Constructing Sacred Space in Mewar: Text, Temple and Landscape in the Fifteenth-Century
Ekaliṅgamāhātmya

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Abstract

The argument of this dissertation concerns the relationship between regional narratives, sacred landscapes, and historical imagination from the tenth to the fifteenth century in the Mewar region of Rajasthan. In the dissertation I will ask several interrelated questions, all of which center to varying degrees on the *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa* (*ELP*), a fifteenth century regional narrative (*sthalapurāṇa*) about the mythico-historical establishment of Ekaliṅga temple, the surrounding sacred landscape, and the royal lineage associated with the region. The overall question of the dissertation can be summarized rather succinctly: what were the political, social, and religious motivations behind the writing of the *ELP*, and is this text a reflection of the royal court's desire to establish political and ideological hegemony in the region? I argue that the available historical evidence points strongly to the fact that the *ELP* was composed during the time of a conscious political "rebranding" of the region after a period of political instability. This rebranding culminated in the composition of the *ELP* and other lengthy inscriptional texts that served to do the cultural and political work of territorial and social integration of the regional kingdom of Mewar during the fifteenth century. I argue that in order to understand the ways in which the authors of the *ELP* reimagined their kingdom we have to consider the dialogical interrelationship between religious narratives, the built environment, and the geographical landscape of Mewar. What this dissertation will explore are the ways in which the *ELP* constructed a sacred Śaiva cartography that was at the same time a very powerful geopolitical claim over the region of Mewar.

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Contents

Abbreviations

EI   *Epigraphia Indica*
ELM   *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*
ELP   *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa*
IA   *Indian Antiquary*
JBBRAS   *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*
URI   *Udaipur Rājya Kā Itihās*

List of Figures

Introduction

Building a Śaiva World: Cartographies of Power[1]

Sacred landscapes and sacred architectural spaces have long been the subject of scholarly analysis, and investigations into the production of these spaces has been undertaken by specialists in the disciplines of religion, anthropology, philosophical geography, and many others. How sacred spaces are produced, negotiated, and contested has been a central theme in many of these scholarly studies, although there is little agreement as to how these spaces are conceived of and utilized by the religious practitioners who inhabit them. In the pre-modern period of India's religious history, it is often local religious narratives, known as *sthalapurāṇa*s or *māhātmyaṣ*, that provide scholars with the clearest window into the creation of sacred spaces in both the geographical and built environments.[2] Local Hindu narratives such as this are central in my investigation of how texts, built environments, and geographical landscapes contribute to the production of sacred space in the pre-modern period of Indian history. A few studies have investigated the relationship between myth and geographical place in early Hinduism broadly,[3] and within specific Purāṇas.[4] In addition

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[1] The phrase "cartography of power" is borrowed from Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage Publications, 2005) 85. Massey uses the term to refer to the "intrinsic relationality" of space in a modern, globalized world that is connected through trade, media, and the like. I am using her term more loosely, but still in the spirit of the "intrinsic relationality" of any and all social spaces.

[2] For a treatment of *sthalapurāṇa*s and *māhātmya*s as a genre, and the relationship between them see Ludo Rocher, *The Purāṇas* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz,1986), 70-75.

[3] See Eck, Diana. 2012. *India: A Sacred Geography*. New York: Harmony Books; Feldhaus, Anne. 2003. *Connected Places: Region, Pilgrimage, and Geographical Imagination in India*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

[4] See Cecil, Elizabeth. "Mapping the Pāśupata Landscape: Narrative, Tradition, and the Geographic Imaginary." The Journal of Hindu Studies 2018: 1–19; Rohlman, Elizabeth. "Geographical Imagination and Literary Boundaries in the *Sarasvatī Purāṇa*." *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 15.2 (2011): 139–63; Smith, Travis. "Renewing the Ancient: The Kāśīkhaṇḍa and Śaiva Vārāṇasī." *Acta Orientalia Vilnensia* 8.1 (2007): 83-108. Taylor, McComas. "Perfumed by Golden Lotuses: Literary Place and Textual Authority in the *Brahma*- and *Bhāgavatapurāṇas*." *Acta Orientalia Vilnensia* 8.1 (2007): 69–81.

to this important scholarship on Hindu sacred space, over the past years there have been several important studies on geography, space, and religion as a result of what has been called the "spatial turn" in the study of human culture.[5] However, none of these studies have addressed a central question: *what is the dialogical relationship between religious narrative, the built environment, and the geographical landscape from which these narratives and architectural spaces emerge, particularly in a South Asian context*?

As a result of this investigatory gap, the scholarship on South Asia and the scholarship that has been concerned with human geography, the politics of space, and the role of sacred space in the lives of religious practitioners has not fully investigated the relationship between religious narratives and their geographical contexts. Without a more detailed analysis of the relationships between religious narratives, built structures, and their spatial frameworks, we miss the central role that narratives play not only in reflecting their socio-historical and spatial contexts, but we also miss the role narratives play in *actively producing*, negotiating, and contesting sacred and political spaces.

This dissertation is an investigation of a fifteenth-century Sanskrit narrative known as the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* ("The Glorification of Ekaliṅga") that was composed in the former kingdom of Mewar in southern Rajasthan. The *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* (also known as the *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa*) recounts the mythicohistorical construction of a still active temple to Śiva in his local form of Ekaliṅga that is situated about fifteen miles north of the modern city of Udaipur. Constructed in 971 C.E., Ekaliṅga temple (today known as Ekliṅgjī) has been the royal temple of the kingdom of

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[5] A few important works for my argument are: Anttonen, Veikko. "Space, Body, and the Notion of Boundary: A Category-Theoretical Approach to Religion." *Temenos: Nordic Journal of Comparative Religion* 41 (2005): 187–202. Knott, Kim. *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis*. London: Equinox Publishing, 2005. Tweed, Thomas. *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006.

Mewar since at least the thirteenth century, and Ekaliṅga has served, and still serves, as the tutelary deity of the ruling family in Mewar, the Guhilas. As the royal temple of the kingdom, the various rulers of Mewar would have their regal status conferred through royal rituals performed at the temple site. Furthermore, in its earliest period, beginning in at least 971, the Ekaliṅga temple site was associated with the Lakulīśa Pāśupata sect of Śaivism. Ekaliṅga temple, therefore, is an important site because of its direct ties to the royal powers in Mewar and because of its connections to the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas, a connection that in the fifteenth century is all but lost.

Emerging as it did in the late fifteenth century, the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* is a product of the political, religious, and social context of medieval Mewar. As I will argue, the politically unstable realities of fifteenth-century North India served as the ever-present contextual background of the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*, and so any investigation of that narrative must take those socio-political contexts into consideration when investigating the reasons for its composition. What I will be examining in this dissertation are the ways in which the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* and related texts, temples and other built structures, and the landscape operated dialogically in the production of a unique regional identity for the royal court of Mewar. My research, therefore, contributes to interdisciplinary questions concerning the role of sacred spaces, both textual and geographical, in the formation of political and religious identities in pre-modern Mewar. My research also aims to engage in scholarly conversations in religious studies, history, geography, and other disciplines where space is a central focus. This dissertation intervenes in ongoing debates about how those in South Asia, and in human culture more broadly, think about, negotiate, and contest the social spaces in which they dwell every day. While providing a regionally specific analysis of sacred space in South Asia, my research is a valuable contribution to broader theories of sacred space and geographical place in the formation of religious identity.

The Structure and Dating of the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*(s)

The "*Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*" is in fact the title of two different works. The earliest work to carry this title is a text written most likely during the time of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā, also known as Kuṃbhakarṇa (r. 1433-1468). This work is a collection and codification of early narratives of Mewar taken from inscriptions, Purāṇic narratives, and presumably folk and oral traditions. The second work to take the name "*Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*" was written most likely in the time of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's son and heir, Mahārāṇā Raimal, who took the throne in 1473. This work recasts the verses found in the earlier *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*, placing them in a much more narrativized and Purāṇic mode filled with borrowings from well-known Upapurāṇas. This later work is a clear attempt at refashioning the older *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* into a pan-Indian Hindu narrative complete with a prestigious Purāṇic pedigree, as the later text claims to be a part of the famous *Vāyupurāṇa*, an Upapurāṇa that predates the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* by many hundreds of years. The two *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*s deal overall with the same concerns: the narrative behind Ekaliṅga's presence in Mewar, the glorification of pilgrimage places throughout the region, and an account of the royal lineage from the first progenitor of the Guhilas down to the present ruler of each respective text. The two texts differ in length and subject matter, but both are clearly articulating, for the first time, a comprehensive and unified vision of Mewar as a distinct regional political power that is framed by a timeless connection to the divine workings of Śiva as Ekaliṅga and many other deities that populate the Hindu cosmos. Following G.H. Ojha[6] I will refer to the earlier text as the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* (*ELM*) and the later *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* as the *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa* (*ELP*).

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[6] Gaurishankar Hiracand Ojha, *Udaipur Rājya kā Itihās* (Rajasthani Granthagar: Jodhpur, 2006 [1928]), 6.

Unlike the *ELP* and other Purāṇic narratives that do not have known authors, tradition ascribes the composition of the *ELM* to Kanhavyāsa, a court poet who lived during the reign of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā. The claim for dating the *ELM* to the time of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā is based on the lineage list (*rājavaṃśa*) given in that text. The lineage lists in the *ELM* and the *ELP* differ from each other, but it is clear that the lineage found in the earlier text ends with the reign of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā. The lineage found in the *ELM* is no doubt taken from much earlier inscriptions, beginning with the 646 CE inscription of Śīlāditya, the earliest record to connect the rulers of Mewar to the lineage of Guhadatta, or Guhila.[7] The lineage in the *ELM* begins with Vijayāditya and lists fifty rulers, ending with the reign of Kumbhakarṇa. The text then praises Kumbhakarṇa over the course of several verses and does not list either of Kumbhā's sons, Udaysingh and Raimal, both of whom succeeded Kumbhā in brief succession. The *ELM* and the *ELP* were both written in part for the purpose of exalting the reign of the past rulers of Mewar and the current Mahārāṇā, so we would expect their names to be found in the lineage given in the text. That the *ELM* ends with Kumbhakarṇa is clear proof that the text was written during that ruler's reign. According to Premlata Sharma, the earliest editor of the *ELP*, there is a copy of the *ELM* based upon a handwritten manuscript dated to 1477 in Udaipur. However, based on this copy the original manuscript must be corrupt and fragmentary, as she notes.[8]

Similarly, the lineage list in the *ELP* ends with the reign of Mahārāṇā Raimal (r.1473–1509), whose name is recorded as Raṇavīra in the text. The *ELP* gives the historically accurate account of the murder of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā by his own son Udaysingh, whose name is Yogarāja in that narrative. The *ELP* describes the cruelty and wickedness of Yogarāja in several verses of the final chapter, an indication of his short-lived reign. Yogarāja is described as a drinker, gambler,

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[7] See the Sāmolī Inscription of the time of Śīlāditya (646CE), *EI* XX, 97-99.
[8] *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*, ed. Premlata Sharma (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1976), 31. I was unable to locate a copy of the *ELM* during my time in the Udaipur archives.

an obstructer of the gods, and fond of prostitutes, to name just a few of his more disreputable traits.[9] The text then reads that he was overthrown or killed by his own son (*svaputreṇa nipātitaḥ*) Raṇavīra, but in fact Raṇavīra (Raimal) was his brother. The *ELP* next gives a long description of a yearly festival to Śiva (*śivamahotsava*), and ends there. That the text mentions Raimal allows us to date the *ELP* to his reign, sometime in the late fifteenth or perhaps early sixteenth century.

The Sanskrit *ELP* has been published twice, first by Premlata Sharma in 1976 mentioned above, and again in 2011 by Dr. Shri Krishnan "Jugnu" and Professor Bhanwar Sharma who also translated the text into Hindi in their edition.[10] Both published editions rely on a manuscript from 1857 currently housed in the Udaipur City Palace Library. An edition of the Sanskrit *ELM* has been published and translated into Hindi by Shri Krishnan and Bhanwar Sharma in 2016.[11] Also, according to Dr. Shri Krishnan, there is a translation and commentary of the *ELP* written in Mewari and a Sanskrit illustrated manuscript, neither of which I was able to locate during my research period.

The *ELP* is important and merits study for several reasons. First, as I argue, it is a formative document in the formation of a unique regional identity for the royal court of Mewar. The *ELP* serves as a religio-political "rebranding" of the kingdom after its rulers experienced external and internal threats from the Delhi Sultanate and the Bhils of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and as such the narrative provides a window into the ways in which regional kingdoms such as Mewar viewed themselves with respect to other political entities. Second, a study of the *ELP* can

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[9] *ELP* 32.4cd-32.6: *vṛttilopaś ca devānāṃ cakāra ha || virodhī sarvalokānāṃ duṣṭānāṃ pratipālakaḥ | madyapānaparo nityaṃ veśyākrīḍanakautukī || dyūtakrīḍā tathā cauryaṃ kulastrīṇāṃ ca dharṣaṇam | ākheṭanaṃ vā prāṇīnāṃ ghātanaṃ tasya bhūpateḥ ||*

[10] *Śrīmadekaliṅgapurāṇam*. Edited and translated into Hindi by Dr. Shrikrishna 'Jugnu.' Delhi: Aryavarta Sanskrity Sansthan, 2011.

[11] *Śrīmad Ekaliṅgamāhātmyam*. Edited and translated into Hindi by Dr. Shrikrishna 'Jugnu.' Delhi: Parimal Publications, 2016.

also provide insights into how the authors of other *sthalapurāṇa*s and *māhātmya*s linked their texts to the wider pan-Hindu literary world. Finally, a study of the *ELP* can offer the attentive reader a glimpse into the ways in which self-aware cultural agents made and re-made their historical reality through the very process of narrative composition.

The Plan of the Dissertation

Ekaliṅga temple sits at the base of the Trikuṭa hills just north of modern Udaipur, in southern Rajasthan. Today the temple—or, more properly, the temple complex—is surrounded by large crenelated walls that separate the main temple of Ekaliṅga and its one hundred and eight smaller temples and shrines from the village of Kailashpuri. Next to the Ekaliṅga temple complex, and also surrounded by a dividing wall, is a smaller temple to the goddesses Vindhyavāsinī, Bāṇmātā, and Rāvalmātā, as well as a small shrine to the locally famous sage Hārītarāśi. Between the two walls that divide Ekaliṅga and, according to her temple priest, his wife Vindhyavāsinī, is a road that leads to Nathdwara and further north. Before the construction of a large national highway that now diverts traffic just east of Ekaliṅga temple, this road brought huge amounts of traffic directly through the small village of Kailashpuri. Despite the reduction in traffic after the construction of the highway, the village still gets many visitors, and immediately outside of both Ekaliṅga and Vindhyavāsinī temples are small shops that sell all manner of trinkets—images of Ekaliṅga,

Figure 0.1: Ekaliṅga temple (pictured left) and Vindhyavāsinī temple (pictured right) separated by Eklingji-Delwara Road, and looking west. Photo by the author.

rudrākṣa beads, *liṅga*s, pamphlets relating the history of the temple and the sacred landscape in both Hindi and English—as well as chai and snack stalls. Immediately behind the Ekaliṅga temple complex is a lake known as Indra Sarovar, a sacred bathing site (*tīrtha*) said to have been dug by Indra himself, a penance he undertook in order to remove the sin (*pāpa*) of killing Vṛtra. Just beyond the limits of Indra Sarovar a very large hill rises up, on the top of which sits the temple to Rāṣṭrasenā, a militant goddess who protects Ekaliṅga, Vindhyavāsinī, and the ancient capital of Nāgahrada. Just north of Ekaliṅga, on a small road that winds through fields and streams, is a small temple to Bappā Rāval, whom locals know as the progenitor of the Guhila lineage and the one who had Ekaliṅga temple built, after receiving the grace of his Pāśupata preceptor Hārītarāśi. Within just a few square miles surrounding Ekaliṅga temple, then, reside all of the major actors present in

the fifteenth-century *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa*: Ekaliṅga himself, Bappā Rāval, Hārītarāśi, Vindhyavāsinī, and Rāṣṭrasenā. All of these figures, housed as they are in the built environment—temples and shrines—represent in miniature the ways in which the sacred landscape and mythic narratives converge in the production of a unique regional religious and political identity for those living in Mewar. Temples, the geographical landscape of rivers and hills, and the stories surrounding these sites constitute in many ways the core themes of Mewar's long and enduring history, and this dissertation will be one small contribution to recounting that history.
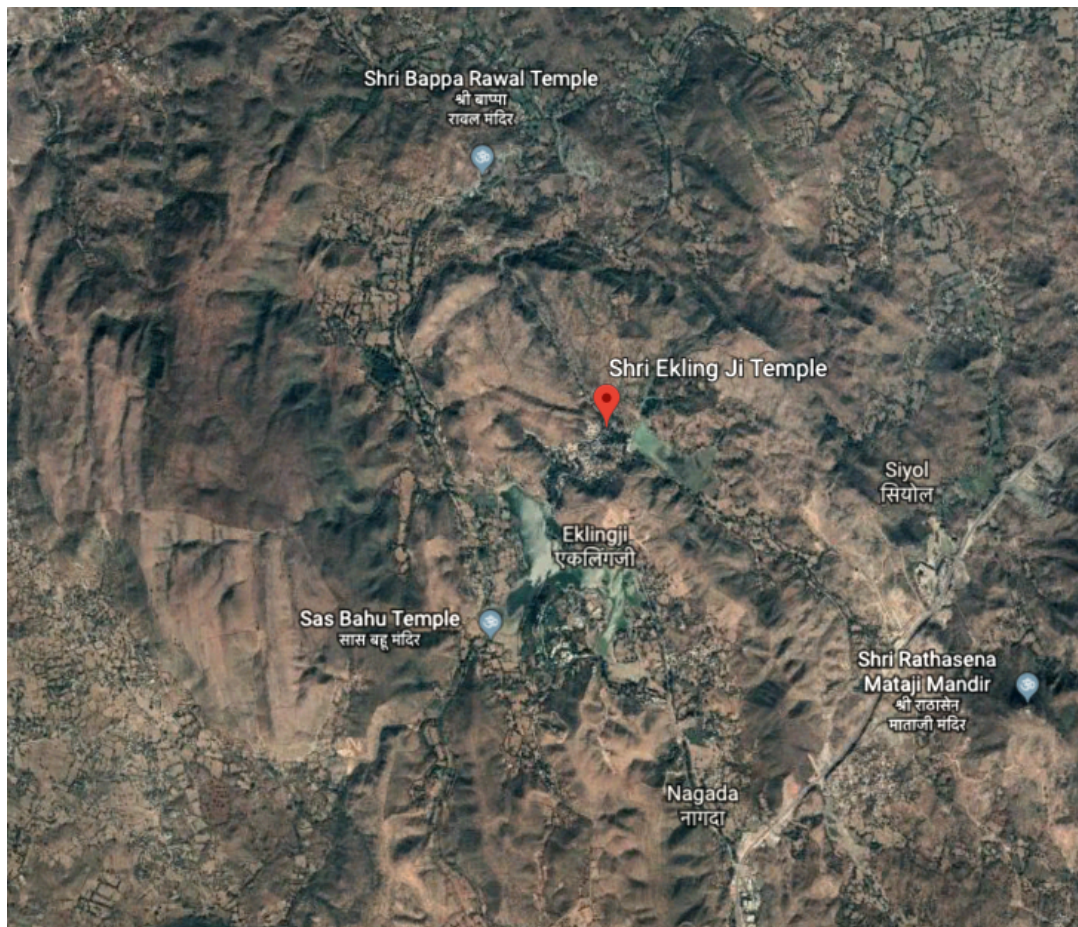
Figure 0.2: Aerial view of Ekliṅgjī Temple (Ekaliṅga), Rāṭhāsena Mātājī Temple (Rāṣṭrasena), Nāgdā, and Bappā Rāwal Temple. Photo from Google Earth.

The structure of the dissertation will be focused broadly on three main themes: texts, temples, and landscapes. Though I will deal with each particular theme in individual chapters, I am only

separating them heuristically. I argue that if we want to understand the work that the *ELP* does in constructing a unique Mewari identity, then texts, temples, and landscapes need to be understood as functioning simultaneously toward that goal.

In chapter one I will trace the history of the kingdom of Mewar from the seventh century to the fifteenth century. In this chapter I will outline the rise of Mewar from a minor and subservient kingdom to an independent political power, and I will demonstrate how Mewar, and the religious center of Ekaliṅga temple, became the object of external military invasions undertaken by the Delhi Sultanate. I will further argue that the historical context of invasion, violence, and threats to the borders of the kingdom served as powerful motivating forces for the authors of the *ELP* in their composition of that narrative.

In my discussions of "texts" in chapter two I address questions relating to the intertextual world of the *ELP*. This section will place the *ELP* in its larger narrative and literary context through an investigation of the "narrative landscape" surrounding that work. I argue that to properly understand the *ELP* as a mature and consciously articulated literary moment in the history of Mewar we must consider the larger constellation of narrative works that impacted the composition of the text. This analysis will include not only textual works classically understood, but it will also include epigraphic evidence as well. I understand the inscriptional record as I do other types of narrative discourse: a human product that was an attempt to record religious lineages and royal genealogies for purposes of political authority, and the glorification of various deities while at the same time being engaged in the active production of those claims. That is, I understand inscriptions not as sources of mere documentary evidence but as active producers of certain religious and political realities reflective of their socio-historical contexts. In this chapter I make a unique contribution to the interpretation of inscriptions by reading them together with the *ELP*, an

interpretation that shows a continuous concern with the emplacement of genealogical claims in a sacred landscape on the part of the royal court.

In my discussions of "temples" in chapter three I address broad questions about the role of physical sites in the creation of religious identity and historical imagination. This section will develop a hermeneutic of sacred architecture, and will then apply that hermeneutic to an understanding of Ekaliṅga temple and surrounding structures in the built environment, specifically in connection to the temples of Vindhyavāsinī and Rāṣṭrasenā. Just as with texts, this section will place Ekaliṅga temple in its wider historical and geographical context, and it will address the role of the built environment in the construction of a wider religious narrative about sacred space and historical imagination in Mewar.

Finally, in my discussions of "landscapes" in chapter four I reimagine Mewar's sacred geography as found in the *ELP* and in the epigraphic record. The dissertation will posit the idea that sacred landscapes in Mewar are above all social productions that come into being through the dialogical relationship between narrative and the built environment. This section, then, is an examination of the role of the sacred landscape in the creation of religious identity and historical imagination in Mewar. In that chapter I will also discuss the role of the physical landscape, but mainly only in the context of its connection to sacred space.

The concluding chapter will bring together the insights gained in the individual chapters on texts, temples, and landscapes in order to evaluate the role of these three elements in the construction of regional religious identity and geographical imagination in fifteenth-century Mewar.

What follows below is a brief introduction to the themes that will occupy the remainder of the dissertation, namely my theoretical orientations to texts, the built environment, sacred landscapes, and, perhaps most importantly, the production of sacred space and of local identity.

The argument of this dissertation rests upon the relationship between religious narratives, their social and historical contexts, as well as their impact on sacred spaces in the production of regional identity. I am ultimately concerned with the production of sacred spaces in Mewar and with how those spaces may have contributed to the production of a particular regional identity for the royal court in the late fifteenth-century. My argument, then, relies on a particular understanding of how cultures organize, relate to, and negotiate space, including textual or narrative space. Historical agents have complex relationships with the texts they compose, and what a particular author's intention is in writing a religious scripture is certainly multilayered. In what follows I do not want to reduce the religious to the political, or the political to the religious. Rather, I will argue that these two frames of reference—the political and the religious—operated simultaneously in the creation of sacred space and regional identity in the context of early Mewar.

Complex Texts, Sacred Temples, Imagined Landscapes

Texts are complex social products, and an author's reason for writing a particular narrative and in a particular narrative style over another is equally complicated. Modern hermeneutical approaches may choose to highlight, intentionally or unintentionally, certain aspects of a text in their investigation, such as its discursive or ideological aspects against its mythical or narrative qualities. However, the dichotomy between an ideological context and religious narrative is certainly a false one, and one that misses the complex goals of the authors of narratives such as the Purāṇas. Narratives serve particular discursive goals, and political aspirations are often indistinguishable from a particular narrative genre. That is, the discursive and narrative elements of nearly any text are simultaneous. As Inden writes in the introduction to *Querying the Medieval*:

> To some degree or other and in varying ways, texts are discursive and narrative. Agents compose texts so that they many use them in their encounters to make arguments and to tell stories. Among the activities in which agents engage when they make and use texts is to determine what is rational in discursive practice and what counts as a plausible story.

> That is, there are no universal criteria that stand outside the practices of the agents concerned.[12]

In an attempt to resist creating a false dichotomization of the text's explicit religious goals (text) and its implicit ideological goals (context), as well as the concomitant tendency to privilege one of these elements of the dichotomy over the other in the historical study of the *ELP*, I will deploy the ambitious hermeneutical strategy of understanding this narrative as a dialogical literary production that actively produced, and was produced by, its complex context. To prioritize text over context or context over text is to reduce or distill an underlying essence either above or below the historical and literary evidence. Inden labels these two approaches to the understanding of the past "authorism" and "contextualism."[13] This dissertation and its hermeneutical approach to the *ELP* is strongly influenced by the methodological position of Mikhail Bakhtin and others who were central in the development of literary dialogism, particularly as presented in Inden's important volume. The attempt here is to complicate the notion of a single author or single authorial intention, as well as destabilize the notion that context entirely informs the complex agency of the author or authors of a narrative. Agency, then, should be understood as being dialogical and distributed across both author and context.

The argument that I am making is, quite simply put, that literary works and their authors participate in a complex dialogical relationship with other texts, authors, and historical realities. Far from serving as static sources for the recording of social, political, economic, or religious truths hiding behind the text—a purely documentary mode of reading—it will be more fruitful to consider the text as *articulating* and being *articulated by* its past and present contexts. That is, works such as the *ELP* do not simply present historical evidence to the historian from behind a

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[12] Ronald Inden, "Introduction" in *Querying the Medieval: Texts and the History of Practices in South Asia*, ed. Ronald Inden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). 12.
[13] Inden, *Querying the Medieval*, 5.

thin veil of mythological narrative and as already present in the world; texts participate in world making practices through their placement in public spheres, and it is in this world-making mode that a text is able to give full presence to its historical argument. I take this idea of "articulation" from Ronald Inden (following Ernesto Laclau):

> Every text, no matter what claims its author or users may make to its transcendence, is *articulative* with respect to specific actors and situations. It is not merely a 'source' that passively records events, but an intervention on the part of an agent in the world…The very composition (and reiteration) of a text, the placement of it in relation to other texts, is itself an assertion of relative power.[14]

Inden uses the term "articulation" here to serve as a corrective to other hermeneutical approaches that either see the text as a passive and static reflection of its context or that see the text as an open-ended and "endless play of signifiers." Both approaches displace the agency of the text or its authors onto something other than the text. What an approach focused on articulation provides, then, is a hermeneutical strategy that views the text as a "living argument" between reader, author, and context.

During my reading of the *ELP* three ostensibly very simple, but at their core quite involved, questions recurred: why was this text written, why at this time, and why is the text presenting its content in such a particular narrative style? The goals of the text are not unitary, or even absolutely discoverable, but it is clear that within its dialogical context the *ELP* is making a particular, or set of particular, arguments about its place in the world of fifteenth-century Mewar. It is the argument of this dissertation that the *ELP* is inserting a set of concerns and interpolations into a larger argument about sacred space and historical imagination in the region. A movement from a heterogeneous admixture of voices in the *ELP*—the nature of its dialogism—is consciously and unconsciously reduced in that text's attempt to construct a unified vision of the sacred landscape and the concomitant historical imagination that is required for such a vision to be socially and

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[14] Inden, *Querying the Medieval*, 13.

politically efficacious. This way of reading a text places more emphasis on the agentive power of the author or authors, and attempts to see the text as a historical moment that had a sense of its own contextual situatedness. Ronald Inden has deployed this method in his historical work, and he is worth quoting in full here:

> The arguments that agents are making, the stories they are telling in their ongoing utterances, are heterogeneous. The very practice of textualizing has as one of its purposes the reduction of heterogeneity to homogeneities tailored to specified situations or organized around specific issues or wishes. A particular text is itself one momentary effect or result of the textual practices in which agents engage. It belongs to a tradition conceived of not as something dead and complete, or as the unfolding of an original unitary idea, but conceived of, after Collingwood, as a scale of texts. Later agents and their texts overlap with those of their predecessors and contemporaries and, by engaging in a process of criticism, appropriation, repetition, refutation, amplification, abbreviation, and so on, position themselves in relation to them.[15]

In this view, texts such as the *ELP* participate in the creation of religious and socio-political realities, as well as enter into a process of world construction and place-making, that is historically unique and regionally specific.

Reading the *ELP* in such a manner is to situate that text within its related communities of discourse. The dialogical aspect of discourse is an inherent aspect of discourse generally, and any proper hermeneutical strategy must take very seriously the larger textual milieu of which a particular narrative is a part. This is meant to serve as a corrective to a deeply ingrained approach to reading South Asian texts in the West, and of Purāṇas and Māhātmyas more specifically. This approach has typically taken the form of treating this narrative literature as being storehouses of historical knowledge or as "dead monuments, as mere sources of factual information or the expression of a creative and exotic genius that we can only appreciate in itself for itself, or as the accidental expression/sedimentation of some larger structure or context…"[16] In reading Purāṇas as elements of a larger conversation—as part of a living process of composite agents with

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[15] Ronald Inden, *Querying the Medieval*, 12.
[16] Ronald Inden, *Querying the Medieval*, 14.

overlapping agendas—and not as static monuments from which we can mine historical data, we can begin properly to locate these conversations within larger historical frameworks; instead of reading these textual sources as static and isolated repositories of historical fact or mythology, it will reimagine those texts within their larger dialogical backgrounds. This approach is similar to that taken by Gabrielle M. Spiegel in her study of historiography in thirteenth-century France. She writes:

> Texts mirror *and* generate social realities, are constituted by *and* constitute social and discursive formations, which they may sustain, resist, contest, or seek to transform depending on the individual case. It is this kind of relational reading of text and context, of overt and suppressed meaning, of implied and articulated purposes, together with the variety of literary and discursive modes in which they are given voice, that I have attempted to offer here and which I believe we need to pursue if we are to achieve a genuinely historical understanding of textual production.[17]

It is on this complex dialogical back-and-forth that I will focus in my reading of the *ELP* and its related narratives. But more than that—and what is unique and central to the argument of this dissertation—*I would like to extend this dialogism to an understanding of built environments and geographical landscapes.* My argument, then, extends to the study of Hindu temples and other built structures.

The Hindu temple has been the most conspicuous and dominating feature of the built environment in India for over fifteen hundred years. Hindu temples in the past, as today, served multiple purposes for the varied temple goers who frequented them. Temples are the physical houses of the abstract divine powers that permeate the Hindu cosmos, and their placement in the geographical landscape is never a haphazard choice on the part of the architects or patrons who financially supported such structures. Often, a temple will be built at a site where something divine

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[17] Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 10.

is said to have occurred, where a rupture between profane space and divine space emerges, or where cosmic time and human time merge. The gods don't just emerge at any place and at any time, however. Gods sport in beautiful places, places rich in natural beauty and quite often near locations associated with rivers, bathing tanks, lakes, or other bodies of water. Wherever the divine emerges or descends in a particular location, one can be certain that that geographical location must be of great importance and power. Importantly, temples, like texts mentioned above, never exist in isolation, either from their geographical context or from their relationship to the rest of the built environment or the narratives of their construction. To conceive of a temple without considering its contextual—and dialogical—relationship to the "natural" environment or built environment in which it resides is to miss the central meaning of that structure; a history of a temple must always be understood in larger terms of the multiple spaces and places that are in conversation with that temple site. I wish to make the comparison between text and temple clear: any hermeneutics of sacred architecture must, like textual hermeneutics, place built structures within their dialogical frameworks and must consider the related communities of discourse influencing those built structures.

What I am not suggesting, however, is that textual hermeneutics should be used as a model for an understanding of built spaces; I am not suggesting that those experiencing the built environment understand it as text, and "read" it accordingly. What I am suggesting is that to understand the built environment, we must pay attention to the larger dialogical context in which any built structure is embedded, just as we must with a textual work. In this regard, I will adopt the idea put forth by Lindsay Jones in *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*—that of the "ritual-architectural event." Jones approaches an understanding of the built environment through an analysis of the relationship between the architectural space and those who enter that space and experience its effects. Jones argues that architecture must be understood in terms of "events" and

asks that we attend to the location and context-specific meaning of architecture, as well as to the ways in which the meaning of a particular structure changes over time. Jones remarkes:

> …from this perspective, the locus of meaning resides neither in the building itself (a physical object) nor in the mind of the beholder (a human subject), but rather in the negotiation or the interactive relation that subsumes both building and beholder—in *the ritual-architectural event* in which buildings and human participants alike are involved. Meaning is not a condition or quality of the building, of the thing itself; meaning arises from situations.[18]

By investigating not just particular temples but the built environment as a whole in terms of a "ritual-architectural event," I hope to demonstrate that there is an important connection between architectural space and the representations of that space by human subjects who composed literary narratives such as the *ELP*, and who therefore participated in a dialogical conversation with the built environment.

Architectural structures such as temples, bathing tanks, and artificial lakes and ponds, are intimately connected to the geographical landscape in which they are emplaced. In order to properly understand, and reconstruct, the history of a sacred place such as Ekaliṅga one must understand the role of geographical space and topography on the built environment. Indeed, it is through the dialogical interaction between the built environment and the geographical landscape that sacred landscapes emerge.

The Production of Sacred Space

This dissertation is concerned above all with space, place, and location. As such, the following section will present an overview of theories on space and place in western academic theory, with a focus on the socially constructed and contextual nature of space. This overview will not be

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[18] Lindsay Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture: Experience, Interpretation, Comparison* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 41.

exhaustive, as that task would require an entire monograph unto itself. What I hope to do in the following review of literature on spatial theory is to highlight some of the most important debates within this theoretical literature, and in the end point the way toward a model of space and place that is most consonant with the conceptions of space found in the *ELP*. What I hope to do, then, by surveying the literature on spatial theory is to develop a model that best works with the evidence found in the *ELP* that can theorize the production of sacred space in pre-modern Hindu narrative literature. Much of the academic literature on space and place concerns the modern city and nation, so careful work needs to be done in order to not use theories of space that do not fit a pre-modern, non-Western context. What I will stress as useful in the following survey is the way in which theories of space have moved from an understanding of space as an empty container—a *tabula rasa* ready to be populated with people, things, and ideas—to an understanding of space as dynamic, contextual, and social that arises simultaneously with the human perception and interpretation of that space. Space, including sacred space, is contingent and relational—it is above all a social product that emerges through narration, contestation, and negotiation. As I will demonstrate, literary spaces, as much as 'real' lived spaces, are imaginative social constructions the boundaries of which change over time, reflective of their constant reevaluation by those who dwell within those very locations.

Sacred spaces are geographical settings that are culturally marked and set apart from the non-sacred through ritual practices that enable a human practitioner to participate in divine power or grace. Sacred spaces are connected to larger networks of social, political, and economic power through physical and symbolic relationships. The many bathing tanks (*kuṇḍa*), rivers, temples, and mountains that form the natural and built environment of Mewar are connected together through their physical relationship to each other and through their narrative emplotment in the *ELP*. To understand the important role of sacred space in Mewar as it is depicted in the *ELP* I first want to

look closer at what is meant by "the sacred" and sacred space more generally, then move on to consider how sacred space serves to create and maintain a sense of local identity through narrative and ritual.

It is my position that the "sacred," an essential aspect of what defines a religion overall, is situational, relational, and established through ritual practice. Following J.Z. Smith who wrote, "Ritual is not an expression of or a response to 'the Sacred'; rather, something or someone is made sacred by ritual (the primary sense of *sacrificium*),"[19] I argue that the "sacred," whether we are talking about sacred objects, people, or spaces, is closely connected to ritual action; sacred space and ritual space intersect, or perhaps more properly speaking ritual space becomes sacred space through ritual performance and vice versa. In discussing sacred space I would like to stress its situational and relational aspects, this in contrast to other earlier phenomenological approaches to the study of the sacred that saw it as an inherent and substantial aspect of people, places, or things in the world.

The Poetics of Space: Substantial Approaches

In the introduction to their book *American Sacred Space*, Chidester and Linenthal sketch two broad approaches to an understanding of the sacred in the study of religion: the substantial and the situational, or what might be understood as the poetics and the politics of space. Mircea Eliade, Rudolph Otto, and Gerardus van der Leeuw represent the first category, the substantial. With Eliade's notion of the "real," Otto's "holy" and van der Leeuw's "power" we see an attempt to identify the source of the sacred in substantive terms that exist within the world and are inherent in the world. The "real" or the "numinous" for Eliade, Otto, and van der Leeuw is something that

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[19] J.Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward a Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 105.

is fixed in the world, and when its "irruption" (to use Eliade's well-known phrasing) or manifestation takes place it does so from inside out, so to speak. According to this position, things or places are inherently sacred because power or the holy exist within them as an inherent part of them. This substantialist position on the nature of the sacred denies, or at least mostly masks, the important role that political, economic, and social motivations play in sacred spaces or over sacred objects. Chidester and Linenthal argue against the substantialist position most forcefully:

> Finally, the assertion that the sacred irrupts or manifests is a mystification that obscures the symbolic labor that goes into making space sacred. It erases all the hard work that goes into choosing, setting aside, consecrating, venerating, protecting, defending, and redefining sacred places. This mystification is even more seriously misleading, however, when it covers up the symbolic violence of domination or exclusion that is frequently involved in the making of sacred place.[20]

To argue that sacrality is an inherent aspect of an object or place is to deny the ways in which sacred objects or places are contested and negotiated by human actors who often have motivations consisting of real or symbolic domination.

Eliade, Otto, and van der Leeuw laid the foundation for later studies of place as the locus for heightened affective experiences. While not concerned directly with religion, later phenomenological studies of space and the experiences of bodies within those spaces emerged. Gaston Bachelard, in his 1958 *The Poetics of Space* (*La poétique de l'espace*), reflects on the poetic images of space and the poetic imagination that *arises* from space:

> Indeed, the images I want to examine are the quite simple images of *felicitous space*. In this orientation, these investigations would deserve to be called topophilia. They seek to determine the human value of the sorts of space that may be grasped, that may be defended against adverse forces, the space we love. For diverse reasons, and with the differences entailed by poetic shadings, this is eulogized space. Attached to its protective value, which can be a positive one, are also imagined values, which soon become dominant. Space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the

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[20] David Chidester and Edward T. Linenthal, eds. *American Sacred Space* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 17-18.

measures and estimates of the surveyor. It has been lived in, not in its positivity, but with all the partiality of the imagination.[21]

Bachelard was concerned not with space as an empty container populated with people and things, nor with space that could be demarcated into sections and measured, but with the imaginative and phenomenological experience of those who live within that space. For Bachelard, space takes on new form, and perhaps exists *as such*, only through the imaginative, poetic experience of that space. In this perspective, the phenomenological experience of the body is primary in one's understanding of space. I will return to this theme later in the dissertation.

Yi-fu Tuan, in his well-known *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, investigates the experience of space and place by looking at the ways in which different cultures perceive of and create metaphors for their placement within their own bodies, within their towns and cities, and within the larger cosmos in which they imagine themselves to live. As Tuan makes clear, it is *experience* that is fundamental to understanding cultural space. He writes, "A key term in the book is 'experience.' What is the nature of experience and of the experiential perspective?"[22] Writing from a phenomenological perspective, it is not surprising that Tuan privileges the experiences of the living human body, experiences that originate first and foremost from the senses and their interaction with external objects of perception. Tuan argues that, "An object or place achieves concrete reality when our experience of it is total, that is, through all the senses as well as with the active and reflective mind."[23] Tuan's emphasis on basic phenomenological sensation in the experience of space is clear in an early chapter entitled, "Space, Place, and the Child." In this chapter Tuan argues that the experience of space, culturally specific though it may be, arises

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[21] Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. M. Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), xxxv-xxxvi. Bachelard's italics.
[22] Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 7.
[23] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 18.

from "biological imperatives" that are universal: "Although children come under cultural influences as soon as they are born, the biological imperatives of growth nonetheless impose rising curves of learning and understanding that are alike and hence may be said to transcend the specific emphases of culture."[24] He argues that despite the cultural dissimilarities in the manifestation of space and our more complex experiences of it, humans share a basic orientation to the world that is based in the human body's biological posture. Space and place, then, arise from the human's orientation as an upright, forward moving biological being:

> Among mammals the human body is unique in that it easily maintains an upright position. Upright, man is ready to act. Space opens out before him and is immediately differentiable into front-back and right-left axes in conformity with the structure of his body. Vertical-horizontal, top-bottom, front-back and right-left are positions and coordinates of the body that are extrapolated onto space. In deep sleep man continues to be influenced by his environment but loses his world; he is a body occupying space.[25]

Space, and place as a specific manifestation of space, arises first and foremost through bodily orientation and sensory experience. The primacy of the body is important in my understanding of sacred landscapes, and I will examine the role of the body in place-making in a later chapter.

The philosopher Edward Casey is strongly influenced by Tuan's investigations into place, space, and the body. In *Getting Back Into Place* Casey reflects on the relationships that one's body has to a sense of location and identity, both individual and social. Casey argues that the body, being located as it is in specific times and places—a "here" rather than a "there," and a "now" rather than a "then"—informs personal and social identity. Early on in his analysis he observes:

> The power a place such as a mere room possesses determines not only *where* I am in the limited sense of cartographic location but *how* I am together with others (i.e. how I commingle and communicate with them) and even *who* we shall become together. The "how" and the "who" are intimately tied to the "where," which gives to them a specific content and a coloration not available from any other source. Place bestows upon them 'a local habitation and name' by establishing a concrete situatedness in the common world.

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[24] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 19.
[25] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 35.

> This implacement is as social as it is personal. The ideological is not merely idiosyncratic or individual; it is also collective in character.[26]

Casey connects the body with the places that that body inhabits, arguing that the body never "merely" exists in space, but that space and body bring place into being. Social identity and community also emerge from the coming together of body and place. Casey contrasts the body and the landscape, but at the same time considers them in their connection to the creation of place. For Casey, body and landscape mirror each other in a sense: landscape is the ever-distant expanse of visible topography, the boundary of the perceptible world; the body is limited, and its boundaries much more immediate and narrow. But landscape and the body are the two primary modes of orienting ourselves in the world—as we move within the limited boundary of the body, we also use that body to orient ourselves through the expansive landscape:

> Body and landscape present themselves as coeval epicenters around which particular places pivot and radiate. They are, at the very least, the bounds of places. In my embodied being I am just at a place as its inner boundary; a surrounding landscape, on the other hand, is just beyond that place as its outer boundary. Between the two boundaries—and very much as a function of their differential interplay—implacement occurs. Place is what takes place between body and landscape.[27]

To understand place and emplacement one has to understand the relationship between the body and the landscape through which that body moves.

Similar to Tuan, in *Getting Back Into Place* Casey begins his analysis with an investigation of the role of the body in the creation of place, particularly in cosmogonic myths. Casey uses the example of the Babylonian myth of Marduk's dismemberment of Tiamat to illustrate the connection between body and place, eventually connecting body and place to the built environment. Casey notes that, according to the myth, the entirety of the world was created from the dismembered body of Tiamat—that is, from the giant body of Tiamat come the particular

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[26] Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back Into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993) 23.
[27] Casey, *Getting Back Into Place*, 29.

geographical places and topographical features of earth. In regard to the connection between Tiamat's dismembered body and geographical place Casey argues that, "If the Babylonian legend is telling us anything, it is that body and place belong together from the beginning. Their fate is linked—not only at the start but at subsequent stages as well."[28] Geographical place, then, proceeds from the body and embodiment, and the two are in many ways coterminous with each other.

Another central focus for Casey in *Getting Back Into Place* is the relationship between the body, the landscape, and the built environment. Casey makes clear the relations between these three terms through an analysis of architectural spaces and bodily form, demonstrating how architects often model their built structures on the measurements of the body.[29] Casey writes, "Built places, then, are extensions of our bodies. They are not just places, as the Aristotelian model of place as a strict container implies, *in which* these bodies move and position themselves. Places built for residing are rather an enlargement of our already existing embodiment into *an entire life-world of dwelling*."[30] The built environment is often modeled on the human form, and in turn the human form shapes how the structures of the built environment open up to the movements of the human body.

The Politics of Space: Situational Approaches

In its earliest manifestations the situational definition of the sacred can be found in the writings of Emile Durkheim, Arnold van Gennep, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Jonathan Z. Smith. A situational definition of the sacred essentially states that sacrality does not inhere in objects, people, or places. Instead, sacrality is a matter of relative position or situation and is a product of the relationship

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[28] Casey, *Getting Back Into Place*, 45. This myth, and Casey's analysis of it, will be important in a later chapter of this dissertation.
[29] Casey, *Getting Back Into Place*, 116-120.
[30] Casey, *Getting Back Into Place*, 120. Italics in original.

between individuals, groups, and the social structures in which they are embedded. The sacred is not an intrinsic aspect of any object or place but emerges through the interaction between people, places and things. This is what van Gennep famously called the "pivoting of the sacred." In describing what the pivoting of the sacred means van Gennep writes, "Characteristically, the presence of the sacred (and the performance of appropriate rites) is variable. Sacredness as an attribute is not absolute; it is brought into play by the nature of particular situations."[31] This is akin to what J.Z. Smith perhaps most famously argued for: the relative and situational nature of sacrality. For Smith, sacred spaces and sacred objects become sacred through ritual. That is, things or places are not inherently sacred but become so after a focused attention on them highlights their difference from the ordinary and the mundane. Smith remarks: "A ritual object or action becomes sacred by having attention focused on it in a highly marked way. From such a point of view, there is nothing that is inherently sacred or profane. These are not substantive categories, but rather situational ones. Sacrality is, above all, a category of emplacement."[32] For van Gennep and Smith, as well as for Durkheim and Geertz, sacrality is relative and relational and emerges within cultural systems whose actors have religious, political, economic, and other motivations that strongly influence what is and is not considered sacred.

The situational nature of sacrality is important in understanding sacred space for a few reasons. First, it is important to understand sacred space as relative and situational in order to fully understand the ways in which sacred spaces are constructed, contested, and negotiated over time and through space by those with political, economic, or other social motivations. The sacred power

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[31] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), 12.

[32] Smith, *To Take Place*, 104. For an important critique of Smith's ideas of ritual space see Ronald Grimes, "Jonathan Z. Smith's Theory of Ritual Space," *Religion* 29 (1999): 261-273. While I agree with Grimes in his critique of Smith, his argument is not fully relevant to my argument here as I am mostly interested in the representations of an idealized sacred space rather than ethnographically recorded ritual practices.

of a site can disappear or reappear over time, and in fact is one of the main characteristics of sacred space if investigated over the *longue durée*. The fact that sacred space is situational also means that it takes on an importance or significance for those experiencing it in ways that are deeply felt and ritually renewed. This aspect of sacred space Chidester and Linenthal call "significant space." Sacred space as significant space plays a central role in the construction of identity as well as in the formation of cultural memory and bodily *habitus* in the sense Bourdieu meant. Chidester and Linenthal argue that, "Sacred space is a means for grounding classifications and orientations in reality, giving particular force to the meaningful focus gained through these aspects of a worldview."[33] Cultural identities and habitual modes are often established and enacted within sacred spaces, as much as they are negotiated and sometimes dissolved. But this is only a possibility, of course, if we understand sacrality to be situational.

Sacred space should also be understood in terms of the exercise of power. Because sacred space is relational, it becomes a location of ideological struggle for economic and symbolic capital. Power, in the sense of political control as well as the control over systems of knowledge, is exercised foremost in sacred spaces, because this is where notions of social identity (including religious identity) and historical memory are often negotiated. The meanings of sacred spaces— what and even where they are—are in flux and change according to those who have control over their articulation. Sacred spaces are contested, as argued by Chidester and Linenthal, because of conflict over "sacred resources" and "symbolic surpluses." Chidester and Linenthal argue that because sacred spaces are not fixed points or necessarily determined by physical boundaries, their signification is debatable and they constitute symbolic surpluses of meaning that are then appropriated by those who wish to have a claim to that space:

> When space or place becomes sacred, spatially scarce resources are transformed into a surplus of signification. As an arena of signs and symbols, a sacred place is not a fixed

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[33] Chidester and Linenthal, *American Sacred Space*, 12.

point in space, but a point of departure for an endless multiplication of meaning. Since a sacred place could signify almost anything, its meaningful contours can become almost infinitely extended through the work of interpretation. In this respect, a sacred place is not defined by spatial limits; it is open to unlimited claims and counter-claims on its significance. As a result, conflict in the production of sacred space is not only over scarce resources but also over symbolic surpluses that are abundantly available for appropriation.[34]

Symbolic surpluses, then, as ideological elements of meaning that are "abundantly available for appropriation" are therefore contested by individuals wishing to monopolize on the power (religious, political, economic, etc.) of a sacred space.[35] Doreen Massey puts the matter clearly:

> Seeing space as a moment in the intersection of configured social relations (rather than an absolute dimension) means that it cannot be seen as static. There is no choice between flow (time) and a flat surface of instantaneous relations (space). Space is not a 'flat' surface in that sense because the social relations which create it are themselves dynamic by their very nature…It is not the 'slice through time' which should be the dominant thought but the simultaneous coexistence of social relations that cannot be conceptualized as other than dynamic. Moreover, and again as a result of the fact that it is conceptualized as created out of social relations, space is by its very nature full of power and symbolism, a complex web of relations of domination and subordination, of solidarity and co-operation.[36]

Sacred spaces, then, are above all socially constructed, situational, contested, and serve as surpluses of symbolic meaning that are produced through ritual practice.

There are several theorists who have made important contributions to spatial theory in general, and theories of sacred space more specifically. One of the most influential theorists of space in its social aspects was Henri Lefebvre, a French Marxist philosopher and theorist of the production of space. Lefebvre theorized three dialectically interconnected aspects of social space that served as a heuristic model of how space is *produced* in an active, and not passive, mode. In emphasizing "production" I am following Lefebvre who was most centrally interested in the ways in which space is experienced by people, and not simply represented or abstractly conceived.

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[34] Chidester and Linenthal, *American Sacred Space*, 18.
[35] Chidester and Linenthal, *American Sacred Space*, 18.
[36] Doreen Massey, "Politics and Space/Time," in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Keith and Pile (London: Routledge, 1993), 153.

Lefebvre postulated three aspects of social space that occur simultaneously and in varying degrees. These three aspects of social space given by Lefebvre are: spatial practice, representations of space, and spaces of representation. I will briefly discuss all three in turn.

Lefebvre defines spatial practice in the following way: "The spatial practice of a society secrets that society's space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it. From the analytic standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed though the deciphering of its space."[37] Spatial practice refers to the ways in which space is used and perceived by people, generally in an immediate and non-conscious way. Space in this aspect is taken for granted because it is sedimented in the body and manifested through *habitus*.[38] Space in this mode is experienced in close connection to the body; it is experienced through embodiment. Indeed, as Lefebvre notes, "Considered overall, spatial practice presupposes the use of the body: the use of the hands, members and sensory organ, and the gestures of work as of activity unrelated to work."[39] Spatial practice, then, refers to the modes by which people experience and transform their social space at a very fundamental level.

"Representations of space" is defined by Lefebvre as, "conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent—all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived."[40] In representations of space the conceived order of social space dominates the lived order; through the detailing and planning of social space architects, city planners, and other organizers of the built environment create livable space in which bodies later move. These planned

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[37] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford and Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 38.
[38] The term "habitus" is meant in the way defined by Pierre Bourdieu. See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, translated by Richard Nice (Cambridge: Polity, 1990), 52 et passim.
[39] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 40.
[40] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 38.

spaces are never neutral, however, and are always embedded in larger questions of ideology and power, and are dynamic and subject to change. Lefebvre writes, "I would argue, for example, that representations of space are shot through with a knowledge (*savoir*)—i.e. a mixture of understanding (*connaissance*) and ideology—which is always relative and in the process of change."[41] This aspect is the planned, second order productions of space that, while being shaped by the lived body, are separated from it due to its consciously conceived nature.

The third and final aspect of social space according to Lefebvre is "representational spaces."[42] He describes this aspect in the following way:

> *Representational spaces*: space as directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users', but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few writers and philosophers, who *describe* and aspire to do no more than describe. This is the dominated—and hence passively experienced—space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. Thus representational spaces may be said, though again with certain exceptions, to tend toward more or less coherent systems of non-verbal symbols and signs.[43]

Representational spaces are conceived of through the imagination and expressed in the symbolic order. This aspect of space describes the ways in which human agents represent and imagine the physical spaces in which they dwell. Representational spaces are dynamic and affective, running at times counter to spaces of representation, or sometimes along with them. As symbolic spaces they are much more open to modification and change than the formal spaces created by city planners and architects.

These three aspects of social space are not independent of each other, nor do they operate as unrelated modes of experience in one's daily movement through space. Instead, they operate at

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[41] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 41.
[42] This is sometimes translated as "spaces of representation." See Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1996), 10; also Kim Knott, *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis* (London: Equinox, 2005), 37.
[43] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 39. Lefebvre's italics.

different times and in different ways dependent upon the culture and the time period. Lefebvre notes that, "It is reasonable to assume that spatial practice, representations of space and representational spaces contribute in different ways to the production of space according to their qualities and attributes, according to the society or mode of production in question, and according to the historical period."[44] Lefebvre further argues that the three aspects are never simple or stable, and their relations to each other are contingent on specific cultural-historical factors.[45]

Lefebvre's spatial triad is heuristically useful in understanding how space is experienced, planned, and creatively imagined by social agents. Wherever necessary I will rely on this conceptualization of space to make sense of how the narrative agents of the *ELP* imagined the geographical and political boundaries of the kingdom and acted to institute those imaged boundaries in both textual and geographical landscapes.

Sacred Space and Local Identity

Space and place are, above all, social products. Space—understood abstractly as undifferentiated and unlocalized territory, and as place as particularized and localized—does not arise unmediated by human construction and production. Space is an inherently human construct and is, as I will argue later, a political demarcation. Space and place, ostensibly appearing given and objective, are inextricably tied to the production of culture and historical context. This idea—that space is a human creation—is not altogether new, and was historically contextualized by J.Z. Smith who reflected: "What if space were not the recipient but rather the creation of the human project? What if place were an active product of intellection rather than its passive receptacle?"[46] Smith argued

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[44] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 46.
[45] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 46.
[46] Smith, *To Take Place*, 26.

that it is ritual practice which establishes the sacred, and ritual also contributes to the production of sacred space; sacred space is a human creation established in situations of focused attention upon that space in ritual performances. To understand how sacred landscape is produced, we must pay attention to the ways in which that landscape is made sacred through ritual means—and this includes the myths and stories of past ritual actions that become connected to the landscape. This dissertation is an investigation into that very theme, that is, the production of sacred space and the relationship the construction of that space has to political power and religious authority in the Mewar region of Rajasthan during a particularly important historical time period. Furthermore, the production of space, sacred or otherwise, is important for understanding how imperial centers established, maintained, and expanded local forms of religious and regional identity within their territories.

As I will argue throughout this dissertation, space and place are, among other things, political demarcations. Place and locality, which I will discuss below, are divisions of space suffused with ideological and political contestation and are fluid in their boundaries and constantly negotiated. In the time period with which we are concerned, the control of territory and the maintenance of political and social boundaries is a primary concern of imperial centers, and one method of establishing and maintaining those boundaries was through ideological means. Henri Lefebvre made this very point when he wrote: "Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally populated with ideologies. There is an ideology of space. Why? Because space, which seems homogeneous, which appears given as a whole in its objectivity, in its pure form, such as we determine it, is a social product."[47] Because space is a social product it is subject to constant conflict over the limits of its boundaries, and the establishment and maintenance of those

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[47] Henri Lefebvre, "Reflections on the Politics of Space," in *State, Space, World: Selected Essays, Henri Lefebvre*, ed. Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 171.

boundaries becomes a continual struggle for those who wish to preserve and expand them. This continuous negotiation of boundaries is important for understanding how local and regional identities are defined, and is also important for understanding what constitutes the center and the periphery, for center and periphery are the two most important concepts for understanding how those living within a specific region, such as Mewar, produce a sense of locality.

Arjun Appadurai, in an intriguing article on the importance of understanding locality in the pre-modern world, as well as the modern world of the nation-state, places emphasis on how locality is produced and maintained in not only the most obvious ways, but also in ways that seem more quotidian and routine. Appadurai doesn't see locality as a unit of space that is necessarily physically spatial; instead, he sees locality as contextual and relational: "I view locality as primarily relational and contextual rather than as scalar or spatial. I see it as a complex phenomenological quality, constituted by a series of links between the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity, and the relativity of contexts."[48] Appadurai notes that locality is a very fragile and precarious thing; because of its relational and contextual nature, locality is constantly either under threat of change at its peripheries, or at its center through ecological and/or technological change. Locality, therefore, is not an inherent and stable given, but is an ever-shifting set of contexts that are dialogical in nature.

Appadurai is concerned with the ways in which space and time are made part of the localizing project of human culture, and he stresses the importance of seeing this process of localization in the most basic of human activities, such as building houses and roads, maintaining gardens and fields, or marking boundaries both internal and external to whatever is considered the local limits of what he terms a "neighborhood." He argues that locality is a conscious negotiation

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[48] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 178.

of boundaries against the ever-present fear of collapse: "Much that has been considered local knowledge is actually knowledge of how to produce and reproduce locality under conditions of anxiety and entropy, social wear and flux, ecological uncertainly and cosmic volatility, and the always present quirkiness of kinsmen, enemies, spirits, and quarks of all sorts."[49] The idea that the production of local knowledge and localized space might be a reaction to perceived threats, both political and cosmic, will be important when we consider the reasons for the composition of the regional (local) *ELP* narrative during a time of political instability. Regionalization, localization, and boundary making are central politico-religious goals that are instituted to push back against the perennial entropic forces that threaten the stability of kingdoms, and the *ELP* was certainly engaged in such a project to establish regional hegemony against these forces.

According to Appadurai, the production of local identity is inherently a process of the exertion of power over dangerous environments or landscapes by a dominant ideological group— often over other, neighboring groups:

> The production of a neighborhood is inherently colonizing, in the sense that it involves the assertion of socially (often ritually) organized power over places that are viewed as potentially chaotic or rebellious…In this sense, the production of a neighborhood is inherently an exercise of power over some sort of hostile or recalcitrant environment, which may take the form of another neighborhood.[50]

The argument of this dissertation is consistent with this theory, which sees the creation of a regional Mewari identity as an exercise of political and ideological power over the sacred landscape of Mewar through the dialogical back and forth of textual and geographical topographies.[51]

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[49] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 181.
[50] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 183-84.
[51] I prefer the term 'dialogical' to 'dialectical' as the former implies an ever-evolving back-and-forth exchange between two or more terms, voices, etc., that does not lead to closure, while the latter term implies a more limited back-and-forth exchange that ultimately ends in closure. My reason for preferring 'dialogical' is that I wish to preserve the sense of open-endedness, non-resolution, and dynamism that dialogue implies.

Locality, as argued by Appadurai, is produced through the dialectical (in his phrase) relationship between context and the local inhabitants embedded in those contexts; locality is the result of the very specific material and non-material constituents of a "neighborhood" and the context making work that those living in any neighborhood produce. This insight led to one of the central concerns of Appadurai's article: "The central dilemma is that neighborhoods both are contexts and at the same time require and produce contexts."[52] Contexts, in the form of existing spaces, populated with social actors, cultural norms, ritual practices, and social hierarchies, are necessary for the production of local subjects. Those contextualized subjects, in turn, push the boundaries of their localized contexts through religious imagination, territorial exploration, and changing political and economic factors. Appadurai remarks:

> Put summarily, as local subjects carry on the continuing task of reproducing their neighborhood, the contingencies of history, environment, and imagination contain the potential of new contexts (material, social, and imaginative) to be produced. In this way, through the vagaries of social action by local subjects, neighborhood as contexts produces the context of neighborhoods.[53]

Appadurai sees the creation of locality and local subjects as a dialectical (although I would consider it dialogical) back and forth between context and context creating actions. This will have an important bearing on the understanding not of only text production and its relationship to historical context, but also to the ways in which literary narrative impacts, and is impacted by, the historical contexts within which they are embedded. The narrative of the *ELP*, as will be discussed in the following chapter, was both the product of its particular local historical context—that of fifteenth century Mewar—and it was also a definitive factor in the creation of that local context through the production of sacred space both within the literary imagination and within the physical geographical landscape. This is consonant with Spiegel's view of the importance of understanding

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[52] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 184.
[53] Appadurai, "The Production of Locality," 185.

context when studying text production:

> My emphasis on the text's social site stems from my belief that the power and meaning of any given set of representations derive in large part from the social context in which they are elaborated. In that sense, the meaning of a particular text is essentially relational, not stable or inherent in the text itself; it emerges only when the text is situated within a local environment of social and political networks that it seeks to shape and that are being organized around it.[54]

Local narratives are produced by, and produce, localized knowledge that help establish and maintain physical boundaries, which become the limits of what might be considered a region with a distinct regional identity. The production of sacred space within a religious narrative becomes part of the state building process that is essential for a local or regional identity through this dialogical process. Indeed, David Carr has argued for the relationship between narrative, community, and social identity through an analysis of the continuity between narrative plot structure and the very real historical and personal stories we record in various forms of individual and historical narratives. Carr argues that the beginning-middle-end structure of narrative is *constitutive* of social life as well as individual life, of our experiences, and not a second-order imposition of this structure upon the "real" chaos of life that has no such structure. Narratives, the stories of inclusion and exclusion that define one group in terms of another, constitute communities. Carr is worth quoting at length here on that very matter:

> A community in this sense exists by virtue of a story which is articulated and accepted, which typically concerns the group's origins and its destiny, and which interprets what is happening now in the light of these two temporal poles. Nor is the prospect of death irrelevant in such cases, since the group must deal not only with possible external threats of destruction but also with its own centrifugal tendency to fragment. Again we can say that the narrative function is practical before it is cognitive or aesthetic; it renders concerted action possible and also works toward the self-preservation of the subject which acts. Indeed, we must go further and say that it is literally constitutive of the group. As before, narrative is not a description or account of something that already exists independently of it and which it merely helps along. Rather, narration, as the unity of story, story-teller, audience, and protagonist, is what constitutes the community, its activities, and its

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[54] Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 9.

coherence in the first place.[55]

Communities emerge from the narratives that they tell themselves and that they tell others, and in turn the narratives reflect those communities.

Cartographies of Power

The argument of this dissertation concerns the dialogical relationship between religious narratives, the built environment, and the geographical landscape, an argument that ultimately examines the ways in which a regional Mewari identity was intimately tied to the composition of the fifteenth century *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa*. By way of conclusion I wish to present a theory of space and place that may account for the ways in which the *ELP* was not only a product of its socio-historical and spatial context, but, more importantly, I wish to explore the ways in which the *ELP* actively produced a sacred geography that served as a type of imagined cartographic map that was as much religious as it was political. By examining such a cartography of power—and by power I mean a cartography that is thoroughly imbued not only with political power, but religious power as well—we can begin to see the ways in which the authors of the *ELP* imagined and constructed their world—how they constructed what Michel de Certeau called "spatial stories." Through the very composition of the *ELP* the authors both constructed boundaries and connected themselves to the larger Hindu cosmos in which they dwelled, all this as part of a project to place Mewar squarely on the larger political and religious map. I argue that religions are, among other things, concerned with orientation and place, and that religious stories and religious actions are aimed at discovering and maintaining our place in the world and in the cosmos; religions orient us in our bodies, in our homes and regions, and in the world of the gods and goddesses who help or inhibit our journey in

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[55] David Carr, "Narrative and the Real World: An Argument for Continuity" in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. Geoffrey Roberts (London: Routledge, 2001), 153.

this world. In the following section I will draw from the ideas of J.Z. Smith, Thomas Tweed, and others to more closely consider how religious narratives contribute to this sense of orientation.

J.Z. Smith has reflected quite extensively on the nature of religion and religious experience. Smith emphasizes space and place in his writings, focusing on the role of place as the site of meaning in which humans dwell. For Smith, religion is a place-making process that constructs and pushes against the limits of one's orientation in the world:

> Religion is the quest, within the bounds of the human, historical condition, for the power to manipulate and negotiate ones 'situation' so as to have 'space' in which to meaningfully dwell. It is the power to relate ones domain to the plurality of environmental and social spheres in such a way as to guarantee the conviction that ones existence 'matters.' Religion is a distinctive mode of human creativity, a creativity which both discovers limits and creates limits for humane existence. What we study when we study religion is the variety of attempts to map, construct and inhabit such positions of power through the use of myths, rituals and experiences of transformation.[56]

The human desire to construct a place in which to "meaningfully dwell" is to construct a vision of the world that is both "locative" and "utopian," centripetal and centrifugal, local and non-local. Meaning comes from staking claim to one place over another, and it comes from ascribing value to the home, the homeland, and the cosmos. There is great value, then, in following Smith's notion of the creative human desire to "map, construct, and inhabit" a world of meaning through an active process of orientation. For the authors of the *ELP*, this mapping took place through the very construction of just such a locative map—an imagined sacred and political geography the limits of which were drawn and redrawn over many centuries.

Thomas Tweed similarly sees religion as a meaning-making endeavor, and he stresses the creative, active, and fluid nature of religious belief and practice. Religious people contest narratives and geographical places in their endless goal of finding meaning through the construction of homes and homelands, and through the movement across geographical and

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[56] J.Z. Smith, "Map is Not Territory" in *Map is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press,1978), 291.

imagined boundaries. Tweed writes that, "Religious women and men make meaning and negotiate power as they appeal to contested historical traditions of storytelling, object making, and ritual performance in order to make homes (dwelling) and cross boundaries (crossing). Religions, in other words, involve finding one's place and moving through space."[57] For Tweed, religious people orient themselves to particular historical and mythical narratives and situate themselves within particular social and geographical landscapes. In one of the central terms of his theory of religion, Tweed reflects on what he means by dwelling:

> Dwelling, as I use the term, involves three overlapping processes: mapping, building, and inhabiting. It refers to the confluence of organic-cultural flows that allows devotees to map, build, and inhabit worlds. It is homemaking. In other words, as clusters of dwelling practices, religions orient individuals and groups in time and space, transform the natural environment, and allow devotees to inhabit the worlds they construct.[58]

Dwelling refers to the modes by which religious people establish orientation first in the body, then in the home, the homeland, and finally in the cosmos. If religion is the "quest" to find a place in which to "meaningfully dwell," (as Smith would have it), then, for Tweed, this dwelling takes place within these four progressively larger embodied, social, and cosmic spaces.

Religious people don't only construct dwellings that orient them in body, home, and cosmos, but they also move across boundaries, whether those boundaries are geographical, embodied, or cosmic. In theorizing the element of "crossing" in religious practices and experiences, Tweed urges us to pay attention to the ways in which religions are about movement and migration rather than being static and frozen in time. Tweed argues for three types of religious crossings: "I argue that religions enable and constrain *terrestrial crossings*, as devotees traverse the natural terrain and social space beyond the home and across the homeland; *corporeal crossings*, as the religious fix their attention on the limits of embodied existence; and *cosmic crossings*, as

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[57] Thomas Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 74.
[58] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*, 82.

the pious imagine and cross the ultimate horizon of human life."[59] Bodies, homes, homelands, and the cosmos are porous things, and their boundaries are not as clear-cut as we might think or want them to be. What Tweed suggests is that religions not only orient the religious in place and space, but they also facilitate and enforce crossings from body to body, region to region, and from the human plane to that which is thought to exist beyond the merely human.

For Tweed and Smith, religion is an orientation, a map-making, and a "cartographic" desire to locate oneself in the larger social, political, and cosmic spaces in which we dwell. A cartography of power is just this: the capacity to exercise control—ideological control as well as sociocultural control—over the ability to orient a group in a particular space and time. What this dissertation will demonstrate are the modes and manners by which the authors of the *ELP* constructed such a cartography of power in order to re-orient the kingdom in a new textual and geographical landscape after its fragmentation during the Sultanate incursions. To echo Geertz, the sacred landscape described in the *ELP* and its topographical reality served as a 'model of' a newly emergent social reality while at the same time it served as a 'model for' a new socio-political and religious identity for the royal court of Mewar.[60]

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[59] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*, 123.
[60] On Geertz's "models of and models for" formulation see Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System" in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 93-95.

Chapter One

Medapāṭa and Its Literary Ecumene

The argument of this dissertation rests upon the historical context of state formation in early medieval and medieval Mewar from the seventh century to the fifteenth century.[1] It is during this formative period that we see the growth of Mewar from a sub-regional political power to a regional kingdom with a wide-ranging religious and socio-political apparatus. It is in the fifteenth century that the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* (*ELM*) and the *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa* (*ELP*) were composed, and the production of a sacred landscape through the integration of local deities and pilgrimage places (*tīrtha*s) into a unified territorial region also took place. In this section I argue that from the seventh to the thirteenth century we see the clear growth of the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhilas of Mewar from a local and subservient political power to a regional power with a developed religio-political infrastructure supported ideologically by a newly developed religious tradition in the region, the Lakulīśa Pāśupata Śaivas, and their narratives of the origin of Ekaliṅga temple and its associated divine and semi-divine actors. Furthermore, I will argue that because of the military invasions and possible near collapse of the kingdom of Mewar during the fourteenth century, the fifteenth century saw a resurgence of power under Mahārāṇā Kumbhā and a concomitant re-envisioning of sacred

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[1] The secondary literature on the history of medieval Mewar is rather sparse. Of note are the following surveys: Kapur, Nandini Sinha. *State Formation in Rajasthan*. Delhi: Manohar, 2002; Paliwal, Devilal. *Mewar Through the Ages*. Udaipur: Sahitya Sansthan, Rajasthan Vidyapeeth, 1970; Somani, Ram Vallabh. *History of Mewar: From Earliest Times to 1751 A.D.* Bhilwara: Mateshwari Publications, 1976. For more focused studies see Day, Upendra Nath. *Mewar Under Maharana Kumbha: 1433 A.D.-1468 A.D.* New Delhi: Rajesh Publications, 1978; Sircar, D.C. *The Guhilas of Kiṣkindhā*. Calcutta: Sanskrit College, 1965; Teuscher, Ulrike. "Changing Eklingji: A Holy Place as a Source of Royal Legitimation." *Studies in History*, 21, no. 1 (2005): 1-16; Teuscher, Ulrike. "Creating Ritual Structure for a Kingdom: The Case of Medieval Mewar." In *State, Power, and Violence.* Wiesbaden: Harrasssowitz Verlag, 2010. Teuscher, Ulrike. "Craftsmen of Legitimation: Creating Sanskrit Genealogies in the Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries." *Studies in History* 29.2 (2013): 159-182. Teuscher, Ulrike. *Königtum in Rajasthan, Legitimation im Mewar* des 7. bis 15. Jahrhunderts. Schenefeld: EB Verlag, 2002.

space, landscape, and pilgrimage patterns through the composition of the *ELM* and the *ELP*. It was the authors of the *ELM*, patronized by Mahārāṇā Kumbhā, who began a process of revitalization through the re-imagining of the narrative of Ekaliṅga in terms of sacred place and pilgrimage, as well as re-imagining the relationship between political power and religious authority in the region.

A History of Mewar (7th-15th centuries)

7th-9th Centuries

The royal family of Mewar, in the past as in the present, are known as the Guhilas, and they trace their lineage back to one of two progenitors: Guhila (from the tenth to the thirteenth century) or Bappā Rāval (from the thirteenth century until the present). The following sections will present a brief history of the Guhilas in Mewar from the seventh century until the fifteenth century with the goal of tracing the rise of this kingdom from a subservient power under the Gujara-Pratīhāras to eventual independent rule in the region.

From the seventh century to the tenth century there were three centers of Guhila power in the Mewar region: the Nāgda-Āhaḍa Guhilas, the Kiṣkindhā Guhilas, and the Dhavagartā Guhilas. These three Guhila lineages occupied the region of Mewar as subservient rulers to their Morī overlords as expressed in the use of subordinate royal titles. It is clear, however, that the region was never settled by the Morī rulers through land grants, indicating that this region was considered to be the exclusive domain of these ruling Guhila families.[2] The creation of an agrarian economic base in the region is evident from grants of fields and irrigational works, as well as evidence of the creation of a strong economic base through the operation of mineral mines in the region.[3] Based on the Sāmōlī Inscription of Śīlāditya, one of the earliest inscriptions from the region, we have

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[2] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 35.
[3] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 37.

evidence of the construction of a local temple near a newly constructed mine in 656 CE. [4] This temple dedicated to Araṇyavāsinī ("She Who Dwells in the Forest") indicates a local goddess associated with the forested areas where the tribal Bhil people dwelled. I argue that this suggests not only the incorporation of possible tribal religious elements into the developing state structure, but also the gradual transformation of tribal groups into settled agriculturalists and miners who creating material support for these emerging ruling families. Furthermore, the Samoli Inscription is the first to mention a ruler from the Guhila family, Śīlāditya. In this inscription, then, we have for the first time the description of a ruler from the emerging Guhila ruling family being associated with the construction of a local temple and a clear indication of an expanding material base. These two aspects—the establishment of a temple to a local goddess, and the construction of a mine— are essential components in the creation of a state structure based on agricultural expansion, lineage formation, and the absorption or adoption of local deities into the Brahmanical fold. Concerning the emergence of land grants and the spread of lineages in early medieval society, Daud Ali notes that, "When land grants begin to be issued in particular regions, they typically index the emergence of local power holders or political adventurers. The communities of Brahmin householders who often formed the recipient of these grants provided these nascent groups with intellectuals and officials for their expanding 'households.'"[5] That the first grant, at least that we have available, concerning the Guhila royal lineage is transmitted in Sanskrit and associated with the construction of a temple to a local goddess speaks to the close relationship between ruling elites and the Brahmanical class in the early stages of state formation in Mewar. Through this inscription we can begin to see the gradual importance of Guhila rule in the region, this together

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[4] Sāmōlī Inscription of Śīlāditya, AD 656, *EI*, vol. XX, 97-9. I will discuss the implications of this "forest dwelling" goddess in terms of the development of the divine feminine in Mewar in a separate chapter.

[5] Ali, "Royal Eulogy as World History," 6.

with the expanding influence of high caste Hindu religious authority. In the same passage quoted above Ali adds:

> At the same time, the boundaries of 'Bramanical' culture were greatly expanded as the once exclusively sacerdotal language of Sanskrit for the first time became the accepted medium of public political discourse outside of the religious sphere, uniting Brahmanical householder communities and ruling elites as part of a single ruling class dependent on a common agricultural basis.[6]

Therefore, this seventh century inscription is important in understanding the early development of political power and religious authority at an early phase in Mewar.

The above-mentioned inscription describing the ruler Śīlāditya is the first record of a Guhila ruler in the Nāgda-Āhaḍa region of Mewar. A second inscription from the seventh century comes from the Kiṣkindhā region of Mewar, just south of Nāgda-Āhaḍa near Ekaliṅga temple. This inscription was issued in 653 CE and records the ratification of a previous land grant to a Brahmin named Asaṅgaśarman. What is important to note here is the reference to the Guhila lineage in the grant, and the subordinate title *guhilaputtrānvaya* ("the lineage of the son of Guhila") used by the author of that grant in reference to the ruler of the Kiṣkindhā region, Bhāvihita.[7] A second important grant emerging from Kiṣkindhā is that issued by Bābhata in 688 CE. This grant is addressed to local chiefs (*nṛpa*), village heads (*grāmādipati*), and the local inhabitants of the region and records the giving of land to five Brahman brothers. Bābhata also takes a subordinate title *guhilanarādhipavaṃśa*, but there is also stress put on the lineage aspect of this title, that is, that Bābhata is a (subordinate) ruler from the Guhila lineage.[8] These two inscriptions indicate that by the seventh century there was a second nuclear area in Kiṣkindhā that affiliated itself with the

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[6] Ali, "Royal Eulogy as World History," 6.
[7] Copper Plate Grants of Guhila Kings Bhāvihita and Bābhata (653 and 688), *EI.*, vol. XXXIV, 167-76.
[8] *EI*, vol. XXXIV, 167-76.

Guhila lineage and that, although subordinate, was nonetheless independent enough to be able to issue land grants and settle brahmans in the outlying sub-regions of that territory.

One final important inscription from this period comes from the Dhavagartā region of Mewar.[9] This inscription records the endowment of fields for two temples by the Guhila ruler Dhanika, one to Śiva (*mahāmaheśvara*) and one to Durgā in the form of a local goddess named Ghaṭṭavāsinī, a connection that the inscription itself makes. This inscription indicates a third nuclear area belonging to rulers associating themselves with the Guhila lineage. It also points to the role of agricultural support for Hindu temples that would presumably also support their priestly oversight.

The inscriptions that emerge during the seventh through ninth centuries record the early formation of a state structure in Mewar and provide fruitful insights into how that structure was instituted over time. During this early period, the inscriptions remain sporadic and brief, but despite this we can detect some important clues that will help us in understanding the unique work being done by the inscriptions and the socio-political and religious implications of these documents. These early inscriptions do not make any *explicit* references to a developed narrative around the lineage founder Guhila, yet lineage is one of the emerging concerns of these local rulers. Furthermore, the inscriptional (and incorrectly conceived "static") nature of these documents should not detract us from understanding that the articulation of these lineage claims were performative in nature and were proclaimed to various members of local administration and village heads, as the inscriptions themselves make clear. Lineage claims were created, displayed, and performed through the very medium of the inscriptions and their public displays in front of the local community, and were not merely expressive of these claims.

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[9] Dabok Inscription of the Time of Dhavalappadeva (813 CE), *EI*, vol. XX, 122-25.

Interregnum: A Brief History of the Pāśupata Sect in Rajasthan

Before moving on to the political context of the tenth through the thirteenth centuries, I would like to discuss in brief the history of the Pāśupatas in Rajasthan because they will eventually play a major role in the construction of Ekaliṅga temple.

The main religious sect found in the *ELP* are the Pāśupatas, an *atimārga* tradition of Śaivism having early historical roots in India.[10] The earliest literary references to the Pāśupatas are probably found in the *Mahābhārata*.[11] In the *Śāntiparvan* section of the *Mahābhārata* four religious doctrines are mentioned: Sāmkhya, Yoga, Pāñcarātrā, and Pāśupata. In terms of a textual tradition for the Pāśupatas, there are two early texts: a *sūtra* known as *Pāśupatasūtra*, and a commentary on that known as the *Pañcārthabhāṣya* written by one Kauṇḍinya (approx. 5th-6th CE). Kauṇḍinya writes that in the past Śiva assumed the body of a brahman and manifested on earth at Kāyāvataraṇa or Kāyāvarohaṇa, after which he went to Ujjayinī where he transmitted his teachings to his disciple Kuśika.[12] This story is found in many later records, including the Ekaliṅga inscription of 971 discussed below. This has led David Lorenzen to argue that, "Lakulīśa was in all likelihood the founder of the Pāśupata order," despite variations and inconsistencies in the textual records. The most developed literary accounts of the birth of Lakulīśa are found in the *Vāyupurāṇa* and *Liṅgapurāṇa*, and these accounts no doubt directly influenced the birth narrative of Lakulīśa found in the Ekaliṅga record of 971 CE. There are some differences in these Puranic accounts, but we can summarize the narrative thus: in the twenty-eighth *yuga* Śiva predicts that he will incarnate as a *brahmacarin* named Lakulī by entering a corpse in a cremation ground at either Kāyārohaṇa in the *Vāyu*, or Kāyāvatāra in the *Liṅga*. Kāyārohaṇa or Kāyāvatāra will become

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[10] For the distinction between *atimārga* and *mantramārga* in Śaiva Tantric traditions see Alexis Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," in *The World's Religions*, edited by S. Sutherland, et. al. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul (1988), 660-704.
[11] *Mahābhārata*, *Śāntiparvan*, 337.59 and 337.62.
[12] Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas,* 175.

sacred sites, and after Lakulī will follow his disciples Kuśika, Garga, Mitra, and Kauruṣya who will transmit the Lakulīśa Pāśupata teachings.[13] The relationship that these Puranic narratives have to the *ELP* and the inscription of 971 is important, and will be examined in the following chapter. For now, let us move to the evidence for Pāśupata influence in the regions of western India during the early medieval period.

Art historical records indicate Lakulīśa Pāśupata influence in Rajasthan by at least the eighth century.[14] Inscriptional evidence also indicates that by the early medieval period the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas had spread from northern Gujarat into southern Rajasthan.[15] The earliest written record of the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas in southern Rajasthan is found at Ekaliṅga temple, however. This inscription, composed during the time of Guhila ruler Naravāhana, is dated to 971 CE and indicates a clear association between the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas and the Guhila royal court.[16] The inscription mentions the place of Nāgahrada (Nāgahṛda/Nāgda) and further mentions a king known as Bappaka of the Guhila lineage. The inscription continues with the narrative of the manifestation of Śiva in the country of Bhṛgukaccha due to a curse that befell the sage Bhṛgu. When Śiva manifested at this place with a club in his hand (*lakula*) he became known as Lakulīśa, and the place where he manifested was known as Kāyāvarohaṇa.[17] There is also important information given concerning the construction of Ekaliṅga temple, specifically that it was constructed according to the orders of certain *ācārya*s named Supujitarāśi, Viṃścitarāśi, and perhaps others. These names ending with "rāśi" remind us of the celebrated Hārītarāśi of Mewar,

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[13] D.R. Bhandarkar, *JBBRAS*, XXII, 154-55.

[14] Tamara Sears, "Śaiva Monastic Complexes in Twelfth-Century Rajasthan: The Pāśupatas and Cāhamānas at Menāl," South Asian Studies, 23:1 (2007): 111. U.P. Shah, "Lakulīśa: Śaivite Saint," in *Discourses on Śiva: Proceedings of a Symposium on the Nature of Religious Imagery*, ed. Michael W. Meister, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), 99-101.

[15] D.R. Bhandarkar, *JBBRAS*, XXII, 151-65; Vyas, *EI*, XXX, 8-12; Bühler, *EI*, I, 271-87.

[16] D.R. Bhandarkar, *JBBRAS*, XXII, 151-65.

[17] Dr. Śrīkṛṣṇa Jugnū, ed., "Ekaliṅgajī Mandirstha Nātha Praśasti" in *Ekaliṅgapurāṇam* (Delhi: Aryavarta Sanskrity Sansthan, 2011), 457-461.

who was the teacher of Bappā Rāval, and are no doubt name-endings that indicate affiliation with the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas. A final important detail given in the inscription is that a celebrated sage at Ekaliṅga temple named Vedāṅga disputed with Jains and Buddhists and was victorious in that debate.

There are a few important items to note about the Lakulīśa Pāśupata sect at Ekaliṅga. First, given the date of 971 CE we can surmise that there must have already been strong Pāśupata influence in the Mewar region before this time. In fact, we have Pāśupata sites from early medieval Rajasthan, the earliest dating to the seventh century.[18] It seems clear that prior to the tenth century the Guhilas did not have a reason to seek out religious groups for patronage, and this may have had something to do with Mewar's relatively weak political status together with its subordinate position vis-à-vis other regional powers from the seventh to the tenth centuries. By the late tenth century, the Guhila state had grown in power enough that they began seeking religious patronage from local religious elements, and based on the Ekaliṅga inscription it is clear that the Guhilas associated themselves with the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas—so much so that, in fact, the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas had the Ekaliṅga temple built and the author of the inscription drew a direct lineage connection with the Guhila family. There were certainly Pāśupata elements in Rajasthan prior to the tenth century, as mentioned above, but nothing on the scale that we see in Nāgahṛda. It is unclear if the Pāśupata ascetics reached out to the Guhila royal court or vice versa, but a close connection between the two was made as documented in the inscription, and this speaks to the level of involvement between the growing Guhila imperial formation and their source of religious authority.

The mention of a debate between the Pāśupatas, Jains, and Buddhists is also of some importance. Taking the inscription at face value, it seems that there may have been competing

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[18] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 210.

influences vying for the Guhila court's attention during the tenth century. This again speaks to the importance of the Guhila state at this time, and perhaps indicates a growing need for political validity as well as religious patronage by both the religious groups and the court. There was considerable Jain influence in the region during the tenth century, and it is perhaps possible that ascetics or intellectuals from these three groups came together to debate in an attempt to obtain patronage from the Guhila court. The details of the debate are not written about in the inscription, only that the Pāśupatas were victorious. Whether or not the debate happened (although I am inclined to believe that it did, lacking any evidence to the contrary), the message seems apparent: the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas were the dominant religious group in the region, and they had direct ties to, and influence over, the Guhila court in Mewar.

Importantly, it is in this inscription that we have the first reference to Bappā Rāval (Bappaka). I will write more about Bappā Rāval below, but for now it is important to bring attention to the fact that the authors of the 971 CE inscription connect this figure to the Guhila lineage and to Nāgahrada. He is not yet considered to be the founder of the Guhila royal lineage, but he is praised as a local king coming from Nāgahrada, a clearly Pāśupata site. It will take another two hundred or so years for Bappā Rāval to become the progenitor of the Guhila lineage, taking the place of Guhila, but we can see here the storyline taking place wherein a local king, associated both with the Guhila lineage and with a definite Pāśupata site is introduced as an important actor in the newly emerging historical narrative of Mewar.

Ekaliṅga temple and the Mewar kingdom were strongly influenced by the Lakulīśa Pāśupata sect from at least the tenth century until perhaps the late thirteenth century. What influences this Śaiva sectarian tradition had on the sacred landscape of Mewar and the political and religious realities during this roughly three-hundred-year period will be investigated throughout the dissertation, particularly the influence of Lakulīśa Pāśupata Śaivism in the creation

of the *ELP* narrative. Based on the inscription at the site, and from iconographical evidence, we know that a Pāśupata temple was constructed within the Ekaliṅga temple compound by at least 971 CE at Nāgdā under the influence of the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas and during the reign of the Guhila king Naravāhana, as discussed above. In the tenth century we see the consolidation of political power by the Nāgda-Āhaḍa Guhilas in their territorial base through the integration of the Kiṣkindhā Guhilas and the absorption of the Dhavagarta Guhilas into the Pratīhāra imperial formation.[19] What we see, then, is the development of a strong political center through territorial absorption and the weakening of other Guhila lineage formations that were vying for power in the Mewar region during the tenth century. Based on the inscription of 971 CE, we know that Nāgda-Āhaḍa had already become a center of Lakulīśa Pāśupata influence, and that there began a process of royal patronage of this Śaiva sectarian tradition. What the relationship was between the royal court and the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas is unclear based on this inscription, but it is evident that from the late tenth century onwards there developed a close relationship between the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas and the royal court of the Nāgda-Āhaḍa Guhilas.

There was a strong connection between the rise of Pāśupata influence in the Nāgda region of Mewar and the growing strength of the Nāgda-Āhaḍa Guhilas during the tenth century, the time of the construction of Ekaliṅga temple. Prior to this time, the period from the seventh to the tenth centuries saw the creation of local state formation in the Mewar region through the creation of Guhila lineage domains and the increased competition between these different ruling families, as well as the creation of a strong agrarian base in the region and the incorporation of local chiefs into royal lineages, local land grants to brahmans, and the possible royal patronage of local deities together with their gradual incorporation into the larger Sanskrit tradition, as demonstrated by the

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[19] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 163-64. I use the term "imperial formation' here following Inden 2006.

656 Samoli Inscription and the 813 Dabok Inscription. These are some of the "ingredients" that B.D. Chattopadhyaya argues went into the creation of regional powers during the early medieval period:

> Common modes of royal legitimation and interrelated phenomena such as the practice of land grants, the creation of *agrahāra*s, the emergence of major cult centres and temple complexes, social stratification subscribing to the *varṇa* order (even when the order in the strict sense of the term was absent)—all these were manifestations of the manner in which local-level states mediated in the absorption of ideas and practices which had been taking shape as a wider temporal and ideological process.[20]

During the seventh to tenth centuries there were three main centers of Guhila power in Mewar: the Nāgda-Āhaḍa Guhilas, the Kiṣkindhā Guhilas, and the Dhavagartā Guhilas. It is through the integration of local elements into these distinct lineage formations, the creation of a strong agricultural base, and the creation of local cults that we see the beginnings of state formation in Mewar.

10th-13th Centuries

The Gujara-Pratīhāras controlled southern Rajasthan during the ninth century, but during the tenth there is a decline in Pratīhāra power in the region, together with what appears to be a consolidation of power by the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhilas in the regions formerly controlled by the Kiṣkindhā Guhilas and the Dhavagartā Guhilas. This is evidenced by the Pratapgarh Inscription issued by Pratīhāra Mahendrapāla II (942-46), which mentions the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhila ruler Bhartṛpaṭṭa II but not the Kiṣkindhā or Dhavagartā Guhilas, and further gives Bhartṛpaṭṭa II the title of *mahārājādhirāja*.[21] This superior status title, given only to independent rulers, indicates that Bhartṛpaṭṭa II was thought to have sole territorial claim to the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa region, and perhaps

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[20] Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, *The Making of Early Medieval India* (Delhi: New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 35.
[21] Pratapgarh Inscription of King Mahendrapāla II, *EI*, vol. XIV, pp. 176-88.

beyond, during the late tenth century. Based on the Āṭapura inscription of 977 CE, the Guhila ruler Śaktikumāra consolidated the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhila kingdom and established a new genealogical list pertaining to the Guhila *vaṃśa*. This indicated a new phase of political power in Mewar, with the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhilas establishing a genealogical connection to the region that had not been explicitly made before.[22] Importantly, the Āṭapura inscription mentions for the first time a figure named Guhadatta, a brahman from Ānandapura in Gujarat who is said to be the founder of the Guhila dynasty. These two developments in the tenth century—the recording of a new Guhila genealogy and the presentation of a founding lineage member of the Guhila line, Guhadatta—are indications of the growing political power of the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhilas over the sub-regional kingdom of Mewar, and further points to the development of an organized state structure aimed at political sovereignty in the region. Before the Āṭapura inscription there were only references to Guhila, or Guhadatta, as the founder of the ruling powers in Mewar, but there was no developed narrative surrounding that figure. I argue that because of the importance of lineage in state formation in southern Rajasthan, the development of a new narrative around Guhadatta should not be underemphasized. These new narrative developments of the life of Guhadatta can be seen as subtle (or perhaps not so subtle) claims to authority and status by the Guhila rulers.

In the early twelfth century, the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhilas identified themselves as the sovereigns of Mewar for the first time by referring to the ruler as *bhūpale medapāṭamahīmām*.[23] This same inscription, the Paldi Inscription of Arisiṃha of 1116 CE, also records the story of Lakulīśa, the founder of the Lākulīśa Pāśupata sect that is so important in Mewar during the tenth century. Paldi, from which the inscription gets its name, is located near modern Udaipur, and because of its location in this area it is clear that the Lākulīśa Pāśupata sect had gained considerable

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[22] Āṭapura Inscription of Guhila King Śaktikumāra, AD 977, *IA*, vol. XXXIX, pp. 186-91.
[23] Paldi Inscription of Arisiṃha of AD 1116, *EI*, vol. XXX, pp. 8-12.

influence in the region outside of Ekaliṅga temple and had in fact expanded their influence to smaller temples that perhaps served as residences of local Lākulīśa Pāśupata orders. By the second half of the twelfth century the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhilas had greatly expanded their sovereign territory over the upper part of the southern Banas plain, territory previously held by either the Pratīhāra rulers or subordinate Guhila rulers. The trend toward greater territorial expansion and political independence took a major step forward in the thirteenth century with the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhila occupation of Chittorgarh, the most important political symbol of military might and independent administrative rule in Mewar. Two separate inscriptions of the Guhila ruler Jaitrasiṃha from 1213 CE and 1222 CE indicate that the Chittorgarh fort was taken over for short periods of time during these years.[24] It was during this time, the thirteenth century, that the Guhilas officially ceased to consider themselves by the sub-regional title as the "Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhilas" and they became the Guhilas of Medapāṭa, that is, the Guhlias of the entire region of Mewar. This shift is essential in understanding how the sub-regional political power centered in Nāgdā-Āhaḍa transformed into a regional power that absorbed through the territorial acquisition of other Guhila lineages, the annexation of Chittorgarh, and the beginnings of an affiliation with the Lākuliśa Pāsupata Śaivas, a group centered at Ekaliṅga temple that would begin to play a major role in state formation and the legitimation of royal rule in Mewar.

13th-15th Centuries

It is in the thirteenth century that we see a decisive shift from the previous narrative of the royal genealogy. All previous records indicated that Guhadatta, or Guhila, was the progenitor of the Guhila rulers in Mewar. However, in the Achaleśvara Inscription of 1285 the narrative changes, and instead of Guhila as the progenitor of the royal line a figure by the name of Bappā Rāval is

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[24] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 62.

said to be the progenitor and Guhila his son.[25] In the same inscription an important addition is given concerning the relationship between royal power and religious authority, specifically that the Pāśupata sage Hārītarāśi, through the grace of Ekaliṅga, confers on Bappā Rāval the right to rule over all of Mewar.[26] Additionally, this inscription notes Bappā exchanged his Brāhmaṇa varna status for a Kṣatriya status, an important qualification for the right to rule. This is a major shift from the narrative found in the tenth through twelfth century inscriptional records where Guhila from Ānandapura was listed as the progenitor of the Guhila *vaṃśa*,[27] and indicates a profound shift of power and legitimation in favor of the narrative put forth by the growing influence of the Pāśupatas centered at Ekaliṅga temple. Changes in royal genealogies serve as important indicators of shifting power structures, particularly in Rajasthan, a region that relied heavily on such genealogies to consolidate territory and expand administrative structures. As Teuscher notes: "Genealogies were more than just proof that the king came from the right family. In the lineage-oriented society of Western India they carried a whole range of meanings, and contained the whole ordering principle of the elite society."[28] Lineages were not uncontested by those who crafted them, particularly as they carried so much political and strategic weight; the creation of a new lineage narrative, though seen from the far distance of our sporadic historical evidence, demonstrates a deeper process of historical change most effectually brought about by these inscriptions themselves. That is, by seeing these changes in the narrative of the royal lineage we can see the "work" being done by these very inscriptions.

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[25] Shyamaldas, Kaviraj. ed., "Achaleśvara Inscription of Samarasiṃha, AD 1285", *Vir Vinod*, vol. I, Delhi, 1986, pp. 397-401. I will present a full analysis of the Bappā Rāval narrative in a following chapter.

[26] Ibid., v.11: *hārītāt kila bappakoṅghrivalayavyājena lebhe mahaḥ kṣātraṃ dhātṛnibhāhitīrya munaye brahmaṃ svasevācchalāt | etedyāpi mahībhujaḥ kṣititale tadvaṃśasaṃbhūtayaḥ śobhaṃte sutarām upāttavapuṣa kṣātrā hi dharmā iva ||*

[27] As exemplified in the Paldi Inscription of Arisimha from 1116 CE, *EI XXX*, pp. 8-12.

[28] Teuscher, "Creating Ritual Structure for a Kingdom: The Case of Medieval Mewar," in *State, Power, and Violence* (Wiesbaden: Harrasssowitz Verlag, 2010), 362-63.

In addition to the changes made in the royal genealogy and the growing influence of the Pāśupatas, in the thirteenth century there were also important changes in the political ranking system, with a proliferation of smaller rulers organized in a growing constellation of political and administrative control in the region. Kapur writes that by the thirteenth century there developed a "political hierarchy based on rank" of royal kinsmen known as *rāval*s. Kapur writes, "Hence, both the royal and private records establish the fact that at least by the second half of the thirteenth century, Guhila kings presided over a number of *rāvals* or royal kinsmen who were recognized by their formal political status."[29] This political hierarchy was organized top down with the most powerful Guhila ruler being named *mahārājakula* or *mahārāval*, indicating a system of ranked power invested foremost in a Guhila king who then had ostensible administrative control over other *rāval*, or subservient, kings in the region in a *sāmanta* hierarchy. Despite a top down structure of administrative control, the *mahārāval* still depended on this ranked order for the stability of the kingdom. This dependence on royal kinsmen is due in large part to the expanding territorial grasp of the Guhilas into new territory, and the emphasis placed on the political rank of Guhila families in Mewar indicates the important role of these royal kinsmen in the process of territorial integration in the region.

'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī and the Fall of Chittorgarh

It is the rule of 'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī (r. 1296-1316) that had the most lasting effects on the political and religious stability of Mewar during the early fourteenth century. It was arguably due to the "Khaljī revolution" wherein a major transfer of power occurred between the Ghiyathids to the Khaljīs in thirteenth century Delhi, the seat of enormous political power in north India. Alā al-Dīn began a campaign of conquest across much of north India against Hindu and Muslim rulers, in

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[29] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 102-3.

particular modern-day Rajasthan, Gujarat and Malwa, and even parts of South India.[30] Muslim rulers in Delhi had made attacks on the kingdoms in Rajasthan for many years. But during the rule of Alā al-Dīn we see fortresses and other strategic sites not merely conquered and made to pay tribute while still maintaining local control; in this period, we see a more concerted effort on the part of the Delhi Sultans to make these fortresses the seats of Muslim governors in an attempt to bring the kingdoms under tighter regulation. In Mewar, while Alā al-Dīn was preparing to attack the local fortresses, there were also internal power struggles occurring within the Guhila monarchy.

Based on relevant inscriptional evidence, it is during the thirteenth century that we see a proliferation of junior lineages, many of which were vying for political power against the dominant state structure, and as noted by Kapur, this jockeying for political supremacy by junior *rāval* kings may have helped lead to the eventual defeat of the Guhilas in 1303 by 'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī. Kapur notes that "At the point when the dynasty reached the zenith of its power, its chief political supporters, the royal kinsmen, were possibly its worst problems."[31] Indeed, it was the defeat of the Guhila rulers by 'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī that led to the almost complete collapse of the Guhila state in the fourteenth century, as born out in the silence of the Guhila inscriptional record during this time. A change from Guhila control of Chittorgarh to the control of the fort by 'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī is born out in some inscriptional evidence coming from Chittorgarh.[32]

As noted above, the period of 'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī marked a clear increase in military aggression with attacks focused on Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Malwa, among other places. Since at least the thirteenth century Mewar occupied an extremely important geographical location, as it was centered among trade routes leading to Gujarat, Malwa, as well as the Deccan and central

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[30] See Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 193-216.
[31] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 105.
[32] Kapur notes an inscription dated to 1314 referring to Alā al-Dīn Khaljī as controlling Chittorgarh. Kapur, *State Formation*, 140 n28.

India. Mewar was central in the vast trade network that linked north India and western and central India. The trade route that passed through Chittorgarh was crucial in linking north India to Gujarat and Malwa, and thus was of great strategic importance to the rulers in Delhi during the Sultanate. 'Alā al-Dīn no doubt wanted to take aggressive control of this region not only to secure his own rule in Delhi against the possible aggressions of the growing military powers in Mewar; taking full control of Mewar through the annexation of the capital of Mewar, Chittorgarh, also served the more ambitious plans of controlling Gujarat, Malwa, and perhaps central and south India. In short, Mewar served as a fundamental strategic region in the plans of 'Alā al-Dīn for the expansion and control of his empire. Even before the attack on Chittorgarh, 'Alā al-Dīn attacked Ekaliṅga temple, Delawara, and Āhaḍa on his way to Gujarat in 1299. This attack may have been something of a trial run for the attack on Chittorgarh only a few years later. Also, in 1299 'Alā al-Dīn's forces attacked and subsequently took possession of the strategic fort of Rathanbōr. In January 1303 Alā al-Dīn departed to personally oversee the attack on Chittorgarh, a very important fort (perhaps *the* most important fort in all of Rajasthan) under the control of the Mewari ruler Samarasiṃha.[33] Chittorgarh had been attacked several times in the past, and it was both a symbolic and real prize for anyone wanting to control Mewar in the political and social sense.[34]

The battle to take Chittorgarh began in January 1303 and lasted until August of the same year. Alā al-Dīn Khaljī appointed the fortress to his heir-apparent, Khiḍr Khān and renamed the fort Khiḍrābād. The months-long battle was particularly traumatic for those living not only in Chittorgarh but also for those living in the region generally. It is not clear how many people perished in the battle, but later chroniclers and historians note that around 30,000 people died in

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[33] Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 197.
[34] See Kishori Saran Lal, *History of the Khaljis: A.D. 1290-1320* (Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1967), 98-99.

the attack. It is also reported that the royal women, rather than suffer the dishonor of defeat, committed *jauhar*—mass immolation—in the final moments before the fort was taken. These numbers are most likely inflated and the *jauhar* incident is certainly debated, but that later stories of the great losses at Chittorgarh proliferated in the years following the event speak to the ways in which later Mewari rulers and subjects viewed their shared history. As I will demonstrate, the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* is a narrative that is very conscious of the internal and external political threats to the kingdom. Chittorgarh passed through the governance of a few Sultanate rulers until Rāṇā Hammīra eventually took it back in 1337.[35] Hammīra was a member of a junior branch of the Guhilas, the Sīsodiā branch, and took the title "Mahārāṇā" for the first time. Mahārāṇā Hammīra was followed by Mahārāṇā Kheta, who was then followed by Mahārāṇā Lakha in the line of succession. It is with Hammīra that we see the ascendency of the Sīsodiā branch of the Guhilas, a branch that will later claim direct descent from Bappā Rāval, the mythico-historical progenitor of the Guhilas.

Meanwhile, the important political centers in Malwa and Gujarat, controlled by Sultanate governors during the time of 'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī, became independently ruled by these governors after the Khalji's time, around 1400. The three main centers of political power during the early fifteenth centuries—Malwa, Gujarat, and Mewar—situated in close proximity to each other, began to assert power against each other. Within Mewar the newly emergent ruling family from the Kelwada region began a process of territorial integration that took place through the assertion of a continuity of Guhila lineage claims and the creation of new administrative centers and forts strategically located along mountain passes.[36] Importantly, there was also renewed interest in Ekaliṅga temple and surrounding temples, bathing tanks, and other pilgrimage sites. References to

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[35] Ram Vallabh Somani, *History of Mewar: From Earliest Times to 1751 A.D.* (Bhilwara: Mateshwari Publications, 1976), 107.

[36] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 174.

Ekaliṅga temple are found again in the inscriptional record during this time, and its reemergence is certainly not coincidental.

Ekaliṅga temple is again mentioned during the reign of Mahārāṇā Mokala (1421-1433) in an inscription dated to 1425.[37] This inscription, written partly in the vernacular language of Mewari, is an important indication of the new socio-political environment existing in fifteenth century Mewar. We know that from the late thirteenth century until 1420 or so the record had gone silent on Ekaliṅga temple, and it's not entirely clear what the status of the temple was during that period, and to what degree the temple had fallen into disrepair. With the Mokal inscription of 1428 we have a renewed interested in the Ekaliṅga site, and a reference to the construction of a rampart around the temple complex, indicating the previous destruction of all or part of the temple and the continued threat from invaders into the region.[38] In fact, in 1432 the Ekaliṅga temple site was again attacked, this time by Ahmad Shāh, the Sultān of Gujarat.[39]

Before continuing, the importance of the turn toward the vernacular in the fifteenth century needs to be emphasized and, certainly, historicized as much as possible. Prior to the fifteenth century, Mewari language terms were used only sporadically in inscriptions, but the imperial court never used it in any widespread manner.[40] Instead, as in much of South Asia at the time, Sanskrit was the language most predominantly used in royal charters. It is only in the fifteenth century that Mewari is used by the rulers of the region in their donative inscriptions, specifically in the sections dealing with practical matters such as business transactions.[41] The actual donative and panegyric section of these inscriptions was still in Sanskrit, but there had developed what Sheldon Pollock

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[37] Indian Historical Quarterly, XXX, pp.178-82.
[38] Śṛngi-ṛṣi Inscription of Prince Mokala (1428), *EI XXIII*, 230-241.
[39] Lyons, Tryna. "The Changing Faces of Ekaliṅga: A Dynastic Shrine and Its Artists." Asiae, Vol. 58, No. 3/4 (1999), 256.
[40] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan,* 169.
[41] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan,* 169.

called a "linguistic division of labor" during this time.[42] It is my argument that there is a clear relationship between the rise of the vernacular in the inscriptional record and the reemergence of a political structure after the defeat of ʿAlā al-Dīn Khaljī. In the subsequent political vacuum, the rulers of Mewar, in an attempt to carve out new political spaces (or at least regain those spaces), turned to a local idiom in order to appeal to a newly emerging sense of regional identity. Concerning the creation of distinct regional identity and the place-making work of vernacular languages Pollock writes: "As unmarked dialect was turned into unified standard, heterogeneous practice into homogenized culture, and *undifferentiated space into conceptually organized place*, vernacularization created new regional worlds."[43] The vernacular turn evident in the inscriptional record of Mewar was, I argue, an attempt by the rulers of the region to establish a physical—that is, geographical—as well as socio-cultural and literary space wherein ideological power could be fully exercised. However, I also do not want to over-stress the use of Mewari in the inscriptional record because, despite the growing use of the vernacular in the fifteenth century, it still did not overtake the use of Sanskrit as the main literary language as found in the *ELP* and language of inscriptions in Mewar. Nonetheless, that there was a turn toward the vernacular in this period in the history of Mewar is, as just mentioned, a clear indication of a conscious attempt to create a localized geographical and literary landscape where political, social, and economic power could be exercised.[44]

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[42] Pollock, Sheldon. "The Cosmopolitan Vernacular." In *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (Feb., 1998), p. 11.

[43] Pollock, Sheldon. "India in the Vernacular Millennium: Literary Culture and Polity, 1000-1500." In Daedalus, Vol. 127, No. 3, Early Modernities (Summer, 1998), p. 42. My emphasis.

[44] I will return to the importance of the vernacular in a subsequent chapter when I consider the intertextuality of the *ELP*.

Mahārāṇā Kumbhā and the _Ekaliṅgamāhātmya_

Mahārāṇā Kumbhā (r. 1433-1468), son of Mokala, arguably one of the most important rulers in the history of Mewar, was one of the most important innovators of his time. It was during Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's reign that we see the height of Mewar's political, social, and cultural power, and, as I argue, it is during his time that we have an attempt at a full consolidation of Mewar as a kingdom with a distinct regional identity and a developed geographical and historical imagination. The cultural and military achievements that are the major and exceptional highlights of Kumbhā's reign mark the definitive reemergence of Mewar as a powerful kingdom in western India. It is during this time that Mewar began to imagine itself as much more than just a regional power. Through literary strategies that link regional pilgrimage sites with a pan-Indian narrative, it consciously asserted itself as not only a political and economic center but even more as the very center of the Hindu mythological and historical world.

Perhaps one of the most important features of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's reign was the intensive effort put toward fortifying the region, as well as aggressive military expansion. During Kumbhā's time there is an increased effort towards rebuilding and reinforcing forts in Mewar and in building new forts at strategic locations, including around the capital of Mewar, Chittorgarh. In the years following Hammira's retaking of Chittorgarh the new rulers of Mewar began claiming the territories they had lost after 'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī sacked the fortress. Kumbhā's strategic plan of rebuilding and fortifying older forts, building additional fortresses, and his acquisition of new territories central to the protection and expansion of his kingdom served his larger ideological goals, expressed most clearly in the _Ekaliṅgamāhātmya_ and other works, of "rebranding" the kingdom of Mewar as a newly emergent trans-local kingdom in North India.

There were several strategic forts over which Kumbhā was eager to reassert control. In the north there was the important fort of Maṇḍalgarh. Maṇḍalgarh had been in the possession of

Mewar in the past, but during Kumbhā's reign there was a focused effort to regain complete control of this fort that was a strategic barrier against invasions to the north and northeast.[45] Kumbhā captured the fort of Gagraun to the east of Chittorgarh, a fort which not only served as a line of defense for another attack against the capital of Mewar, but that also served as a defense against attacks from the growing power of the Sultanate of Malwa. The fort of Giripur was also annexed as a defense against southern incursions from the Gujarat Sultanate. There were several other forts annexed or rebuilt during the time of Kumbhā, with the forts of Maṇḍalgarh, Gagraun, and Giripur being three of the most important of perhaps eighty or so forts in the Mewar region during his reign.

One of the most important fortresses built during Kumbhā's time, and certainly one of the most important symbolic and strategic structures in Mewar up until the late fifteenth century, was Kumbhālgarh. Named after Mahārāṇā Kumbhā and situated roughly forty miles north of modern-day Udaipur, Kumbhālgarh was an impressive and imposing fortress. Construction of the fort was completed by 1458, and it was meant to serve as a stronghold and place of safety for the royal family if Chittorgarh fell. Kumbhālgarh was arguably the highest architectural achievement in Kumbhā's reign, and it signifies the great lengths to which Kumbhā went in order to solidify and expand his political control over the kingdom. As a monument to Kumbhā's ambition to establish political hegemony in Mewar, Kumbhālgarh served as a symbol of Mewar's reemergence as a north Indian military power.

Mahārāṇā Kumbhā contributed in several important ways to the growth of state power during his reign: he contributed to the military expansion of Mewar through the building and repair

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[45] *Virvinod*, 411-416, vv.263-264: *jitvā deśam anekadurgaviṣamaṃ hāḍāvaṭīṃ helayā tan nāthān karadān vidhāya ca jayastambhānudastaṃbhayat || durgaṃ gopuramatra ṣaṭpuram api prauḍhaṃca vṛndāvatīṃ śrīmanmaṇḍaladurgamuccavilasacchālāṃ viśālāṃpurīṃ || utkhātamūlaṃ salilaiḥ prabhaṃjana iva drūmam || viśālanagaraṃ rājā samūlamudamūlayat ||*

of strategic forts within the region, and he also contributed to the growth of the kingdom through the patronage of art, literature, and architecture. These two strategies of military expansion and the solidification of political territory through fort building, combined with an increased patronage for the arts, ultimately served the same purpose: the legitimation of royal power and the expression of a renewed sense of regional identity that asserted itself against the identities of the surrounding Sultanates of Gujarat and Malwa. By building and repairing forts in Mewar, Kumbhā was attempting to wall in the region and protect the most important political center at the time, Chittorgarh. The use of militarily strategic forts to establish a politically and economically stable region is not altogether surprising, however. What is more surprising, and innovative, is the use of architectural spaces and literary places for the same purpose, namely the conversion of Mewar into a fully articulated regional power with a mythico-historical past that represented that very region. Kumbhā didn't build these forts and architectural structures from scratch, however, and it is important to notice the ways in which older structures were re-appropriated by the state into a reimagined sacred landscape centered on Ekaliṅga temple. As Ulrike Teuscher reflects on Kumbhā's building program in much the same way: "At his [Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's] time the newly integrated territory became covered with royal gifts, buildings, tanks, etc., many of them restorations of older structures. It is conspicuous how many pre-1300 elements were revived in his time."[46] It is indeed conspicuous, but I argue it served a very clear and perhaps deliberate purpose.

It is not clear what knowledge the Kelwada-Guhila rulers, particularly Mokala and Kumbhā, had of the mythological background that formed the core narrative model for the legitimation of the state, namely the narrative of Bappā Rāval, Hārīta Rāśi, and Ekaliṅga. As mentioned above, Mahārāṇā Mokala's court had some knowledge of the importance of the temple of Ekaliṅga, as made evident by the fact that he had the walls surrounding the temple rebuilt.

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[46] Teuscher, "Craftsmen of Legitimation," 173.

However, Mokala does not seem to place any emphasis on the narrative of the establishment of the sacred site or the actors involved in its construction. The Śṛṅgiṛṣi Inscription of Mokala does make mention of Bappā Rāval as the progenitor of the royal lineage, but only in what seems a minor note. Instead, more emphasis is placed on the ruler Hammīra in that inscription. Hammīra was a Guhila ruler who had direct lineage ties to the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa Guhilas of the thirteenth century and earlier. The author of the Śṛṅgiṛṣi Inscription seems more concerned with establishing a lineage connection to the rulers of Mewar before the Khaljī invasions than with the Bappā Rāval narrative. It is, in fact, Mahārāṇā Kumbhā who is the first to look back at the twelfth to thirteenth century narratives about Ekaliṅga and use that narrative in a strategic manner. Mahārāṇā Kumbhā, in what seems to be a truly exceptional awareness of the power of historical narratives and politico-geographical landscapes, employed court poets in the task of weaving together the disparate religious and militarily strategic sites of Mewar into a Puranic narrative structure that draws from the past inscriptional accounts of Bappā Rāval, Hārīta Rāśi, and Ekaliṅga in a way that had not been attempted in the past.[47] Regarding Kumbhā's artistic and architectural achievements in the service of these new political and religious concerns Michael Meister writes:

> "Rajasthan" took on the powerful regional importance it currently holds primarily from the 15th century onward, when Rana Kumbhā, who ruled in Mewar, actively attempted to restore Rajput power in spite of Mughal rule over North India. His 'renaissant' style, rather than merely extending the synthetic style of the Solankis, was conspicuously self-conscious about the variety of older styles available within the territory of Rajasthan, and drew on the past in what might now seems a 'post-modern' way.[48]

The artistic style to which Meister is referring can certainly be found in parallel in the literary styles that were promoted during Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's reigning period, and in many ways characterizes the goals of the *ELP*.

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[47] I will discuss these earlier inscriptional accounts below.
[48] M.W. Meister, "Art Regions and Modern Rajasthan," in *The Idea of Rajasthan: Explorations in Regional Identity,* ed. K. Schomer, J. Erdman, D. Lodruckand L. Rudolph. (Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1994), 166.

It was during Kumbhā's reign that several architectural and literary works were produced. Most notably he had erected the "Victory Pillar" (*kīrtistambha*) at Chittorgarh in the mid to late fifteenth century; he had built the massive Kumbhālgarh Fort for strategic and defensive purposes; he restored and had built many forts near trading routes and mountain passes (according to traditional narratives he built thirty-two of the eighty-four forts in Mewar); and he had built several bathing tanks and several temples in the region, most notably a temple to Viṣṇu on the northern side of the Ekaliṅga temple complex. Of course, there were several literary achievements during the time of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā as well, most importantly the writing of the *Saṅgītarāja*, a text on vocal and instrumental music; a commentary on the *Gītagovinda* called *Rasikapriya*; and the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* compiled by the court poet Kanhavyāsa. Popular legend claims that Kumbhā was the author of at least two of these literary works, however the evidence points more strongly in the direction of multiple authors for this literature.[49] Nevertheless, it is clear that during Kumbhā's period there was a marked increase in artistic production, particularly compared to the time of Mokal or during the Khaljī interregnum. To again echo Meister—and to follow the evidence—it is clear that something new was occurring during Kumbhā's political rule, something altogether inventive and "renaissant." Mahārāṇā Kumbhā, through military expansion and protection, as well as through his court's artistic achievements, embarked on a campaign of territorial consolidation and the creation of a regional identity unknown before his time.

Udaikaraṇ, the eldest son of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā, assassinated the king in 1468, after which he ruled for a brief period of approximately five years. His brother Mahārāṇā Raimal succeeded him. Importantly, there was yet another attack on Ekaliṅga temple either during the last year of Udaikaran's rule or first year of Raimal's rule. This attack was carried out by Gīyāth-ud-Dīn, the

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[49] Ram Vallabh Somani, *Maharana Kumbhā and His Times*, (Jaipur: Jaipur Publishing House, 1995), 167-69.

Sultan of Malwa, in 1473.[50] It is most likely that during the reign of Raimal that the *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa* was written, and it is in this narrative, which draws from the earlier *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* as well as a large body of Puranic literature and inscriptional records, that we see Mewar as a fully imagined political and religious space.

Summary of Attacks on Ekaliṅga Temple

So far in this chapter I have traced the history of the region of Mewar from the seventh through the fifteenth centuries. What I have endeavored to show is that Mewar has had a long history of conflict, and warfare—whether internal or external—has profoundly affected the ways in which the Mewari rulers understood their own historical place in the larger Indic world in the fifteenth century. Warfare affected not only the forts and towns of Mewar but the religious centers as well.

Plundering, and then often razing, religious centers was a way for invading kingdoms to inflict not only moral damage upon an enemy but economic damage as well, as often times large temples or temple complexes were storehouses of the kingdom's wealth. In the early medieval and medieval period it was often the case that Hindu kingdoms were closely tied to one or another deity whose divine nature in some sense "legitimated" the political order.[51] Temples, which were the "homes" of these deities, were, therefore, symbols of political rule and as such were direct targets for invading armies. There was a close connection between political rule, religious authority

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[50] The Ekaliṅga Temple inscription dated 1488 gives a detailed account of this invasion. See Kaviraj Shyamaldas, "Ekaliṅgajī Temple Dakṣiṇadvāra Praśasti dated AD 1488," *Vir Vinod*, vol. 1, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1986), 417-24.

[51] While I use the "early medieval", "medieval", and "late medieval" periodization in reference to India's historical past, these terms are not entirely unproblematic. I use them as terms marking the time-period from roughly the eight through sixteenth centuries. For a critical analysis of the idea of the medieval in South Asian historiography see Daud Ali, "The idea of the medieval in the writing of South Asian history: contexts, methods and politics" in *Social History*, 2014, Vol. 39, No. 3, 382–407. Below I will also address the vexed issue of "legitimation" in the study of Hindu state formation.

supporting that rule, and the physical temple sites that housed state deities. Richard Davis, in his

Lives of Indian Images, makes this connection clear when he writes:

> Images were often closely tied to the political order. In the prevailing dispensation of early medieval India, worshippers of Viṣṇu, Śiva, or sometimes the goddess Durgā considered ruling authority to emanate from that highest lord of the cosmos downward to human lords who claimed to rule more limited domains such as empires, kingdoms, territories, or villages. The construction of monumental temples housing images of these divinities, instantiating their cosmic sovereignty within the polity of the sponsor, acted to represent and embody political accomplishments while at the same time locating such attainments within a larger, encompassing divine order.[52]

What Davis describes above is very much the case in medieval Mewar. Ekaliṅga temple was the

royal temple in that region from at least the thirteenth century, playing a central role in the

confirmation of rulers. In fifteenth-century Mewar there is a very clear connection between divine

rule and the earthly, political rule embodied in the king and manifested in his kingdom. During the

reign of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā a very important development in the relationship between Ekaliṅga

and the Mahārāṇā took place. In inscriptions and in the *ELP* Kumbhā is called *ekaliṅganijasevaka*,

the "servant of Ekaliṅga."[53] This term has important implications for the role of Ekaliṅga temple

in Mewar, as it is a clear indication of the role of both Ekaliṅga temple and the Mahārāṇā. During

the time of Kumbhā and after, the ruling Mahārāṇā was thought to be ruling secondarily to, and

by the grace of, Ekaliṅga, while the latter was truly the ruler of the kingdom. That Ekaliṅga temple

was central to the political control of the kingdom made it a direct target for invading armies who

wished to do direct damage to the political structure of Mewar. It is for this reason that Ekaliṅga

temple was attacked several times by invading armies over several centuries.

One of the earliest records we have concerning an attack on Ekaliṅga temple describes how

the ruling Sultan of Delhi, Altam<u>sh</u> (r. 1211-1229), invaded Nāgdā between 1222 and 1229 on his

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[52] Richard H Davis. *Lives of Indian Images,* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 53.
[53] Kumbhālgarh Praśasti, fourth slab, v. 239.

way to invading Gujarat.[54] Nāgdā was the capital of Mewar during that time, and it is situated very close to Ekaliṅga temple. The record is not clear on whether or not the invading armies in any way assaulted Ekaliṅga, but a direct offensive on the capital in close proximity to the temple would have been threatening to such an important site. Though there is no evidence, I would not find it unlikely that the Sultan's army would have in some way damaged the temple site. As related above, in 1299 'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī, on his way to Gujarat, again attacked Nāgdā and Ekaliṅga, among other sites in Mewar; Ahmad Shāh, the Sultān of Gujarat, attacked the temple in 1432; and Gīyāth-ud-Dīn, the Sultan of Malwa, attacked the temple site in 1473. It seems, then, that from the early thirteenth century to the late fifteenth century, the time of the composition of the *ELP*, Ekaliṅga temple as well as the both capitals of Mewar, Nāgdā and Chittorgarh, had been attacked at least four times.

I argue that these attacks had a lasting effect on the historical memory of the rulers of Mewar, and the constant threat to the temple created a persistent anxiety that is in many ways evident in the *ELP*. The *ELP* was in part written for the purpose of creating a unified political and religious vision of Mewar, and this vision was influenced by the historical memory of the rulers, and likely of the average person of the time. The historical memory of the region was, I argue, strongly colored by the persistent threats coming from both outside and inside the kingdom. What I will briefly discuss next are the internal threats against the stability of the kingdom coming from the Bhil tribe.

The Bhils and Mewar

The Bhil tribe has played an important role in Mewar from an early period in the kingdom's formation. The role of the Bhils in allowing safe passage through the forests and mountain passes

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[54] Somani, *History of Mewar*, 81.

was fundamental to the growth of trade and the security of the state, and so their integration into the Guhila political structure was of great importance to the rulers of Mewar. In many ways Mewar was a formidable kingdom because of its topography, located as it is within the Aravalli Mountain Range. Invading armies had to contend not only with the armies of Mewar but also with the difficult terrain and unincorporated tribal areas in which lived Bhil groups who had detailed knowledge of the land. The Bhils were incorporated into the state structure of Mewar by military means as well as through providing Bhil chiefs with political titles such as *rāṇā* and *rāvat*, beginning in the seventeenth century. This process of integration, however, most likely began much earlier, and records from the time of Hammīra and after indicate the potential for revolt. Because of this, the Bhil tribe was considered a threat to the political stability of the kingdom.

In popular narratives the relationship between the rulers of Mewar and the Bhil tribe stretch all the way back to the earliest kings of the region, Guhadatta and Bappā Rāval. In these narratives the foundational kings of Mewar had close associations with the Bhil tribe—so close in fact that Bhil chiefs were thought to have applied the *tīka* mark to the foreheads of both Guhadatta and Bappā Rāval, a politically central ritual that conferred the sovereignty of rule to kings in the region.[55] Though we cannot take such narratives at face value, these popular stories are telling us something important about the relationship between the Bhil tribe and political rule in Mewar. However, despite narratives that indicate the somewhat peaceful relationships between the Bhil people and the rulers of Mewar, there is a fair amount of evidence indicating that there was some level of conflict between the two from the early period of Mewar.

An early indication of the trouble the kingdom had in controlling the Bhil population comes from the 1428 Śṛngiṛṣi Inscription of Prince Mokala, mentioned above. This inscription gives an account of the Sisodia lineage of the Guhilas, beginning with Hammīra and extending to

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[55] For a fuller account of this narrative, see chapter two of the present dissertation.

Mokala. It also recounts how Hammīra conquered the town of Chela in what was Marwar, overlooking Goḍwār, a region in which lived Bhils who were a threat to the kingdom.[56] In the late fifteenth century we know that Mahārāṇā Kumbhā fortified locations that were strategically important in preventing raids from not only the surrounding Sultanates but from the Bhils as well.[57] James Tod writes that inimical tribal groups surrounded Mewar; Mewar was "bounded on three sides, the south, east, and west, by marauding barbarous tribes of Bhils, Mers, and Meenas..." While we must take Tod's account with some skepticism, that the Bhils were thought to be a "marauding" and "barbarous" people says something quite clear about the ways in which these tribal groups were understood in popular imagination.[58]

The Bhil people were known to be formidable warriors, sometimes being conscripted as militia in wars, fighting in support of the kingdom, rather than against it.[59] A few locations of importance in Mewar, Moti Magri and City Palace Museum, record the important role that the Bhils have played in battles against invading Islamic armies, the most important which was the Battle of Haldighati in June of 1576. This close relationship between the Bhils and the rulers of Mewar is best exemplified in Mewar's coat-of-arms, a relatively late but important symbol of Rajput and Bhil interdependence. The coat-of-arms depicts a Rajput Rāṇā on the right and a Bhil Rāṇā on the left, while in the top center we see a regal male figure surrounded by the rays of the sun, a depiction of the Guhila claim to their *sūryavaṁśa* lineage (see figure 1).

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[56] Śṛngiṛṣi Inscription, *EI XXIII*, 235, v.4: *puramgrahidarigaṇānbhillānuguhāgehakānji(ñji)tva tānkhilānnihatya ca balāt khātāsināsaṃgare |*
[57] See chapter 3 for a fuller discussion of Kumbhā and the fortification of Mewar.
[58] Tod, *Annals and Antiquities*, 129.
[59] Somani, *A History of Mewar*, 219.

Figure 1.1: The coat-of-arms of the Kingdom of Mewar. On the left is depicted a Bhil, and the right a Rajput. Google images.

After the fifteenth century some Bhil groups, such as those who lived in the Oghna-Panarwa region, claimed direct descent from Rajput lineages. It is clear that the Bhils have had a supportive, and also contentious, relationship with the rulers of Mewar. We will see below that the authors of the *ELP* were weary of the political and ideological threat that the Bhils represented in Mewar, and often sought to pacify what was perceived to be their more "violent" tendencies. In this way the *ELP* served very specific discursive goals, ones that were aimed at producing a particular past that served the needs of a dangerous and politically unstable present.

Purāṇic Narrative as Political Ideology

In her book *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France*, Gabrielle Spiegel describes historical writing in the following way: "Historical writing is a powerful vehicle for the expression of ideological assertion, for it is able to address the historical issues so crucially at stake and to lend to ideology the authority and prestige of the past, all the while dissimulating its status *as* ideology under the guise of a mere accounting of

'what was.'"[60] Spiegel's formulation is suggestive of my larger argument about the relationship between literary works and their broader cultural contexts. For a very long time India was "the land without history," characterized as it was by an overly romantic imagination that prevented any objective recording of history in the form of annals and chronologies of kingdoms similar to the kind we see in the West.[61] For eighteenth, nineteenth, and even twentieth century writers, Hindu literature was a confusing mix of myth together with some historical content, and this mixture was forever and inseparably intermingled. The attempt to reconstruct a positivist chronology of India's political history was thwarted by this intermixture of myth and "what really happened." Inscriptions were often seen as sources to reconstruct this positivist chronology, very much in contradistinction to narratives such as the Purāṇas, which reflected the Romantic and Idealist mode of the Indian mind. Based upon my investigations of the literary record of Mewar from the seventh until the fifteenth centuries, it is not only clear that the rulers of Mewar had a self-conscious understanding of their own place in the historical trajectory of their empire and in their geographical territory, it is also clear that they utilized their history to fashion, and re-fashion, their place in the larger political and religious world.[62] By way of conclusion to this chapter, I would like to briefly discuss the relationship between historical narrative and ideology.

What I am arguing for in this dissertation is the deeply contextual nature of the *ELP* and its interwoven connections to the political, social, and religious realities of its time. Of course,

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[60] Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 2.

[61] This position is perhaps summed up best by Hegel, who wrote, "The Hindoos on the contrary are by birth given over to an unyielding destiny, while at the same time their Spirit is exalted to Ideality; so that their minds exhibit the contradictory processes of a dissolution of fixed rational and definite concepts in their Ideality, and on the other side a degradation of this ideality to a multiformity of sensuous objects. This makes them incapable of writing history." See George Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, translated by J Sibree ([1899] New York: Dover, 1956), 162

[62] For an engaging and sophisticated approach to history as a self-aware genre in India see Velcheru Narayana Rao, David Shulman, and Sanjay Subhrahmanyam, eds., *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India 1600-1800* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001).

texts (and any cultural phenomenon for that matter) do not emerge from vacuums, but are directly tied to their contexts. History and lineage were central focuses of the rulers of Mewar. The growth from a small, subservient kingdom to a powerful political and military kingdom over the course of several centuries involved the absorption of minor lineages into an increasingly larger state structure that claimed lineage descent ultimately to Sūrya, the sun god. With the growth of Mewar's political might in the thirteenth century we see a shift in the lineage claims made by the composers of the inscriptional record. The earlier records show that Guhila, or Guhadatta, was the progenitor of the royal lineage, but in the thirteenth century the narrative shifts, and it is Bappā Rāval who is the progenitor of Mewar's royal line, the same Bappā Rāval found in the 971 CE inscription at Ekaliṅga temple. This new narrative connects Bappā Rāval to the sage Hārītarāśi and to the Pāśupata Śaiva tradition, an important development in the relationship between this Śaiva tradition and the royal court. While these changes were taking place, Mewar continued to grow in political power, and the control of the geographical landscape—mountain passes and trade routes—as well as the built environment of forts and temples became an important concern for the Delhi Sultanate who desired to expand the borders of their empire into Gujarat, the Deccan, and toward the east. As Mewar became a central focus of the Sultanate rulers in North India, its rise in political and military strength led to times of instability and, perhaps, even anxiety. The repeated attacks on Nāgda, Āhaḍa, Ekaliṅga temple, and Chittorgarh from the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries are directly connected to the composition of the *ELP*. The *ELP*, therefore, was certainly not a passive reflection of its historical context—it was an active agent in reshaping a political and religious world in which it was intertwined. This question—how religious narratives relate to their socio-political contexts—has been theorized over the last several decades using a model of cultural production and state formation known as legitimation theory, a theory that is problematic in its functionalist and simplistic assumptions. Before concluding this chapter, I wish briefly to consider

some legitimation arguments and then consider where the argument of this dissertation fits into those debates.

To Legitimate or Not to Legitimate: A Critical Interlude

The theory of how state structures obtain and exercise political, religious, economic and ideological control over the lands they inhabit and the people within those territories is a complex question that has a specific history in the study of South Asia. This question—the relationship between culture and power—has had a particular and enduring answer for many scholars working on the history of India and, indeed, much of the pre-modern and modern West as well. The answer to this difficult question often comes in the form of a "theory of legitimation" in various iterations. The modes and manners by which rulers and their courts, and the priests of those courts who often had invested interests in the maintenance of the state, exercised ideological and military power is a fundamental question for any scholar wishing to reconstruct the early Indian state. This question is central to the argument of this dissertation, and in the following section I wish to outline previous scholarship on the study of state formation in India and the dominant theoretical model that has been used by past scholars in their analyses of how power and culture interacted in pre-colonial Indian state formation.

As the questions of this dissertation concern the role of kings, priests, and the court in the production of literary narratives in the pursuit of a new vision of the kingdom, I must seriously consider the dominant theoretical model that accounts for long-term change in the cultural systems of South Asia. This dominant model, known generally as legitimation theory, is problematic for a number of reasons, as will be investigated below. The general argument of the theory uses a "logic of instrumental reason" that understands ideational and material cultural elements such as religious belief, language, and literary composition as products of, and depended upon, a process of

legitimation.[63] This legitimation takes the form of the Brahmin priest who in some manner "legitimizes" a political motivation such as hegemony through his ability to convert that underlying political motivation into a religious vernacular.[64] This "hermeneutics of suspicion" model depends on a certain assumption underlying political and religious motivation, that is, that both are in some way disingenuous. Reflecting on what the term "legitimation" broadly means, Sheldon Pollock notes: "Aside from the historical specificity and cultural limits of its radically constitutive notion of law (*lex*), and the function of law in relationship to a political formation, in its most fundamental (English) sense 'legitimation' signifies transforming something that is 'false' into something that is 'true'—a bastard son into a legal heir, for example."[65] What most iterations of legitimation theory in the study of South Asia presuppose, then, is an outmoded and equally simplistic understanding of human agency and social motivation, one that sees political and religious actors as being complicit in the creation of a false consciousness in order to dupe a naïve population into participating in a system that is against their interests. The Marxist overtones of this argument are clear, and the relevance of such a theory is problematic given its anachronistic application. Pollock makes the same criticism about legitimation theory when he writes, "Absolute dogma though this explanatory framework may be, it is not only anachronistic but intellectually mechanical, culturally homogenizing, theoretically naive, empirically false, and tediously predictable."[66] What follows is a brief survey of the most relevant examples of legitimation theory

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[63] Pollock, *The Language of the* Gods, 516.

[64] By "hegemony" I mean the (somewhat generalized) Gramscian concept whereby culture and power work hand-in-hand toward the normalization of a particular set of values or ideas by a dominant group over another, weaker group. This is keeping in mind that Gramsci's concept of hegemony was used in multiple ways throughout the development of his work. For a study of the concept see Derek Boothman, "The Sources for Gramsci's Concept of Hegemony," *Rethinking Marxism*, Volume 20, Number 2 (April 2008): 201-215.

[65] Sheldon Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 517.

[66] Pollock, *The Language of the* Gods, 18.

that impact the argument of this dissertation, after which I will consider a more fruitful lens through which to view the relationship between culture and power in pre-modern India.

Max Weber is perhaps the most well-known source for the development of legitimation theory. Weber posits three types of legitimate rule: legal rule, traditional rule, and charismatic rule.[67] In legal rule authority resides in the office of an elected official, and not in the person, and leadership is located in the office of bureaucratic officials. In traditional rule power is legitimized by custom and embodied in a historical person such as a king or chief. In charismatic rule the power of authority is embodied in a dynamic personality and is based almost entirely on that person's charismatic qualities. Structures of power, and those in power, depending on the particular state's organization base their right to rule on various types of legitimating authorities. In terms of religion's role in the legitimation of political power Weber writes: "Religion legitimates both the outward and internal interests of the rulers, the rich, the victorious, the healthy, in short, all those who enjoy good fortune."[68] Weber sees the relationship between political power and religious authority as one of dependence, where those in political power depend upon religious authorities to justify and support their claims to that very power.

One of the earliest formulations of the theory of legitimation in the study of the South Asian state comes from the writings of J.C. Heesterman. Heesterman famously theorized what he called the "inner conflict of tradition," a modeling of the relationship between the "worldly" social actors within Hindu societies and those who transcend those very social relationships, and yet remain in some way connected to the larger social systems of which they are a permanent part. For Heesterman, these two social relationships—one immanent in the world and one transcendent— comprise the fundamental structural whole of the Indian, and specifically Hindu, sociocultural and

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[67] Sam Whimster, ed., *The Essential Weber: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 2004), 133-145.
[68] Whimster, *The Essential Weber*, 60.

political system. At the heart of this system is the conflicting relationship between the king and the Brahman, both of whom in some way rely on the power and authority of the other. Heesterman argues that the power and authority that the king is meant to have as an inherent and stable aspect of his rule is actually unstable and not a permanent or intrinsic feature of his kingship. The king, centered as he is among a wider and wider circle of surrounding kings who threaten his authority, constantly has to negotiate conflict and assert his legitimate right to rule over and above these other surrounding powers. The power and authority of the king are not "ultimate" and inherent features of his status as king. As Heesterman writes:

> But if ultimate authority and legitimacy elude him, how is the king to make his writ run, as he obviously does? Part of the answer is in the nature of kingship itself. At the intersection of the conflicting interests and factions, the king fulfills the connective function that the all-pervading conflict requires. His position, then, rests on conflict, and he cannot therefore be called upon to end and eliminate all conflict. But by his connectiveness, he should keep conflict from becoming schismatic.[69]

The sacrality of the king resides in this "connectiveness" according to Heesterman, but this power is lacking any "decisive potency." The king obtains this potency from the Brahmin, who alone has access to transcendent authority. Heesterman remarks, "It is only transcendence that provides ultimate authority, and it is only the Brahmin who has access to it. However, because of his renunciatory stance that gives him transcendent authority, he cannot involve himself with the king on pain of losing that authority and becoming no more than the king."[70] This is the very conflict that exists at the heart of Heesterman's argument, the conflict between political power and sacred authority.

The conflict, as mentioned above, is between immanence and transcendence—the immanent political power that the king must and does wield in the control of his kingdom, and the

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[69] J.C. Heesterman, *The Inner Conflict of Tradition: Essays in Indian Ritual, Kingship, and Society* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 6.
[70] Heesterman *The Inner Conflict of Tradition*, 7.

transcendent authority to actually wield that power. In a structuralist move, Heesterman places the king within the immanent world of conflict among himself and the other kings against which he defines his own right to rule, and he places the Brahmin within the transcendent realm that is removed from the strife and suffering brought about by an engagement and attachment to worldly concerns. The immanent king and the transcendent Brahmin, then, are on opposite sides of the social world, and yet their mutual interaction is necessary for the proper functioning of the Hindu kingdom. In Heesterman's view the Brahmin "monopolizes" the source of authority and legitimation and strips the king's potency, leaving him with "mere power."[71] The king, therefore, needs to obtain this sacred legitimizing authority in order to turn "mere power" into actual political power that can be wielded in court. Heesterman summarizes the "conundrum" thus: "The king, therefore, desperately needs the brahmin to sanction his power by linking it to the brahmin's authority. The greater the king's power, the more he needs the brahmin. This, then, is the classical, Indian formulation of the problem of authority."[72] In Heesterman's understanding of the relationship between king and Brahmin the king remains essentially impotent without the sacral authority of the Brahmin who legitimates kingly power, while the Brahmin is tied to the king's power to provide subsistence and protection.

David Shulman takes Heesterman's argument and applies it to a vast range of Indian literature, from the Vedas to South Indian court poetry. Like Heesterman, Shulman's account of the relationship between king and priest is a structural-functionalist one, and one that sets the king and priest in a single cultural system but at opposite ends. Shulman considers the "gift" to be the central element in the exchange relationship between king and Brahmin, the former hoping to transfer his sins to the latter through a gift-giving ritual. Shulman sets up the opposition between

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[71] Heesterman *The Inner Conflict of Tradition*, 112.
[72] Heesterman *The Inner Conflict of Tradition*, 127.

Brahmin and king in much the same way as Heesterman, an opposition that implies a fundamental distinction between the transcendent authority of the Brahmin and the immanent political power of the king. The king, according to Shulman, depends on the Brahmin for his legitimacy through his ability, and need, to give gifts to the latter in order to negate the violence and demerit gained through a martial life that is connected to violence and bloodshed. Shulman writes: "In theory such gifts could be distinguished from outright *payments* to the Brahmin for fulfilling his priestly role within the context of the *jajmāni* service-order. In either case, however, the king's peculiar dependence is conspicuous; his ability to carry on, indeed his legitimacy in the widest sense, is inseparably tied to his ability to give gifts to the Brahmin."[73] Shulman's structuralist pair is in constant tension, a tension that is unresolved and constantly enacted through the ritual of exchange. But again, like Heesterman, the king is an impotent social actor who obtains his legitimacy and potency only through the transcendent authority of the priest.

Like Heesterman and Shulman, Hermann Kulke also depends upon the theory of legitimation in his larger accounts of state formation in South Asia. Kulke, working on the religious and political history of Orissa, has written rather extensively on the ways in which political and religious institutions in South Asia developed over time into larger and larger state structures, a model of state formation that he termed the "processural model."[74] The process of state integration took place, according to Kulke, through the absorption and conversion of "tribal" deities and social groups to Brahmanical orthodoxy, which was concentrated most powerfully at the center of the kingdom and embodied in the Hindu king and priest. Kulke argues for two different types of legitimation in the process of state formation: vertical and horizontal legitimation.

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[73] David Shulman, *The King and the Clown in South Indian Myth and Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 30-31. Shulman's italics.
[74] See Hermann Kulke, "The Early and the Imperial Kingdom: A Processural Model of Integrative State Formation in Early Medieval India" in *The State in India 1000-1700*, ed. Hermann Kulke (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995).

For Kulke, vertical legitimation refers to the legitimation of political power and religious authority through the integration of non-Hindu tribal groups into the Hindu tradition and into the larger social system known as *varṇāśramadharma*. Kulke terms this process "Hinduization," the conversion of tribes to Hinduism and their deities into tutelary Hindu deities. Kulke makes the historical claim that small kingdoms consolidated their power and control over the hinterlands surrounding their centers of power through the conversion of non-Hindu tribal groups to Hinduism and *varṇāśramadharma*, and through the absorption of tribal deities, usually goddesses. This in turn leads to the royal patronage of tribal cults and to the "pacification" of these potentially dangerous tribal groups. This patronage supports the legitimation of the king and his power through the control of the tribal population and their deities: "The main reason for this royal patronage was that even a fairly Hinduized court, in tribal or partly Hinduized surroundings, was highly dependent on the support and loyalty of the tribes. Royal patronage of autochthonous deities seems to have been an essential presupposition for the consolidation of political power and its legitimation in the Hindu-tribal zone of Orissa."[75] Horizontal legitimation, in turn, refers to the modes and manners by which Hindu kings legitimated their rule in the view of other surrounding Hindu kings; horizontal, or external, legitimation concerned the right for any one king to lay claim to a territory and kingdom, and the right to exercise political power over other kings. Horizontal legitimation generally took place through the construction of large imperial temples.[76]

The larger implications of Kulke's theory of legitimation similarly involve the role of the Brahmin and the king and their mutual interaction in the production of political power. In the process of vertical legitimation Brahmins were settled in the tribal zones through the *agrahāra*

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[75] Hermann Kulke, "Royal Temple Policy and the Structure of Medieval Hindu Kingdoms" in *Kings and Cults: State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 1993), 6.

[76] Kulke, "Royal Temple Policy," 16.

system of land grants, and through this the tribal groups and their deities were slowly Hinduized and converted into passive subjects of the king. Again, the Brahmin is the primary source of the king's legitimation through his role as the sole basis of religious authority and conversion. Similar in approach to the theories put forth by Heesterman and Shulman, but with a different socio-cultural focus, Kulke's legitimation model centers upon an impotent king who depends upon the legitimation of tribal groups through their conversion to Hindu orthodoxy by Brahmin priests.

While the formulations of the king-priest relationship by Heesterman, Shulman, and Kulke, which serve as the very backbone of the legitimation theory argument, may have some heuristic value, they fail to capture the dynamic and agentive reality of complex sociopolitical institutions such as courtly culture. What structural-functionalist arguments fail to do generally, and in the case of South Asian kingship specifically, is to account for the dynamic nature of social relationships that are constituted and reconstituted through the actions of the social agents involved. The theory of power and culture formulated through legitimation theory in South Asia surveyed above is at once reductive and, in a sense, transhistorical, implying as it does the existence of power and legitimation existing somehow "above" the sociocultural formations it is meant to describe. Indeed, legitimation itself as an analytic term is perhaps not even a relevant category for understanding Indian kingship. As Sheldon Pollock remarked, "There is no reason to assume that legitimation is applicable throughout all human history, yet it remains the dominant analytic in explaining the work of culture in studies of early South and Southeast Asia."[77] This rather simplistic and hermeneutically suspicious model also oversimplifies the relationships between social actors in court settings, resulting in what Daud Ali rightfully describes as "a very impoverished court sociology, one dominated by the single feature of the king/patron." He

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[77] Sheldon Pollock, "India in the Vernacular Millennium: Literary Culture and Polity, 1000-1500," *Daedalus*, Vol. 127, No. 3, Early Modernities (Summer, 1998): 44.

continues: "If…the court was a complex agency, then it is possible to read courtly literature, even in its most individually eulogistic mode, as addressing a variety of composite agencies necessary for its operation. The court poem, in other words, addressed a variety of courtly agendas rather than the individual needs of the patron."[78] Ali is arguing against the simple legitimation model on the grounds that it does not adequately address the more accurate understanding of courtly culture as complex and filled with competing agendas, concerns, and motivations. What the legitimation model misses, according to Ali, is the very complex sociology of the court, and instead it relies on a perhaps naïve formulation of courtly culture as a simple dynamic between the king and the priest.

The argument of this dissertation does not rely upon a strict legitimation model, but at the same time it does allow for, and attempt to account for, the exercise of political power in pre-modern South Asia. While I disagree with the presuppositions inherent in the legitimation model, the relationship between power and culture still needs to be addressed, particularly in the case of the *ELP*, a text that emerged very clearly during a re-envisioning of political, religious, and geographic space. I agree with Pollock when he wrote, "Political power is just the capacity to achieve outcomes; it is not *inevitably* linked with conflict and is not *necessarily* oppressive."[79] The culture-power model I wish to pursue here attempts to understand literary narrative—Purāṇic and epigraphic—as already enmeshed in the contexts of religious and political power, simultaneously articulating that context and being articulated by it. Through my analysis of the *ELP* I am trying to avoid reducing a complex religious narrative to political motivations, and similarly I am trying to avoid reducing political motivation to a merely religious impetus. By looking at religious narratives as being dialogically related to the built environment and the geographical landscape, I hope to demonstrate how narratives cannot be simply reduced to political or religious motivations

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[78] Daud Ali, *Courtly Culture and Political Life in Early Medieval India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 15.
[79] Pollock, *The Language of the* Gods, 521.

but have unique agentive power to shape and reshape their contexts. Religious narratives are not mirrors reflecting some desire to legitimate political power; they actively produce and are produced by complex socio-cultural motivations.[80]

In this critique of legitimation theory I do not want to throw out the baby with the bath water in arguing that legitimation played *absolutely* no role in the formation of Indian polities in the pre-modern period. To be clear, I believe royal courts directly or indirectly obtained political legitimation from religious authorities, but I do believe that this legitimation was neither a conscious action on the part of those in power, nor was it the *only* resultant effect of religious narratives such as the *ELP*; legitimation is not an inherently necessary outcome in the composition of religious narratives, nor of the complex interactions between political power and religious authority in Hindu kingdoms. I argue that the legitimation of political power is one *possible* outcome, and one of many, of the interaction between Brahmans and other religious actors, and the royal court. There is no reason to assume that the authors of the *ELP*, and the royal powers that patronized such a literary work, did not believe wholeheartedly in the religious goals of that narrative while at the same time being partially aware of the power that the narrative had in refashioning the boundaries of the kingdom or of the work it did in establishing a new and

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[80] For an excellent study of the relationship between inscriptions, literary narratives, kingship, and legitimation in sixteenth and seventeenth century Rajasthan see Ramya Sreenivasan, "Rethinking Kingship and Authority in South Asia: Amber (Rajasthan), ca. 1560-1615," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 57 (04): 549-586. In the conclusion Sreenivasan writes: "Claims to kingship did not guarantee legitimacy among the putative ruled, nor among potential rivals. Those contests over authority arguably had to be resolved elsewhere and by other means—through military mobilization and loyal service to the overlord. The diversity and abundance of evidence from Man Singh Kachhwaha's tenure at Amber thus helps us to glean somewhat of a different history of South Asian kingship as it were—as a project permanently in the making, perennially contingent and contested, and acutely modulated to context and audience," 579.

pervasive sense of regional identity. A more nuanced approach, and the one I wish to take, understands legitimacy as complex, conditional, and one of many potential outcomes in the composition of religious narratives and any court sociology.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have traced the growth of the Guhila lineage and the rise of Mewar from a subsidiary kingdom under the Gurjara-Pratīhāras to a regional kingdom with a clearly articulated state structure, together with its claims to geographical territory that eventually became a threat to the Delhi Sultanate. The inscriptions from Mewar record not only the rise of the military might of a regional kingdom, but also the development of a historical self-awareness on the part of its court poets and genealogists. The authors of the inscriptions, the *ELM*, and the *ELP* represent a sustained political, religious, and geographical image of Mewar, a vision that was developed over time in reaction to the very real political threats that surrounded the territorial limits of their kingdom. The *ELP* was the result, in its time, of a totalizing vision of the textual landscape, the geographical landscape, and the built environment: it was a cartography of power the aim of which was the consolidation of a kingdom threatened time and again by the dangerous forces that lay just beyond its borders.

As I mentioned above, the memory and anxiety of past invasions also played a role in the composition of the *ELP*. There is strong evidence demonstrating the relationship between the writing of the *ELP* and the political context surrounding the narrative. What I have tried to show in this chapter is that very context. The *ELP*, a narrative ostensibly written about the distant and mythical past, was a conscious articulation of the very real political present. I don't have the space here to discuss the complex matter of social memory and its relation to anxiety and trauma, but it is certainly likely that the *ELP* was a literary expression of such traumatic memory, given the long

history of external and internal threats to the kingdom. Mewar's literary ecumene up through the *ELP* was centered on the consolidation of political power through the absorption of junior lineages, specific claims to the lineage of Guhadatta and later Bappā Rāval, and territorial claims through the description of *tīrtha*s, temples, and other structures in the built environment and the geographical landscape.

What I will explore in the next chapter is the intertextual nature of the *ELP*, and I will also investigate the ways in which the authors of the *ELP* sought to locate that narrative in the larger corpus of Purāṇic literature. The "work" that the *ELP* does in reimagining the map of Mewar begins with first considering how the authors of that text understood its relationship to inscriptions in the region and to other Purāṇic narratives. The following chapter, then, will begin our journey proper in the investigation of text, temple, and landscape in fifteenth-century Mewar.

Chapter Two

Text: The *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa* and its Imperial Political Agenda

Narrative Theory and Theorizing Narratives

I begin this section with a theory of the text adopted from Dominick LaCapra, who, in *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language*, presents two aspects of the text: the documentary and the worklike. LaCapra writes:

> The documentary situates the text in terms of factual or literal dimensions involving reference to empirical reality and conveying information about it. The 'worklike' supplements empirical reality by adding to and subtracting from it. It thereby involves dimensions of the text not reducible to the documentary, prominently including the roles of commitment, interpretation, and imagination…With deceptive simplicity, one might say that while the documentary marks a difference, the worklike *makes a difference*—one that engages the reader in a recreative dialogue with the text and the problem it raises.[1]

The documentary aspect treats texts primarily as sources of evidence for a historical reality existing somewhere behind the text itself, and approaches the text as if it were (more or less) merely a recording of events outside of it. The worklike aspect of literature, however, involves dialogue both with itself, other texts, and with the reader and interpreter of that material. LaCapra expands on his definition of the worklike aspects of the text when he writes, "The worklike is critical and transformative, for it deconstructs and reconstructs the given, in a sense of repeating it but also bringing into the world something that did not exist before in that significant variation, alteration, or transformation."[2] While both ways of approaching texts are valuable, the approach taken here will emphasize the "worklike" aspect of textuality as a way of understanding how texts are continuous with their contexts, rather than understanding them as passively documenting some

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[1] Dominick LaCapra *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 29-30. My italics.
[2] LaCapra *Rethinking Intellectual History*, 30.

historical reality behind the narrative, as more positivist historiographical approaches might suggest.

Building off of this approach to literary works that understands an ontological continuity between text and context, and that argues for the active, worklike nature of these documents, I will consider in more detail the nature of the work that literary narratives do in the larger context of the Purāṇas. In order to understand how Purāṇic narratives served to articulate their contexts, and be articulated by them, it is necessary to understand the dynamic process of intertextuality and dialogism. To do this, let me first address the notion of intertextuality and its implications for a proper and productive approach to reading Purāṇic narratives.

The idea that literary works are "intertextual" is perhaps not a surprising insight, particularly for a reader of Indian literature. Intertextuality, for the purposes of this dissertation, concerns the interrelated nature of textual traditions, tropes, ideas, and so forth across time and space in Indian literature. Texts inevitably become involved in the ever-expanding webs of other works, and often consciously or unconsciously place themselves in relation to those other bodies of literature. In these relations the material we are concerned with may make active or passive claims to power above or below another text or group of texts through literary strategies such as mimesis or parody. Any given narrative, then, must be understood as participating in a larger dialogue with other literary works and contexts. This is the nature of language generally and, in many ways, of Indian literature specifically. This conception of language and literature is an argument against a monological approach to reading Purāṇic narratives, a position that attempts to uncover a static and passive meaning behind any text, broadly understood. Instead, by understanding texts as intertextually related to others, one can better understand the ways in which a narrative such as the *ELP* articulated, and was articulated by, its socio-historical situation.

Intertextuality attends to the ways in which written texts must be seen as inherently social in orientation, and even intrapersonal and intrapsychic, given the fact that they emerge at specific times and places, and participate in specific socio-cultural and ideological formations.[3] As Bakhtin notes concerning the dialogic nature of language and, indeed, the written word: "The living utterance, having taken meaning and shape at a particular historical moment in a socially specific environment, cannot fail to brush up against thousands of living dialogic threads, woven by socio-ideological consciousness around the given object of an utterance; it cannot fail to become an active participant in social dialogue."[4] When reading the *ELP*, then, we must pay attention to the ways in which that text speaks to other texts, and the ways in which it positions itself in relation to those other narratives and participates actively in the wider literary genre of the Purāṇas. In this way we can see that every text has its own "voice," that is, its own way of articulating the space that it occupies and the socio-historical context in which it is embedded. Similarly, through an intertextual approach we can see the ways in which a text actively articulates and participates in that context through a dialogue with its broader literary environment.

Concerning the nature of Indian literature specifically, A.K. Ramanujan argues that such material can be organized according to two principles: context sensitivity and reflexivity. Reflexivity comes to mean, essentially, intertextuality for Ramanujan, and he argues for three types of reflexivity: responsive, reflexive, and self-reflexive; or, co-texts, counter-texts, and meta-texts. A *responsive text* responds to another, and this response defines both narratives; a *reflexive text* reflects upon another and defines itself in relation to it; and a *self-reflexive text* reflects on

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[3] The "intrapsychic" nature of intertextuality is discussed by Julia Kristeva. This complex and fascinating idea is tangential to my argument, so I will not fully discuss it. See Julia Kristeva, "Intertextuality and Literary Interpretation" in *Julia Kristeva Interviews*, ed. Ross Guberman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 190.

[4] Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, 276.

itself or texts like itself.[5] This reflexive nature of Indian textuality (and I would include inscriptions in this category) constitutes an "open network" of relations whereby one narrative situates itself in a place of relative power above or below another text or group of texts:

> Reflexive elements may occur in various sizes: one part of the text may reflect on another part; one text may reflect another; a whole tradition may invert, negate, rework, and revalue another. Where cultures (like the 'Indian') are stratified yet interconnected, where the different communities communicate but do not commune, the texts of one stratum tend to reflect on those of another: encompassment, mimicry, criticism and conflict, and other power relations are expressed by such reflexivities.[6]

Reading an Indian (or any other) literary work as a single document reflecting its context or the intentions of an omniscient author is, therefore, to miss the larger web of interconnections surrounding the work. Reading a narrative without considering its intertextuality is also to miss the very real, and very central, argument it is implicitly or explicitly making about its position within that web of interrelations. Narratives such as the Purāṇas make indirect claims to religious and political superiority or inferiority through their placement within the larger web of related works, and these claims are often ones of power, both in the overtly political sense and in the sense of power over systems of knowledge.

This is not to say that a work such as the *ELP* has an open, endless web of interconnections and signifiers. The limits of the web are defined by the limits of the discourse. For the *ELP*, the network of power in which it is embedded limits its very intertextuality and circumscribes the limits of its discursive range. If, as I argue, textuality produces (political and sacred) power and (political and sacred) power produces textuality, then it seems necessary to investigate the ways in which a given work participates in its intertextual surroundings and how that narrative articulates and is articulated by its discursive environments.

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[5] A.K. Ramanujan, "Where Mirrors are Windows: Toward an Anthology of Reflections," *History of Religions*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Feb., 1989), 189.
[6] Ramanujan, "Where Mirrors are Windows," 190.

Centrifugal and Centripetal Narrative Forces

The Purāṇas as a genre are well known for their elusiveness in terms of the dates of their composition, their authorship, and their relationships with other literary works. The ways in which these narratives are in dialogue with other Purāṇas and with texts of all different genres is complicated, and attempting to unravel these various interconnections is an ambitious project. I suggest that the endeavor of locating the intertextual relationships in a Purāṇic narrative should have as its goal not the search for some narrative core or "original" meaning of the text, however. Rather, the purpose of investigating the intertextuality of a Purāṇic narrative (and any religious narrative) is to better understand the ideological and theological goals of the author or authors of the text and to understand the nature of their reception by those who read or listened to them. To a greater or lesser degree Purāṇic narratives operate at two different but interrelated levels: the local and the trans-local. This is all the more the case when we investigate local Purāṇas— *sthalapurāṇa*s and *māhātmya*s. These narratives, written with the purpose of glorifying a local deity or sacred geographical location (and often both), display a rather remarkable ability to negotiate between the local and the trans-local world in which they are embedded. The larger ritual and narrative traditions that these local Purāṇas engage with I will call "textual communities." The authors of the *sthalapurāṇa*s and *māhātmya*s consciously and unconsciously position their narratives in dialogical relationships with other Purāṇic narratives (as well as other literary genres in their textual communities) in an attempt to authenticate and negotiate local beliefs and practices. They do this while at the same time often affirming and participating in the Sanskrit Brahmanical worldview of *varṇāśramadharma*. These local works negotiate between what Mikhail Bakhtin termed centrifugal and centripetal forces of language, the centralizing and decentralizing aspects of verbal-ideological life. I would like to briefly discuss Bakhtin's notion of the centripetal and centrifugal forces of language in order to investigate the ways in which the authors of the *ELP*

negotiated local and trans-local concerns in their work toward establishing a hegemonic social and political order, this through an engagement with existing textual communities.

Let me make clear what Bakhtin meant by the centrifugal and centripetal forces of language. In *The Dialogic Imagination* Bakhtin refers to "unitary language," by which he means a language that is put forth in a conscious attempt to unify multiple linguistic styles—which he terms "heteroglossia"—in order to create linguistic normativity, and therefore to establish ideological hegemony (although he does not use this term). This language is "a system of unitary norms" that strive toward an "officially recognized literary language."[7] The creation of a unitary language takes place through a process of centralization and unification of disparate linguistic forms that work toward the implicit goal of creating a standardized language—a national language, for example. Unitary language reflects what Bakhtin terms the centripetal forces of language. He writes: "Unitary language constitutes the theoretical expression of the historical processes of linguistic unification and centralization, an expression of the centripetal forces of language."[8] Centripetal forces are those that work toward the creation of a standard, "correct" and official form of the language; they aim toward unity of linguistic norms against the constant pull of heteroglossia, the term used to define the centrifugal forces of language, those forces that work against any type of unification.

Centripetal, unifying languages, then, aim to centralize and standardize heteroglot (that which involves multiple languages, dialects, etc.) linguistic styles with the goal of ideological unification. To again quote Bakhtin:

> We are taking language not as a system of abstract grammatical categories, but rather language conceived as ideologically saturated, language as a world view, even as a concrete opinion, insuring a *maximum* of mutual understanding in all spheres of ideological life. Thus a unitary language gives expression to forces working toward concrete verbal and

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[7] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by Mikhail Bakhtin* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 270-271.
[8] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination,* 270.

ideological unification and centralization, which develop in vital connection with the processes of sociopolitical and cultural centralization.[9]

The centripetal and centralizing forces of a unitary language naturally fight against the push and pull of centrifugal and decentralizing forces, so that "alongside verbal-ideological centralization and unification, the uninterrupted processes of decentralization and disunification go forward."[10] We see these centripetal and centrifugal forces at play in the *ELP* when we investigate the narrative style and tropes present in the text. As a sub-genre of the larger Purāṇic literary corpus, the *ELP* participates in the translocal and Sanskritic world of these Purāṇic narratives and in Brahmanical normative ideologies. At the same time, as a local *māhātmya* the centrifugal elements of the *ELP* decentralize the text, and the close reader is offered a narrative with a clear regional identity. The dialogic nature of the *ELP* is just this: within the text there is the constant back-and-forth of local and centrifugal elements against trans-local, Sanskritic, centripetal elements. The following sections will delve deeper into the nature of this dialogism by examining the intertextuality, authorship and setting, and ideological agenda of the *ELP*.

Authors and Settings in Purāṇic Narratives

In order to illustrate the local and trans-local nature of the *ELP*, I would like to address the complicated question of authorship in that narrative specifically and in the Purāṇas more generally. Through a consideration of what it means to author a Purāṇa such as the *ELP*, we can see how its authors worked to place the "voice" of that narrative in the mouths of well-known Purāṇic interlocutors. The question of authorship in Indian religious traditions—and the *ELP* specifically—is a valuable inquiry, in part because by understanding conceptions of authorship in this context we can better understand the ways in which narrative literature, or any literature,

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[9] Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination,* 271.
[10] Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination,* 272.

functioned to institute certain discursive orders and strategies aimed at political and religious hegemony at a regional level.

The *ELP* and texts like it are making arguments about the world in which they exist, but they are not simply reflections of their socio-historical context, nor are they the direct result of one individual author's intention. I understand the *ELP* to be an argument in narrative form, and its very composition and emic claims of authorship were an active insertion of ideological power and political hegemony in the literary and geographical landscape of Mewar. The text does this through its claim of authorship by well-known narrators and sites of narration. By asserting authorship by well-known Purāṇic sages and storytellers, and by locating regional events in a larger Purāṇic landscape, the *ELP* draws heavily on other textual traditions and places its own series of narrative events in a position of relative authority and power over those other Purāṇic texts. For that reason it is important to attend to the ways in which the *ELP* articulates its own sense of authorship and locality, because these claims themselves are as much political and ideological as they are religious.

Part of the question of authorship involves the question of audience, because we have to assume that the authors of the *ELP* were writing for an audience of either listeners or readers from the royal court, most likely.[11] As I noted, it is my position in this dissertation that the *ELP* is primarily an argument, a polemical and ideological narrative the aim of which was, in part, to refashion a region under a new hegemonic political order. For this goal to be successful, the text placed itself firmly in the narrative tradition of the Purāṇas and utilized the narrative voices of past

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[11] It's not altogether clear for whom the *ELP* was written. That it was written in Sanskrit immediately reduces its readership and/or listenership, but this does not rule out the possibility that there were oral versions in regional languages in circulation that were known to those living in Mewar in the fifteenth century and after. That we have a nineteenth century Mewari version is certainly suggestive of this. As further support, Rocher notes the existence of caste-Purāṇas and vernacular Purāṇas not composed in Sanskrit. See Ludo Rocher, *The Purāṇas. Vol. II, fasc. 3 of A History of Indian Literature*, ed. Jan Gonda (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1986), 71-74.

sages and gods to make these claims more potent. In what follows I begin with the problematic issue of understanding Purāṇic narratives in Western literary terms, and then I examine the literary agents present in the *ELP* itself.

The problem of authors and authorship is a problem that has become highlighted in the modern period, particularly by Barthes, Foucault, LaCapra, Vološinov/Bakhtin, and others. The complex problem of what an author is, or if the author "exists" in a discoverable way through their work, is a problem that has not only vexed the study of modern Western literature, however; it has also been a persistent issue for those working on South Asian literature. The issue with much of the religious works in South Asia, outside of philosophical literature (although the problem exists there as well) is that authorship is second order to the actual narrative of the text. Epic and Purāṇic literatures often have complicated notions of authorship, the authors themselves sometimes taking on attributes that are divine or that transcend time, and so they often remain outside of a defined and discoverable historical context. The question of the authorship of a Purāṇic narrative is complex, particularly given the lengthy amount of time it took to compose these texts, and the situation of the *ELP* is no different. The question of authorship is made more complex if we take into account the voices of the actors within the narrative itself, such as a deity, sages, or *sūta*. What we are left with, then, in the question of the authorship of Purāṇic narratives is a matter of orientation: what do we mean by an "author" in the Purāṇic context? What role does an author play in the creation of Purāṇic narratives, and in the *ELP* specifically?

Ronald Inden, in his introduction to *Querying the Medieval*, makes a distinction between what he terms "authorism" and "contextualism." Both of these approaches to understanding the meaning of a given text are problematic in that they assume the text to be a "monological utterance," that is, a unitary expression of meaning from either a single author or from a single

linguistic or historical context.[12] In the authorist approach, the text is understood to be the expression of a single individual's mind and is a more or less direct result of his or her intention of authorship. There are many problems with this approach, even outside of the Purāṇic literary genre that in many ways actively denies attributing a particular narrative to a specific author. In western literature, particularly after the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the attribution of a particular literary work to an author became increasingly important. Foucault, in his essay entitled, "What is an Author," argues that in western culture the attribution of an author's name to a particular work serves a specific discursive goal, which is to circumscribe the cultural boundaries of the text and present a particular status to the discourse. In other words, an authored work is not everyday speech: "On the contrary, it is a speech that must be received in a certain mode and that, in a given culture, must receive a certain status."[13] Foucault is arguing that assigning an author to a work of literature—and "discovering" that author if a work is anonymous—emerges at a historical moment and serves as a mode of discourse that, in the end, is ideological. He continues:

> It would seem that the author's name, unlike other proper names, does not pass from the interior of a discourse to the real and exterior individual who produced it; instead, the name seems always to be present, marking off the edges of the text, revealing, or at least characterizing, its mode of being. The author's name manifests the appearance of a certain discursive set and indicates the status of his discourse within a society and a culture.[14]

This is the process of the "author function" described by Foucault. The "authorist" approach, with its desire to locate a single individual who composed a work, is, therefore, not without its own ideological goals. Needless to say, to attempt to uncover a single author of the *ELP* is undesirable and problematic. As Foucault argues, the author function is particular to every socio-cultural

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[12] Inden, *Querying the Medieval*, 5.
[13] Michel Foucault, "What is an Author," in *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. James D. Foubion, trans. Robert Hurley et al. (New York: The New Press, 1998), 211.
[14] Foucault, "What is an Author," 211.

formation, and it is of great interest to investigate the role of the author function in the *ELP* in order to better understand the discursive and ideological value of the narrative at the time of its composition.

While the *ELP* does not have a specific author, like other Purāṇas it takes place in the form of a dialogue (*saṃvāda*) between several well-known figures from other Hindu narrative contexts. From one perspective, it is certain that the *ELP* had a human author or authors who existed at a particular time and place. From another perspective, given the obscurity of the human author or authors of the text, it is authored through the narrative agents in the outer-most frame stories.

The outer frame narrative of the *ELP* takes place between Nārada and the wind god Vāyu. The *ELP* considers itself a part of the larger *Vāyupurāṇa*, and the reasons for this are analyzed in part two of this chapter. For the purposes of this section I would like to take into account all potential narrative agents and investigate the roles they play in the authorship of the *ELP*, but without considering the larger canonical questions the *ELP* brings up. The outer narrative between Nārada and Vāyu frames the first inner narrative between the sage Śaunaka and an unnamed *sūta*. Nārada begins the narrative when he asks Vāyu about the origin of the name of the earth and the origin of the name "Medinī."[15] This line of questioning situates the narrative at the very beginning of time, that is, with the very foundation of earth itself and the local region known as Medinī, that is, Mewar. Nārada is a celestial musician and famed wanderer, appearing in the *Mahābhārata* and Purāṇas in order to tell stories and relate events in various parts of the world. Vāyu, in response to Nārada's questioning, begins the *ELP* narrative proper with the story of a twelve-year fire sacrifice to which several important sages and gods came. It was at this sacrifice where Śaunaka asked the *sūta* to relate the story of the conversation between Nārada and Vāyu. So the frame narrative is a

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[15] ELP 1.6: *sarvajñas tvam ato vāyo saṃśayaṃ chindhi me 'nagha | kasmāt pṛthvīthi vikhyātā medinīti kathaṃ smṛtā ||*

conversation between Nārada and Vāyu that is being retold to a group of sages at a sacrifice by the *sūta* at the behest of Śaunaka.

The narration of the *ELP* by the *sūta* takes place, as was mentioned, at a twelve-year sacrifice attended by a host of sages and the gods.[16] This way of starting the narrative is not unique to the *ELP*, however. The *Vāyupurāṇa* also begins as a conversation between sages and a *sūta* named Lomaharṣaṇa[17] taking place during a twelve-year sacrifice in the famous Naimiṣa forest. This same narrative setting is also found in the *Brahmapurāṇa*. However, the most famous—and perhaps earliest—reference to a twelve-year snake sacrifice is from the *Mahābhārata*. The *Mahābhārata* narrative has Lomaharṣaṇa's son Ugraśravas arrive at a twelve-year sacrifice (*sattra*) headed by Śaunaka in the Naimiṣa forest.[18] It is this outer frame story that constitutes the core *Mahābhārata* narrative, and beyond this outer frame narrative the forest is mentioned seven more times in the *Mahābhārata* as the location of ritual congregations. So, given the direct relationship the *ELP* has with the *Vāyupurāṇa*, together with the literary trope of framing other Purāṇic narratives and the *Mahābhārata* in this same setting, I would claim that the *ELP* is also best understood as taking place as a conversation between the *sūta* Lomaharṣaṇa and Śaunaka, together with the other sages, in the Naimiṣa forest, although the text does not make this explicit.

The setting and narrative agents of the *ELP* are not haphazard, therefore, but serve a clear purpose of linking the local region and inhabitants of Mewar to the larger Hindu literary landscape. By framing the *ELP* in terms of well-known narrative localities, and by placing the narrative agency into the form of a dialogue between well-known literary characters, the *ELP* is making a

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[16] *ELP* 1.8cd-9: *bhṛgugautrodbhavaḥ śreṣṭa śaunako nāma viśrutaḥ || tasyaiva vartamāne 'tra yajñe dvādaśavārṣike | tatrāgacchan muniganā āhṛtā brahmavādinaḥ ||*

[17] Lomaharṣaṇa translates to: "causing the hair to bristle" or "causing a thrill of joy," possibly because of his energetic and engaging story telling style that would thrill the audience.

[18] For a compelling analysis of the Naimiṣa forest as it relates to the *Mahābhārata*, see Alf Hiltebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahābhārata: A Reader's Guide to the Education of the Dharma King* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

direct allusion to these literary precedents. To return to Foucault and the "author function," I am arguing that by placing the *ELP* narrative in the mouths of Vāyu, Nārada, Śaunaka, and (arguably) Lomaharṣaṇa, and setting the second frame-story in the Naimiṣa forest, the *ELP* is making an ideological claim of participation in, and perhaps even supremacy over, a Purāṇic discursive context that lends it a legitimizing status. For a text like the *ELP* to gain accepted status in a contested narrative space, it couldn't simply present its story as true without adopting an authorial voice that functioned to place the narrative events in the same discursive space as some of the most well-known Purāṇas.

Velcheru Narayana Rao relates a folk story that was turned into a Purāṇic narrative in a way similar to what I argue is being done in the *ELP*.[19] Rao tells the story of the Komaṭi cast of Andhra, a caste of the Vaiśya *varṇa*. The caste goddess of the Komaṭis is Kanyakā, and in this local narrative she was said to be the daughter of a wealthy Komaṭi named Kusumaśreṣṭi and the most beautiful woman in the world. One day the king of the region visits the city and sees Kanyakā, and instantly falls in love. He says that either she be given to him as his wife or he will invade and destroy the city. The Komaṭis cannot give Kanyakā to the king or else they will make the caste impure, as the king is not a Komaṭi. The elders discuss their dilemma, but cannot come up with a solution. Kanyakā takes charge and states that she will immolate herself and all the Komaṭi families that are loyal to her. The king arrives and Kanyakā and the loyal Komaṭi families die in the fire, but just before doing so the goddess established a code of conduct that all Komaṭi must follow after her immolation. This code states that cross-cousin marriage must always be practiced, all Komaṭi girls are to be given the name Kanyakā, all Komaṭi girls are to be born ugly so that men

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[19] Velcheru Narayana Rao, "Purāṇa as Brahminic Ideology," in *Purāṇa Perennis: Reciprocity and Transformation in Hindu and Jaina Texts*, ed. Wendy Doniger (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 85-100.

will not desire them, the king will die when he enters the city, and the city in which this all took place is to be a pilgrimage place for Komaṭis.

Later the story becomes part of the *Vāsava Kanyakā Purāṇa*, a local Purāṇic narrative that associates itself with the *Skanda Purāṇa*. In this Purāṇic retelling, the story takes place as a conversation between Sūta and Śaunaka in the Naimiṣa Forest. The narrative is reimagined as taking place in the world of the gods, where a *gandharva* falls in love with a Vaiśya girl, but the Vaiśyas reject the proposal. The Vaiśyas are cursed to die in fire after falling from their heavenly state to the earth. The Vaiśyas are understandably upset about this, but are assured by the gods that they are needed on earth to restore order and after their death they all will return to the world of Śiva. After this series of events the *gandharva* is born as the wicked king and the Vaiśya girl is born as Kanyakā, and the local story unfolds as described above.[20]

What these two narratives are doing is something that is quite similar in intention to the *ELP*. The two narratives described by Rao exemplify the relationship that local/folk stories have to a larger Purāṇic and Brahmanical context. The local and the trans-local operate simultaneously, and the reliance on well-known Purāṇic narrators and settings serves a legitimizing function of the narrative and is a product of its intertextuality. As Rao concludes: "We have a tendency to look at the Puranas as disparate texts, each neatly bound in identifiable volumes. But the texts do not work in isolation; they are part of a totality of a text tradition with intertextual relationships and commentarial contexts. One could make sense of any of these texts only by listening to the texts as part of this tradition."[21] By opening the narrative with a common frame story, the *ELP* participates in a centripetal (to harken back to Bakhtin's formulation) literary trope that at once centers and legitimizes the entirety of the narrative; it is in fact "framed" by a an already legitimate

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[20] Rao, "Purāṇa as Brahminic Ideology," 90-91.
[21] Rao, "Purāṇa as Brahminic Ideology," 92.

core set of Hindu voices. However, by Nārada asking about the story of the name of "Medinī" the narrative immediately takes on a local character and is directly concerned with local places, people, and deities. This centrifugal, local set of concerns about which temples and bathing tanks were built where and by whom, which rivers are the most sacred and where they flow, and which god or goddess emerged at such and such a site are placed in active and conscious tension within the larger centripetal frame story.

Having set these more theoretical parameters, let me now turn to the intertextual connections between the *ELP* and the larger narrative world in which it was situated in order to fully understand the intertextual motivations of its authors.

The *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* in Dialogue

Intertextual Linkages: The *ELP* and the *Vāyupurāṇa*

The *ELP* makes an explicit connection between itself and the *Vāyupurāṇa*; in the internal colophons at the end of every chapter the author states that the *ELP* is a part of the larger *Vāyupurāṇa* (*VāP*) narrative.[22] It is not clear why the authors of the *ELP* claim that it is part of the *Vāyupurāṇa*, and the connection is never made explicit. Through closer analysis, however, we may be able to come to some conclusions as to why the *ELP* aligned itself with the *Vāyupurāṇa*. Before considering the connections that the *ELP* has to the *VāP*, it should be noted that texts such as the *ELP*—that is, texts of the *māhātmya* genre—often associate themselves with one of the Mahāpurāṇas or Upapurāṇas. A simple reason might be that as new material was written glorifying a certain deity or sacred location (*tīrtha*), the authors sought to support new religious claims and the deities or temples they praise by inserting them into an already existing narrative that had wide acceptance within the larger Brahmanical community. Such a move is understandable enough.

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[22] Each colophon begins "*iti śrīvāyupurāṇe medapāṭīye…*"

However, the more interesting question is why the authors of any particular local *māhātmya* might select one or another Purāna as its source of legitimation. What follows will be an attempt to understand the motivations behind why the authors of the *ELP might* have desired to associate their text with the *Vāyupurāṇa*.

Interestingly, both the *VāP* and the *ELP* begin with the story of a twelve-year sacrifice being conducted by a group of sages, and this becomes the location where the narratives of the *Vāyupurāṇa* and the *ELP* are told. In both narratives the interlocutors—Nārada in the *ELP* and the sages in the *Vāyupurāṇa*—want to know about the origin of the universe and all things inside it. While the *Vāyupurāṇa* explains the origin of the universe according to the Sāṃkhya philosophical system over the course of several chapters amounting to hundreds of verses, the *ELP* in its version begins in a more mythological mode by relating the story of the two demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha, their dismemberment, and the creation of the earth from their bodies. The *ELP* version of this widely known myth is told in response to Nārada's question about the origin of the word Medinī, translated literally as, "having fatness or fertility," and meaning "earth" or "land."[23] Medinī is close to the Sanskrit word for Mewar used throughout the narrative, Medapāṭa or Medapāṭīya. The question Nārada asks to Vāyu about the origin of the universe is similar to that asked in the *Vāyupurāṇa*, although Nārada's desire to hear a description of the universe as well as to hear a description of the origin of the local region known today as Mewar. From this perspective, associating the *ELP* with a similar twelve-year sacrifice as described in the *Vāyupurāṇa*, and beginning with a story of creation, establishes for its reader or listener a similar set of concerns that can be linked back with a much earlier and more "legitimate" and historically pedigreed Purāṇic narrative.

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[23] Monier Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 1899, 832.

The oldest sections of the *Vāyupurāṇa* are generally thought to have been composed somewhere between the fourth and fifth centuries C.E., and it has a place in most lists of the eighteen "great" or Māhāpurāṇas. Furthermore, the *Vāyupurāṇa* is thought to be one of the oldest and most authoritative Purāṇas in the genre.[24] The *Vāyupurāṇa* itself is intertextually related to other works, and may at one time have been identical with another early text known as the *Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa*.[25] Some of the chapters that distinguish the *Vāyu* from the *Brahmāṇḍa* are clearly sectarian, describing as they do Pāśupata yoga and the story of the Lakulīśa Pāśupata ascetic (and founder of the sect) Lakulin. Chapters eleven through fifteen concern the benefits and possible dangers of Pāśupata yoga, and the Maheśvaramāhātmya section—chapter twenty-three—gives the story of Lakulīśa. The *Vāyu*, therefore, is one of the earliest sources for a history of the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas and for the story of Lakulīśa, and this is of particular importance for the history of Ekaliṅga temple and the *ELP*.

Pāśupata ascetics no doubt played an important role in the creation of the Bappā-Hārīta-Ekaliṅga myth in the Nāgda area in Mewar during the early tenth through thirteenth centuries, as the Ekaliṅga Stone Inscription dating to 971 C.E makes clear.[26] The inscription gives an account of the story of Śiva and his incarnation in a corpse at the burning ground in Kāyāvarohaṇa. This incarnated corpse is Lakula, who thereafter begins teaching the Lakulīśa Pāśupata system. The Ekaliṅga inscription certainly post-dates the *Vāyupurāṇa*, and the story of Lakula was in fairly wide dissemination by 971 C.E. Given the Lakulīśa Pāśupata inscription at Ekaliṅga temple, and regardless of the sectarian orientation of the temple in later times, it is fairly obvious that the Pāśupatas had great influence in the Nāgda area of Mewar during the tenth through thirteenth

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[24] Ludo Rocher, *The Purāṇas*. Vol. II, fasc. 3 of *A History of Indian Literature*, ed. Jan Gonda (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1986), 245.
[25] Rocher, *The Purāṇas*, 244.
[26] "An Eklingji stone inscription and the origin and history of the Lakuliśa Sect," *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XXII: 151–67.

centuries. Furthermore, at least some of these Pāśupatas may have had knowledge of the *Vāyupurāṇa*, particularly the sections on Pāśupata yoga and the incarnation story of Śiva at Kāyāvarohaṇa.

It is clear, therefore, that the *Vāyupurāṇa* was influenced by the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas during some early stage in its textual formation. Likewise, there is clear evidence of early Lakulīśa Pāśupata influence in the Nāgda region around the temple of Ekaliṅga, and the oldest temple within the Ekaliṅga complex itself was certainly an early Pāśupata site. Therefore, given the early date and authoritative status of the *Vāyupurāṇa*, and given the important role of Pāśupata Śaivism in that text, it becomes evident that the authors of the *ELP* desired to affiliate their text with the *Vāyupurāṇa* to both proclaim the legitimate status of their text as well as make a certain statement about its sectarian affiliation. By making the pan-Hindu wind god Vāyu the narrator of the *ELP*, the authors of that text implicitly created a link between a well-established and authoritative divine voice of the local gods and human actors in the *ELP*. The fact that the *ELP* needed to affiliate itself with a more widely known Purāṇa is not a surprising fact; like the Vedas before, the Purāṇas— particularly the eighteen or so *Māhāpurāṇa*s—were sources of religious authority and, for many, the recollected words and deeds of the gods. The *ELP* is an extended dialogue between Vāyu and the sage Nārada, and so Vāyu takes first place (and perhaps pride of place) within the narrative structure of the text. Within that outer frame narrative is the story of the sage Śaunaka and the Sūta, a Purāṇic bard. In the *Vāyupurāṇa* the Sūta, named Lomaharṣaṇa, speaks first and introduces the narrative that was given to him by Vāyu. In the *ELP* Vāyu takes on a much more agentive role than he does in the *Vāyupurāṇa*, and this is perhaps an intentional narrative device by the authors of the *ELP*, because by giving an active role and voice to Vāyu the narrative reads much more as a conscious and legitimate production of a pan-Indian deity. Through a connection to the *Vāyupurāṇa*, the authors of the *ELP* succeeded in producing a local narrative with a pan-Indian

pedigree, what I have theorized as part of the push and pull of centripetal and centrifugal forces of language in the text.

Intertextual Linkages: The *ELP* and the *Skandapurāṇa*

Perhaps the most important early primary source for the study of Śaiva sacred geography is the *Skandapurāṇa* (*SP*). This monumental work has been critically edited and reflected upon by R. Adriaensen, H.T. Bakker and H. Isaacson, P. Bisschop, and Y. Yokochi. Bisschop, in a reworking of his doctoral dissertation, analyses one important list of Śaiva topographical places, associated with sanctuaries (*āyatana*), as found in the *SP*. The *SP* is in many ways a detailed account of sacred space and geography unlike any of its kind. The work contains several chapters in which the sacred topography, as well as the built environment, are closely detailed, and Bisschop has labored to show that the *āyatana* list found in the *SP* that forms the basis of his study is directly related to the mythological and physical landscape of India, forming as they do a circumambulatory route with Vārāṇasī at the center.[27] In short, the *SP* relates several mythological events that take place over the length of the narrative to topographical locations covering much of northern and western India. These *māhātmya*s of sacred places end with several verses of praise for a particular sacred site. As Bisscop notes: "One who reads the texts carefully is struck by the way the topographical references are intrinsically linked with the mythology of the Purāṇa[…] In general, the sacred topography is found at the end of a chapter, and consists of a eulogy of the sacred site at which the event narrated earlier is supposed to have taken place and has left traces."[28] The *SP* serves as an important model for later Purāṇic narratives in their telling, and retelling, of Śaiva myths and the relationship these myths have to the sacred and physical geography of India. Given the *SP*'s importance in the

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[27] Peter Bisschop, *Early Śaivism and the Skandapurāṇa*: *Sects and Centres* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 2006), 12-14.
[28] Bisschop, *Early Śaivism and the Skandapurāṇa*, 17.

Purāṇic corpus (and given the role the Pāśupatas play in that narrative, which will be explored below) I am certain that the authors of the *ELM* and *ELP* had a knowledge of that work and that it was influential in the composition of their text.

The main religious sect found in the *SP* are the Pāśupatas. In terms of ritual the *SP* relates two different methods of Pāśupata practice: *yoga* and *vrata* (vow). Biscchop notes that while references to, and descriptions of, Pāśupata *yoga* are found in the *SP*, they lack the more esoteric and antinomian elements, such as the courting of dishonor (*avamāna*), that we find in texts like the *Pāśupatasūtra*.[29] What is part of the Pāśupata *vrata* as found in the *SP*, however, is the rite of bathing in ashes (variously *bhasmasnāna*, *bhasmadhāraṇa*, etc.) a ritual that is found in the *Pāśupatasūtra* as well as in the *Vāyupurāṇa* and that is a distinctive observance of that sectarian tradition.[30] This rather unique Pāśupata vow of bathing in ashes, which I will discuss in some more detail below, is also found in the *ELP*.

What I want to emphasis below are the ways in which the *SP* and the *ELP* share a common concern for place, space, and landscape. What the authors of the *SP* were engaged in—their geopolitical and religious project—was central to the project of those who composed the *ELP*, namely the creation and assertion of a worldview that placed them squarely in the center of the Hindu mythological and political world. This is very much akin to how Cecil characterized the goals of the *SP*:

> Articulated through the particular rhetorical and ideological framework of the literary genre of purāṇa, and its sub-genre, māhātmya, this literary canonisation of a Pāśupata geography records an authoritative effort to localise, order, and authenticate a particular vision of community and thus records a formative moment within the larger project of Pāśupata self-fashioning. But this narrative had far broader implications. The Skandapurāṇa's cartography was a deeply political statement. The text's claim to colonise a region that occupied the very socio-political heart of northwest India presents an imagined

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[29] Bisschop, *Early Śaivism and the Skandapurāṇa*, 39.
[30] The phrase in Vāyupurāṇa reads *bhasmasnānānulepanāḥ*. See *VāP* 1.23.145b.

geography—not a fanciful representation; rather, a spatial rhetoric aimed at locating the Pāśupata tradition at the centre of the early medieval world.[31]

The authors of the *SP* and the *ELP* share a mutual concern for the geographical landscape that is at the same time a religiously imagined sacred cartography that situates, or emplaces, political claims to space and place. It is perhaps not surprising that the *ELP* in some ways follows the narrative goals of the *SP*, as Ekaliṅga temple is ostensibly a Pāśupata site and the *ELP* in some ways a Pāśupata text, memorializing as it does Ekaliṅga's manifestation to Bappā Rāval and Hārītarāśi, two figures with links to the Pāśupatas, as explored below. But is the *ELP* a Pāśupata text?

Is the *ELP* a Pāśupata Text?

It is not altogether clear what influence the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas may have had in the composition of the *ELP*. The evidence cited above presents an obvious case for Lākula influence at the Ekaliṅga temple site, and the authors of the *ELP* probably associated that text with the *Vāyupurāṇa* (*VāP*) because of the latter's connection with Pāśupata Śaivism. If there are in fact Lakulīśa Pāśupata ideas present in the *ELP,* this is further proof of the stated connection between the *ELP* and the *VāP*. This would be quite interesting given the date of the *ELP*, and it would in a way affect our understanding of the relationship between the state and religion in this part of India, as there is a lack of epigraphical, literary, or other evidence of the Pāśupatas in Mewar during the late fifteenth century. What follows is an examination of the possible Lākula influences on this text, both explicit and implicit.

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[31] Elizabeth A. Cecil, "Mapping the Pāśupata Landscape: Narrative, Tradition, and the Geographic Imaginary," *The Journal of Hindu Studies* 2018: 1–19.

Interestingly, there is only one direct reference to the Pāśupatas as a doctrinal system in the *ELP*. The first reference is found in a list of unacceptable doctrines, including Sāṃkhya, Nyāya, Jain, Cārvāka, and Buddhist.[32] The second, and last, reference to the Pāśupatas in the *ELP* is in the final chapter of the published text that concerns the pilgrimage rules for a great festival (*mahotsava*) celebrating Ekaliṅga. At this festival the participants are told to perform a rite called the Pāśupata Vow, which is said to lead to the world of Śiva.[33] This Pāśupata Vow finds precedent in the *Liṅgapurāṇa* where a rite to liberate beings who are still in a state of spiritual bondage is described.[34] The rite found in the *Liṅgapurāṇa* is not in any way distinctively Pāśupata in its performance, but rather is a description of fairly standard rituals (*pūjā*) involving the offering of incense, flowers, and eatables to a deity. The Pāśupata Vow presented in the *ELP* is part of a much larger fourteen-day rite that involves purification of the mind, the body, and the place where rituals will take place, such as a temple. As mentioned above, one interesting component of the Pāśupata Vow found in the *ELP* is the use of ashes to anoint and purify the body (*bhasmadhāraṇa*).[35] This act of covering the body in ashes is common in the Pāśupata tradition, and adopted later by other Śaiva sects. This is an important difference between the two texts, and an important ritual action prescribed by the *ELP*. It is certainly not a clear indication of Pāśupata influence, but it is perhaps an indication that some Pāsupata ritual elements became part of a more public and heterogeneous ritual program at and around Ekaliṅga.

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[32] *ELP* 13.6-7: *sāṅkhyair naiyāyikaiś caiva jainapāśupatādibhiḥ | cārvākair bauddhamatibhiḥ panthāno bahavaḥ kṛtāḥ || āṣaṇḍibhis tathālpajñair vistṛtāḥ krūrabuddhibhiḥ | bhrāmitaṃ ca jagatsarvaṃ rajovātair ivoddhatam ||*

[33] *ELP* 32.14: *vrataṃ pāśupataṃ nāma śivalokagatipradam | śivabhaktaiḥ sadā kāryam ekaliṅgasya sannidhau*

[34] *Liṅgapurāṇa* 80-81.

[35] *ELP* 32.36: *kṛtvendrasarasi snānaṃ vidhinā bhasmadhāraṇam | rudrākṣāṃś ca tathā śirṣe karṇayor vakṣasī (si) bhuje ||*

Given the above, the evidence is slight that the Pāśupatas had a major role in the composition of the *ELP*. There are very few actual direct references to the Pāśupatas in the *ELP*, this despite the influence the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas may have had in and around the Ekaliṅga temple site. A further clue against any Pāśupata influence in the *ELP* is the role of the divine feminine in the text. The pan-Indian goddess Vindhyavāsinī plays a major role in the *ELP*, arguably dominating the main narrative of the first ten chapters. There is also an entire chapter dedicated to the visualization of Vindhyavāsinī, as well as a description of her mantra and *maṇḍala*.[36] Furthermore, there are two chapters and various verses dedicated to a description of the local warrior goddess Rāṣṭrasenā, who emerged from the body of Vindhyavāsinī. The inclusion of Vindhyavāsinī and Rāṣṭrasenā in the *ELP* is an indication that there were other Hindu sectarian groups involved in the composition of the narrative: the Pāśupatas do not have any tradition of the divine feminine in their system; Pāśupata cosmology and yogic systems posit Śiva Paśupati as the highest reality, and he rules the universe without a divine female consort, as some later tantric traditions posit.[37]

Pāśupata links with Bappā Rāval and Hārītarāśi

While there is little direct evidence of Pāśupata influence in the writing of the *ELP*, there is evidence of Pāśupata associations with the main actors in that narrative. The *ELP*, as mentioned above, is categorized as a *sthalapurāṇa*, which can be translated loosely as an ancient narrative of a (sacred) place. The sacred place here is of course Ekaliṅga temple, and it is with the foundation

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[36] An examination of Vindhyavāsinī and her role in the *ELP* will be investigated in chapter three.
[37] For a detailed study of the development of Śaivism in India, and the development of the divine feminine therein, see Alexis Sanderson, "The Śaiva Age: The Rise and Dominance of Śaivism During the Early Medieval Period," in *Genesis and Development of Tantrism*, ed. Shingo Einoo (Tokyo: Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo, 2009), 41-349.

of that temple that the authors of the narrative were most concerned. Two of the most important narrative actors in the story of the founding of Ekaliṅga temple are Bappā Rāval and Hārītarāśi. Both Bappā Rāval and Hārītarāśi play an important role in the narrative of the founding of Ekaliṅga temple prior to the *ELP*, and, although their role is more muted than those played by the gods in that text, they do play important roles in the story of the establishment of Ekaliṅga. References to Bappā Rāval date to the 971 Ekaliṅga inscription mentioned above. Hārītarāśi appears in inscriptional records from the thirteenth century, where it is stated that he conferred the kingdom of Mewar on Bappā Rāval. It is, therefore, of great importance to investigate the places of these two figures in the overall narrative of Ekaliṅga temple, because while there is little evidence of direct Pāśupata influence in the *ELP*, the stories of Bappā Rāval and Hārītarāśi are fundamental to the narrative and of Mewar overall. The following will be a close examination of the narratives of Bappā Rāval and Hārītarāśi both inside and outside of the *ELP*.

Bappā Rāval has been considered the progenitor of the royal family of Mewar from the thirteenth century until the present. Several legends surround the figure of this important king, and his larger-than-life deeds in the region are still frequently spoken of today. Within the Ekaliṅga temple compound, facing toward the *mūrti* of Ekaliṅga, is a ten-foot tall statue of Bappā Rāval, hands reverently held together in an act of supplication, an image that is also depicted in paintings from the region. The narrative of Bappā Rāval is complex, however, and details of the interactions he had with his Śaiva preceptor Hārītarāśi and with local the Bhil community offer interesting clues that may shed light on Pāśupata influence in Nāgahṛda and at Ekaliṅga temple.

Despite local narratives that place Bappā Rāval in the eighth century, the earliest inscriptional records we have referring to Bappā or Bappāka come from the tenth century—the most notable for our purposes coming from the 971 Ekaliṅga inscription that also details the Kāyāvarohaṇa episode of the Lakulīśa Pāśupata tradition. This inscription describes Bappā Rāval

as a decedent of Guhila, the supposed founder of the Guhila lineage. Importantly, Bappā Rāval is not described in this inscription as the founder of the royal family of Mewar, as he is in later inscriptions from the thirteenth century. To better understand the narrative of Bappā Rāval, I will trace the progression of his story chronologically through the varied inscriptional evidence discovered thus far. I hope to show that the progression of Bappā Rāval's story, from his interactions with Pāśupata sages and the Bhil tribe, illustrates the very centripetal and centrifugal narrative forces mentioned above.

As mentioned, the first inscription to mention Bappā Rāval is the Ekliṅgji inscription of 971 CE. In this record he is described as an important member of the Guhila royal lineage and as a king ruling in Nāgahṛda, the ancient capital of Mewar that was a center of Pāśupata activity during this period. In a slightly later inscription from 977 CE Guhadatta is listed as the eponymous founder of the lineage for the first time according to the available records.[38] This record does not list Bappā in the lineage at all, an absence that is striking given his importance in the 971 Ekaliṅga inscription if he were indeed considered to the founder of the Guhila lineage. It is only in 1274, and later 1285, that we have the first references to Bappā or Bappāka as the founder of the Guhila lineage. Importantly, Guhila is said to be the son of Bappā in the 1285 record.[39] Furthermore, the inscription reads that Hārītarāśi bestowed royal splendor on Bappā, this in the form of a golden anklet. Bappā in turn bestows priestly splendor upon Hārītarāśi through his devotion to him.[40] A list of the Guhila kings follows this, and these kings are clearly marked as direct successors to the original ruler Bappā Rāval. After this early account, stories of Bappā begin to take shape and soon became elaborate legendary tales that we would expect of a royal figure. James Tod relates the

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[38] Āṭapura Inscription of Guhila King Śaktikumāra, *IA*, vol. XXXIX, 186-91.
[39] Mount Abu Stone Inscription of Samarasiṃha, 1285 CE, *IA*, vol. XVI, 345-53; Chittaurgarh Stone Inscription of Samarasiṃha, 1274 CE, *URI*, p. 176.
[40] *IA*, vol. XVI, 348, v.10-11.

fully developed narrative of Bappā's birth and time spent in the Mewar hills with the Bhil tribe. According to this narrative, Bappā was the son of a local king named Nāgāditya who was killed in battle by the Bhils. He was taken to the hills of Mewar by his mother in secret, and was left there with a brahman family who raised him. Bappā is described as a precocious child, and there are several rather remarkable stories detailing Bappā's mischievous behavior. The most well-known, and important for our purposes, involves a marriage "prank." During a local festival the daughter of the Solanki ruler of Nāgdā was playing a game with her female friends and attendants in the Mewar hills. Bappā arrived and joined in the games with these girls, and at one point tied the scarf of the Solanki chief's daughter to his waistband. The other girls in attendance held Bappā's hands, and so a large human chain was created. As they played in this way, they made a certain amount of revolutions around a mango tree, an amount that happened to be the correct number for a marriage ceremony. In this way, Bappā accidentally married the Solanki girl as well as all the other girls who were participating in the game. When the Solanki chief discovered this, he was understandably upset, and so Bappā had to flee in order to escape his anger. He fled with two Bhils, Baleo and Dewa into the hills of Mewar, the "wild" territory over which the Bhils laid claim. After some time, Bappā is said to have collected an army of Bhils and captured Chittaurgarh from the local rulers. In order to establish his sovereignty, Bappā had *tilaka* applied to his forehead with the blood from one of the fingers of Baleo, a tradition that continued up until at least the nineteenth century, as recorded by Tod.[41] This tradition is immensely important for an understanding of the relationship between the kings of Mewar and the Bhil tribal people living in the region. Although it is not clear when this tradition began (it's not recorded in any other source), it speaks to the

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[41] James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 208-9. Tod writes, "Besides making the teeka of blood from an incision in the thumb, the Oguna chief takes the prince by the arm and seats him on the throne, while the Oondree Bhil holds the salver of spices and sacred grains of rice used in making the teeka."

important relationship that developed between the local tribal population and the more orthodox Hindu tradition represented in the person of Bappā Rāval. That there developed over time a close relationship between the royal court and the Bhil tribe in the region is extremely vital for understanding the complex religious processes we find in the *ELP*.

Another central narrative (perhaps *the* central narrative for our purposes) involves Bappā's life as a young cowherd in Mewar. According to the version given by Tod, and found in scattered epigraphical records, Bappā was given the job as cowherd by the brahman couple who was raising him after his mother placed him in their care, following the killing of his father Nāgāditya by the Bhils. Over the course of some time, the brahman couple began to suspect that Bappā was stealing from one of their cows, as one particular cow would come home every night having already been milked. Bappā, being innocent of the theft, decided to follow the cow and discover exactly how the cow was returning dry every night. Bappā followed the cow into a bamboo thicket and discovered that the cow was miraculously and spontaneously pouring her milk onto a Śiva *liṅga* hidden in the thicket. Seated next to the *liṅga* was the sage Hārītarāśi, a Pāśupata ascetic. Bappā asked to serve the sage, and from that time forward he would bring the sage offerings, feeding and bathing the ascetic as well. After some time, Bappā asked to be initiated into his Śaiva order, and Hārītarāśi agreed. (There is never any explicit reference to the particular sectarian tradition of which Hārītarāśi was a part, but further in this section I will make it clear that Hārītarāśi was in fact a Pāśupata). On the morning of the initiation, Bappā was meant to meet Hārītarāśi to receive initiation and supernatural powers before Hārītarāśi was to ascend into the heavens mounted on a swan.

Bappā arrived late to the designated location, and Hārītarāśi was already well on his way up into the sky. As he flew up, however, Hārītarāśi spit down onto Bappā who was meant to catch the spit in his mouth, an act that was to be the final act of Bappā's initiation into Hārītarāśi's order.

Bappā became squeamish, though, and instead of catching the expectorate in his mouth he let it fall upon his foot, and from this he gained immunity to weapons instead of the intended result of immortality.[42] This narrative of spitting into the mouth of an initiate, or an initiate consuming the saliva of an ascetic, is found in other narratives predating and postdating the Bappā Rāval narrative. One story involves the Nāth Siddha Gorakhnāth. In this tale Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ Śāh, who would lead a successful military campaign in the Kathmandu Valley, meets with Gorakhnāth and gives him a gift of yogurt. Gorakh takes the yogurt into his mouth and attempts to spit it back into the hands of Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ Śāh who is supposed to eat it as *prāsād*. Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ Śāh instead opens his hands and lets the yogurt fall on his feet.
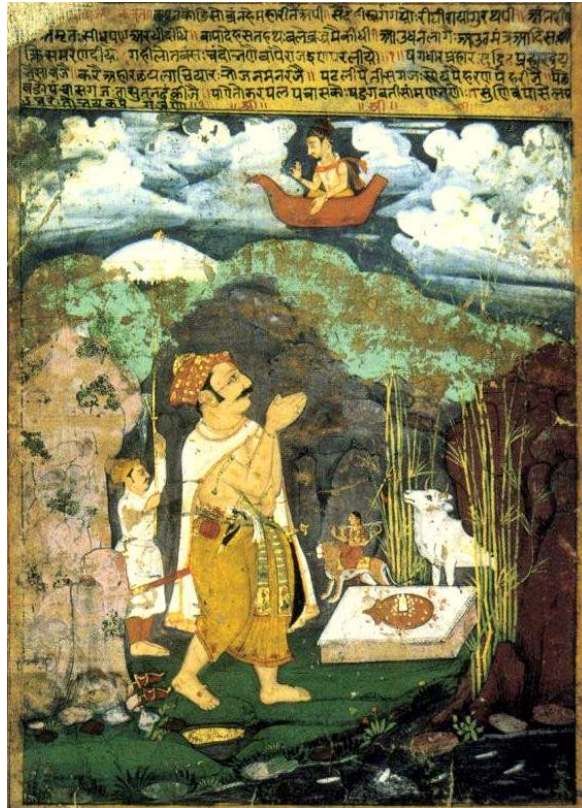
Figure 2.1: Bappā Rāval supplicating Hārītarāśi as the latter departs for heaven.

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[42] Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan,* 210-211. I've only found this narrative in Tod's account of Bappā Rāval, and so it is difficult to determine its source. The very same narrative was recounted to me by a security guard working at Ekaliṅga temple during one of my visits.

Because of this he is told that he will only conquer the world as far as his feet will take him, instead of becoming the world conqueror he would have become had he consumed the regurgitated yogurt. There is another incident coming from Alberuni's eleventh-century description of India where a Mahāsiddha named Vyāḍi attempts to spit an alchemical elixir into the mouth of the well-known king Vikramāditya. The king steps aside and lets the expectorate fall onto the ground where it turned into gold.[43]

It is after this incident that Bappā received his initiatory title of "Rāval," a name that is a clan designation of the Pāśupatas beginning from at least the eighth century, after which the title "Rāval" was absorbed into the Nāth tradition sometime in the thirteenth century.[44] Furthermore, there is another story told by Tod that says Bappā Rāval, during his wandering in the Mewar hills, met with Goraknāth, the founder of the Nāth *sampradāya*, and received from him a double-edged sword.[45] Relatedly, there is numismatic evidence depicting a relationship between Bappā Rāval and the Pāśupatas. There is a coin from the roughly tenth century that reads "*Śrī Voppa*" on the obverse and below there is a trident, bull, and Śiva *liṅga*, together with a prostrate man who has large, exaggerated ear holes.[46] Ear piercing, or boring, was a practice most associated with the Nāth Siddhas, which gave them their name Kānphaṭa Yogis, "Split-Eared Yogis." Ear piecing or boring does predate the existence of the Nāth Siddhas, but the practice is certainly connected to both the earlier Pāśupata and Kāpālika traditions.[47] David White writes, "According to Hazari Prasad Dvivedi, Rāval was, already in the eighth century, a clan name proper to the Pāśupatas

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[43] Both of these narratives are found in White, *The Alchemical Body*, 310-11.

[44] Hazariprasad Dvivedi, *Nāth Sampradaya* (Allahabad: Lokabharati Prakasan, 1981), 174-75; David White, *The Alchemical Body* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 270-72.

[45] Tod, *Annals and Antiquities*, 211; G.W. Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānpahata Yogīs* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), 66.

[46] Gaurishakar H. Ojha, "A Gold Coin of Bāppā Rāval," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, new series no. 6, vol. 23, Numismatic Supplement no. 40 (1926-27), 14-19.

[47] White, *The Alchemical Body*, 321.

which, in the thirteenth century, became the third of the old Śaivite clans absorbed into the Nāth *sampradāya*."[48] White also notes that Rāvals are also known as Nāgnāthis after Nāgnāth, the founder of the Rāval suborder of the Nāth *sampradāya* and a disciple of Gorakhnāth.[49] The Pāśupatas predate the Nāth Siddhas, but by the thirteenth century in Mewar it cannot be ruled out that there was a connection between the Nāth Siddhas and Bāppā Rāval, Hārītarāśi, and the Ekaliṅga temple site. Together with the narrative of meeting Gorakhnāth in Mewar and the title "Rāval" being associated with the Pāśupatas and Nāth Siddhas, there is strong evidence to support a connection between these ascetic groups and Bappā Rāval.

Furthermore, the sage Hārītarāśi has clear connections to the Pāśupatas and perhaps the Kānphaṭa Yogis in Rajasthan. The name *rāśi* was a common name among the Pāśupatas, and several inscriptional records from Rajasthan show Pāśupata ascetics in control of temples in the region.[50]

As I noted above, Bappā Rāval does not emerge as the founder of the Guhila royal lineage until the thirteenth century. Before this it was Guha, or Guhadatta, who was considered the progenitor of the royal line. What we see in the thirteenth century is a rather dramatic shift in the relationship between religious authority and political rule in Mewar, and one that seems to be centered on a shifting association between king and priest. Putting aside the more developed

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[48] White, *The Alchemical Body*, 121.

[49] White, *The Alchemical Body*, 121.

[50] Shanta R. Sharma, "Metamorphosis of Śaivism in Rajasthan, c. AD 600-1000: The Cult, Sects, and Monastic Order," Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Vol. 83 (2002), 142-43; D.C. Sircar, *The Guhilas of Kiṣkindha* (Calcutta: Sanskrit College, 1965), 25. Bisschop notes that the earliest known use of Pāśupata names ending in -rāśi come from an inscription of the time of Mahāśivagupta Bālārjuna who ruled from 590-650 CE (found in *EI* XXXIX, 151), and another from an inscription dated 710-711 CE (Journal of the Bihar Research Society, 1955, 249-261). See Bisschop, *Early Śaivism and the Skandapurāṇa*, 204, n. 259.

narrative put forth by James Tod, as it is unclear at what point the longer narrative was in circulation among the royal court and local population, we can nevertheless see a changing idea of what constitutes an ideal relationship between the priesthood and the royal court lead by the king from the thirteenth century onward.

Both the Mount Abu Stone Inscription of Samarasiṃha and the Kumbhālgarh Inscription, which I will discuss below, describe Bappā Rāval as meditating at the feet of Hārītarāśi, and both inscriptions explain that it was Hārītarāśi who bestowed the kingdom of Mewar upon Bappā Rāval. Certainly Ekaliṅga temple and Nāgahṛda were Pāśupata sites by the late tenth century, but by the thirteenth century Bappā Rāval had become the founder of the Guhila lineage and was initiated into the Pāśupatas by the sage Hārītarāśi. While there is little direct evidence of Pāśupata influence in the *ELP*, the figures of Bappā Rāval and Hārītarāśi, present in that narrative, indicate Pāśupata influence.

The *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa* and the Formation of an Imperial Worldview

Taking together the theory of text and intertextuality from LaCapra and Bakhtin discussed at the beginning of this chapter, and the specific examples of the *ELP*'s authorship and connections to the *Vāyupurāṇa* and *Skandapurāṇa*, I now explore the ways in which the authors of the *ELP* located their narrative in the local textual communities of Mewar through its relationships with the epigraphical record.

The *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa* is the product of several centuries of writings found in inscriptions and the earlier *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*. Indeed, the *ELP* is, in many ways, the culmination of a long process of narrative development that stretches back several hundred years and is the result of many competing local visions—visions of lineage, genealogy, landscape, and pilgrimage place. In what follows I hope to demonstrate how the *ELP* participated in a specific "sociotextual

community" and made claims to an imperial worldview that, while emerging from a local context, had translocal aspirations.[51] In the formation of this imperial worldview (a historical reality which was never achieved) inscriptions and Purāṇic narratives served to anchor the *ELP* in its local context, while at the same time these narratives served as models for the imperial religious and political agenda of the ambitious royal court of Mewar. I would like to historicize the religio-political vision of the *ELP* by placing it in conversation with the wider intertextual web in which it is embedded, and from this demonstrate that the authors of the *ELP* were well aware of, and had agentive control over, their own historical situatedness.

There are strong thematic consistencies between the inscriptional record in Mewar and the *ELM* and *ELP*. It is my argument that all three "texts"—inscriptions, the *ELM*, and the *ELP*—are concerned overall with two primary themes: a description of the royal genealogy of Mewar (*rājavaṃśa*), and a description and narration of the sacred landscape of the kingdom, including pilgrimage places and temples.[52] The early inscriptional record is primarily concerned with lineage—with making claims to the proper royal family of whichever ruler issued the inscription. Proper lineage was perhaps the most important concern of the early rulers of Rajasthan, and so the beginning portions of the early inscriptions generally take up the task of describing the royal genealogy from the very earliest (and sometimes mythic) time period. What is perhaps most

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[51] I take the term "sociotextual community" from Sheldon Pollock, which he describes as, "…the mutually constitutive relationship of literature and community: literature addresses, sometimes calls into being, particular sociotextual communities. These define themselves in significant if variable ways on the basis of the literature they share, and they create new literatures in service of new self-definitions." See Sheldon Pollock, "The Cosmopolitan Vernacular" The Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 57, No. 1 (Feb., 1998): 9.

[52] The genealogical succession of earthly kings is a central concern of several Purāṇic narratives, and is one of the "five characteristics" of the major Purāṇas (*purāṇāṃ pañcalakṣaṇam*) according to Western interpretations. The *pañcalakṣaṇa* typology, which does find some support in the primary literature, is nonetheless a problematic division mostly introduced rather artificially into the Purāṇas. For a brief historical account of the problematic nature of *pañcalakṣaṇa* see Ludo Rocher, "The Purāṇas," vol. 2.3 of *A History of Indian Literature*, edited by Jan Gonda (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1986), 24-30.

interesting, and in keeping with the position that inscriptions are not merely representative of their socio-historical contexts but are in fact directly involved in their articulation—their making and remaking—are the ways in which the genealogies of the rulers of Mewar were frequently altered in response to political and religious exigencies. In Rajasthan lineage claims were powerful rhetorical expressions not only of political legitimacy, but they were made claim to a specific political orientation with respect to other neighboring polities. A particular lineage claim, therefore, was an attempt to remake a particular political relationship. This is the "work" that inscriptions, in part, were meant to perform. As Daud Ali writes concerning the role of inscriptions in constituting political relationships: "I am suggesting that inscriptions were not merely representative of political relationships but in fact were the means by which a variety of lords of different domains articulated these political relationships."[53] Inscriptions were active and performative expressions of a specific religio-political identity expressed through particular lineage claims and through the re-imagining of sacred space. As we will see, these genealogical and spatial claims eventually found their manifestation in the more developed Purāṇic narratives of Mewar—the *ELM* and the *ELP*.

Inscriptions as Historical Evidence

The *ELP* did not act alone in this re-imagining of sacred space, however. The *ELP* influenced, and was certainly influenced by, other records that we will consider "literary," namely inscriptions. Broadly speaking, inscriptions are a very valuable but underused source of evidence for scholars in the study of Indian religion. There are, of course, several very significant reasons why inscriptions are not often utilized as the sole, or even primary, source for the study of the religious, social, and political history of India. The most convincing argument against inscriptions as sole

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[53] Ali, "Royal Eulogy," 186.

historical evidence (which is also directly connected to how inscriptional evidence is most commonly used by scholars) is the fact that these records are very sporadic and fragmented in nature. Inscriptional records from north India in particular are infrequent, particularly in comparison to the wealth of inscriptions from South India during the Cola period. Alexis Sanderson expresses this same concern when discussing the use of inscriptional evidence in the reconstruction of the history of Śaivism in India. He cautions us about drawing any definitive conclusions based on inscriptional evidence alone due to the incomplete nature of the record. The reality is that inscriptions are often lost, destroyed, or simply undiscovered. He writes:

> We must accept therefore that the epigraphic record is incomplete and uneven. This means, for example, that it is hazardous to draw conclusions from the absence of epigraphic evidence of a form or practice of Śaivism in an area or from the presence of fewer epigraphic records of this form or practice in one area than in another. It is only when we have a large population of documents from an area that marked differences in the density of evidence become significant.[54]

If we are reading inscriptions as primary sources for the reconstruction of Indian history, then the sparse nature of the epigraphical record will certainly be an issue. However, perhaps there is a different way to approach these texts rather than as simple evidence for a historical reality behind their stone and copper facades.

Context, both geographical and chronological, also remains an issue when considering the value of inscriptions as historical evidence. As Leslie Orr notes for South India, inscriptions were often recorded without a concern for the material context in which those records were made, an issue that compromises our ability to properly contextualize these records.[55] Chronological issues are also persistent, with records using calendric dating systems that are not always clear-cut, an

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[54] Alexis Sanderson, "The Impact of Inscriptions on the Interpretation of Early Śaiva Literature," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 56 (2013): 218.
[55] Leslie Orr, *Donors, Devotees, and Daughters of God: Temple Women in Medieval Tamilnadu* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 27.

issue that can (and does, in the case of Mewar) cause problems for scholars who are attempting to produce historically accurate royal lineages.

Other concerns with inscriptional evidence include the (over) emphasis these records place on the super-structural institutions that created and propagated them, such as royal centers and temples, as well as the recipients of the donations, namely Brahmans and other "high-caste" individuals. While inscriptions are excellent sources for an understanding of the actual lived realities of social actors (in contrast to the more idealized and normative nature of Sanskrit literature), they are still created and disseminated by elite social actors, and so their value in understanding those individuals normally obscured from Sanskrit literary works (women, the lower-castes) should be viewed with skepticism.

While these are very valid issues concerning the use of inscriptions as historical evidence, part of the problem with these issues themselves is the historiographical assumptions they make. The most prominent of these assumptions is based upon a positivist epistemology that sees epigraphic evidence as objective and static documents that are directly representative of the historical context from which they emerged. If we understand inscriptions as documents that indirectly present objective historical "facts" to be uncovered by an attentive researcher, then we will naturally run into several issues concerning the accuracy of these materials as they relate to historical reality. If, however, we look at inscriptional evidence as discursive moments in a dynamic cultural system, we can shift the focus to how these texts participated in a larger dialogic conversation with other textual and historical documents. Ali has been critical of this approach to understanding inscriptions, and instead urges us to read them as "discursive" texts. He writes:

> I will read inscriptions, specifically post-Gupta copper place charters, not as so many separate "documents" that mirror political and social realities, but instead as texts that formed part of an integrated discursive practice. By reading copper plate eulogies together, we can avoid seeing them as self-contained documents or literary texts. By seeing them as

discursive, we can turn our attention to how they participate in larger systems of signs that cross particular genres and textual moments.[56]

I will attempt, as much as possible, to place the inscriptional evidence in its discursive context, particularly as it overlaps with—that is, has a dialogue with—the narrative found in the *ELP*. By reading the inscriptions together with the *ELP*, we can better understand how both "texts" were part of a larger discursive practice aimed at structuring and re-structuring the social and political realities of Mewar.

Through a close study of the epigraphical evidence, it seems clear that local inscriptions in Mewar greatly impacted the composition of the *ELP*. The two main concerns of the *ELP*—royal lineage and sacred landscapes—are also the two main concerns of the inscriptions found in and around Mewar. The *ELP*, in a somewhat typically Puranic mode, but with its own regional style, is dialogically related to the inscriptional record that tends to operate according to a style that is less "narrative" in its approach. However, the inscriptions from the region, and specifically the royal eulogies known as *praśasti*, are as equally concerned with "place-making" and "world construction" as the Purāṇic *ELP*. By reading both types of narrative as dialogical utterances (in Ali's words), rather than monological documents revealing some historical reality situated somewhere "behind" the narrative, we can examine the narrative strategies used by the author or authors of these texts in a more fruitful manner. I will again quote Ali who observes that, "The royal eulogies (*praśasti*) of copper plate inscriptions can be read as imperial histories with which medieval agents made and remade their world in a field of highly politicized and often contestatory representations, as texts partly articulative of their contexts and partly articulated by them."[57] The dialogical nature of the material evidence is emphasized in order to put a more focused light on

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[56] Daud Ali, "Royal Eulogy as World History: Rethinking Copper-plate Inscriptions in Cōla India" in *Querying the Medieval* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 175.
[57] Ali, "Royal Eulogy as World History," 166-67.

the social and transformative nature of these texts at the very point at which they speak to one another. Instead of utilizing inscriptional materials to establish a "mere" historical context for the more traditionally understood narrative of the *ELP*, I will investigate how inscriptions relating to the formation of Mewar as a regional power are bound up directly with the creation and recreation of political and religious identity in the region. Through an investigation of the changes in the inscriptional record, namely the changes in lineage founders, religious sectarian affiliation, and the development of a network of sacred and salvific spaces, we can see the gradual creation of a Purāṇic worldview embedded in these various narratives.

What follows will be an examination of some important inscriptions that will shed light on the historical consciousness of the royal genealogists and royal court of Mewar. I will place particular emphasis on the ways in which these inscriptions are not merely sources for the reconstruction of the royal lineage of Mewar but rather are historically conscious texts that *emplace* the royal lineage and the historical actors found therein. What follows will not be an exhaustive study of all possible inscriptions coming from Mewar; instead, there will be a particular focus on inscriptions that I believe played a conscious or unconscious part in the writing of the later *ELM* and *ELP*. As I proceed in this section I hope to show how inscriptions in Mewar are dialogically related to their complex contexts. In this I am following Ali in his understanding of inscriptions:

> I have used the term "intertextuality" to refer to how these discourses relate to one another, and the way texts and the technologies of representation that are located within them penetrate and extend in complex ways into other discourses and texts. Foregrounding these issues will enable us to see how codes of meaning are manipulated from text to text, and text to context. We can see a continuity not only among texts but also between textual discourses and other less textual social practices. Instead of inscriptions being contextualized, contexts will be, aptly, inscribed with textuality.[58]

In what follows the intertextuality between inscriptions and Purāṇic discourses will become clear.

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[58] Ali, "Royal Eulogy," 175.

Lineage in its Spatial Context in Mewar

The use of donative inscriptions recording royal genealogies and eulogies by Indian kings comes early in Indian history, but they take on increasing importance during the late Gupta period, where we see a proliferation of these records together with a reshaping of the political order around smaller and larger interrelated polities. This increase in inscriptional records serves as an index of the rise of regional royal families and dynastic lineages who over time would situate themselves in uneven relationships with larger and larger political powers in a hierarchy indicated by ranked titles. A supreme overlord, called variously *mahārājādhirāja* (Great King of Kings), *parameśvara* (Supreme Lord), or *paramabhaṭṭāraka* (Supreme Honorable One) sat at the top of a political hierarchy, and the lesser kings and nobles were arranged in a 'circle of kings' (*rājamaṇḍala*) wherein various dynastic struggles were played out.[59] These inscriptions record the development of dynastic lineages and their relative political and economic relationship to other powers in the region, often through the composition of eulogies (*praśasti*s) that prefaced the donative portion of the inscription. What is perhaps most remarkable are the changes taking place in the relationship between kings, priests, and those other growing powers throughout the subcontinent that might threaten the realm. A political configuration that was mirrored, and was mirrored by, a newly emerging "cosmo-moral" order was an essential component of proper rule in the Gupta and post-Gupta period. This configuration included a modeling of the realm according to the rules of *dharma*—a social, moral, cosmic, and indeed political injunction of how the world *should* be organized and hierarchized. As Inden observes:

> The *dharma* that a king was supposed to establish was not a vague notion of rightness among people, a shared sentiment of goodness or propriety. It was a very specific ordering of people, places, and things—an ensemble of relationships. The major object of an ordinary king with respect to this order was to establish the proper hierarchic relationships of the constituents of his domain as a kingdom—himself on his throne, his counselors at

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[59] For a description of these titles see Ronald Inden, *Text and Practice: Essays on South Asian History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

court, the people of the royal capital at their livelihood, and the people of the countryside in their villages.[60]

The proper cosmic and social order was realized in the political order through the hierarchy of greater and lesser kings in the *rājamaṇḍala*, and this political order was made and remade through royal inscriptions and Puranic narratives. This argument, following the position of Daud Ali who argues that "inscriptions were not merely representative of political relationships but in fact were the means by which a variety of lords of different domains articulated these political relationships,"[61] will understand inscriptions and other literary evidence as constitutive of these world ordering dharmic practices.

The earliest independent lineage claim made by the Guhilas is found in the Āṭapur Inscription of Śaktikumāra.[62] The first line of the inscription states that a brahman named Guhadatta of the Guhila lineage came from Ānandapura.[63] Following this the inscription records several past rulers in the lineage of the Guhilas, ending at Śaktikumāra who, it is said, consolidated the kingdom.[64] The second to last line of the inscription praises the town of Āṭapura, the location in which the inscription is located. This town, just outside of the main city of Udaipur, is also known as Ahar, Āhaḍ, or Āhaḍa and served as the first capital city of the newly conceived kingdom of Mewar.[65] This early inscription provides us with some valuable information concerning the formation of a state structure with a clearly articulated lineage claim, and it describes a new geographical and political location in which this lineage claim was performed. The purpose of the inscription is to commemorate the construction of a temple in Āhaḍa to a deity known as

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[60] Inden *Text and Practice*, 133.
[61] Ali, "Royal Eulogy as World History", 186.
[62] Āṭapura Inscription of Guhila King Śaktikumāra, AD 977, *IA*, vol. XXXIX, 186-91.
[63] *ānandapuravinirgataviprakulānandano mahīdevaḥ | jayati śrīguhadatta[ḥ] prabhavaḥ śrīguhilavaṃśasya ||*. Āṭapura Inscription, *IA*, XXXIX, 191.
[64] *tataḥ śaktikumārobhūtsutaḥ śaktitrayojitaḥ | bhartṛpaṭṭābhidhā[ḥ] śrīśca prāpa rāṣṭram adhāpayat ||*. Āṭapura Inscription, *IA*, XXXIX, 191.
[65] See Jain, *Ancient Cities and Towns of Rajasthan: A Study of Culture and Civilization*, 220.

Nānigasvāmī and issued by Śaktikumāra. The Āṭapura inscription is a very early example of what I distinguish as being the two central concerns of epigraphists as well as the authors of the *ELM* and the *ELP*, namely genealogy and sacred space. The inscription begins with an account, for the first time, of the lineage of the Guhilas beginning with Guhadatta himself. The text concludes with a brief description of the new capital town of Āhaḍa, an important and new geographical marker in the sacred landscape of Mewar. The genealogical claims expressed in the inscription are an expression of independence over and against the Pratīhāras, to whom the Guhilas served as vassals from the eighth to the tenth century. Indeed, lineage claims such as this are often associated with attempts to change dependent political status and gain political sovereignty. In his study of the origins of the Rajputs Chattopadhyaya remarks:

> All this suggests that detailed genealogies of ruling clans, which came to be formulated only in the period of change from feudatory to an independent status, can hardly be extrapolated for an assessment of actual origin, although some parts of such genealogies may have been based on a genuine tradition. The different states in the formulation of genealogical claims also thus reveal a political process, it being that of upward mobility from an initial feudatory position.[66]

The lineage given in the Āṭapura inscription should not be understood as a mere list of the names of past kings; it is a formative document in the self-identity of the newly established kingdom, and displays a level of self-awareness of the historical past that is not seen in earlier records from Mewar. As Teuscher notes in reference to this very same inscription:

> Even in the tenth century, even as first genealogy was in its nascent state: as the Ahar [Āṭapura] inscription was for the Guhilas, it is much more than just an enumeration of ancestors. It carries several concepts, which are, in part, peculiar to a small region in Western India. I think it can be safely said that the genealogy was the result of an ongoing dialogue between the employed specialists and the king or his advisers. When Śaktikumāra consolidated his power he came to the point where donation rituals on a full scale became necessary, as this was what kings did, which was indispensable when they reached such a point and what more or less constituted his independent status. A full-scale gift ritual necessitated a Sanskrit genealogy, created by specialists.[67]

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[66] B.D. Chattopadyaya, *The Making of Early India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 72.
[67] Teuscher, "Craftsmen of Legitimation: Creating Sanskrit Genealogies in the Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries," in Studies in History 29.2 (2013): 165.

The lineage found in the Āṭapura inscription and the claim to independent status against the Pratīhāras were interconnected, as was the new capital at Āhaḍa and the temple built to Nānigasvāmī.

The second to last line of the Āṭapura inscription briefly describes the town of Āṭapura—Āhaḍa—wherein Śaktikumāra took up residence and was installed as ruler. It is significant that both the town and the temple are mentioned in this rather short inscription of twelve verses. As mentioned above, Āṭapura was an early capital of the Guhila rulers, and, in fact, this inscription provides the first mention of this town as the seat of the Guhila rulers and the location from where Śaktikumāra ruled the kingdom. This is an important moment, then, in the construction of a new kingdom—the claim to a political capital at a specific location in the landscape. *The Āṭapura inscription is making a claim to place, here, as much as it is making a claim to a certain royal lineage.* Furthermore, it is no small matter that the inscription is recording the building of a temple to Nānigasvāmi, whose identity, while remaining unclear, is most likely a local Hindu deity with a tie to that location. Āhaḍa was not only the capital of the Guhila rulers, but it was also an important pilgrimage place. Also known as Gaṅgodbheda, Āṭapura was a local pilgrimage place (*tīrtha*) even before the time of Śaktikumāra's rule. In 953 C.E. we have inscriptional evidence of the construction of a temple to Viṣṇu in his form as Varāha, together with an account of the king's ministers and temple officiants at Āṭapura.[68] Āṭapura was the second capital of the Guhilas, the first being Nāgdā, which I will discuss below. The Guhila ruler Allaṭa seems to have moved the capital from Nāgdā to Āṭapura during his reign for reasons that are unclear. What is certain is that Āṭapura was known as a place of religious importance by the time of Śaktikumāra.

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[68] "An Inscription of the time of Allaṭa of Mewar", in *Indian Antiquary*, vol. 58, 161-162; Jain, *Ancient Cities,* 220.

The establishment of a temple at the new capital as described in the 977 C.E. inscription is a very strong claim not only to political space, but also to religious and sacred space. The importance of this inscription, therefore, is not just limited to the light it may (or may not) shed on the construction of the royal lineage of the early Guhilas; the actual import of the inscription for both historians and for those who lived contemporaneously with the inscription, are the claims it makes to both political and religious space in the service of a newly consolidated kingdom. The inscription is a completely new, and rather bold, claim to sacred and political power supported by a royal genealogy whose origins stretch back to an illustrious progenitor. Scholars who have focused on this inscription in past studies have limited their discussions almost exclusively to the factual or fictive nature of the Guhila lineage presented therein.[69] What is being missed are in the ways in which this lineage claim is embedded in a spatial context that is making similarly strong ideological claims to geographical place, sacred space, and political authority.

In 1083 C.E. we find an inscription consisting of forty verses inscribed on two copper plates held together by a large ring and issued by the royal powers in Mewar. The inscription, known as the Kadmal Plates of Vijayasiṃha, records the donation of a fifth part of the produce from the village of Pallī to a brahman who lived in the village, and issued from Nāgahrada, also known as Nāgdā.[70] Vijayasiṃha was the current ruler at the time of the inscription, and is the donor of the grant. This inscription is interesting for a few reasons. First, the inscription describes Vijayasiṃgha as *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Maṇḍalīka*, a title that is a clear indication of how the rulers of Mewar understood themselves with respect to other neighboring rulers—Vijayasiṃgha was *the* paramount ruler in the region. Furthermore, the inscription follows what will be a very similar pattern for other epigraphic records in the following

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[69] See Teuscher 2013; Kapur 2002; and Bhandarkar *IA*, vol. XXXIX (1910).
[70] The Kadmal Plates of Vijayasiṃha, V.S. 1140 (1083), *EI*, vol. XXXI, 237-248.

centuries, that is, a focus on the royal genealogy and the (sacred and/or political) place from where the document was issued. The first verse of the 1083 C.E. inscription praises the deity Ekaliṅga whose temple is very close to Nāgdā, and verses two through nine provide the genealogical succession of the rulers of Mewar. The first genealogical verse reads: "*ānandapuravinirgataviprakulānandano mahīdevaḥ | jayati śrīguhadattaprabhavaḥ śrīguhilavaṃśasya*."[71] This verse, interestingly, is a verbatim description of Guhadatta found in the 977 C.E. Āṭapura Inscription of Guhila King Śaktikumāra presented above. This is the first indication that the genealogists who were working in the service of the royal court had direct access to the Āṭapura Inscription and appropriated its first lines in support of their own genealogical claims. This historical self-awareness and use of a past document to support genealogical claims becomes a persistent theme in the textual record of Mewar up through the *ELP*.

Verses twenty-one and twenty-two state that Vijayasiṃgha worshipped Ekaliṅga after having bathed in a lake called Bhoja-taḍāga—known from other records as Indra Sarovar—that is just behind and to the east of Ekaliṅga temple. Nāgdā, or Nāgahṛda, served as an early capital for the Guhilas, and the extent of that territory included, of course, the royal temple of Ekaliṅga. Like Āhaḍa after it, Nāgdā was not just politically central but also religiously central to the formation of Mewar as a kingdom and the execution of political rule in the region. Even before the earliest inscription at the Lakulīśa temple at Ekaliṅga we have evidence of temples being built by the Guhilas in Nāgdā.[72] The most important temple in Nāgdā is, of course, the royal temple of Ekaliṅga constructed shortly before 971. That the present inscription was issued at Nāgdā, then, is no coincidence or arbitrary matter, and while it may seem somewhat obvious that a royal inscription would be issued from the center of religious and political power, it bears repeating that these

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[71] The Kadmal Plates of Vijayasiṃha, *EI* XXXI, 245. I have emended the inscription from "*śrīguhadatta[ḥ] prabhavaḥ*" as the original editor of the inscription had it.

[72] Jain, *Ancient Cities,* 214.

genealogical claims and their concomitant expressions of political power through the donation of revenue, land, temples, or other gifts, need to be understood within their specific spatial contexts. Genealogical claims such as we find in the inscriptional record of Mewar do not exist in a spatial vacuum, as scholars sometimes view them. Genealogical claims are emplaced through their textuality and, in some instances, through their performance in the geographical landscape.

In a 1283 inscription from Chittorgarh and a 1285 C.E. inscription from Mount Ābū known as the Acaleśvara Temple inscription, there is a decisive change in the Guhila genealogy.[73] In all previous records from Mewar the progenitor of the Guhila royal lineage is the eponymous Guha or Guhadatta, including the 971 C.E. Ekaliṅga inscription that provides the earliest reference to Bappā Rāval. It is in the 1283 Chittorgarh inscription and the 1285 Acaleśvara inscription that, for the first time, we find Bappā Rāval listed as the progenitor of the royal family and Guhila is given as his son. Bappā Rāval is described as a local prince in the 971 Ekaliṅga inscription coming from Nāgahrada, the once capital of the Guhilas of Mewar. According to the 977 Āṭapura inscription Guhadatta came from Ānandapura in modern Gujarat. The 1283 and 1285 inscriptions exchange a non-local progenitor for the local prince Bappā Rāval. As explained above, the name "Rāval" has associations with the Pāśupatas, and so this new lineage claim is also a sectarian claim influenced by the Lakulīsa Pāśupatas. These two inscriptions are important, then, in the work they performed in reimagining not only the royal lineage of the Guhila rulers but also in the work they did in shifting political and sectarian focus to a ruler of local origin tied to the Lakulīśa Pāsupata tradition. These two inscriptions, as those analyzed above, are not simply a new claim to a different royal progenitor of the Guhila line, and their main value is not, as the editor of the 1285 inscription

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[73] "A Stone Inscription containing the genealogy of Sisodia Kings of Chitore in Meywar Dated Saṃvat 1339," A Collection of Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions (Bhavnagar: Bhavnagar Archeological Department, 1890): 74-84; Mount Abu Stone Inscription of Samarasimha. [Vikrama]-Samvat 1342," *IA*, vol. XVI: 345-355.

states, "in its furnishing the…list of the Guhila princes."[74] Rather, what seems of greater importance to the author of the inscriptions is a description of the new genealogy in its spatial context, as both begin with a glorification of Mewar and Nāgahrada. The reason for the change from Guhadatta to Bappā Rāval is unclear, although what seems most likely is that the author(s) of the thirteenth-century inscriptions desired a local progenitor for the Guhilas, and one with a connection to the Pāśupatas, rather than Guhadatta who, according to earlier inscriptions, had emigrated from Ānandapura.

Both inscriptions give the name Vedaśarma as the one who composed the eulogies, and because of this they both follow a fairly similar narrative style. The first few verses of the inscriptions praise Śiva, Gaṇapati, and then the following verses explain that the intention of the record is to describe, and praise, the Guhila lineage. Following this, several verses describe the country of Mewar, including some of its topographical features and the town of Nāgahrada. The 1283 inscription reads:

> The beautiful Medapāṭa, covered over with places of pilgrimage that give pleasure to the mind and are like the caves of the Mandarācala Mountain, with large cities that bear the beauty of the wealth of heaven, with lakes that are pure as white jewels and are as it were the looking glass of the heavenly Lakṣmī, and which is the sole abode of female beauty, stands prominent.[75]

The 1285 inscription also describes the land of Medapāṭa, but with a decisively different focus. It reads: "This country [Medapāṭa] which was, in battle, totally submerged in the dripping fat (medas) of wicked people by Bappāka, which has skillfully banished the very name of misfortune (from its precincts), which has excelled paradise itself by its excessive splendor, and which has deprived all other cities of the pride of their glory bears the name Śrī Medapāṭa."[76] After describing

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[74] "Mount Abu Stone Inscription of 1342 [1285]," *IA*, vol. XVI: 345-355.
[75] A Collection of Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions: 78. Translated by Peter Peterson, editor of the inscription.
[76] "Mount Abu Stone Inscription of 1342 [1285]," *IA*, vol. XVI: 88-89.

the larger territories of Medapāṭa, the two inscriptions then go on to briefly describe Nāgahrada

and the first meeting between first Bappāka/Bappā Rāval and Hārītarāśi. The 1283 inscription, for

instance, reads:

> In this (country) there is a city called Nāgahṛda which is the ornament of the land of
> Ilākhaṇḍa and which rivals the glory of the horns of the moon with its rows of palaces,
> which is, like a large (invaluable) pearl of the earth, like a lotus, the palace of Lakṣmī, like
> the play-ground of Kāmadeva, and like a bed of the moon, made of nectar. May the city
> (of Nāgahṛda) be victorious, which adds to the beauty of Ilākhaṇḍa, and which has, even
> while on earth, humbled the city of the gods by its great wealth; coming from which the
> Brāhmaṇa Bappā, who had given up all love for this world, established the Yajñastambha
> in the Vedi of land situated amid the four oceans, and worshipped the two lotus-like feet
> of Hārītarāśi Muni.[77]

After describing Medapāṭa and Nāgahṛda, the author of the two inscriptions states that Bappā

received his new right to rule over the kingdom of Mewar through an anklet given to him by

Hārītarāśi, his Pāśupata preceptor, who in turn received the anklet from Ekaliṅga.

The first from 1283:

> Hārītarāśi gave Bappā a fine golden anklet which he had got as a wonderful fruit of the
> lotus-like feet of Ekalingaji. Hence, Bappā, who was fitted by his energy to carry out all
> that was intended by the old sage (Brahmā), became lord of Śrī Medapāṭadeśa.[78]

The second from 1285:

> Assuredly from Brahmā-like Hārīta, Bappāka obtained, in the shape of an anklet, the luster
> of a Kṣatriya, and gave the sage, his devotion his own Brāhmanical lustre. Thus even till
> now, the descendants of that line shine on this earth, like Kṣatriya-hood in human form.[79]

This is the critical change in the genealogical narrative, and it is within these few verses that we

see the rudimentary elements of the later *ELP* narrative: Bappā Rāval, a local ruler, is elevated to

the status of progenitor of the entire Guhila lineage, and he obtains this status and his right to rule

from his Pāśupata preceptor Hārītarāśi in the form of a golden anklet given to him by Ekaliṅga,

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[77] A Collection of Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions, 78. Translated by Peter Peterson, editor of the
inscription.
[78] A Collection of Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions, 78. Translated by Peter Peterson, editor of the
inscription.
[79] "Mount Abu Stone Inscription of 1342 [1285]," *IA*, vol. XVI, 89.

the tutelary lord of Mewar.[80] All of this took place at Nāgahṛda in Medapāṭa, the geographical location of Ekaliṅga temple. It is only after this geographical context is established, and the central connections between Bappā Rāval, Hārītarāśi, and Ekaliṅga fully made, that the text moves on to describing the various rulers who comprise the royal genealogy. Genealogy is first situated in its spatial context, and only after that context is made clear are the genealogies given and the rulers praised for their various martial and other feats. The two inscriptions are immediately placing the reader into a spatial framework in which the beauty of the land is described and violent struggles of the Guhila rulers are played out. What has been missed in past readings of these and other inscriptions are the very modes by which genealogical claims are made, that they are first and foremost *emplaced* discourses that are part of a larger self-aware historical consciousness. What I contend is taking shape, particularly in the 1283 and 1285 inscriptions, but also in the other inscriptions described thus far, is a vision on the part of the rulers of Mewar and their genealogists of an historical past that is at the same time an active re-articulation of the present. The inscriptions of 1283 and 1285 are actively reimagining the past through an intertextual engagement with a mode of historical discourse—inscriptions—that many historians have viewed as passive documents "reflecting" their social, political, and dynastic contexts. Instead, I argue that these inscriptions are actively articulating a new political and sacro-spatial reality.

To continue, beginning in the late thirteenth century there were a series of invasions into western India by the armies of the Delhi Sultanate, during what has been called the "Khaljī Revolution."[81] From approximately 1298 and lasting for several years, these incursions by the armies of the Sultanate, and lead by 'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī, subdued the regional kingdoms of Mewar,

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[80] For a possible interpretation of this ritual exchange of the golden anklet see J.C. Heesterman *The Inner Conflict of Tradition: Essays in Indian Ritual, Kingship, and Society* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 126.

[81] Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 240.

Malwa, and Gujarat. The inscriptional record coming out of Mewar is virtually silent at this time,

due to the loss of political control by the Guhila rulers. However, it is during the time of Mahārāṇā

Mokala (1421-1433) that there was a concerted effort on the part of the newly reintegrated

kingdom of Mewar toward an assertion of past lineage claims and renewed references to the temple

of Ekaliṅga. The 1428 Śṛngiṛṣi Inscription of Mokala records the construction of a new rampart

around the temple of Ekaliṅga, indicating a renewed interest in the temple site and a renewed

material base for Mokala and his court.[82] The emphasis in this inscription, appearing as it does

after the turbulent years following the Sultanate invasions, is on the royal lineage and its military

prowess. Nonetheless it does focus in part on Ekaliṅga temple, the persistent center of political

and religious power of the kingdom, and the sacred spaces surrounding and including Śṛngiṛṣi

temple that is located only a few miles from Ekaliṅga temple near modern Chīrwā.

Mahārāṇā Mokala's contributions to the resurgence of Mewar's political control over the

former geographical and religious territory were exponentially increased by his successor

Mahārāṇā Kumbhā. I won't revisit what I have already written concerning Kumbhā's military and

artistic achievements, but instead I will focus on three of the most important literary works

composed during his reign: the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya, Kīrttistambha Praśasti*, and the *Kumbhālgarh*

Praśasti.

The *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* was compiled from inscriptions located in the Mewar region and,

according to tradition, was composed during the reign of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā by his court poet

Kanha Vyāsa.[83] The *ELM* begins in a way very similar to the inscriptions from the region, that is,

with a description of the local landscape and important pilgrimage places. In the first chapter Śiva

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[82] See Śṛngi-ṛṣi Inscription of Prince Mokala, *EI XXIII*, 230-241.
[83] In a single verse in the "rājavaṃśa" section of the *ELM* there is a verse that reads: *śrīkumbhādattasarvārthā śrīgovindakṛtasatpathā | pañcāśikā 'rthadāsena kanhavyāsena kīrtitā ||*. See *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*, 198.

and Parvatī unite to create Skanda, who is born in order to kill the demon king Tāraka at the behest of the other gods. After this is accomplished Parvatī becomes angry, presumably due to an offense to her modesty by the gods, and in her anger she "curses" Śiva. She states that Śiva will take the form of Ekaliṅga in Mewar, his bull and mount Nandin will take the form of Bappā (Bāṣpa), and Caṇḍa, an attendant of Śiva, will take the form of Hārītarāśi.[84] Parvatī further states that the gods will all take the form of *mūrti*s on the earth—specifically in Mewar—the Sarasvatī River will become the Kurumā River that is known locally as the Karmoī River that flows near Chittorgarh, the Ganges will become the Kuṭilā River that flows near Vindhyavāsinī temple in Kailashpuri, and Parvatī will become Vindhyavāsinī and dwell on the shores of that river.[85]

The next chapter continues the description of Mewar, Nāgahrada, and, importantly for the argument of this dissertation, the journey of the wish-granting cow (*kāmadhenu*). I will explore the importance of the journey of the wish-granting cow in a later chapter, but in order to draw out the connections between the *ELM* and the *ELP* I need to point out that the chapter describing the journey of this cow in the *ELM*, taking place over seventy-five verses and following the *kāmadhenu* from Amarakaṇṭaka, Oṃkāra, Ujjain, Brahmagiri and Trayambaka, Dvāraka, Kedāra, and finally Vārāṇasī, is greatly expanded upon in chapters thirteen through eighteen of the *ELP*. The description of the cow's journey in the *ELM* begins with her pouring milk down upon the ground under which is the hidden *liṅga* of Ekaliṅga trapped in Pātāla, the underworld. Because of this auspicious milk Śiva rises up from Pātāla and is known thenceforth as "Ekaliṅga."[86] Ekaliṅga gives a boon to the wish-granting cow, stating that thenceforth she will travel around the region of Mewar establishing temples to Śiva as Ekaliṅga. This rather short chapter in the *ELM* describing

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[84] *Śrīmad Ekaliṅgamāhātmyam*, ed. and trans. Shri Krishna 'Jugnu' (Delhi: Parimal Publications, 2016), 5-6 [1.15-22].
[85] *ELM*, 6 [1.23-26].
[86] *ELM*, 8 [2.10]: *mātṛsnehād ato brahman saṅkarasya mahātmanaḥ | pātālād utthitaṃ liṅgam ekaliṅgam iti śrutam ||*

the journey of the wish-granting cow is fully taken up and expanded upon by the later authors of the *ELP* and comes to constitute the very narrative device used to depict the sacred landscape of Mewar. In fact, chapters eight, nine, and ten of the *ELP* follow very closely upon the *kāmadhenu* chapter of the *ELM*, but greatly elaborates on the various places in Mewar that she visits, including temples, bathing tanks, rivers, and mountains. There is no doubt then that the authors of the *ELP* knew the *ELM* well and used it as a model for their Purāṇic retelling.

Following the chapter on the wish-granting cow the authors of the *ELM* outline the narrative of Indra and the construction of Indra Lake directly behind Ekaliṅga temple; they recount the narrative of Vaśiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, and the wish-granting cow that will be explored in a later chapter; and they relate the narrative of Takṣaka and the town of Nāgahrada. These three divine figures—Indra, the wish-granting cow, and Takṣaka—are, according to the text, the foremost devotees of Ekaliṅga in the Kṛtayuga, the Tretāyuga, and the Dvāparayuga respectively. The final primary devotees of Ekaliṅga in the Kaliyuga are Bappā Rāval and Hārītarāśi.

In the second to last chapter of the *ELM* (what the editor titles *atha medapāṭavarṇanam*, "Now a Description of Medapāṭa") that precedes the long *rājavaṃśa* section there is a brief description of Mewar in eleven verses. [87] In these verses the authors describe and praise the landscape of Mewar with its lakes, mountains and valleys, as well as its temples and people, and these local places are equated with their heavenly or mythical equivalents.

The chapter following this description of the geographical and built landscape is a rather lengthy presentation of Mewar's royal genealogy, known as the *rājavaṃśa*. Importantly, this section begins in ways very similar to the 977 Āṭapura Inscription and the The Kadmal Plates of Vijayasiṃha of 1083. Compare the following:

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[87] *Śrīmad Ekaliṅgamāhātmyam*, 53-55.

Āṭapura Inscription of 977: *ānaṃdapuravinirgataviprakulānaṃdano mahīdevaḥ | jayati śrīguhadattaḥ prabhavaḥ śrīguhilavaṃśasya ||*[88]

The Kadmal Plates of Vijayasiṃha of 1083: *ānandapuravinirgataviprakulānandano mahīdevaḥ | jayati śrīguhadattaprabhavaḥ śrīguhilavaṃśasya ||*[89]

ELM Rājavaṃśa, v.2: *jayati tathā 'nandapure nāgarakulamaṇḍano mahīdevaḥ | yajanādikarmakuśalo vijayādityābhidho vipraḥ ||*

ELM Rājavaṃśa, v.8: *yaduktaṃ [su]purātanaiḥ kavibhir ānandapurasamāgataḥ | viprakulānandano [hi] guhadattaḥ śrīguhilavaṃśasya ||*[90]

There is no doubt that the authors of the *ELM* had an awareness of, and were consciously borrowing from, either the 977 record, the 1083 record, or both. What all three of these records displays, moreover, are two central concerns extending over the nearly five hundred years that separates them: a concern for royal lineage and a desire to locate that lineage in a particular political and religious spatial context. But just as with the inscriptional accounts of Mewar explored above, past scholars have ignored the spatial contexts of the *ELM* in favor of this genealogy in their investigations, ignoring the fact that the narrative is first and foremost concerned with describing the sacred geographical and built landscape of Mewar—its rivers, trees, hills, lakes, and temples. In short, what past studies have missed are the ways in which the spatial context of genealogy is foregrounded by the authors before they expound upon the various past rulers of the region.

The *Kīrttistambha Praśasti* (*KP*) is found in the Kīrttistambha at Chittorgarhgarh, and was composed, according to the inscription itself, in 1460 during the reign of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā.[91] The original inscription was close to two hundred verses, but the first twenty-one verses have been lost. The *KP* as we have it is a long panegyric to Mahārāṇā Kumbhā and his many architectural

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[88] Āṭapura Inscription, *IA*, XXXIX, 191.
[89] The Kadmal Plates of Vijayasiṃha, *EI* XXXI, 245.
[90] *Śrīmad Ekaliṅgamāhātmyam*, 56-57.
[91] R. Nath *Chittorgarhgadh Kīrtti-Stambha of Maharana Kumbhā* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1999), 151-170.

and military feats. In fact, the inscription seems to alternate between describing the military prowess of Kumbhā—his strength on the battlefield, his conquering of new and old territories—and numerous architectural accomplishments in and around Chittorgarh. There is no genealogy given in the inscription based on the present record, although this was quite possibly given in the first twenty or so lines that have been lost. The record is quite powerful in its representation not only of Kumbhā as a ruler, but also in the ways in which it depicts the geographical and built environment surrounding Chittorgarh. The record depicts the construction of several temples, bathing tanks, shrines, roads, forts, moats, and other structures. The author describes the construction of a temple to Viṣṇu at Ekaliṅga, the temple of Kumbhāsvāmin at Chittorgarh, and the construction of several temples and bathing tanks at Mount Ābū. The inscription also describes how Kumbhā had the fort known as Kumbhalgarh built, and it also describes the surrounding geographical landscape of mountains and hills that are equated with the mythic mountains Meru and Mandarācala.[92] The inscription ends with an extended description of the military prowess and artistic achievements of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā.

The Kumbhalgarh Inscription, also composed during the rule of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā, comes from a temple known as Kumbhāsvāmin, or Māmādeva, within the fortress of Kumbhalgarh. The first and third slabs of the inscription have been edited and published, while the second slab is only in fragments. The first slab begins with a description of the geographical landscape of Mewar, including the Trikuṭa hills at the base of which sits Ekaliṅga, Vindhyavāsinī, and several bathing tanks; a description of the Kuṭilā River that flows next to the temple of Vindhyavāsinī during the rainy season; Ekaliṅga temple; Indra Lake that sits just behind Ekaliṅga temple; and Vāghelāva, which today is modern Bāgelā Lake to the south of Ekaliṅga temple. Also included in these opening verses are descriptions of the wish-granting cow (*kāmadhenu*), Takṣaka, and the town of

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[92] Nath, *Chittorgadh Kīrtti-Stambha*, 165-166, and vv.137-143.

Nāgdā. This portion of the inscription ends with a description of Mewar, which it calls Medapāṭa, and in brief portrays the beauty of the natural environment and towns in that region. In fact, these ten verses (58-68), which begin with the phrase *atha medapāṭavarnanaṃ* ("now a description of Medapāṭa"), are found verbatim in the *ELM* cited above.[93] It is clear then that the authors of the *ELM* and the Kumbhalgarh Inscription knew of the other work, although it is not altogether clear which of these texts was composed first.

The third slab of the Kumbhalgarh Inscription begins with a description of the "primal person" (*purāṇapuruṣa*) Bappā and the sage Hārītarāśi. Like the 977 Āṭapura Inscription and the 1083 inscription of Vijayasiṃha, the Kumbhalgarh record states that this "primal person" came from Ānandapura, but of course switching Guhila from the older inscriptions to Bappā in the present inscription.[94] Verses five through nine of the first slab of the Kumbhalgarh Praśasti are nearly an exact match to verses thirty-nine through forty-two of the "*nāgahradavarṇanam*" section of the *ELM*, both describing and extolling the sacred landscape of Mewar.[95] The *ELM* and the Kumbhalgarh Praśasti share not only many of the same verses, but they also share a very similar narrative structure. Both records begin with a description of the sacred landscape: they describe Medapāṭa, Nāgahrada, and the mountains, rivers, and deities that find their home within that landscape. It is only after nearly seventy verses in the Kumbhalgarh Praśati, and almost one hundred and fifty verses in the *ELM*, that these narratives move on to an account of the royal lineage. It seems the authors of both records are in agreement regarding their narrative structure: sacred place comes first in an account of the history of Mewar and its rulers.

It is clear that in the construction of their narrative the authors of the *ELM* borrowed heavily from other records, and other records borrowed from it, in an historically self-aware fashioning of

[93] Kumbhalgarh Praśasti, first and third slabs, 1460 CE, *EI*, XXIV, 321-22.
[94] Kumbhalgarh Praśasti, first and third slabs, 1460 CE, *EI*, XXIV, 322-23.
[95] See Kumbhalgarh Praśasti, *EI*, XXIV, 315 and *Śrīmad Ekaliṅgamāhātmyam*, 44-45.

Mewar's past. This "reflexivity" (as Ramanujan would understand it) on the part of the authors of these records reflects a deep understanding of the historical past, and also displays a conscious attempt to fashion the present in terms of those earlier records. This all strongly suggests that the authors of the *ELM* used one or more inscriptions, all of which found their source in the Āṭapura Inscription, as a model to fashion their own genealogical claims. These similarities display a self-aware and deliberate use of past historical records to define present religio-political claims in fifteenth-century Mewar. What I further suggest is that the authors of the *ELM* also modeled the larger narrative structure of their text on the Āṭapura Inscription as well as on the Kadmal Plates of Vijayasiṃha. All three of these records are not simply providing a list of the royal lineage; rather, they are emplacing lineage claims in their geographical—that is, political and religious—contexts in order to make specific geopolitical claims. What the Āṭapura Inscription does in a brief twelve verses the *ELM* does over several hundred, and the very same narrative concerns are present in both: the emplacement of political lineage claims in a sacred geographical landscape.

Conclusion

The intertextual and dialogic nature of literary narratives, and Indian narratives in particular, is clearly demonstrated by the borrowings between historical records in Mewar from the tenth through fifteenth centuries. Julia Kristeva, in her essay "Word, Dialogue, and Novel" argues that "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double*."[96] Through an analysis of the relationships that the *ELM* and the *ELP* have with

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[96] Julia Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue, Novel," in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press), 66. Kristeva's italics.

other Purāṇas and with inscriptions in the region, we can begin to see the "reflexive" and intertextual aspects of these works.

What is of great importance for my understanding of the *ELM*, *ELP*, and the numerous inscriptions in the region is that they participate in a self-aware and deliberate conversation with each other; these narratives are intentional mediations with the historical past and are not merely passive reflections of it. Travis Smith makes a similar insight in his study of the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*:

> Rather than viewing them [Purāṇas] as imperfectly preserving elusive kernels of historical fact, almost impossibly obscured by the accretions of mythological embellishment, we might rather understand the Purāṇas as *actively articulating particular versions of the past with specific intent*. From this perspective, 'mythical' Purāṇic narratives are not merely accidental fantasies obscuring an imagined core of 'real' history, but rather the narratives themselves are dynamic and purposeful interventions, the intentions of which a discerning examination may occasionally reveal.[97]

The authors of the *ELM* and *ELP* remade their past by trading the progenitor of the royal line, Guhila, with the local royal figure Bappā Rāval who had clear associations with the Pāśupata Śaivas. The royal poets who composed the *ELP* reframed past narratives of the Guhilas and placed them in the service of the court during a time of political uncertainty and violence. By drawing on the past in creative ways, and by placing this Purāṇic narrative in conversation with other well-known Purāṇas such as the *Vāyupurāṇa*, the authors of the *ELP* engaged in the push-and-pull dynamics of centripetal and centrifugal narrative forces. The *ELP* remains a local text with clear ties to the immediate landscape and to regional inscriptions and narrative concerns, while at the same time its authors link it to other Purāṇic narratives that have pan-Indian and pan-Hindu appeal. Far from being a mere 'document,' the *ELP* demonstrates the 'worklike' aspects of textuality discussed by LaCapra. Indeed, in LaCapra's words, the *ELP*, in its historical and geographical interventions, "*makes a difference*."[98]

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[97] Travis Smith, "Re-newing the ancient: The Kāśīkhaṇḍa and Śaiva Vārāṇasī," *Acta Orientalia Vilnensia* 8.1 (2007): 84. My italics.
[98] Dominick LaCapra *Rethinking Intellectual History*, 30. My italics.

The next chapter will investigate the relationship of the built environment to sacred space in both the geographical and textual landscapes. I argue that we must understand the relationship between the built environment, the geographical landscape, and the textual tradition as "intertextually" related; that is, we must understand text, temple, and landscape as mutually articulative in much the same way as we understand narratives as intertextually related and mutually influential.

Chapter Three

Temple: Goddess of the Mountain, Goddess of War

As a case study on the role of the built environment in the production of sacred space in Mewar, this chapter will investigate the temples of Vindhyavāsinī and Rāṣṭrasenā in order to highlight the ways in which the built environment, textual landscapes, and geographical landscapes are mutually related. In *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture* Lindsay Jones theorizes a more productive way to interpret sacred architecture than has been utilized in the past. Jones argues that the more common hermeneutic of "looking at buildings" or "reading them as texts" should be replaced with a hermeneutic of experience that uses the metaphor of "play" and "event." Instead of seeing static buildings passively waiting to be interpreted, we must view them as dynamic occasions, what is termed a "ritual-architectural event":

> …buildings must be contextualized—or 'situationalized'—both in relation to the human users who bring with them their characteristic prejudices and preunderstandings and in relation to the particular ceremonies that transpire in, on, and around those buildings. Built forms, human beings, and festival occasions all interact and coalesce within the confines of a so-termed ritual-architectural event.[1]

Jones urges us to see architecture as contextualized and contested—an understanding that can lead to a more nuanced view of the relationship between the built environment, the geographical environment, and the narratives of those places. I hope to use the example of the textual and material creation of the temple to Rāṣṭrasenā in order to highlight the dialogical relationship, highly contextualized, between narrative, geography, and the built environment. The temple to Rāṣṭrasenā was an architectural representation of the quickly changing sociopolitical context near the end of the fifteenth-century in Mewar, and the geographical location of her temple directly impacted the role she played in the *ELP*.

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[1] Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*, 48.

As I discuss the role of the built environment and the landscape in the *ELP*, I also want to stress the important role of the body in interpreting these spaces. The body, divine and human, has a central place in the formation of socio-cultural identity and in the construction of and perception of architecture. In their pursuit of a religious cartography of Mewar, the authors of the *ELP* sought to orient the reader or listener of the narrative in a mythical space and time that was, simultaneously, very local. Religions are deeply concerned with orientation and place, as I discussed in the introduction. This orientation begins with an orientation in the physical body, and then moves out into the homeland and cosmos; body, place, and identity are interrelated. As Edward Casey notes: "Of one thing we can be certain: both the continuing accessibility and the familiarity of a dwelling place presuppose the presence and activity of the inhabitant's lived body. This body has everything to do with the transformation of a mere *site* into a dwelling *place*. Indeed, *bodies build places*."[2] As the built environment is an extension of the body, so it is also important in the formation of individual and regional identity. The narratives of Vindhyavāsinī and Rāṣṭrasenā represent a particular example of that sense of regional identity in Rajasthan.

A History of the Divine Feminine in Mewar

The divine feminine has a long history in Mewar. There are inscriptional accounts of the patronage of local goddesses in this region from at least the 7th century, and by the time of the composition of the *ELP* a cult surrounding the divine feminine had clearly been integrated into that of Ekaliṅga. In fact, by the late fifteenth century the worship of the divine feminine had become central to Mewar's political and military apparatus. Two important goddess temples are founded by the time of the *ELP*, one to the pan-Indian goddess Vindhyavāsinī and one to a local war goddess known

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[2] Casey, *Getting Back Into Place*, 116. Italics in original.

as Rāṣṭrasenā. These two temples and their mythological narratives are important for an understanding of religious belief and practice in Mewar during the early-medieval period. The following will be an investigation not only of the representations of goddess worship represented in the *ELP*, however. This chapter will also be an examination of the actual sites of these two goddess temples and their placement in the physical and literary landscape of Mewar. It is not altogether common in South Asia that we have physical temples linked directly to their representations in the literary record. Mewar presents an excellent study of the relationship between text (the *ELP* and the textual traditions from which it draws) and context (the geographical landscape and political realities) in western India. This chapter, then, will be a contribution to the larger idea of the dialogical relationship between text and context in early-medieval Hindu temple building.

One further point should be made about the argument of this chapter. What I wish to articulate first and foremost is the complex back-and-forth nature of text and context mentioned above. The temples to Ekaliṅga, Vindhyavāsinī, and Rāṣṭrasenā, it will be argued, are central elements in the mytho-historical, as well as the geographical and sacred, landscape of medieval Mewar. The ritual, historical, and mythological narratives of these temples are tied in very important ways to the sacred land in which they reside. In South Asia, the placement of sacred sites, such as temples, in the physical landscape is never a mere afterthought to their actual construction, and this is particularly so for this triad of temples in Mewar. Historical exigencies such as military incursions into the region and the expansion of the kingdom impacted the textual landscape of the *ELP*, and that narrative in turn impacted both the geographical and sacred landscape of Mewar through the physical emplacement of these temple structures on hilltops or near centers of political power. Text and context mutually constitute each other, and it is only by paying equal attention to geographical and historical context that we can understand narrative text

in the case of Mewar.

At present, the earliest reference to the divine feminine in Mewar is found in the Sāmōlī inscription of Śīlāditya, dated to 656 CE.[3] This inscription refers to the construction of a temple (*devakula*) dedicated to the goddess Araṇyavāsinī—"the goddess who dwells in the forest"—at Aranyakupagiri. This temple was built by one Jentaka near a mine that served as the primary means of livelihood for the people living in this region. Before the expansion of the Guhila state into these peripheral areas outside of the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa area, it can be assumed that local Bhil tribes dominated this region. The construction of a mine—most likely used as material support for the expanding Guhila state—and the construction of a temple to Araṇyavāsinī near that mine indicates the important role of local (and perhaps tribal) goddess appropriation for the Guhila kings. It is stated in the inscription that wealthy patrons visited the temple,[4] indicating that the temple had more than just local appeal. It further illustrates the point that at this early stage in the formation of regional power in Mewar wealth, material resources, and religious centers were closely linked.

Another local goddess to appear in the epigraphical record is Ghaṭavāsinī—"the goddess who dwells in a pot." This local goddess is associated with Durga in the inscription, a common strategy for the assimilation of local goddesses into the larger Sanskrit tradition. The inscription, found eight miles east of Udaipur, indicates that some fields were donated to the god Śiva and to Durgā as Ghaṭṭavāsinī for the purpose of the increase of the donor's religious merit and for the maintenance of the two temples.[5] We can assume that this local goddess was at some point assimilated into the larger Brahmanical fold through her association with the pan-Indian goddess Durgā. The link between local goddess and the broader Sanskrit tradition was made through such grants and assimilative relationships. A final goddess recorded in this early period is found in the

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[3] Samoli inscription of Siladitya, AD 656 *EI*, XX pp 97-9, 1.9
[4] Samoli inscription vv 1.8: *dhanadhānyahṛṣṭapuṣṭa[pra]viṣṭajananityasaṃbādhaṃ(dham)* |
[5] Dabok Inscription of the Time of Dhavalappadeva (813 CE), EI., vol. XX, pp.122-25.

Pratapgarh Inscription dated 942-6 CE. In this inscription there is a reference to the goddess Vaṭayakṣinīdevī, who was granted a village by the king of Mahodaya.[6] Vaṭayakṣinīdevī is also identified with Durgā in this inscription, and a grant of a village in her name is again an indication of the assimilation of a local goddess into the Brahmanical fold.

Local goddesses of the hills, forests, and trees have had an important role in the religious imagination of Mewar since at least the 7th century, and their assimilation into the larger Hindu tradition by way of goddesses such as Durgā is also recorded in these inscriptions. It is not surprising, then, that Vindhyavāsinī—a pan-Indian Hindu goddess with clear associations with hills and forests—becomes of paramount importance in the creation of the cult of Ekaliṅga and in the process of royal legitimation. During the time of these inscriptions (the 7th-10th centuries) the Mewar region, while expanding militarily, still was predominantly occupied by the Bhil tribal people, especially in the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa region. The Bhils dominated the forest and hilly areas that made up the geographical landscape of the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa region at that time, but as the Guhila state gradually expanded outwards into the peripheral areas, they naturally came into contact with the Bhil tribes. Overall, with the construction of temples to local goddesses who were either directly identified with pan-Indian goddesses such as Durgā or are otherwise Sanskritized, we can assume that together with the expansion of the Guhila political apparatus we also have the expansion of Brāhmaṇs into these tribal areas, this through what B.D. Chattopadhyaya called the "brahmāṇical mode of appropriation." He writes, "The appearance of the cults of goddesses in records from disparate geographical locations and at different points in time takes place mainly because of the linkage which is established between such cults and emerging monarchies through the mediation of the Brahmans and their rituals."[7] Through extensive land grants to Brāhmaṇs

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[6] Pratapgarh Inscription dated AD 942-6, *EI*, vol. XIV pp 176-88.
[7] Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, *Studying Early India: Archaeology, Texts, and Historical Issues* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003), 182.

local political powers attempted to unify and pacify tribal groups through the appropriation of indigenous gods and goddesses. It was through the integration of local goddess cults, and their tribal devotees, into the religious framework of the Ekaliṅga cult that eventually lead to the adoption of Vindhyavāsinī as the representative of the divine feminine in Mewar.

Vindhyavāsinī in the Sanskrit Textual Tradition

Sanskrit literary references to Vindhyavāsinī appear at least as early as the *Harivaṃśa* (4th century) and the *Skandapurāṇa* (6th-7th century CE).[8] Prior to her appearance in these textual traditions, Vindhyavāsinī may have existed as a local/regional goddess dwelling in the Vindhya Mountains, or (most likely) as an amalgamation of various local goddess figures that rose to prominence during the early centuries of the Common Era. Of course, the origins of this goddess outside of the textual record is difficult to prove, but it is not a far leap to assume that before her appearance in the textual record—in fact for her to even warrant an appearance in the textual record—she must have already had a devoted and numerically large following. This is not to say that Vindhyavāsinī was a fully composite goddess before her appearance in the Sanskrit/Brahmanical tradition. As Yokochi notes, Vindyavāsinī may have been an umbrella term used by the Brahmanical tradition to refer to numerous local goddesses worshipped by those living in the Vindhya Mountains.[9] In fact, Vindhyavāsinī's ability to absorb local goddesses into the larger Brahmanical tradition is a central element of her mythology and a key argument of this chapter. On Vindhyavāsinī's ability to absorb other, minor goddesses into her character Humes notes: "Vindhyavasini's association with motifs of absorption and identification helps to explain how she could be consistently linked with her

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[8] Cynthia Ann Humes, "Vindhyavāsinī: Local Goddess Yet Great Goddess" in *Devī: Goddesses of India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).
[9] Yuko Yokochi, "The Rise of the Warrior Goddess in Ancient India: A Study of the Myth Cycle of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī in the *Skandapurāṇa*." Ph.D. diss., (Rijksuniversiteit Gorningen, 2005), 18.

local context--mountain dwelling societies and their often "unorthodox" traditions--yet at the same time be understood as possessing the monistic characteristics of Mahadevi."[10] Indeed, in the early mythology of Vindhyavāsinī, coming from the Kauśikī cycle of the *Skandapurāṇa*, a hierarchy of goddesses is presented which exemplifies the nature of Vindhyavāsinī as a goddess who is absorbed by and in turn emits other goddesses. Yokochi draws attention to the nature of the goddess in this text as a hierarchy of the divine feminine moving from Pārvatī at the top of the hierarchy to Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī, then finally to bird and animal-faced goddesses known as the Mothers at the bottom.[11] This will be important in my treatment of the role of Vindhyavāsinī in the *ELP*. For now it should be clear that Vindhyavāsinī, as presented in the Kauśikī cycle of the *Skandapurāṇa*, occupied a position somewhere between the pan-Indian Brahmanical goddess Pārvatī and the local manifestation of the divine feminine represented in the figures of the Mothers.

Peculiar to Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī's iconography as described in the *Skandapurāṇa* is her dark complexion and her virginity, both indicative of her warrior nature and her liminal—and dangerous—status in the Brahmanical tradition. Indeed, her appearance (which itself indicates her unmarried and independent nature) may link her to her local and perhaps tribal origins.[12] In the *Skandapurāṇa* Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī was said to have been born from Pārvatī's dark skin after Pārvatī performed *tapas* and gained the name Gaurī.[13] This liminal role played by Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī—that is, her placement between the royal/Brahmanical tradition and local religious traditions—will be important when we consider her position in the *ELP* narrative. Schnepel, considering a similar case of goddess appropriation in Orissa, writes:

> Royally patronized tribal goddesses thus developed into liminal beings, for they originated from a tribal background and moved into the fold of Hindu culture without, however, being completely alienated from the former or totally absorbed by the latter. In this intermediary

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[10] Humes, "Vindhyavāsinī: Local Goddess Yet Great Goddess," 52.
[11] Yokochi, "The Rise of the Warrior Goddess in Ancient India," 49-50.
[12] Yokochi, "The Rise of the Warrior Goddess in Ancient India," 3.
[13] Yokochi, "The Rise of the Warrior Goddess in Ancient India," 23.

state, they were well qualified to bridge the initial gulf between the indigenous population and the Hindu king and to provide a crucial element in the ritual policy of the kings, especially with regard to their internal legitimation during the early phase of their rule.[14]

As a liminal goddess positioned between the local and the trans-local traditions, Vindhyavāsinī was the key link between tribal and Brahmanical religious worlds, without which a connection to the Bhil tribal groups in the region would perhaps be impossible for the royal court.

Vindhyavāsinī appears in a clear Tantric context at least by the time of the composition of the tenth century *Prapañcasāra* (*PS*) and the late tenth to eleventh century *Śāradātilaka* (*ŚT*). In the *PS* she is called Vanadurgā, "the forest Durgā," who "was originally a village goddess, who was integrated into the Tantric pantheon."[15] The *ŚT* borrows from the *PS* in its description of Vanadurgā, but adds that this goddess also dwells in the Vindhya mountain range.[16] The *ELP* in turn borrows directly from the *ŚT* in its description (*dhyāna*) of Vindhyavāsinī in chapter 31, discussed below. Vindhyavāsinī's tantric character was clearly established by the tenth century, but her origins as a local village goddess were still discernable in her earlier narratives.

Certainly, Vindhyavāsinī was well known at the time of the composition of the *ELP*, and in fact the earliest references to this goddess in Mewar come from the 13th century epigraphical record. This date places her in the region close to two hundred years before the earliest dating of the *ELP*. Despite this early reference, it was most certainly the *ELP* that popularized Vindhyavāsinī in Mewar, elevating her to the status of the consort of Ekaliṅga, the supreme deity of the region from at least the 10th century until the present. It is my argument that Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī's nature as a goddess situated between Pārvatī and the Mothers in the hierarchy of goddesses, and

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[14] Burkhard Schnepel, "Durga and the King: Ethnohistorical Aspects of Politico-Ritual Life in a South Orissan Jungle Kingdom," in *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 1, No. (Mar., 1995): 150.

[15] Gudrun Bühnemann, *The Iconography of Hindu Tantric Deities: Vol II The Pantheons of the Prapañcasāra and the Śāradātilaka* (Egbert Forsten: Groningen, 2001), 53.

[16] Bühnemann, *The Iconography of Hindu Tantric Deities*, 223.

her place between local and translocal (Brahmanical) traditions, is exactly what enables her facilitation and acceptance of the local warrior goddess Rāṣṭrasenā in the *ELP*.

Vindhyavāsinī in Mewar: Goddess of the Mountain

The temple to Vindhyavāsinī is situated to the north of the rampart surrounding Ekaliṅga temple, perhaps one hundred yards away if it were not for the two ramparts dividing the sites. The Vindhyavāsinī temple sits at the base of a part of the Trikuṭa hills that form a natural triangle of hilltops among which Ekaliṅga and Vindhyavāsinī temples reside. The entrance itself is a simple gate between another large rampart that divides Ekaliṅga and Vindhyavāsinī. Upon entering the gate you go up some stairs and, turning to the right, are met with the main temple about fifty yards off. Vindhyavāsinī temple is directly in front, and to the right are two smaller temples to important local goddesses—Bāṇmātā and Rāvalmātā. As you walk around to the main entrance to Vindhyavāsinī's shrine you are met with a large tiger (her mount) and a trident about six feet tall. The tiger naturally faces the *mūrti* of the goddess. The image of the goddess is striking. She is dark complexioned—black. Around her eyes are two yellow swirls that contrast the darkness of her image. She is dressed in red garments and so it is not possible to see what she holds in her hands. Flanking her right and left sides are Kāla and Goḍa Bherujī, respectively. These two local Rajasthani forms of Bhairava are skeletal and horrific in appearance and indicate that perhaps at some point Vindhyavāsinī accepted non-vegetarian offerings, although she does not accept animal sacrifice today. Directly across from the *mūrti*, behind the tiger mount, is a much smaller shrine, set within a deep recess, to the famed sage Hārītarāśi. Inside this shrine is a small image of Hārītarāśi, and directly to the left is a small Shiva lingam. Altogether, then, within this temple complex there are four temples—Vindyavāsinī, Bāṇmātā, Rāvalmātā, and Hārītarāśi. The temple to Vindhyavāsinī is by far the largest within the compound and dates to at least the fifteenth

century based on the earliest inscription describing this temple.[17]

Figure 3.1: Vindhyavāsinī Temple, Kailashpuri, Rajasthan. Photo by the author.

In the *ELP* there is a clear identification between Pārvatī and the goddess Vindhyavāsinī. The Vindhyavāsinī temple priest also made the connection during my visit to the temple. This theme is consistent with the mythology of Vindhyavāsinī found in the *SP* mentioned above. As Yokochi notes, there is evidence that Vindhyavāsinī emerged from the multiple local goddesses who were thought to dwell in the Vindhya Mountains and grouped under the Brahmanical typology of the Mothers.[18] Pārvatī was already a well-known goddess in her own right, particularly as the consort of Śiva, by the first centuries CE. The assimilation and integration of these three aspects

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[17] *EI*, XXIV, 304-28.
[18] Yokochi, "The Rise of the Warrior Goddess in Ancient India," 51.

of the divine feminine—Pārvatī, Vindhyavāsinī, and local or folk goddesses—into an interrelated hierarchy of goddesses took place by the time of the *SP* with Pārvatī occupying a privileged place at the top and Vindhyavāsinī and the Mothers occupying second and third rank. By the time of the SP, then, a hierarchical relationship had been constructed integrating these ranks of goddesses. As Yokochi notes: "In the Kauśikī cycle [of the SP], the hierarchical system of goddesses is presented as a series of emissions, the lower being produced out of the higher. Pārvatī emits Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī, who in turn emits the Mothers."[19]

As I noted above, Vindhyavāsinī first appears in the records of Mewar in the 13th century. Verses 20-22 of the 1460 Kumbhālgarh Praśasti describe Vindhyavāsinī.[20] However, the primary source for reconstructing the mythico-historical character of Vindhyavāsinī in Mewar is the *ELP*. The first five chapters of the *ELP* relate the story of Pārvatī's tempting of Śiva to commit a sin in the pine forest, her subsequent curse of the gods when they interrupted her and Śiva having sex, and her curse that caused Śiva's *liṅga* to fall onto the earth. This description of Pārvatī is in keeping with Purāṇic accounts of her role as Supreme Goddess who is a nurturing and devoted wife, being called *jagaddhātrī* ("mother/supporter of the world") by Vāsudeva in the *ELP*, indicating this motherly, supportive and (mostly) benign nature that is common in her Puranic descriptions. In chapter five of the *ELP* Vindhyavāsinī makes her first appearance. Interestingly, she is described as carrying a noose, goad, a bow and arrows, and she is described as wearing red clothing and being a girl perpetually sixteen years old.[21] It is then said that she was placed within a physical image and known famously as Vindhyavāsinī.[22] The gods honored her and departed, and Vindhyavāsinī, having officially emerged as such in the text, remains in Mewar to grant the boons

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[19] Yokochi, "The Rise of the Warrior Goddess in Ancient India," 51.
[20] Kumbhālgarh Prasasti, first slab, 1460 AD, *EI*, vol. XXIV, pp. 304-28
[21] ELP 5.14cd-15ab: *pāśāṅkuśadhanur bāṇā sarvābharaṇabhūṣitā || raktavastraparīdhānā sadā ṣoḍaśavārṣikī*
[22] ELP 15cd: *aparāṃ mūrtimāsthāya vindhyavāseti viśrutā ||*

of liberation and worldly pleasure.[23]

Vindhyavāsinī's tantric and militaristic character is illustrated in chapter thirty-one of the *ELP*. This chapter describes the proper ritual worship of Vindhyavāsinī, including the appropriate use of her *mantra* and *maṇḍala*. This feature of the worship of Vindhyavāsinī is important because it lends support to the claim, which will be examined in full below, that there is a connection between the mythology of the Eight Mothers, the sixty-four *yoginī*s who are her offspring, and Rāṣṭrasenā as she is represented in the *ELP*. As David White notes, in South Asia the *maṇḍala* often functions as the "mesocosmic template through which the Tantric practitioner transacts with and appropriates the myriad energies that course through every level of the cosmos."[24] Priests and rulers have used the *maṇḍala*, existing as it does between the microcosm of the individual body and the macrocosm of the entire universe, in ritual contexts as the physical site for the negotiation of religious power and political authority since very early on in South Asian religious traditions. That there is a close connection between the worship of the divine feminine and proper political rule is illustrated in the *ELP* by the fact that the ritual is constructed around a conversation between a priest and a king. In the description of the ritual, nine *śakti*s are invoked into the center of the maṇḍala (*pīṭha*), followed by eight goddesses (again referred to as *śakti*s) who are invoked into an eight-petal lotus surrounding the center, along with their weapons. These eight goddesses are: Āryā, Durgā, Bhadrā, Bhadrakālī, Ambikā, Kṣemā, Vedagarbhā, and Kṣemaṅkakarī.[25] Another set of eight goddesses "beginning with Brāhmī" are then invoked, after which the World-Guardians (*lokapāla*) are to be worshipped together with their weapons and vehicles. What we have in this maṇḍala is the invocation of a host of divine feminine powers who are presented, together with

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[23] *ELP* 17cd: *vindhyavāsā 'bhavad devī bhuktimuktiphalapradā ||*

[24] David White, *Kiss of the Yoginī: "Tantric Sex" in its South Asian Contexts* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 124.

[25] These two lists of *śakti*s are taken line for line from chapter 11 of the *Śāradātilakatantra* (~12th century).

their martial implements, as the *śakti* of Vindhyavāsinī and therefore as the primary motivating power of the kingdom. Immediately after the ritual invocation of the divine feminine powers by the priest for the sake of the kingdom, the text states that the "entire royal ceremony" should be displayed.[26] This part of the ritual includes the presentation of the emblems of kingship, such as a flywhisk and royal umbrella. Combining the invocation of the divine feminine energies into the *maṇḍala* together with a royal ritual is clearly indicating the unification of feminine protective powers in support of royal power and its concomitant right to rule. A single great goddess surrounded by a retinue of eight lesser *śakti*s/goddesses in order to create a circle of Nine Durgās is not uncommon in South Asia. In reference to the Mallas of Nepal, White writes, "[The Mallas] worshipped the Nine Durgās during the season of military campaigns and called upon the Eight Mothers to protect the borders of their city-states from invasion. Durgā, their goddess of war, also identified as their clan goddess Taleju, had a shrine in every fort and garrison, and presided over the defense of the kingdom."[27] I argue that the circle of eight *śakti*s within the Vindhyavāsinī *maṇḍala* exists for much the same purpose. I will reflect further on the historical context underlying the *ELP* in the next section, but for now it should certainly be noted that the *ELP*, written during the time of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā, is a clear reflection of its militarily turbulent times. Mahārāṇā Kumbhā was waging constant war against the sultans of Malwa and Gujarat in an ever-evolving cyclic process of state expansion and defense, and, as is expected, the worship of martial goddesses was central to the protection of the state. During his reign Mahārāṇā Kumbhā was also engaging in aggressive military expansion and the construction of defensive positions throughout Mewar, and in this task he needed local, administrative, and religious support.[28] Drawing on

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[26] *ELP* 31.37: *rājopacārānakhilān darśayitvā nṛpottama | stutvā yathāvat praṇabhed bhaktiyuktas tu sādhakaḥ ||*

[27] David White, *Kiss of the Yoginī*, 132.

[28] For a description of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's military expansions see Kapur 2002, 174-84.

alternately named Rāṣṭraśyenī.[32] As Rāṣṭrasenā—"[Goddess of the] Army of the State"—she has a clear role as a warrior goddess and protector of the empire. However, Rāṣṭraśyenī—"[Goddess Who is the] Hawk of the State"—is more complicated to unpack. Let me now turn to the importance of this description of Rāṣṭrasenā as a hawk, or hawk-faced, goddess in Sanskrit literature and the Hindu tradition more generally, and for Mewar specifically.

Of Birds and Goddesses

Animal and bird-headed goddesses have a long pedigree in Indian religious traditions. Space does not permit me to delve into a more complicated historical treatment of mother goddesses in South Asia, with whom these theriomorphic divine figures are no doubt associated. Instead, I will trace the historical development of specifically bird-headed goddesses in the Hindu tradition, placing particular emphasis on their relationship with Vindhyavāsinī.[33]

Bird-headed goddesses are most closely associated with the divine grouping of female figures known as the "Mothers" (*mātṛs/mātṛkā*s), but have other connections with Yakṣiṇīs (female tree spirits) and Grahaṇīs (female Seizers). The earliest material and literary evidence for independent mother goddesses is found in the Kuṣāṇa period sculptural and literary record (1st-3rd centuries CE), although it is almost certain that these records are a codification (and perhaps domestication) of local, non-Aryan goddesses. These mother goddesses—specifically the Grahaṇī/Mātṛ type directly connected to the narrative of the birth of the warrior-god Skanda found in the Mahābhārata—are sometimes depicted as feral dogs and cows, but more commonly as birds.

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[32] *ELP,* 29.1.

[33] For a more detailed analysis of South Asian mother goddesses see White, David. *Kiss of the Yoginī: Tantric Sex in its South Asian Contexts.*" Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003; Shaman Hatley, "From *Mātṛ* to *Yoginī*: Continuity and Transformation in the South Asian Cults of the Mother Goddesses," in *Transformations and Transfer of Tantra in Asia and Beyond*, ed. István Keul (New York: De Gruyter, 2012), 99-129.

David White notes that "Most [mother goddesses] fall into the latter [bird] category: these include Kākī, Ṣaṣṭhī, Vinatā, Revatī, and Pūtanā, as well as the many nameless bird-headed Mothers depicted in Kushan-era sculpture."[34] The above listed goddesses are all associated with birds, being in fact depicted in the available records as either bird-headed or as entirely avian: Ṣaṣṭhī is named "Winged Ṣaṣṭhī (*pakṣa-ṣaṣṭhī)*; Revatī is described as a bird and a female Grahī; and Pūtanā is similarly described as a bird in the *Harivaṃśa* and alternatively named Pūtanā Śakunī (Stinky Female Bird).[35] In the *Gauḍavaho* Revatī is said to be the attendant of Vindhyavāsinī.[36] These goddesses are also often connected to disease, childbirth and children, and inauspicious locations such as forests, trees, cross-roads, or mountains. These goddesses become important for the current argument through their connection to the pan-Indian goddess Vindhyavāsinī—the very same Vindhyavāsinī found in the *ELP* narrative. In fact, the goddesses referred to above in the Mewar inscriptional and literary record—Araṇyavāsinī, Vaṭayakṣinīdevī, and Rāṣṭrasenā—are all connected to forests, trees and mountains.

The sixth century *Skandapurāṇa* depicts a battle between the goddess Vindhyavāsinī and an army headed by the demons (*daitya*s) Śumbha and Niśumbha. At the start of the battle Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī emits from her body (specifically from her limbs) a retinue of terrifying female figures who lead their own individual troops of animal-headed women. Included in the long list of names of these theriomorphic goddesses are Revatī, Pūtanā, and Ṣaṣṭhī—the same goddesses found in the Kushan-era sculptural and literary records.[37] These female goddess figures are armed with weapons and armor and are clearly meant to evoke a sense of dread not only to the demon army whom they are about to attack, but to the reader or listener of the narrative as well. Yokochi

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[34] David White, *Kiss of the Yoginī*, 58.
[35] See White 2003.
[36] N.P. Joshi. *Mātṛkās; Mothers in Kuṣāṇa Art*. New Delhi: Kanak, 1986.
[37] *The Skandapurāṇa* (*SP III*), *Volume III, The Vindhyavāsinī Cycle*, ed. by Yuko Yokochi (Brill: Groningen, 2013), 214.

summarizes the scene thus:

> Then, beating drums and shouting battle-cries the well-armed goddesses go before Devī. Their battle-cries disconcert the demons and terrify the elephants and horses in their army into discharging excreta. They seem to make the earth quake, the oceans tremble and mountains shudder, and to split the roof of the sky. Looking like a mass of clouds in the rainy season, adorned with banners and standards, the army of the goddesses rapidly approaches the demons. The demons see the menacing army approaching them.[38]

The frightening appearance of these goddesses serves the purpose of instilling in the reader or listener an image of the dreadful nature of these emanations of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī, emphasizing as it does their nature as warrior goddesses capable of destroying any foe, demon or otherwise. It is not a mere narrative flourish to describe these goddesses as terrifying on the battlefield. Instead, it serves a deeper didactic purpose, which is to describe to the audience in no uncertain terms that even these "smaller" goddesses—"portions" (*aṃśa*) of the greatness of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī—are nonetheless powerful warriors in their own right.

After the battle, where the goddesses are victorious, Kauśikī places all the emanated goddesses in cities and regions throughout the subcontinent. Some of these emitted goddesses go on to inhabit specific locations, while others are placed in "various other villages, cities and towns or on mountains."[39] This is important for the immediate narrative development of the Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī story, and it is especially important for the *ELP* narrative. It could be argued that this *SP* episode is a narrative explanation of the presence of local and regional goddesses in particular locations, and in fact accounts for the existence of any local goddesses whether or not they are explicitly identified as deities within the Brahmanical fold. The *SP* narrative suggests the existence of the divine feminine at the local level (not to say tribal), and these divinities possibly served as tutelary warrior goddesses for growing regional kingdoms throughout the subcontinent. Yokochi, commenting on this very passage, observes:

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[38] Yokochi, *The Skandapurāṇa III*, 126-127.
[39] Yokochi, *The Skandapurāṇa III*, 135.

> This relationship between Kauśiki and the secondary goddesses may be analogous to that between a sovereign and his vassals. So it may be not too much to say that Vindhyavasinī, in the Kauśiki cycle, came to reflect the image of a sovereign who, assuming the overlordship of all the earth, gives his vassals the offices of the actual control over their territories—so to speak, the image of cakravartin.[40]

In fact, this is strongly in line with my argument regarding the development of the divine feminine in Mewar. As will be discussed below, the divine feminine in Mewar is frequently associated with mountains and hilltops. Being placed upon a hilltop, particularly if that hilltop is in a militarily strategic location, speaks to the local nature of the goddess situated there (even if she is later identified with a "high" Sanskrit goddess such as Durgā) and speaks to her nature as a potential warrior goddess protecting the regional kingdom (*kuladevī*). These local goddesses, associated with the Mātṛs and Grahanīs examined above, carry the sense of transmitters and expellers of pestilence and disease, along with their more explicitly martial duties of defeating demons at the periphery of the kingdom. Outside foes, whether narrativized as demons or politicized as dangerous outside armies, are pacified (destroyed) in the same way that these goddesses pacify disease and pestilence. We will encounter a very similar idea when we investigate the role of the wish-granting cow in the *ELP* in chapter four of this dissertation.

Michael Meister has located a late eighth century temple to the local goddess Pāḍāmātā in Didwana, Rajasthan that is, in part, quite possibly depicting the emergence of bird-headed goddesses from the body of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī—a direct architectural representation of the narrative we find in the *SP*.[41] The early date for this temple, and the compelling evidence for its depiction of the *SP* narrative of Vindhyavāsinī and her bird-headed companions, lends weight to the argument that this narrative was not only known to be circulating in Rajasthan, but that it was

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[40] Yokochi, "The Rise of the Warrior Goddess in Ancient India," 124.
[41] Michael Meister, "Gaurīśikhara: Temple as an Ocean of Story," *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 69, No. 2, *"To My Mind": Studies in South Asian Art History in Honor of Joanna Gottfried Williams.* Part I (2009), 295-315.

important enough to be represented architecturally and embodied in the sacred landscape. While Meister is not able to reflect on the exact political importance of this temple or its placement in the physical landscape, it certainly points to the idea that text and physical site can be dialogically related if placed in conversation with each other.

I will turn now to the role of Rāṣṭrasenā in the *ELP* and in the larger socio-political landscape of Mewar.

Rāṣṭrasenā: Goddess of War

Rāṣṭrasenā (today known as Rāṭhāsaṇ Mātājī) appears for the first time in the *ELP*. There is no mention of this goddess in the inscriptional record or any other record predating the fifteenth century. It appears to be the case, then, that Rāṣṭrasenā was the creation of the authors of the *ELP*, at least as she was known by that name. It is perhaps possible that a tribal goddess had a home at the current hilltop site where the temple to Rāṣṭrasenā now sits, it being absorbed, as it were—or "Sanskritized"—by the narrative of the *ELP* and by Brahmans and the Hindu rulers of Mewar. While this is difficult to prove, there are a few certainties we can glean from the narrative of the *ELP*: Rāṣṭrasenā is a local warrior goddess emerging from the body of Vindhyavāsinī, she has the form of a kite or hawk (*śyenī*), and she exists for the protection of the kingdom of Mewar. Because of these characteristics—her emission from Vindhyavāsinī, her avian form, her martial nature, and her localism—I argue that Rāṣṭrasenā is a direct descendent of the Mātṛ/Grahinī goddess type found in the Kushan era records and in the *Skandapurāṇa*. Furthermore, I argue that it is because of increased military aggression by Sultanate forces that the authors of the *ELP* sought the protection of Rāṣṭrasenā, and her inclusion into the narrative was a major contribution to the understanding of sacred place and imagined geography in fifteenth-century Mewar. Due to the aforementioned features of Rāṣṭrasenā, I will also briefly consider her role as a tantric goddess of

the *yoginī* type, particularly as Ekaliṅga temple historically was a Pāśupata site until at least the 16th century.

Figure 3.2: The mountain (center) upon which sits Rāṣṭrasenā temple. Indra Sarovar is in the foreground. Photo by the author.

The temple to Rāṣṭrasenā sits high upon a hill about two miles east of Ekaliṅga temple, as the crow flies. While the current path up the hill is mostly paved, it is a steep and difficult climb. From behind the main boundary wall of Ekaliṅga, overlooking lake Indra Sarovar, you can see Rāṣṭrasenā's temple distinctly, dominating the immediate landscape. What is interesting for the current argument is the physical location of the temple to Rāṣṭrasenā—the fact that she forms a third "point" in a visual triangle in the physical landscape, comprised of herself, Ekaliṅga, and

Vindhyavāsinī. Rāṣṭrasenā's temple has a 360-degree view of the valley below which, for a long time, constituted the ancient capital of Mewar, Nāgdā. Rāṣṭrasenā, therefore, sits atop perhaps the most strategic hill in the surrounding area, having a bird's eye view of the valley, and particularly of Ekaliṅga, Vindhyavāsinī, and the ancient capital. Let me now return to the *ELP* and the argument laid out above concerning the historical context of theriomorphic goddesses in early Indian religious thought in order to connect the temple of Rāṣṭrasenā to the physical and textual landscape.

One of the most important passages in the *ELP* for the current argument occurs on 11.15-16. The passage reads as follows:

> Having emitted Rāṣṭrasenā from her own body, she [Rāṣṭrasenā] was then established there [on the hilltop]. Seeing her self-arisen form, [Vindhyavāsā], who was pleased, said these very words [to Rāṣṭrasenā]: "O goddess, having taken entirely the form of a hawk, [you are] the goddess who holds a vajra in her hand. For this reason protect the empire![42]

It is at this moment in the *ELP* narrative that Rāṣṭrasenā appears. She emerges from the body of Vindhyavāsinī, takes the form of a hawk, and is established on the very hilltop where she currently resides in order to protect the empire. In this verse Rāṣṭrasenā is depicted as holding a *vajra* weapon in her hand, and further on in the narrative she is described as carrying a sword, shield, bows, and arrows.[43] Given this description, Rāṣṭrasenā is unquestionably a warrior goddess who is invoked by the authors of the *ELP* and given a militarily strategic location in the geographical landscape in order to defend the empire. This story has several of the same elements that are in the depiction of the goddesses found in the *Skandapurāṇa*. To reiterate, the goddesses in the *SP* emerge from the limbs of Vindhyavāsinī, many are bird-headed, and after the battle they are distributed to local cities and villages—including hilltops—to serve as regional protectors fitting with their warrior

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[42] ELP 11.15-16ab: *svadehād rāṣṭrasenāṃ tāṃ sṛṣṭvā sthāpyātha tatra sā | tasyāḥ svarūpe dṛṣṭvā vai hṛṣṭā vākyamuvāca ha || śyenārūpaṃ samyagāsthāya devirāṣṭraṃ trāhi trāhyato vajrahastā |*
[43] ELP 29.8cd: *kaḍgacarmadharāṃ vīrāṃ dhanur bāṇopaśobhitām ||*

natures. Given her association with Vindhyavāsinī and, particularly, given her avian form and location in Mewar's physical landscape, it is clear that Rāṣṭrasenā is a descendent of the *mātṛ*/*grahaṇī* typology of goddess found in the Kushan era records and the *SP*.

Figure 3.3: The *mūrti* of Rāṣṭrasenā. Photo by the author.

Why does Rāṣṭrasenā emerge from the body of Vindhyavāsinī? What could be the reason for the inclusion of this particular myth in the *ELP*? According to the narrative, Rāṣṭrasenā emerges from Vindhyavāsinī in order to protect the Mewar kingdom from all sorts of demons and ghouls

by using her *māyā* to defeat them.[44] The *ELP* also states that Rāṣṭrasenā will protect Mewar from barbarians—"*yavana*"—a term which can be translated as "foreigner."[45] This reading makes sense when we consider the historical context at the time of the composition of the ELP in the mid to late fifteenth century described in chapter one of this dissertation. To reiterate, by the fifteenth century it is certain that the Ekaliṅga temple site had been threatened or attacked by Sultanate armies several times. Incursions by Delhi Sultan Altamsh, Sultan Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, Aḥmad Shāh of Gujarat, Ghīyāth-ud-dīn of Malwa and others paint a clear picture of constant threat and even destruction of the Ekaliṅga temple site.[46] Ekaliṅga was the most important site in the Mewar region because it was the center of religious power and political authority and legitimation for the Mewar royal family. As this regional kingdom grew in political power, so it became an increasingly looming threat to the Delhi Sultanate and other powers in the surrounding regions. Given the political context of repeated attacks on Ekaliṅga, and therefore on the state itself, it becomes apparent that the creation of a martial goddess would be of great importance for the authors of the *ELP*. As a potentially malevolent warrior goddess associated with death and disease who dwells high on a hilltop in the form of an eagle, and who has a strategic 360-degree view of the region, Rāṣṭrasenā is no mere afterthought to the textual landscape of the *ELP* or to the physical landscape of Mewar.

In the twenty-ninth chapter of the *ELP*, a chapter wholly devoted to the description of the rules for the worship of Rāṣṭrasenā, she is described as the family deity of Bappā Rāval, the

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[44] *ELP* 11.16: *duṣṭān daityān rākṣasān vai piśācān bhūtān pretān yoginījṛmbhakebhyaḥ || duṣṭagrahebhyo 'nyatamebhya evaṃ śyene trāṇaṃ medapāṭasya kāryam ye 'smin deśe prātiyotsyanti kecit te hantavyā māyayā duṣṭarūpāḥ ||*
[45] *ELP* 11.22: *rāṣṭraseneti nāmnīyaṃ medapāṭasya rakṣaṇam | karoti na ca bhaṅgo 'sya yavanebhyo 'parāga(da)pi ||*
[46] Tryna Lyons, "The Changing Faces of Ekaliṅga: A Dynastic Shrine and Its Artists." Asiae, Vol. 58, No. 3/4 (1999): 255-56.

mythico-historical progenitor of the Mewar royal family.[47] This is an important passage for several reasons. First, there is no mention in any other available record designating Rāṣṭrasenā as the *kuladevī* of Bappā Rāval. Today the *kuladevī* of the Mewar royal family is Bāṇmātā, and before this goddess the *kuladevī* was traditionally thought to be Kalikamātā followed by Ambamātā.[48] Bāṇmātā ("Arrow Mother") has clear associations with warfare, as we would expect from a militaristic regional power. Her militaristic overtones also connect her to Rāṣṭrasenā and Vindhyavāsinī as they are depicted in the literary record. Rāṣṭrasenā shares a set of common traits to other family goddesses in Rajasthan that are indicative of her status as *kuladevī* to the royal family, and the connection between her and Bāṇmātā is apparent. In her overview of *kuladevī* narratives collected in Rajasthan, Harlan describes a number of "fundamental points" shared by all of these *kuladevī*s, including divine guardianship of the king, his heirs, or the kingdom itself; direct association and protection of the king and his family; protection on the battlefield; and association with pan-Indian Sanskritic Goddesses, particularly Durgā.[49] Rāṣṭrasenā participates in these *kuladevī* characteristics through her status as a warrior goddess emitted from Vindhyavāsinī for the protection of Bappā Rāval and his kingdom from foreign invasion, specifically invasion by Sultanate armies. Her physical form as a bird or hawk is consistent with these other Rajasthani *kuladevī* narratives as well. As Harlan notes: "As the Rajput king and his army fight to subjugate new land, the *kuldevi* accompanies the king as a snake, sits on his shoulder as a green fly, or, in still another tale, flies above him as a kite (an eagle-like bird of prey)."[50] Given this evidence, it seems very possible that during the time of the composition of the *ELP* Rāṣṭrasenā was given the

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[47] ELP 29.1: *rāṣṭraśyenī purā proktā yā devī ripunāśinī | tasyāḥ pūjāvidhiṃ brūhi bāṣpāṇāṃ kuladaivatam ||*

[48] Lindsey Harlan, *Religion and Rajput Women: The Ethic of Protection in Contemporary Narratives*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 57.

[49] Harlan, *Religion and Rajput Women*, 59-60.

[50] Harlan, *Religion and Rajput Women*, 59-60.

role of *kuladevī* by the authors of the text. How long this goddess retained that position is not clear, particularly given the unclear history of the *kuladevī*s of the Sisodiya line of Guhilas. In a footnote to the narrative of Bāṇmātā, Harlan writes that, "The antecedents of Ban Mata are vague. Amba and Kalika are Sanskritic epithets and so do not characterize these goddesses as discrete local incarnations. As we shall see, these stories refer to a *kuldevi* preceding the appearance of Ban Mata but give her no specific local name or identity."[51] It is possible that the authors of the *ELP* attempted to put forth Rāṣṭrasenā as the *kuladevī* of Bappā Rāval, and therefore of the Sisodiya line—the rulers of Mewar during the fifteenth century—after which Bāṇmātā took over this role as warrior goddess and protector of the state. It could also be the case that Rāṣṭrasenā never became the official *kuladevī* of the royal family, but that at some point in the development of her narrative this particular aspect of her story was elided and entirely forgotten.

Tribes, Kings, and Goddesses

Given Rāṣṭrasenā's appearance in the form of a hawk born from the body of Vindhyavāsinī, and the fact, demonstrated above, that this indicates her status as a local/regional goddess, it is perhaps not a far leap to venture that Rāṣṭrasenā was originally a Bhil tribal goddess possibly occupying the very same physical site as she does now. It was a practice not altogether uncommon in South Asia that local village gods and goddesses in tribal regions were patronized and appropriated by royal powers during times of territorial expansion. As regional powers grew, they would naturally enter into areas occupied by tribal groups. These tribal elements were not always willing to let expanding royal kingdoms—with their Sanskritic gods and goddesses—into these areas. If a kingdom was intent on expanding, interaction with, and pacification of, these tribal groups was necessary. Based on the aforementioned inscriptional and literary references, it is clear that tribal

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[51] Harlan, *Religion and Rajput Women*, 57n12.

elements in Mewar during the ancient and early medieval period were ideologically linked to newly emerging royal kingdoms through the medium of local goddess worship. The patronage of local goddesses—such as Ghaṭṭavāsinī, Vaṭayakṣinīdevī, and Araṇyavāsinī—indicate a concerted effort on the part of the Guhilas to incorporate local, i.e. tribal, goddesses into the expanding state structure dependent on these legitimizing agents. Regarding the worship of local goddesses in south Orissa, Schnepel writes:

> Royal patronage of powerful and respected local goddesses was one of the most effective means available to an outside king seeking to obtain the trust and support of the original inhabitants of his new realm. It established some kind of legitimacy for these kings, since it linked them ideologically and ritually to the very earth of their kingdoms and to their tribal inhabitants.[52]

That the patronage of local goddesses was initially more influential than patronage to Śaiva temples in the early formation of state structure in the Nāgdā-Āhaḍa region is born out in the inscriptional record. From the seventh to tenth centuries we have no evidence referring to a temple to Śiva in this region.[53] It's not until 971 CE that we have the first epigraphic reference to the construction of Ekaliṅga temple and direct reference to the Pāśupatas.[54]

As mentioned above, Rāṣṭrasenā does not appear in any other record before the fifteenth century *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa*. My argument is in part that Vindhyavāsinī gained increased importance in the Mewar region because of the narrative surrounding her emission of regional, theriomorphic goddesses in times of war; Vindhyavāsinī is present in the text in order to facilitate the acceptance of the local war goddess Rāṣṭrasenā. It could very well be that Rāṣṭrasenā was a complete creation of the authors of the *ELP*, but I find it more plausible that an already existing tribal deity associated with the Bhil tribal groups in the region was adopted for this very purpose. Further support for this possibility is found in the literary and epigraphical records dating to the period of the thirteenth to

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[52] Schnepel, "Durga and the King," 149.
[53] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 210.
[54] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 211.

fifteenth centuries, the very time period in which the *ELP* was written and Rāṣṭrasenā introduced.

The Bhil tribal groups have had a long relationship with the Guhila kings of Mewar, as might be expected. The narratives related to the formation of the Guhila kingdom in Mewar at its earliest stage all have a connection in some way to the Bhil tribes, and their political integration into the larger state structure is evident in these stories. For the period in question—the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries—we see both an attempt to integrate Bhil groups into the Guhila state structure, as well as attempts to defend the state against Bhil aggressions.[55] Local traditions and modern memorial sites in Mewar, such as City Palace Museum and Moti Magri in Udaipur, preserve narratives relating Bhil participation in the battles fought by Rāṇā Hammīra, and especially the battle of Haldīghāṭī under Mahārāṇā Pratāp. At the same time, particularly in the fifteenth century, as Kapur notes, "Every possible step was taken to fend off possible attacks by Bhils."[56] Furthermore, due to recurrent revolts by the Bhils in the fifteenth century, Mahārāṇā Kumbhā engaged in the largest fort building and repair operation to that date, especially at mountain passes where Bhils typically were the most difficult to control.[57] Bhils were known to control and protect the forest, hill, and cave passes that were essential in the larger trade networks of Mewar inside and outside of the region, and so control of the Bhil tribes by the Guhila state was essential to economic state expansion as well. Protection of Mewar's political and economic structure was in many ways dependent on the control of potentially aggressive Bhil forces, and this control was, in part, centered on assimilation and pacification through the adoption of local religious elements. The pacification of the Bhils through religious devotion is in fact recorded in the literary record. Chapter twenty-eight of the *ELP* states that the Bhil tribes were made to abandon their violent

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[55] This point will be taken in up in the next chapter.
[56] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 132.
[57] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 174.

behavior through their devotion to Śiva.[58] Rāṣṭrasenā was given space in the literary landscape—in the *ELP*—as a theriomorphic regional goddess who protects the state from invading armies, and she was also given a physical site in the geographic landscape—on top of a militarily strategic hill—as a possible takeover of a previous local Bhil goddess in an attempt to pacify tribal aggressions toward the Guhila state and their control of key trade passes.

Furthermore, local goddesses, such as Rāṣṭrasenā, were instrumental in helping to legitimize Guhila rule in the eyes of the tribal populations. Rāṣṭrasenā never became more than a regional goddess in Mewar, and this may have to do with her liminal status as both tribal/local goddess and as a goddess placed within the Hindu fold as the emanation of the pan-Hindu Vindhyavāsinī. However, despite her merely regional importance, after the fifteenth century Rāṣṭrasenā became central to the ritual policy of the Mewari rulers, and by the seventeenth century the power of royal legitimation had shifted entirely to Rāṣṭrasenā.[59]

Rāṣṭrasenā as Yoginī

Although the term is never used in the *ELP*, Rāṣṭrasenā fits the polythetic character type of the *yoginī* in her narrative description and in her placement in the physical landscape. This relationship is most closely identified in the connection between the sixty-four *yoginī*s and the Eight Mothers. One of the sixty-four *yoginī*s listed in the *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* of the *Skandapurāṇa* is Śyenī, a hawk-faced or hawk-formed goddess whose name has clear connections with Rāṣṭraśyenā of the ELP.[60] Other sources standardize the tradition that has the sixty-four *yoginī*s deriving from the Eight

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[58] *ELP* 28.45cd-46ab: *bhillaś ca vividhākārair vṛtaṃ paramadhārmikaiḥ || śivabhaktir atair vīrair bhūtahiṃsādivarijitaiḥ |* I will discuss this passage further in the next chapter.

[59] Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 261; Muhaṇota Nainsī, *Muṃhata Nainsī rī Khyāt*, ed. by Acharya Jinavijaya Muni (Jodhpur: Rājasthāna Prācyavidyā Pratishṭhana, 1960), 11.

[60] Vidya Dehejia, *Yoginī Cult and Temples*, (New Delhi: National Museum, 1986), 215.

Mothers (*aṣṭamātṛkā*).[61] There is a connection, then, between the Eight Mothers, the sixty-four theriomorphic *yoginī*s who derive from them, and Rāṣṭrasenā in Mewar. As tutelary goddess (*kuladevī*) of Bappā Rāval and therefore as protector of the realm, Rāṣṭrasenā was the closest link between the ruling family in Mewar and the other royal families and inhabitants of the realm.

In Rajasthan, as elsewhere, affiliation with a clan goddess was central to the symbolic and actual rule over the kingdom. Ekaliṅga remained central to the royal cultus in Mewar, but the establishment of a *kuladevī* was important for local control over the inhabitants of the land, as well as for establishing relationships and marriages among royal families. White notes that "it was the latter group [the *kuladevī*s] that ratified and energized the pragmatic religious life of the kingdom as a whole, both as the great family of the king and his people, and as an embodied cosmos of people, ancestors, animals, and land."[62] That Rāṣṭrasenā is both *kuladevī* and *yoginī* should not be altogether surprising; *kuladevī* and *yoginī* both served as protectors of the realm, and specifically of the royal lineage during the early medieval period with which we are concerned. As embodiments of divine female power and liminal danger inhabiting forests, mountains, and other "dangerous" spaces, they are ideally purposed to serve as warriors who stand guard at the edges of the royal center of power. White, referring to the city-states of the Kathmandu Valley, writes: "The fierce or wrathful deities located at the periphery of the royal mandala have often been female—circles of wild animal-or bird-headed goddesses—a reminder once again that the activated energy that flows through the Tantric mandala is nearly always feminine."[63] Rāṣṭrasenā, sitting as she does high on a hill in the form of a hawk at the periphery of the religious center of Mewar, fits the warrior-protector *yoginī* type illustrated above. This is further supported by the description of Vindhyavāsinī's *maṇḍala* in the *ELP*, wherein a circle of eight *śakti*s along with

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[61] Dehejia, *Yoginī Cult and Temples*, 30.
[62] White, *Kiss of the Yoginī,* 127.
[63] White, *Kiss of the Yoginī,* 132.

their weapons surround Vindhyavāsinī. That Rāṣṭrasenā emerges from the body of such a goddess and her retinue of eight powers indicates her link to the *yoginī* typology of goddesses.

Conclusion

I want to stress the importance of the built environment, geographical landscape, and historical context in the understanding of the relationship between Vindhyavāsinī, Rāṣṭrasenā, and Ekaliṅga as presented in the *ELP* and other sources. As noted above, Rāṣṭrasenā does not exist in any available record before the late fifteenth-century *ELP*. The hill upon which she, in her temple, resides today was made sacred simultaneously through her emergence in both the narrative landscape and the geographical landscape. Placing Vindhyavāsinī directly next to Ekaliṅga temple was a strategic action on the part of the architects, priests, and royal powers in Mewar. Vindhyavāsinī occupies a physical place in the geographical and sacred landscape that is emblematic of her role as wife of Ekaliṅga and her importance in the royal cult. Rāṣṭrasenā, likewise, is positioned strategically on a hilltop—a topographically dominant place—as an indication of her role as *yoginī* and *kuladevī* of the royal family of Mewar. If we can imagine Vindhyavāsinī and Ekaliṅga temples forming the base of a triangle, Rāṣṭrasenā occupies the top point of that triangle. Her *mūrti* faces Ekaliṅga and Vindhyavāsinī, as well as the ancient capital of Mewar, Nāgdā. The physical emplacement of these three temples in the landscape is no mere accident; one can visibly see, in a certain sense, how Rāṣṭrasenā was emitted from the "body" of Vindhyavāsinī—that is, from her physical temple—and placed upon a hilltop in her architectural form. The "body" of this goddess is, in this case, also her physical temple, and this architectural aspect is also tied directly to the geographical landscape, which, for those who live in the region, is also the sacred landscape.

It may be the case, as Ulrike Teuscher notes, that the section on Rāṣṭrasenā was "a later addition to the EM [*ELP*]," but there is no evidence to support his claim that Rāṣṭrasenā was "a completely marginal figure" in that narrative.[64] Rāṣṭrasenā was introduced into the *ELP*, and into the geographical landscape, precisely because she was *not* a marginal figure. Determining the textual layers to Purāṇic narratives is notoriously difficult, and perhaps even inherently flawed in an attempt to arrive at distinct historical strands and therefore at the "true" meaning of the text. For the purposes of this argument I am considering the text in the way that it was presented by the authors to its intended audience at the time when Rāṣṭrasenā was included in the narrative. For the authors of the *ELP*, Rāṣṭrasenā was anything but marginal. Given the historical context behind the creation of such a goddess outlined above, it is clear that Rāṣṭrasenā was included in the text intentionally, her narrative no mere accident or marginal inclusion.

The authors of the *ELP* were in a constant dialogical relationship with other textual traditions, such as the *Skandapurāṇa* and local inscriptions, and they were also contextually related to the changing historical realities in which they lived, as well as with the geographical environment. Rāṣṭrasenā is made central to the *ELP* narrative through her emission from the body of the pan-Indian Hindu goddess Vindhyavāsinī, but she also emerges as an important regional goddess *because* of a changing political and military reality, one characterized by the violent external incursions by the Delhi Sultanate as well as the internal threat of the Bhil people. This is the very dialogical nature of text, temple, and landscape that is so central to the production of sacred space. To again quote Inden: "We want to think of texts as works enmeshed in the circumstances in which people have made and used them, and we want to see them both as articulating the world in which they are situated and as articulated by it, that is, as integral to the

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[64] Teuscher, "Changing Eklingji," 15n5.

makeup of one another."[65] Whatever the status of the hilltop may have been before Rāṣṭrasenā took up residence there, the site was certainly given a deeper sacred significance because of the creation of the Rāṣṭrasenā narrative in the *ELP*. At the same time, Rāṣṭrasenā was inserted into the *ELP* narrative because of the changing historical context. Rāṣṭrasenā articulated the world in to which she was inserted through the creation of a new sacred site on the hilltop, and she was articulated by the world through the changing historical context and political demands during the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries. Textual landscape, the built environment, and the geographical landscape converged to establish, in a very real way, a newly articulated sacred landscape in the case of Rāṣṭrasenā. Textual events such as this "take place" in the narrative landscape as much as they "make space" in the physical landscape.

In the next chapter I examine the role of the landscape, both sacred and geographical, of Mewar in the construction of a microcosmic map of the kingdom, this through a close reading of the *ELP*. I argue that the *ELP* presents a locative view of the cosmos that is directly tied to the local landscape of Mewar, and that in order to understand the role of geography and its connections to the built environment and textuality, we must also investigate the role of divine and human bodies in the organization of sacred space.

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[65] Inden, *Querying the Medieval*, 3.

Chapter Four

Landscape: Dismembering Demons in Mewar's Sacred Geography

This chapter examines the representations of divine and human bodies and spatial practices in the *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa*, and in particular how those textual representations are manifested in the geographical and built environment of Mewar. I argue that to understand the importance of Ekaliṅga temple and its function as the royal center of political power and religious authority in the Mewar region of early medieval Rajasthan, we have to examine the textual representations of divine and human bodies as they relate to the built environment and the geographical landscape. Bodies, human and divine, serve as blueprints for the geographical landscape and for the Hindu temple, and as such they mediate between structured order on one hand and chaos—represented mythologically as cosmogonic time before the creation of geographical place, and politically by geographical spaces outside of political control—on the other. In the *ELP* the body serves as the blueprint for cosmic and political order that is in constant struggle against the dangers of primordial chaos and political instability.

The *ELP* is, I argue, a political and cultural "rebranding" of the kingdom after its near destruction during the turbulent centuries of the Sultanate incursions in the early fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This "rebranding" took the form of the reestablishment of the territorial boundaries of the kingdom through the creation, in both narrative and geographic space, of temples, bathing tanks, and other built structures. In cosmological and political terms, what lay beyond these boundaries represented a threat to the structure and order of the kingdom of Mewar. In additional to the threats posed by the Delhi Sultanate, within and outside the boundaries of the kingdom there lived Bhil tribes who represented a constant threat to the political stability of the kingdom, as I will demonstrate below. Cosmologically, what lay beyond the boundaries of Mewar

was unstructured, chaotic, and dangerous space populated by demons and other impure and threatening beings. So, what became of foremost importance to the authors of the *ELP*, and by extension to the royal court of Mewar, was the maintenance and protection of the boundaries of their domain. What will be investigated below are the ways in which the royal court, through the composition of the *ELP*, represented and negotiated these dangerous beings that lay beyond the boundaries of their territory. Toward this end, I will first begin with a discussion of space and place in western academic theory and then move on to the *ELP* specifically.

Space and Place in the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*

This chapter will be concerned with the relationship between bodies—both human and divine—and territorial and political boundaries. Boundaries between bodies and between political and territorial spaces, including 'sacred' spaces, become locations of contestation and negotiation in both mythological and political terms. This is what Chidester and Linenthal were referring to when they discussed the "symbolic violence of domination or exclusion that is frequently involved in the making of sacred place."[1] Those in positions of political power can appropriate not only material objects and physical spaces in the pursuit of implicit or explicit domination, but they can also appropriate symbolic spaces. Chidester and Linenthal note: "In a similar way [to appropriating physical space], symbolic space can also be appropriated. The sacred character of a place can be asserted and maintained through claims and counter-claims on its ownership. The sacrality of place, therefore, can be directly related to a politics of property."[2] What I will investigate here are the ways in which the royal court sought to establish and maintain the borders of their kingdom

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[1] Chidester and Linenthal, *American Sacred Space*, 17-18.
[2] Chidester and Linenthal, *American Sacred Space*, 8.

through the composition of the *ELP*, a text that is a narrative expression of the symbolic control over religious and political territory.

In this chapter I argue that representations of the human body in the *ELP* are coextensive with and equated to political and geographical territory, and interactions between body and landscape take place at the very limits of each, that is, at boundary locations in the geographical landscape and boundaries between human and divine bodies. Representations of the human body and representations of territorially and politically bounded spaces are mapped on to each other, and it is through the interaction of these two symbolic realms that the *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa* was able to construct a cognitive and cosmic map of the kingdom of Mewar in their pursuit of territorial control. In this formulation I am following several scholars of religion, including Veikko Anttonen who writes, "Just as the body is an entity with boundaries, the bodily openings are border zones through which life flows in or out in a similar manner as people transgress international borders in entrance and exit sites. The human body and territory are always in symbolic interaction."[3] The interaction between bodily boundaries and territorial boundaries in the *ELP*—and the dangers that crossing these boundaries represented—had real implications for how the rulers of Mewar attempted to control the dangerous and chaotic forces that lay just beyond the actual political boundaries of their kingdom.

The argument of this chapter relies on a particular understanding of "sacred space," a scholarly term the definition of which is debated. I understand sacred spaces to be physical places that are set apart from other "profane" geographical locations through ritual practices that transform ordinary space into sacred space. Sacred spaces, furthermore, are inherently relational,

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[3] Veikko Anttonen, "Rethinking the Sacred: The Notions of 'Human Body' and 'Territory' in Conceptualizing Religion," in *The Sacred and Its Scholars: Comparative Methodologies for the Study of Primary Religious Data*, ed. Thomas A. Idinopulos and Edward A. Yonan (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 52.

contested, and are the locations of economic, political, social, and symbolic power. In my analysis

of space, place, and embodiment in the *ELP* I will draw from several theoretical models, most

importantly Henri Lefebvre, Viekko Anttonen, and Thomas Tweed, among others. The writings

of these scholars emphasize the situational and fluid notion of space and the body, such that

territorially bounded regions, and physically bounded human bodies, obtain their very sacredness

through a constant process of boundary negotiation as well as through the dynamics of various

expressions of symbolic power. Ritual is central to the understanding of sacred space, because it

is ritual that consecrates everyday space and sets it apart as extraordinary and imbued with the

divine. Ritual, of course, is performed by embodied beings, and so the body is a fundamental

element of sacred space, serving in many ways as a metaphor for the natural, geographical

landscape as well as for the built environment. Additionally, sacred spaces often function as

centers of religious power and political control. Even if only temporary, sacred spaces can serve

as political centers in opposition to the ordinary, profane, and at times dangerous peripheral spaces

that exist beyond the boundaries of sacred spaces.

I want to emphasize the important role of center and periphery, boundary and limit, and

other metaphorical and literal understandings of orientation in the idea of the sacred. The sacred is

relational, but sacred spaces often become centers of religious, political, and social power. In order

to understand the role of sacred space in the lives of religious practitioners we have to attend not

only to these spaces as centers of geographical, social, and cosmic orientation—we must also

attend to the boundaries, boarders, and peripheries that surround such sacred centers. Sacred spaces

provide orientation—local, national, cosmic—but the actual power of these spaces is precisely at

their boundaries and limits, because the sacred itself is defined in opposition to what lies beyond

those very boundaries: the profane, the impure, and the dangerous. The boundaries of the sacred,

and what lies beyond them, can be as small as the walls of a temple or, as I argue here, as large as

the (imagined) boundaries of a kingdom. Peripheries and boundaries are also central in the construction of religious, political, and social identities because of the ideological work they do in defining who, or what, is inside and outside of those boundaries. On this issue Thomas Tweed remarks:

> Religions position women and men in natural terrain and social space. Appealing to supranatural forces for legitimation, they prescribe social locations: you are this and you belong here…Religions, in other words, involve homemaking. They construct a home—and a homeland. They delineate domestic and public space and construct collective identity. Religions distinguish us and them—and prescribe where and how both should live.[4]

Taking Tweed's understanding of the ways in which religions orient people in their natural and social landscapes, I argue for the orienting and identity shaping power of sacred space, particularly when those spaces serve doubly as the very markers of political territory.

I also follow Tweed when he argues for a fluid definition of religion, which emphasizes not only place-making through the building of homes, temples, and other social centers but that also emphasizes movement across boundaries and through/across social space. Tweed pushes against a static understanding of religion, arguing instead for a dynamic definition that not only stresses homemaking and dwelling but also movement, contestation, negotiation, and re-orientation. Religion is a process of orientation—to the home, to the immediate landscape, and to the cosmos—and *as a process* religion constantly struggles against the ever-present threat of disorientation and chaos. If we understand religions as fluid and dynamic cartographies of orientation, then "we can understand religions as always-contested and ever-changing maps that orient devotees as they move spatially and temporally. Religions are partial, tentative, and continually redrawn sketches of where we are, where we've been, and where we're going."[5] What

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[4] Thomas Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 75.

[5] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling,* 74.

Tweed stresses, and what I would like to demonstrate in this chapter, is that religion as a map of geographic, social, and cosmic orientation does not stay fixed. Like texts and their surrounding intertextual webs, center and periphery are relative terms that are in constant tension.

What does this all mean for the representations of sacred space in the *ELP*? The political boundaries of the kingdom of Mewar are of foremost concern to the authors of the text, and as such the narrative begins with the formation of the earth, which I argue is coextensive with the boundaries of the kingdom of Mewar (Medapāṭa) itself. As I will describe later in this chapter, the earth was formed from the fat and other body parts of two demons killed by Viṣṇu, after which their bodies serve as the territorial limits of the kingdom. What is beyond the boundaries of the kingdom's territory, and what is beyond the boundaries of the (divine or demonic) body is described as dangerous, chaotic, and impure. One of the implicit goals of the authors of the text, then, is to protect the boundaries of the kingdom through the establishment and maintenance of temples, bathing tanks, and other sacred spaces that function at the same time as the limits of the divine body. In the following section I will make clear the relationship between embodiment, the built environment, and the geographical landscape.

From Body to Territory

Hindu temples in South Asia are never finished structures, never wholly completed physical sites. Temples are complex things, and the ebb and flow of their popularity is determined by multiple factors such as ritual efficacy, royal patronage, and mythological elaborations, to name a few. To say that a temple is never finished is to consider a temple through both diachronic and synchronic lenses; temples are constantly imagined and reimagined in the minds and stories of those who visit and maintain them. Temples often serve as physical loci in which individuals and groups from near and far enact social, political, and religious identities, and it is these identities that give new

meaning to a temple site. Importantly, temples in South Asia almost never exist alone in the geographical landscape, or in the sacred landscape. Large temples as well as small participate in larger and larger webs of relationships with other local, regional, and even trans-regional (national) sacred sites. To posit the study of a single site, then, is never the full story; a single temple must always be investigated in its entire geographical, literary, and spatial contexts. So, if there is indeed a relationship between physical temple site in the geographical landscape and the representations of that temple in the literary landscape, what is it that serves to link the two together? What serves as the mediator? To establish this link, let us take a look at the role of the "body" in Hindu narrative traditions.

In Hinduism, as in other religious traditions, there is an intimate relationship between the body and social space. In fact, following Lefebvre, social space implies the body and follows from it. Lefebvre writes: "The whole of (social) space proceeds from the body, even though it so metamorphoses the body that it may forget it altogether—even though it may separate itself so radically from the body as to kill it. The genesis of a far-away order can be accounted for only on the basis of the order that is nearest to us—namely the order of the body."[6] Body and territory are coterminous, the one implying the other. What I want to stress is this very intimate relationship between territory and the human body, as very frequently Hindu traditions make this same argument, as I demonstrate below. In my argument I will follow Veikko Antonnen who argues that the relationship between body and territory is related to the relationship between center and periphery and the visible and invisible. Antonnen, in "Rethinking the Sacred: The Notions of 'Human Body' and 'Territory' in Conceptualizing Religion" makes the argument for the coterminous nature of body and territory through the notion of the visible and the invisible, where the visible is continuous with the external body and the inside of the territory, and the invisible is

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[6] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 405.

continuous with the internal body and the outside of the territory. He argues that "any cultural system can exist only when there is symbolic interaction between the inside and the outside and between the visible and the invisible. The outside of the human body is continuous with the inside of the territory; they are both perceivable aspects of social life. The inside of the human body is continuous with the outside of the territory; they are both invisible."[7] In an Indian context, the natural landscape, the built environment, and representations of bodies all interrelate to establish the political order of the kingdom—its boundaries—and they serve to symbolically represent the dangers that lay beyond them.

Representations of the body—human, animal, divine—and their connections to the sacred has a long history in the religious narratives of Hindus in India. Hindu religious narratives imagine a topography that is absolutely imbued with the divine; mountains, rivers, lakes, forests, and other natural landforms are often connected with sacred narratives that relate the stories of their physical emplacement within the larger topography of the Indian subcontinent. The physical placement of natural topographic features within the larger Indian landscape often takes place with reference to divine bodies—their eruption from the earth, or their dismemberment—and the ways in which those bodies make up the very space of India. The body of the divine, distributed across the physical landscape is, I argue, the primary metaphor for the creation of sacred space within the Indian Hindu tradition. This metaphor of the distributed divine form upon the physical landscape is important for an understanding of how human actors negotiate sacred places, and it is also important for a consideration of how regional and trans-regional identities were imagined and re-imagined in early medieval Mewar.

From very early on in the Hindu religious world divine bodies are seen as the foundation of the geographical landscape. In fact, one of the hymns in the Vedic tradition speaks of the

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[7] Antonnen, "Rethinking the Sacred," 42.

dismemberment of a cosmic giant and the subsequent placement of his body parts into a newly formed world. In one of the most well-known hymns in the Ṛg Veda, known as the *Puruṣa Sūkta* ("The Hymn of Man), the entire earth, and even what lay beyond the earth, is pervaded by a cosmic giant who has, "a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet."[8] From this cosmic giant all beings were born, including animals, humans, and even the gods Agni and Indra.[9] Naturally, as all beings were born from this cosmic Man, so did the division of the universe emerge from the parts of his body: "From his navel the middle realm of space arose; from his head the sky evolved. From his two feet came the earth, and the quarters of the sky from his ear. Thus they set the worlds in order."[10] This hymn is telling us something very specific about the order of the world, namely that space and place do not exist apart from the body. Edward Casey, reflecting on the relationship between place and body in a similar dismemberment myth in the Babylonian *Enuma Elish*, writes: "If the Babylonian legend is telling us anything, it is that body and place belong together from the very beginning. Their fate is linked—not only at the start but at subsequent stages as well."[11] Bodies are not only blueprints for the built environment, but more broadly they are the very foundation of reality itself; the body, cosmic or otherwise, is the locus of world creation and the source for the very establishment of one's orientation in the physical world. The myth found in the *Puruṣa Sūkta* is making the claim that bodies come first, not only mythologically and cosmologically, but also experientially. It is the human body that first brings meaning to a place, and regional or trans-regional identities emerge from the contact between body and landscape. As J.Z. Smith writes: "It is the relationship to the human body, and our experience of it, that orients

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[8] *Rg Veda* 10.90.1. The *Puruṣa Sūkta* is a relatively late hymn and "was certainly the final addition to the codified Ṛgveda" according to Jamison and Brereton. See *The Rigveda: The Earliest Religious Poetry of India. Volume III*" trans. Stephanie W. Jamison and Joel P. Brereton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1367.
[9] 10.90.13
[10] 10.90.14
[11] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 1993, 45.

us in space, that confers meaning to a place. Human beings are not placed, they bring place into being."[12] This is plainly evident in the *Puruṣa Sūkta* myth: the body of "man" was the source of the very foundation of place itself, and it was from this body that India as a meaningful landscape emerged.

The body is not only the foundation of the earth in Hindu mythological narratives; it also is central in understanding local, regional, and trans-regional sites of sacrality. The Hindu geographical landscape is covered with mountains, rivers, forests, and fields that are connected in one way or another to the body of the divine. One of these mythological motifs is the story of the *śākta pīṭha*s, places variously numbered across India where the dismembered body of The Goddess fell to earth.[13] A well-known version of the story begins with Śiva's destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice and the subsequent mourning of his deceased wife and Dakṣa's daughter, Satī, after she self-immolates. Śiva, distraught over the death of his wife, is said to have danced across the earth with the body of Satī over his shoulder. The gods, needing to put an end to this dance, either entered the body of Satī through yoga, making the body fall apart piece by piece or, according to another version, Viṣṇu is said to have cut Satī's body into pieces with his discus. Both narratives say that the places where the dismembered parts of Satī's body fell became *śākta pīṭhas*—seats of female divine power—and embodied in physical temples. These temples became pilgrimage sites distributed all across the Indian subcontinent, and they continue to be important locations for the worship of the divine feminine. This myth tells us that not only is there a correspondence between body and sacred landscape, but even further, it tells us that a relationship exists between temple, body, and sacred landscape. Like the myth of the dismemberment of *Puruṣa*, the cosmic giant, the geographical landscape becomes imbued with sacred meaning through the association of the

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[12] Smith, *To Take Place,* 1987, 28.

[13] See D.C. Sircar's *The Śākta Pīṭhas* (1973) for a fuller investigation of this myth.

physical topography of India with a mythic body; physical landscape and mythic landscape converge to establish sacred places such as these goddess temples, which then become locations for ritual and the concomitant expression of regional and trans-regional religious identities.

Just as the landscape is inseparable from the body, so the Hindu temple is also modeled on the human form. Indeed, one of the most important correlations made in Indian architecture is between the Hindu temple and the human body. This correlation goes back to ancient Vedic sacrificial practice where the construction and orientation of the sacrificial altar was based on the measurements of the human body—specifically of the patron of the sacrifice—and a square shape was used in the construction of these altars in which a human body was imagined to be.[14] The connection between the body of the sacrificer and the sacrificial altar is one of homology where the altar becomes the body of the one performing the ritual; the microcosmic body and the macrocosmic universe are both renewed in the performance of the Vedic sacrificial ritual. Stella Kramrisch writes: "In building up the sacrificial body, the altar, the sacrificer in so doing becomes the very altar itself; he builds for himself a sacrificial body and by doing so he is beyond time and death."[15] The homologue between the human body and the sacrificial altar in the Vedic period was passed on into the period of Hindu temple building.

The diagram used in the building of Hindu temples, the *vāstupuruṣamaṇḍala*, is a schematic map of the temple structure that uses proportions of the human body in order to visualize and measure the temple space. Regarding the continuation of the Vedic fire altar into the period of the Hindu temple, together with its proportions based upon human anatomy, Kramrisch states:

> The image of the Vāstupuruṣa is coterminous and one with the maṇḍala drawn in the likeness of man. His head lies in the East, in the maṇḍala of 64 squares, the legs opposite; body and limbs fill the square. Now bricks are laid down which had been identified with the several parts of his body. The bricks were square; now squares are drawn, lines separate and connect those parts and limbs and are their joints and vital parts. These must not be

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[14] Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple vol. I* (Delhi: Motilal Benarsidass, 1976), 22 et passim.
[15] Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 69.

hurt. The lines too (nāḍī), belong to the anatomy of the subtle body of Vāstupuruṣa, they are channels of energy as the nerves are and the arteries in the gross body. Their prototypes are Prāṇa and Vāyu. The spine (vaṃśa) of this Puruṣa of 64 squares, is the middle line of the plan of the temple, as it is of the altar.[16]

As this demonstrates, the role of the body in Hinduism (and in South Asian religion more generally) is central to the creation of the sacred landscapes and to the construction of sacred architecture such as temples. Similarly, Anne Feldhaus has demonstrated the implicit connections made between the human body, sacred rivers, and the *Puruṣa Hymn* as described in various local Māhātmyas from Maharashtra. She writes, "Such an identification of a river as a human body presents a powerful cosmological image. This image implies that the river is organic and that it is human. To identify the body with the Vedic Puruṣa implies in addition that the river is the stuff out of which the universe is made."[17] Bodies, divine or human, are used as the physical material *out of which* the earth itself is made and *by which* sacred temples are measured out and constructed. The centrality of the physical body in place-making and world construction is evident in all of this.

Cosmogenesis as Topogenesis: The Dismemberment of Demons[18]

The *ELP* presents a similar story of divine dismemberment and place-making as we saw in the *Puruṣa Sūkta*. In its early chapters the *ELP* provides a mythic source for the foundation of the physical form of the earth through the narrative of the dismemberment of the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha. The story of the killing of Madhu and Kaiṭabha is found in other Puranic narratives, but its inclusion in the *ELP* is important for understanding place and sacred landscape in the geographical imagination of its authors. For the authors of the *ELP* physical place had to emerge first in the larger telling of the history of Ekaliṅga temple. As the story goes (as given in the *ELP*)

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[16] Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 71.
[17] Feldhaus, *Connected Places*, 19-21.
[18] I take the phrase "cosmogenesis as topogenesis" from Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 19.

the two demons (*daitya*) named Madhu and Kaiṭabha emerge from the ears of Viṣṇu bent on killing Brahmā. Brahmā awakens Viṣṇu, and after a five thousand year battle the two demons are defeated, and their bodies dismembered. The blood, fat, and bones of the two demons are then laid out as the foundation of the earth itself by the mythic king Pṛthu.[19] For the authors of the *ELP* world creation and place making begins in the same fashion as other Hindu mythological accounts, that is, with the dismemberment of divine (or demonic) bodies and the construction of the physical landscape from those body parts. The text is constructing a mythological narrative to account for the Sanskrit name of Mewar—Medapāṭa, the land extended (*pāṭa*) by fat (*medas*).[20] From the very beginning, then, the authors of the *ELP* make clear the relationship that those who dwell in Mewar (Medapāṭa) have to bodies and embodied being. The cosmological macrocosm, envisioned as the dismembered bodies of two demons, is localized as the microcosmic regional landscape. Presenting the mythic past in such a way, that is, through the incorporation of the local landscape of Mewar into the larger frame of universal world place-making, the *ELP* collapses the macro and transcendent into local, the regional, and the immediately present. Furthermore, the landscape as body, and the body as landscape—or the macrocosm/microcosm relationship—is most profoundly embodied in the image of the temple. Cosmologically, temples such as Ekaliṅga serve as mediators between the divine and human realms, and they act as centers of meaning for those who are able to physically as well as imaginatively visualize that temple space.

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[19] *ELP* 2.16-17ab: *pṛthur venyo 'bhavad rājā dhārmiko yajñakṛcchuciḥ | madhukaiṭabha-dehotthair medo 'sṛgbhis tathā 'sthibhiḥ ||*

[20] 2.15: *tato vai medasāplāvya pūriteyaṃ vasundharā | medinīti ca vikhyātā pṛthvīsaṃjñāmataḥ śṛṇu ||* The name "Mewar" is a vernacularization of the Sanskrit name "Medapāṭa." The early history of the name Medapāṭa and its meaning is unclear. In an inscription during the time of the Guhila ruler Samarasiṃha it is briefly noted that the name Medapāṭa is such because the land was bathed in the fat (Sanskrit: *medas*) and blood of the enemies of Bappaka, the early ruler of Mewar. Shyamaldas, Kaviraj. ed., "Achaleśvara Inscription of Samarasiṃha, AD 1285", *Vir Vinod, vol. I*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1986,) 397-401.

Built structures such as temples become "centers" not only in a cosmological sense, but also in the social and political sense. Linking the temple to the divine body, and to the larger physical and sacred landscape, says something very powerful about the way that human bodies conceive of and move through space. It is common in South Asia that large temples are embedded in a network of smaller temples and pilgrimage places such as lakes, rivers, and bathing tanks. Ekaliṅga temple, as represented in the *ELP*, is embedded in such a network of pilgrimage locations that serve as a mythic and actual map of Mewar and the surrounding kingdom in the fifteenth century. Performing pilgrimage to Ekaliṅga and its surrounding affiliated architectural and geographical sites constituted a deep religious and social engagement with the imagined landscape of Mewar. The depiction of pilgrimage in the *ELP*, even if only in an imagined and ideal sense, is a depiction of the possibility of bodily movement through the divine landscape. Movement through the divine landscape—the body of the deity—is as important socially and politically as it is religiously. Furthermore, bodily movement through such a space is central in the construction of regional identity and political control. Anne Feldhaus, in her study of region, pilgrimage, and geographical imagination in Maharashtra, writes about the relationship between body and landscape:

> Passing through an area with one's body, or imagining oneself—or someone else—doing so, gives one a sense of the area as a region. In most pilgrimages in South Asia, the pilgrims enact their conviction that they *can* move through a region by in fact doing so. At the same time, they reinforce the same conviction for those who, though they remain at home, are aware of the pilgrim's journeys. Movement through an area with one's own body, or a clear realization of the possibility of such movement, is a condition for being able to image the area as a region in *any* coherent sense.[21]

Physical place and body, then, codetermine a pilgrim's experience of the sacred landscape and help create a larger conception of regional identity through the actual, or even imagined, movement

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[21] Anne Feldhaus, *Connected Places: Region, Pilgrimage, and Geographical Imagination in India* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 28.

through that landscape. As I describe below, in the presentation of the various pilgrimage sites surrounding Ekaliṅgajī the *ELP* is describing, and circumscribing, the central religious and political region of Mewar. The very landscape in which Ekaliṅgajī temple was, and is, is made religiously and politically central through the imagined movement of bodies across the sacred landscape. This movement was narrativized in the *ELP* in the form of pilgrimage routes. In the *ELP* we are presented with two very different literary descriptions of pilgrimage: the first, a Brahman goes on a pilgrimage through the center of the kingdom around the temple of Ekaliṅga; the second, a wish-granting cow goes on a pilgrimage to the borders of Mewar. Both of these pilgrimages serve to define the center and periphery of the kingdom of Mewar, and by doing so defines the very limits of political and cosmic order in the kingdom.

Establishing Boundaries: The *Aṣṭatīrtha*s

By the time of the composition of the *ELP* in the late fifteenth century, Ekaliṅgajī temple was serving as the center of political power and ritual authority in Mewar. The *ELP* provides references to many important pilgrimage locations (*tīrtha*s) spread throughout the actual physical landscape surrounding the temple. For the first time in the history of Mewar the physical landscape is constituted as a web of interconnecting religious centers based around Ekaliṅga temple. The authors of that text drew on the larger pan-Indian pilgrimage centers and creatively linked local pilgrimage sites in Mewar to India's larger sacred landscape. Certain pilgrimage places existed before the writing of the *ELP*, but this text presents a new map—a newly constituted sacred landscape—for the purpose of administrative and social unification during a time of political change and military expansion. The ability of pilgrimage places to create a new sacred landscape that is at the same time a place of political legitimation and religious power is, again, because of the real or imagined movement of bodies through that landscape.

Ekaliṅgajī temple complex was, of course, the most important pilgrimage center in Mewar during the time of the composition of the *ELP*. The lake directly behind Ekaliṅga, Indra Sarovar, is perhaps the most important of all *tīrtha*s described in the *ELP*, being represented last in a list of eight main pilgrimage places surrounding the Ekaliṅga temple complex, all of which are bathing tanks (*kuṇḍa*). This list of eight pilgrimage tanks include Kuṭila Kuṇḍa, Takṣakeśa Kuṇḍa, Bhairava Kuṇḍa, Karaja Kuṇḍa, Cakrapuṣkariṇīṃ Kuṇḍa, Vindhyavāsinī Kuṇḍa, Kedāra Kuṇḍa, and Amṛta Kuṇḍa.[22]   Interestingly, the figure that is said to be performing the pilgrimage (*tīrthayātrā*) to these eight sacred wells is a Brahman named Śiva Śarmā.[23] Śiva Śarmā appears in a similar narrative context in the *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* section of the *Skandapurāṇa*. According to that narrative, Śiva Śarmā, a Brahmin from Mathurā, takes a pilgrimage to the seven cities of liberation (*saptapurī*), but before he is able to make it to all of the cities, he dies in Hardvār instead of his intended city of Kāśī. After his death he is taken on a tour of sorts around heaven and is shown different kingdoms that are each presided over by one of the eight directional guardians, and as he passes each kingdom he is given the story of those eight guardians.[24] The narrative of Śiva Śarmā, then, is directly connected to a larger narrative of the eight directions and the divine powers that guard those directions in the *Skanadapurāṇa*. The *ELP* is strategically adopting the narrative of Śiva Śarmā in order to draw an implicit connection between the importance of the eight directions and their divine guardians and the eight pilgrimage places being described in the *ELP*.

Although the actual geographical space where most of these *kuṇḍa*s are located is rather small, their importance in the *ELP*—comprising two chapters and a total of 127 verses—is evident

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[22] *ELP* 28.3-40

[23] *ELP* 28.1-3: *yena krameṇa sa muniḥ snānaṃ cakre yathāvidhi | kuṭilādyāṣṭatīrtheṣu tan me brūhi samīraṇa || bhairavaṃ tu namaskṛtya tad ajñāṃ parigṛhya ca | tīkṣṇadaṃṣṭreti mantreṇa śivaśarmā dvijottamaḥ || kuṭilodbhavakuṇḍe tu snātvā sampujya śaṅkaram | dānaṃ datvā 'hnikaṃ kṛtvā putrapautrādibhiḥ ||*

[24] KKH 6-24

and should not be overlooked. The narrative establishment of these eight pilgrimage places, and their association with the directions, is a subtle claim by the authors of the *ELP* to the control over the religious center of Mewar, Ekaliṅga temple. The movement of the royal/Brahmanical figure of Śiva Śarmā through these pilgrimage places indicates a consolidation of religious and political authority at the religious center of the growing Mewar kingdom. The creation of these eight pilgrimage sites is the beginning of the establishment of a larger network of Brahmanical authority and political control over Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's expanding empire. The creation of pilgrimage sites, and the description of Brahmans at those places, is, it seems, a process of royal control over the landscape. By drawing local pilgrims into the Ekaliṅga cultic network, the local landscape became part of a network of sacred space the center of which was the powerful royal cult of Ekaliṅga and his *diwan*, the Mahārāṇā.

This list of eight *tīrtha*s is interesting, particularly because a few bathing tanks with similar names are found elsewhere in north India, specifically Cakrapuṣkariṇīṃ Kuṇḍa, Kedāra Kuṇḍa, and Bhairava Kuṇḍa. The other *tīrtha*s are specifically local bathing tanks presumably located near Ekaliṅga temple or within the temple complex.[25] Perhaps the most interesting feature of these *tīrtha*s is that they are listed as eight in number. The number eight is important in Indian religious traditions where it is used as a reference for the totality of physical space, that is, the four cardinal and four intermediate directions. It is possible, then, to understand these eight pilgrimage places as either directional guardians marking the boundaries of the sacred center of religious authority in the region of Mewar, or at the very least they can be understood as markers of the spatial core

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[25] Of these eight *kuṇḍa*s, I am aware of the actual presence of four of the named bathing tanks—Bhairava Kuṇḍ, Takṣakeśa Kuṇḍ, Tulsi Kuṇḍ and Kuraj Kuṇḍ. The two current bathing tanks within the Ekaliṅgajī temple complex itself—Tulsi Kuṇḍ and Kuraj Kuṇḍ—could in fact be two tanks on the *ELP* list, particularly Kuraj Kuṇḍ, which is also called Pārvatī Kund. My guess is that Tulsi Kund is Cakrapuṣkariṇīṃ Kuṇḍ—both names are both clear references to Viṣṇu, and Tulsi Kund is directly behind a large temple dedicated to Viṣṇu.

of the Ekaliṅgajī cult in the 15th century. The *ELP* is in strong support of this argument, as it itself provides the cardinal directions for four of these *tīrtha*s. Specifically, the *ELP* states that Kuṭila is in the west (6.22), Takṣakeśa is in the south, Vindhyavāsinī is in the north, and Amṛta is in the east. However, why the *ELP* presents these eight pilgrimage places in this specific order is not altogether clear. It cannot be the case that these eight *tīrtha*s form a *pradakṣiṇa* pilgrimage route, because for this to be the case they would have to move in a clockwise movement through the four directions. Instead, the would-be pilgrim would move from the west, to the south, to the north, and finally to the east. Perhaps the solution is that the authors of the text want the pilgrim to end at Indra Sarovar, which is to the east of Ekaliṅgajī temple, and the route is simply an efficient path to ultimately end at that most important *tīrtha*.

Figure 4.1: Bhairava Kuṇḍa, one of the eight *tīrtha*s listed in the *ELP*. Kailashpuri, Rajasthan. Photo by the author.

Figure 4.2: Indra Sarovar, an important *tīrtha* at Ekaliṅga temple. Kailashpuri, Rajasthan. Photo by the author.

Furthermore, the *ELP* goes on to say that in the four specific directions dwell "pure-minded ascetics" who are engaged in different types of spiritual practice.[26] This reference to ascetics—Brahmans—dwelling at these *tīrtha*s and engaging in religious practice is important for an understanding of just how these eight pilgrimage places were understood by the authors of the *ELP*, and how they may have been used. Given the context of the *ELP*, these four directions are no doubt directly linked to the four pilgrimage places just listed. Apart from the importance of the various deities linked with these eight *tīrtha*s, the important role of Brahmanical influence at these sacred sites needs to be stressed. By narratively (and perhaps physically) placing Brahmans

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[26] *ELP*: 28.42-45ab.

(*tapasvin*s) at the four cardinal pilgrimage places, the *ELP* is in effect claiming Brahmanical control over these important spiritual sites, the center of which is Ekaliṅga. This control was as much political as it was religious.

The establishment of this group of eight *tīrtha*s possibly played another role in the continuation of royal power in the Mewar region, specifically that of legitimation. Legitimation of political structures through religious ideology by emerging state powers is important in understanding how religious authority and temporal political power came together in the creation of regional empires in South Asia. As noted by Kulke, religious institutions such as temples, pilgrimage places, and lands donated to Brahmans (*agrahāra*s) were central to the political stability of emerging state powers in south Asia during the medieval period. These three elements—temples, pilgrimage places, and *agrahāra*s—operated simultaneously in the process of state control. The creation of eight new pilgrimage sites described in chapter twenty-eight of the *ELP*, and the fact that they were described as being populated by sages and Brahmans, is, therefore, an important clue in understanding the role of *tīrtha*s in the *ELP* and in the larger process of state formation in Mewar. Brahmans played an exceptionally important role in the legitimation process of these early kingdoms. As Kulke notes: "For, the material reproduction of this new form of political authority demanded—as is widely agreed—a continuously increased appropriation of socially produced surplus which required new forms of religio-political legitimation. Creating such legitimation was pre-eminently the task incumbent on an invited Brahmin."[27] This "socially produced surplus" involved the creation of a centralized religious cult that was supported in part by a "Hinduized" tribal population.

The *ELP* concludes its description of the eight pilgrimage places by stating that the entirety of the town of Nāgahrada, where these eight pilgrimage places are located, has the distance of

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[27] Kulke, "The Early and the Imperial Kingdom," 237.

"five *krośa*s," (*pañcakrośa*) a measure that varies according to different sources.[28] The actual distance is mostly irrelevant, as this term appears most prominently in the description of the geographical limits of the city of Kāśī. According to Diana Eck, the modern city of Banaras is divided into smaller and smaller circles that delimit its sacred geographical boundaries, and as one approaches the inner center of the city religious power is thought to increase. The area referred to as Kāśī constitutes the largest of the five circles, everything else being included in that geographical limit. Eck equates the five *krośa*s with the five *kośa*s, or sheaths, that constitute the human body. Eck writes:

> Its largest circle—Kāśī—encloses a sacred area which extends far into the countryside to the west of the city. As one approaches the center, each sacred zone becomes increasingly charged with power. In a mystical sense, one might say that just as there are five *koshas* (literally "sheaths," a word interchanged in this context with *krosha*, a unit of measurement) in the human person, layered like the leaf sheaths on a stalk of grass, so there are five *koshas* in Kāshī: Kāshī, Vārānasī, Avimukta, Antargriha, and, finally, the innermost *linga* of Vishvanātha.[29]

This is similar to Hans Bakker's description of Avimuktakṣetra in Vārāṇasī given in the *Skandapurāṇa*: it is a sacred "field" ringed by twelve *liṅga*s, with Avimukteśvara at its center.[30] As the *ELP* is clearly modeling itself on the geographical landscape of Vārāṇasī, it seems appropriate to imagine that the same process was at play in Nāgahrada and Mewar. The town of Nāgahrada, with Ekaliṅga temple at its center, constituted the sacred center of the region, with power being condensed most strongly at the very heart of the kingdom, Ekaliṅga temple itself.

It shouldn't be surprising that pilgrimage places were used in multivalent ways, and pilgrims in all probability engaged these *tīrtha*s in several different manners at once. The social

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[28] *ELP* 28.55
[29] Eck, *Banaras*, 350.
[30] Hans Bakker, "The Avimuktakṣetra in Vārāṇasī: Its Origin and Development" in *Visualizing Space in Banaras: Images, Maps, and the Practice of Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 23-39.

history of these specific places of pilgrimage surrounding Ekaliṅga—how they were understood by local pilgrims in the region—is not possible to recover based on the *ELP* or other evidence. What we can perhaps glean from the *ELP*'s presentation of these eight pilgrimage places is their role in the 'vertical legitimation' of royal authority in Mewar. By bringing together these eight disparate locations into a unified group representative of the spatial directions, the authors of the *ELP* began the process of integrating local cults and religious sites into the larger royal cult of Ekaliṅga. This process strengthened the core religious and political nuclear area by establishing a centralized sacred topography with Ekaliṅga temple as the religious, and political, focus of the kingdom of Mewar. 'Salvific space' and sacred topography both facilitated this process of political legitimation.

Relatively large kingdoms in Rajasthan, such as the kingdom of Mewar in the fifteenth century, expanded the boundaries of their states through a process of military aggression as well as through a process of ideological conquest and control. This generally occurred through the pacification and "Sanskritization" of local gods and goddesses and, in the case of Mewar, the "Rajputization" of tribal populations.[31] This ideological (and social) process of expansion and control over the local population involved not only the adoption of local deities, but also the building of temples and pilgrimage networks supported by the royal center and administered by Brahman priests who were often given land grants and other monetary gifts to maintain those temples. Hermann Kulke, in his study of the growth of state power in Orissa, notes three main ways in which central powers controlled peripheral powers through ideological means. Specifically, he mentions: 1) royal patronage of pilgrimage places; 2) settlement of Brahmans; and

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[31] Kapur, *State Formation in* Rajasthan, 132-33.

3) construction of new imperial temples.[32] Royal temples, and their surrounding networks of related sacred ponds, bathing tanks, and shrines, were the physical embodiment in the landscape of royal authority and priestly control in these expanding regional kingdoms. Furthermore, the deities housed in these royal temples were often associated either directly with the king himself through his apotheosis, or, in the case of Mewar, through the blending of kingly and divine roles. In that vein, in Mewar it is the god Ekaliṅgajī who is considered to be the actual ruler of the kingdom, and the king (Mahārāṇā) is considered the *diwan* or servant of the god. Through the physical emplacement of temples and pilgrimage places within the geographical landscape, those who lived in the region experienced the relationship between political power and religious authority in their daily life. In this way political authority and religious power were manifested in the landscape through a spatial ordering of the built environment. Concerning the relationship between planned temple towns and what he terms the "spatial expression of ritual politics" Hans-Jürgen Nitz writes:

> It was part of the implementation of this ideological policy to make the subjects perceive with all their senses that the divine cosmic order really was the basis, the divine superstructure of the imperial rule. This policy was achieved by marking the secular landscape as the lifeworld of the people not only with divine symbols—especially temples of the royal deity in the political centers as well as in the main villages—but by literally drawing lines upon the land which should project the cosmic order onto the ground which they worked day by day, and upon the layout of the villages which they lived in.[33]

Ekaliṅga and its regional *tīrtha*s, by being emplaced in the landscape and by being represented in the *ELP* as part of the larger cosmological system of pan-Indian pilgrimage places, are narratively and materially linked (at least ideally) in the minds of those who live in the Mewar region. Political

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[32] Herman Kulke, "Royal Temple Policy and the Structure of Medieval Hindu Kingdoms" in *The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Tradition of Orissa*, eds. Anncharlott Eschmann, et al. (New Delhi: Manohar, 1978,) 132.

[33] Hans-Jürgen Nitz, "Planned Temple Towns and Brahman Villages as Spatial Expressions of the Ritual Politics of Medieval Kingdoms in South India," in *Ideology and Landscape in Historical Perspective*, ed. Alan R.H. Baker and Gideon Biger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 109.

identity, religious identity, and regional identity converged through the interrelation between sacred topography and regional narrative. Royal temples and pilgrimage sites served, in certain ways, as markers of political and regional identity through their emplacement within the larger geographical landscape and through their descriptions in these mythological narratives.

The verse following the description of the Brahmans who are dwelling at the eight *tīrtha*s surrounding Ekaliṅga temple is a very curious addition which states that at these *tīrtha*s various types of Bhils are made to abandon violence and become devotees of Śiva.[34] The pacification of the Bhil tribe through their conversion to Hinduism was a particularly important concern during the reign of Maharana Kumbhā, and we see this process take place through the development of control over the pilgrimage sites surrounding Ekaliṅga. In a way the Bhil tribe served as a symbol of the danger that existed just beyond the boundaries of the kingdom. As the territorial limits of Mewar is coterminous with the dismembered bodies of Madhu and Kaiṭabha, so the tribal groups beyond the limits of the kingdom were mythologized as dangerous, violent, and in need of pacification. Chapter twenty-eight spends a large amount of time describing the eight pilgrimage sites and the various sages and devout religious practitioners at those sacred places. The authors of the text make it very clear that it is here among these Hindu sages and sacred spaces that the dangerous Bhils are pacified and converted to Hinduism through devotion to Śiva. At the center of the kingdom—indeed, at the very center of the divine and cosmically ordered body—the chaotic and politically dangerous forces represented by tribal groups are pacified and made politically submissive.

By being at the center of the kingdom and the center of the divine and properly structured body of landscape and temple, these otherwise religiously impure and politically destabilizing

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[34] *ELP* 28.45cd-46ab: *bhillaiś ca vividhākārair vṛtaṃ paramadhārmikaiḥ || śivabhaktir atair vīrair bhūtahiṃsādivarjitaiḥ |*

tribal groups are made pure through their conversion to Brahmanical orthodoxy. As one moves away from the center of the kingdom and the order that the body brings, however, political and cosmic order becomes threatened. This is mythologized by the travels of the wish-granting cow and her journey through the political and religious map of Mewar, particularly as she approaches the boundaries of the kingdom. In her journey through Mewar the wish-granting cow serves as a powerful protector of its territorial borders, simultaneously establishing those limits and driving off any foe who might cause harm to the kingdom.

The role of the wish-granting cow (*kāmadhenu*) is central to the narrative of the *ELP*, particularly if we wish to understand how sacred spaces, particularly temples and bathing tanks, were created according to the mythological system of the text. The wish-granting cow, as I will demonstrate below, is also important for understanding how political spaces and sacred spaces mapped on to each other in the context of religious and political identity formation in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. I will turn now to a brief discussion of the history of the wish-granting cow in early Hindu literature. This history will not be exhaustive, but it will demonstrate the ambiguous nature of the cow in Hindu mythology—her auspicious and also violent aspects—and it will make clear why such an ambiguous divine figure would be so well-suited to protect the borders of the kingdom.

A History of the Wish-Granting Cow

The wish-granting cow has a long history in Hindu literature, art, and sculpture. The earliest narratives providing the account of the wish-granting cow include the *Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa*, several Purāṇas, and the *Kathāsaritsāgara*. In these narratives the wish-granting cow is seen as the source of the five central substances (*pañcagavya*) used in ritual practice,[35] she is the mother of all

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[35] These are: milk, curd, ghee, urine, and dung.

cattle and the mother to the eleven Rudras, she holds all of the deities and the Vedas within her body, and she is often directly associated with Pṛthvī, the earth itself. She is also known as Surabhī, "The Fragrant-Smelling One," a form that is also related to the earth (*surabhī* being another name for earth) and prosperity. And while the wish-granting cow is often portrayed as being the very symbol of non-violent, non-sexualized prosperity, in some sources she is also depicted as violent, dangerous, and a potential source of impurity. We see both of these forms of the wish-granting cow depicted in the *ELP*, and because of her central and unique role in that narrative I will discuss in detail her place in that text.

The wish-granting cow plays a central role in the narrative of the *ELP*, serving, I argue, as the primary narrative agent who drives the description of the sacred landscape forward in time and place. The chapters concerning sacred places in Mewar are fundamentally concerned with the establishment of temples and bathing tanks, and it is often due to some action of the wish-granting cow—digging in the earth, or lactating upon the ground—that a given temple or bathing tank is constructed or renewed. It is a rather unique feature of the *ELP* that it focuses so heavily on the movements of the wish-granting cow across the territorial limits of Mewar. It is mainly due to the travels of the wish-granting cow through, and up to the limits of, the kingdom that territorial, political, and religious space and identity are reinforced. The actions of the wish-granting cow throughout the geographical landscape of Mewar serves to create a dynamic, and not static, political and cosmic map that is much more fluid than a mere two-dimensional map of the landscape might presuppose.

Origins: Auspicious Mother, Violent Mother

The cow in Hindu India, and specifically the *kāmadhenu*, represents all wealth, particularly as that wealth relates to the ritual and sacrificial order that maintains the cosmos. The cow is most

importantly the animal of the Brahman, as it is the Brahman who performs the Vedic sacrificial ritual that upholds the cosmos. The ritual substances that are used in the sacrificial oblation are obtained from the products produced by the cow, such as milk and clarified butter. The Brahman uses the products of the cow in the oblation, and by properly performing sacrifice the Brahman insures the proper dharmic order of the universe, and thereby maintains the cosmos. The role of the cow in Vedic sacrificial ritual is so central that the *kāmadhenu* is also sometimes called *homadhenu*, the one "from whom oblations are drawn."[36] As I mentioned above, as a symbol of prosperity and sacrificial order, the cow is also the symbol of the earth, and as such can be called upon to protect the earth from those who threaten her and the cosmic order that she represents. As early as the Ṛg Veda the cow is associated with both Aditi and Pṛthivī.[37] We will see this most clearly in the *ELP*, although there are older precedents that connect the wish-granting cow with cosmic order as well as with danger and violence.

It is in the *Mahābhārata* (*MBh*) that we find a clear description of the value of cows in the religious life of Hindus in South Asia. The merits of the cow in ritual and in the maintenance of the cosmos, including the origins of the name "Surabhī" and the celestial "cow realm" (*goloka*) are all given in eight chapters of the *MBh*.[38] One of the origin stories of the cow comes from book thirteen, the *Anuśāsanaparva*, of the *Mahābhārata*. This story says that at the beginning of time the self-created Lord (*svayambhuva*) told his offspring Dakṣa to create living beings, and as soon as those living beings were created, they called out for food. Dakṣa then drank the nectar of immortality (*amṛta*) and emitted a substance from his mouth. This substance, which had a fragrant odor (*surabhi*), turned into a cow by the name of Surabhī, and Dakṣa took her as his daughter.

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[36] Madeleine Biardeau, "Kamadhenu: The Religious Cow, Symbol of Prosperity," in *Asian Mythologies*, ed. Yves Bonnefoy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 99.
[37] *RV* 1.53.3; RV 1.160.3.
[38] See *MBh* 13.75-82.

Surabhī then gave birth to a number of cows that then became the "mothers of the world" (*lokamātṛkā*). These cows are the "mothers of the world" because of their ability to nourish the earth and provide food through the five substances that they produce, which are then used in sacrifice and in other ritual contexts. This myth, and the entire eight chapters that extoll the virtues of the cow, clearly describe the cow as a source of prosperity, life, health, and wealth. In this description the cow as goddess seems to be clearly on the side of the "goddess of the breast" as opposed to "goddesses of the tooth" in Wendy Donger's formulation. Concerning the goddesses of the breast, Doniger writes, "The second group are the goddesses of the breast, endemic and auspicious, bountiful and fertile, linked to the life-cycle. Goddesses of the breast provide role models for the wife: they are subservient to the husband."[39] In many ways the cow—and the wish-granting cow in particular—serves as the model for all other cows, exemplifying the nurturing, auspicious mother-goddess type described by Doniger and present in so many manifestations of the divine feminine. However, like all forms of the divine feminine, the Goddess can also be terrifying, violent, and a potential source of impurity. We see this very same juxtaposition in narratives of the wish-granting cow from the *Mahābhārata* and other contexts.

One of the earliest narratives of the wish-granting cow comes from the first book of the *Mahābhārata*.[40] This important episode begins with the story of the king Śantanu, his wife Gaṅgā, and their eight sons. In this story Gaṅgā says that she will marry Śantanu as long as he does not question her actions or speak ill words towards her. After some time of general marital bliss, Gaṅgā gives birth to eight children. She throws the first seven into a river, killing them—an act that shocks Śantanu. However, because of his promise to Gaṅgā not to question her actions, he remains quiet. As Gaṅgā picks up the eighth child in order to drown him in the river Śantanu has had enough,

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[39] Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 90-91.
[40] What follows is a summary of *MBh* 1.91-93.

and he begins to question Gaṅgā's actions and her motivation for murdering her own sons. Gaṅgā says that she will not kill the eighth child, but instead will give it to Śantanu as his heir. She then says that because Śantanu questioned her actions she can no longer stay with him. As she departs, she tells the king that she is in fact the river goddess Gaṅgā, and the eight children born from her were in reality the eight Vasus, divine celestial beings who were born on earth due to a curse from the sage Vasiṣṭha. Śantanu asks to hear the story of the curse that was placed on the Vasus, and Gaṅgā obliges.

Gaṅgā says that at one time there was daughter born to Dakṣa named Surabhī, and this daughter gave birth to a cow through her union with the sage Kaśyapa. The famous sage Vasiṣṭha then obtained this cow who is described as a "*homadhenu*" and is able to grant all desires.[41] The text also says that the cow was known by the name Nandinī, a name that sometimes refers to the wish-granting cow and sometimes to her calf in various different narratives. One day the Vasus together with their wives came to the forest in which Vasiṣṭha lived, and seeing the wish-granting cow they desired to obtain it for themselves. While Vasiṣṭha was away the Vasus stole the cow (together with her calf, as the story goes), and upon learning that his cow had been stolen Vasiṣṭha cursed the eight Vasus that they will be born as humans on earth. Presumably during their next life the eight Vasus were indeed born to Gaṅgā, who released seven of the Vasus from their curse. She was not able to release the Vasu who headed the cow theft, Dyau, who was born as the well-known Bhīṣma in the epic.

We come across a second, and enduring, story of the wish-granting cow again in the first book of the *MBh*.[42] In this narrative a king named Viśvāmitra comes to the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha seeking rest after a long hunt. When Viśvāmitra arrives he is properly honored and given food,

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[41] *MBh* 1.93.9: *anugrahārthaṃ jagataḥ sarvakāmaguhāṃ varā | tāṃ lebhe gāṃ tu dharmatmā homadhenuṃ sa vāruṇiḥ ||*
[42] What follows is a summary of *MBh* 1.165.1-44.

and is shown around the hermitage. Viśvāmitra sees the wish-granting cow and is immediately astonished at her beauty and her ability to provide her owner with anything he may desire. Viśvāmitra asks that Vasiṣṭha give him the wish-granting cow in exchange for ten thousand cows, and even his entire kingdom. Vasiṣṭha refuses this offer, saying that the cow is used for the purposes of gratifying the ancestors and performing sacrifice, therefore he could not possibly part with it. Viśvāmitra, undeterred, says that he will take the cow by force, as this is his *kṣatriya* duty. Viśvāmitra takes the wish-granting cow from Vasiṣṭha and begins whipping and abusing her. The wish-granting cow cries out, and addressing Vasiṣṭha asks if he wishes to abandon her to Viśvāmitra. Vasiṣṭha states that he does not wish to abandon her, and if she can stay then she should stay. At hearing the word "stay" the wish-granting cow became incredibly angry and took on a very frightful appearance.[43] In a state of rage the wish-granting cow then emitted from various parts of her body, such as her tail, udders, womb, dung, urine, and mouth armies of outcaste groups described as Kirātas, Yavanas, Barbaras and other "*mleccha*s." Viśvāmitra's armies were forced to flee, and after this incident Viśvāmitra, a *kṣatriya*, praises the power of the Brahman Vasiṣṭha and of the wish-giving cow that was able to rout his entire army.

In the *Śalyaparva* of the *MBh* we find a very similar story to the one found in *MBh* 1.65. In this story there is a great king by the name of Gādhi who has a son named Viśvāmitra.[44] Gādhi passes on the protection of the kingdom to Viśvāmitra, but the latter, an impetuous *kṣatriya* without the knowledge that is obtained from ascetic practices, does not know how to lead his army in a proper way. One day when Viśvāmitra and his army are on the way to fight a demon (*rakṣasa*) they arrive at the home of Vasiṣṭha and proceed to destroy the great forest that surrounds the hermitage. When Vasiṣṭha arrives and sees the forest devastated he becomes angry and orders his

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[43] *MBh* 1.165.32.: *sthāyatām iti tac chrutvā vasiṣṭhasya payasvinī | ūrdhvāñcitaśirogrīvā prababhau raudradarśanā ||*
[44] What follows is a summary of *MBh* 9.39.11-29.

cow to "emit [from yourself] frightful looking Śabaras."[45] The cow then created an army of men that fought and drove off the army of Viśvāmitra. Viśvamitra, seeing the power of the army that the Brahman Vasiṣṭha was able to create, vowed to practice austerities and become a Brahman himself, which he eventually did.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* contains a very similar story of Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra found in the *MBh*. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* version Viśvāmitra again asks—demands—the wish-granting cow from Vasiṣṭha after seeing all that it can produce for its owner. Vasiṣṭha denies this demand, even after Viśvāmitra says that he will give hundreds of thousands of cows, elephants, chariots, and nearly anything else one might think of as valuable. Vasiṣṭha makes the connection clear between the wish-granting cow and the sacrifice that holds the universe together. Vasiṣṭha declares:

> I would not give you Śabalā [the wish-granting cow], your majesty, for a hundred thousand or even a thousand million cows—not even for masses of silver. For she is as inseparable from me as is good repute from a man of self-control. Foe-conquering hero, Śabalā is not deserving of abandonment. For upon her depend my offerings to the gods and the offerings to my departed ancestors, as well as our bodily sustenance—so do the burnt offerings, the *bali*, and the *homa* offerings. So too, the ritual utterances *svāhā* and *vaṣaṭ*, and the various branches of learning—all this depends upon her, royal seer. Of this there can be no doubt.[46]

What is clear to Vasiṣṭha the Brahman, and perhaps not so clear to Viśvāmitra the *kṣatriya*, is the ritual importance of the wish-granting cow, and cows in general, apart from the ability to give the owner material wealth. The *Rāmāyaṇa* narrative follows the narratives found in the *MBh*, which state that after Viśvāmitra attempted to take the wish-granting cow by force she became angry and emitted from herself tribal people or "races" that are outside of the *āryan* fold, such as Pahlavas, Yavanas, and Śakas (in the *Rāmāyaṇa* version she emits them from her roar, '*Humbhā*'). The *Rāmāyaṇa* narrative goes on to say that the Pahlavas, Yavanas, and Śakas created by the wish-

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[45] *MBh* 9.39.20cd-21ab*: tasya ṛddho mahārāja vasiṣṭho munisattamaḥ || sṛjasva śabarān ghorāniti svāṃ gāmuvāca ha |*
[46] *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki*, vol. 1, trans. Robert P. Goldman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 224-225.

granting cow were nearly overrun by the forces of Viśvāmitra when Vasiṣṭha commanded that the cow create more troops through her "yogic power." The wish-granting cow then proceeds to emit more non-Āryan groups from various parts of her body. The narrative states,

> From her bellow, '*Humbhā*,' were produced Kāmbhojas bright as the sun, while from her udders came Pahlavas, weapons in hand. From her vulva came Yavanas, from her anus, Śakas, and from the pores of her skin, Mlecchas, Haritas, and Kirātas. Within an instant, delight of the Raghus [Rāma], Viśvāmitra's entire army was destroyed, with its infantry, elephants, horses, and chariots.[47]

The narrative just related from the *Rāmāyaṇa* has clear parallels with *MBh* 1.164-165, and there is little doubt that these two narratives are related to each other.[48] What both of these narratives makes clear is that the wish-granting cow has the ability, as do many other Hindu goddesses, to emit from herself troops of warriors who will protect her in her role as provider of material goods and sustainer of the cosmos. This is very similar to the narrative of Vindhyavāsinī and her ability to emit animal-headed goddesses as described in the *Skandapurāṇa*, as well as the narrative of the emission of Rāṣṭrasenā from the body of Vindhyavāsinī.

What is perhaps most interesting for the purposes of this argument are the groups that the wish-granting cow emits. From her body the wish-granting cow emits groups of warriors known by several terms. These terms—Śabara, Pahlava, Yavana, Śaka, Kirāta, and Mleccha—while in some sources referring specifically to either tribal groups in the north of India (for example the Kirāta) or to Greeks or Persians, are often used to refer to any tribal, or non-*āryan* group. It is a curious fact that the wish-granting cow would emit from own "pure" body—so pure, in fact, that a majority of substances used in Vedic sacrifice and Hindu ritual come from her body—armies of non-*āryan* and "impure" tribal groups or foreigners. This issue will be discussed in more detail

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[47] *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki*, vol. 1, 227-228.
[48] Goldman makes this very same claim. See *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki*, vol. 1, 371.

below. Now I would like to take a brief look at the themes that emerge from the above myths relating to the wish-granting cow.

There are several interesting themes that emerge from these early narratives of the *kāmadhenu*. The first is that the wish-granting cow can be known by several different names, specifically *kāmadhenu*, *homadhenu*, *surabhī*, and *nandinī*. What is consistent in these myths is the perhaps rather obvious fact that the wish-granting cow is the source of all prosperity, able to provide her owner with anything he or she may desire. Another striking feature of the wish-granting cow is that she is a source of negative desire for those who see her. Promising infinite wealth and success, the wish-granting cow is a coveted object of desire that often leads those with a weak will away from proper dharmic action.

Ambiguity and Danger in the Myths of the Wish-Granting Cow

The Goddess in Hinduism is both a source of nourishment and life as well as poison and death, and Doniger has examined the Goddess in these two contradictory forms.[49] The Goddess, associated as she is with both milk and blood, is an ambiguous figure, either pure or impure depending on the contextual relationships to those in contact with her. In Hinduism, the cow serves as a primary example of the ambiguity and danger inherent in the divine feminine, and in the feminine more generally. From the earliest period of Indian myth the cow, and the milk that she produces, has been connected with the earth, with the fire-god Agni, with Soma, with the Vedic sacrifice, and with prosperity. The cow's milk is also associated with poison and blood, both of which drain and destroy life. In early myths, such as the myth of the churning of the milk ocean, both the elixir of immortality as well as the Hālāhala poison emerge from the churning process.

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[49] For instance see Wendy Doniger, *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980).

What we see in the mythology of the wish-granting cow is this ambiguity of life and death, bitter poison and life-giving immortality. I will briefly examine the early myths concerning the relationship between the cow and purity and danger, and then move on to the representation of the wish-granting cow in the *ELP* in light of those observations.

In the early hymns of the Ṛg Veda there is a clear association between the waters—both terrestrial and in the form of clouds—at the beginning of time that give birth to all things as well as Agni and the cow. In the hymn to The Child of the Waters (*apām napāt*) this "child" is identified with Agni in the form of lightning in the clouds. The hymn states that the Child is nourished by "three women," the waters of the three worlds, who nurse him as a cow does a calf: "Three women, goddesses, wish to give food to the god so that he will not weaken. He has stretched forth in the waters; he sucks the new milk of those who have given birth for the first time."[50] The connection between the cow, Agni as the source of the sacrifice, and the wealth obtained from that sacrifice is readily evident as well: "In his own house he [The Child of the Waters, Agni] keeps the cow who yields good milk; he makes his vital force swell as he eats the nourishing food. Gathering strength in the waters, the child of the waters shines forth to give riches to his worshipper."[51] Additionally, in the myths that relate the story of Soma—which is both the divine elixir and a deity—the process of producing the Soma through the pressing of the substance is associated with the milking of rain from rain clouds, which is itself a clear connection to the milking of cows. Milk and Soma are directly identified in these hymns, and these two are in turn identified with the goals of obtaining wealth and long life. A particularly exemplary hymn reads: "Like a new-born child he [Soma] bellows in the wood, the tawny racehorse straining to win the sun. He unites with the sky's seed that grows great with milk. With kind thoughts we pray to him for far-reaching

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[50] Ṛg 2.35.5. Translated in Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *The Rig Veda: An Anthology* (New York: Penguin Books, 1981), 105.
[51] Ṛg 2.35.7; O'Flaherty, *The Rig Veda*, 105.

shelter."[52] Rain—the sky's seed—and clouds—the milk—mix to create the life-giving waters that fall upon the earth. This is parallel to the mixing of the Soma with the milk in the Soma-bowls, a part of the Soma ritual. The hymn continues: "Butter and milk are milked from the living cloud; the navel of Order, the ambrosia is born. Together those who bring fine gifts satisfy him; the swollen men piss down the fluid set in motion."[53] In a note to this rather obscure verse, Doniger writes, "The Maruts are the swollen men (clouds) who urinate the Soma (a male image) after it has been milked from the clouds (a female image). Soma is the living, androgynous cloud from which milk and rain are pressed."[54] Milk and Soma, together with the imagery of the cow and the life-giving rains, are all thematically related in their connection to the nourishment of the earth and of those beings, including humans, who live upon the earth. In this imagery the cow and the milk she produces are the very source of life, of ambrosia, and of the order of the cosmos through Vedic sacrifice.

In later myths found in the *Mahābhārata* we again see this same trope of the connection between the cow, milk, water, and ambrosia (*amṛta*). In the myth of the churning of the ocean the Devas and Asuras, in an attempt to churn ambrosia from the cosmic ocean, produce many other wondrous things: Soma, Lakṣmī, the gem Kaustubha, and Surabhi, the wish-granting cow.[55] Along with the ambrosia, however, arose a poison so powerful that only Śiva was able to consume it and negate its dangerous properties. The relationship between the wish-granting cow, her milk, the nectar of immortality (*amṛta*), and the other items is circular, such that Surabhi is born from Brahmā who spat the nectar of immortality out after he was satiated by it. Surabhi gave birth to four cows that are positioned in the four cardinal directions: Surūpā in the east, Haṃsikā in the

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[52] Ṛg 9.74.1; O'Flaherty, *The Rig Veda*, 122.
[53] Ṛg 9.74.4; O'Flaherty, *The Rig Veda*, 122-23.
[54] O'Flaherty, *The Rig Veda*, 123n4.
[55] *MBh* 1.16-17.

south, Subhadrā in the west, and Sarvakāmadughā in the north. The milk of these cows was then mixed with the water of the cosmic ocean and the nectar of immortality (*amṛta*) was produced. The creative process whereby the *amṛta* was produced from the milk of the divine cows also in turn was the source of the birth of Surabhī.[56]

This myth tells us something quite important about the relationship between the wish-granting cow and purity and danger. The wish-granting cow is the source of the nectar of immortality, and as discussed above she is also the source of the five pure substances that are central to Vedic sacrifice, which itself maintains the harmony and order of the entire universe. She is also the source of the very dangerous *hālāhala* poison. These myths make clear the ambivalent nature of the wish-granting cow—her ability to provide immortality to those who protect her and poison, pollution, and death for those that threaten her. What is also important to note is the description of the four cows born from Surabhi that are placed in the cardinal directions. The text states that these four cows dwell in the four directions and they "support" or "bear" those directions.[57] The cows are not given as protectors of the directions (*dikpāla*) but as their foundation beyond which nothing exists, for they constitute the very limits of the universe. This mythic image, brief though it may be, is important for understanding the role of the wish-granting cow in the *ELP*, as one of the important tasks given to her by Śiva in that narrative is to travel to the limits of Mewar and establish *liṅgas* at those borders. That this task is given to the wish-granting cow makes more sense if we understand that she has this relationship to the cardinal directions.

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[56] *MBh* 5.100.1-15.
[57] *MBh* 5.100.7: *asyāścatasro dhenvo 'nyā dikṣu sarvāsu mātale | nivasanti diśāṃ pālyo dhārayantyo diśaḥ sma tāḥ ||*

The Journey of the Wish-Granting Cow

Early on in the *ELP* Ekaliṅga gives a boon to the wish-granting cow, making her the mother of the eleven Rudras and stating that she will wander the earth establishing *liṅga*s that are in actuality manifestations of Ekaliṅga.[58] The journey of the wish-granting cow takes up the following several chapters, and in fact her journey across the landscape of the northern and western parts of India is the very lens through which we will view the sacred topography of Mewar. The journey of the cow described in chapter eight is something of a macrocosmic snapshot of the most sacred places in India as represented by the authors of the *ELP*. The wish-granting cow sets off for Amarakaṇṭaka in modern Madhya Pradesh, the first stop on her journey. From there she journeys to Oṃkāra, Ujjain, Somnāth, Saurāṣṭra, Mount Ābū, Kedarnātha, Prayāga, and ending finally in Vārāṇasi. In between these major pilgrimage sites, the wish-granting cow's journey also takes her to the shores of sacred rivers and the peaks of holy mountains. The list of sacred sites that the cow visits marks a clear pilgrimage route—a *pradakṣiṇa*—around and across the north of India. Starting in Madhya Pradesh, she moves in a more-or-less clockwise route from central India to the west and the Deccan, then to modern Gujarat, up to Mount Ābū in Rajasthan, to the far north in Uttarakhand and Kedarnāth, down to Prayāga, and finally ending where we might expect a good devotee of Śiva to end, in Vārāṇasi. The authors of the *ELP*, then, take the cow, and the reader/listener, on a macrocosmic trip across the sacred landscape and to some of the most important places of pilgrimage known to them. The journey of the wish-granting cow in the *ELP* delineates the pan-

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[58] *ELP* 8.47-56ab. This particular passage will be analyzed in the following section of this chapter. Concerning the eleven Rudras Monier-Williams states the following: "Rudra is said to have sprung from Brahmā's forehead, and to have afterwards separated himself into a figure half male and half female, the former portion separating again into the 11 Rudras, hence these later Rudras are sometimes regarded as inferior manifestations of Śiva, and most of their names, which are variously given in the different Purāṇas, are also names of Śiva." Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary,* 883. This myth is found in the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*.

Hindu world of sacred space, at least as imagined by the authors of the narrative, and it sets the geographical limits of this specifically Śaiva cartography.

The chapters of the *ELP* that are concerned with the sacred geography of Mewar are all narratively tied to the journey of the nurturing, life-giving, and also dangerous wish-granting cow. As the cow traverses the geographical landscape establishing *liṅga*s the built environment springs up behind her, and these two aspects of the sacred geography of Mewar become indistinguishable. In chapter fifteen of the *ELP* we seem to begin the journey proper of the wish-granting cow, who is headed to Amarakaṇṭaka. The text places this pilgrimage site to the west (*paścima*) of Ekaliṅga temple, despite the geographical fact that the location would be quite a distance east of Ekaliṅga. However, in the chapters describing the journey of the cow it seems that the authors of the *ELP* have moved us from the macro, pan-Indian map to the microcosmic cartography of the Mewar region. Indeed, it is from this moment on in the narrative that local rivers, bathing tanks, temples, and other sacred sites become equated with the sacred sites of the pan-Hindu landscape.

In the first several verses of chapter fifteen the wish-granting cow journeys west for two leagues (*krośa*) toward Amarakaṇṭaka, lets out a magnificent bellow, and then begins to dig the tip of her horn into the earth. From the middle of the hole that she dug arose the deity Kuṇḍeśvara, a form of Śiva.[59] After worshipping Kuṇḍeśvara for some time the cow then journeyed north, going to the very limits of Mewar (*jagāma medapāṭāntaṃ*), and establishing thousands of *liṅga*s wherever she went.[60] Further north she saw a beautiful lake and established the eleven Rudras there at the bank of the river. In front of those Rudras, and presumably at or near the bank of the shore the wish-granting cow then poured milk down upon the ground, and a river known as the Gomatī emerged from the combination of the earth and milk. The narrative goes on to say that the

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[59] *ELP* 15.6-7.
[60] *ELP* 15.9-10ab.

wish-granting cow then built three wells (*kuṇḍa*) on the banks of that river that were just like the three wells at the famous pilgrimage place of Pushkar, in Rajasthan. From the wells established at the Gomatī emerged another local river, the Candrabhāgā, and at the confluence of those two rivers a person who bathes there will gain the same amount of merit as one who bathes at the famous Prayāga, a sacred pilgrimage place at the confluence of the Ganges, Yamuna, and the "underground" Sarasvati rivers. The narrative then states that on the banks of the Candrabhāgā the wish-granting cow established another eleven Rudras, the most prominent of these being Kṣīreśvara.[61] This Kṣīreśvara—the Lord [born from] Milk—is depicted in Tantric iconographical form: he is a local protector deity (*kṣetrapāla*) who dwells in cremation grounds, who has a frightful mouth, wears a skull necklace, is beloved of dogs, and who should be worshipped with meat and alcohol.[62]

Now, the Gomatī is a fairly well-known sacred river that begins in Uttar Pradesh and flows south until it eventually meets the Ganges. However, there is also a Gomatī River in Rajasthan, just north of Ekaliṅga and flowing into Rajsamand Lake. According to the editor of the *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa* there is another river near Rajsamand Lake named Candrabhāga that flows underground (or is simply dried up) but that presumably flows during the monsoon.[63] These two rivers are, I suggest, modeled on the more prominent Gomatī and Yamuna rivers at the confluence of which is the very sacred *tīrtha* of Prayāga. After all, the *ELP* does state: "A man who bathes at the confluence of those two rivers [the Gomatī and the Candrabhāga] obtains the fruit of Prayāga."[64] Additionally, there are also at least two prominent temples just to the west and east of Ekaliṅga, both known as Kuṇḍeśvar Temple. There is no doubt, then, that we are in the local region

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[61] *ELP* 15.24cd-34.
[62] *ELP* 15.52-55ab.
[63] *Śrīmad Ekaliṅgapurāṇam*, trans. Shri Krishnan 'Jugnu' and Bhanwar Sharma (Delhi: Aryavarta Sanskrity Sansthan, 2011), 182.
[64] *ELP* 15.27ab: *tatsaṅgame naraḥ snātvā prayāgasya phalaṃ labhet |*

of Mewar, while simultaneously being placed in the larger Hindu cosmos. The authors of the *ELP* are describing the journey of the wish-granting cow from Ekaliṅga to Amarakaṇṭaka and further beyond through India's sacred landscape, but this journey seems to take place concurrently within the political and religious limits of Mewar. This local and trans-local back and forth constitutes those centripetal and centrifugal narrative forces defined by Bakhtin and discussed in chapter two of this dissertation. The *ELP* makes claims to a larger, pan-Hindu cosmos wherein all the action of the narrative takes place, and yet the centrifugal, local elements of the narrative place the mythical events squarely within the political boundaries of Mewar.

Figure 4.3: Kuṇḍeśvara Kuṇḍa, Kasniyawad, Rajasthan. Photo by the author.

The journey of the wish-granting cow seems to be just this: a journey to the very limits of the macro/microcosmic map of the sacred landscape in order to establish *liṅga*s that are religious and political markers of territorial boundaries. In chapters sixteen and eighteen the wish-granting cow is described as journeying to rivers and mountains that serve as geographical markers of political territory, and at these locations she builds temples (establishes *liṅga*s) in order to make territorial claims. Chapter eighteen, in fact, opens with a verse that reads: "Then the [wish-granting] cow went to Avantī [Ujjain], celebrated on the earth, spreading *liṅga*s everywhere in that country."[65] The following verse indicates that the wish-granting cow was somewhere on the banks of the Carmaṇvatī (Cambal) River, which today forms the boundary between Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. While the boundary between the two states is modern, the river nonetheless may have marked a northeastern political boundary. Likewise, on the path to Oṃkāra the wish-granting cow establishes *liṅga*s "on all sides," and upon her arrival at the temple to Śiva at Oṃkāra she again pours down her milk and establishes "a thousand" *liṅga*s.[66]

The journey of the cow across the geographical, sacred, and political landscape is not just a narrative device used to explain the founding of certain temples or shrines. The movement of the cow is, instead, a device that lends a dynamic quality to the geographical landscape and prevents the cartography described from being merely a static and one-dimensional map. What I am suggesting is that the wish-granting cow's movement across the geographical macro/microcosmic map of northwestern India is the expression, on the part of the authors of the narrative, of the political and religious boundaries of Mewar; it is a cartography of power—ideological and political—that describes the sacred topography of Mewar while at the same time it describes the

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[65] *ELP* 18.1.

[66] *ELP* 18 22-23: *tasmin mārge tu liṅgāni viniveṣṭya samantataḥ | prāpya revāṃ ca tatrāpaḥ pītvauṅkāraṃ dadarśa ha || payasā snāpayitvā tam oṅkāraṃ surabhī tadā | niveśya tatra liṅgāni śaṅkarasya sahasraśaḥ ||*

larger Hindu sacred landscape and cosmos. The narrative of the cow's movement across the landscape of Mewar and north India locates the narrative, and the reader of the narrative, locally within the boundaries of the kingdom and at the same time within the larger Hindu cosmos. That the *ELP* is constructing an imagined sacred landscape that is also a political map of Mewar is made clear when the wish-granting cow travels to the very limits of that map and confronts the religious and political dangers that lie just beyond its boundaries.

Beyond the Boundaries: Chaos and Danger

Just as the *ELP* described specific pilgrimage locations (*tīrtha*) surrounding the political and religious center of the kingdom—the temple of Ekaliṅga—so the narrative also describes what lay beyond those boundaries. At the beginning of this chapter I stressed the relational and contingent nature of the sacred, and I placed emphasis on the relationship between center and periphery in how I define sacred spaces. In this section I want to look further at how the *ELP* mythologized that which existed beyond its boundaries—those dangerous and chaotic spaces outside of political and cosmological limits.

I argue that we can understand boundaries as liminal spaces with respect to the territorial limits of a kingdom or other culturally bounded region. It is because of this liminality that these spaces are regarded as dangerous, chaotic, and, often, impure in the view of the imperial court of Mewar. Victor Turner argues that liminal spaces are often characterized by ambiguity and danger, owing to their non-incorporation into accepted classificatory boundaries.[67] In the *ELP* this danger takes the form of non-Hindu groups that threaten the political stability of the kingdom because of their perceived impurity and military aggression. The tribal group most dominant in the Mewar

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[67] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1995), 94 *et passim*.

region of Rajasthan in the fifteenth century, as now, are the Bhils. The Bhils, as a tribal group, are outside of the Hindu *varṇa* classificatory system, and as such are considered impure in the eyes of the orthodox Brahmanical Hindu tradition. The worldview put forward in the *ELP* is a clear assertion of political and cultural boundaries that stress the (imagined) community that lay within the limits of the kingdom, and those on the outside, existing as they do in the chaotic and liminal spaces beyond political control and cosmic order, are constant threats to the stability of the kingdom. The Bhils were known to inhabit the "dangerous" forests and mountains surrounding Mewar, and as such were also associated with danger, impurity, and non-Hindu social and religious practices.[68]

The authors of the *ELP* and the royal court that supported the worldview of that narrative imagined what lay within the boundaries of the kingdom as what Tweed calls the "homeland," a space inhabited by an imagined community with a more-or-less homogeneous identity. Homelands emerge through a process of homemaking, a constant negotiation and renegotiation of territorial boundaries. Tweed notes that, "Homemaking does not end at the front door. It extends to the boundaries of the territory that group members allocentrically imagine as *their* space, but since the homeland is an imagined territory inhabited by an imagined community, a space and group continually figured and refigured in contact with others, its boarders shift over time and across cultures."[69] The *ELP*, focused as it is on the creation and enforcement of political and cultural

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[68] This is expressed in the *ELP* as demonstrated below, and was also the case in James Tod's time. Tod calls the Bhils "vanapootra," "sons of the forest," and reiterates stereotyped descriptions of the Bhils as "savages." See Tod, *Annals and Antiquities*, 206. For an interesting discussion on the differences between literary representations of the forest and towns, and what the forest meant in terms of impurity and danger in early Sanskrit literature see Anne Feldhaus, "The Image of the Forest in the *Māhātmya*s of the Rivers of the Deccan" in *The History of Sacred Places in India as Reflected in Traditional Literature*, ed. Hans Bakker (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1990), 90-102. See also Romila Thapar, "Perceiving the Forest: Early India," Journal of Asian Civilizations, Vol. 38, No. 1, July (2015): 53-73.

[69] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*, 110.

boundaries, makes clear arguments about the dangers of those living outside of the homeland and beyond the boundaries of the kingdom. The narrative does this through the story of a wish-granting cow and her creation of temples, bathing tanks, and other built structures that mark the limits of the territory of Mewar.

By paying attention to the representations of place and people on the inside and outside of sacred spaces we can more fully attend to the ways in which religious and political actors exercise a "politics of exclusion."[70] The limits of Mewar, the very boundaries of the kingdom, become central to the narrative of the *ELP*. Who, or what, is included within the boundaries, and excluded from them, becomes part of the larger narrative of sacred space in the text. Chapters thirteen through eighteen of the *ELP* describe the sacred geography of Mewar. As outlined above, these same six chapters describe the journey of the wish-granting cow across the geographical and political landscape of Mewar, and her movement up to the very limits of Mewar is described several times in those chapters. In my analysis this is a clear process of using the Hindu temple—as a representation of the human and divine body in the built environment—as a marker of political and religious inclusion/exclusion. By creating these boundaries marked with Hindu temples the authors of the *ELP* are making a claim to the inner space of the kingdom as a unique region protected from the dangers that exist beyond its borders. Body and landscape, therefore, work together to establish a space with a specific regional identity. Edward Casey reflects on this very relationship when he writes:

> Body and landscape present themselves as coeval epicenters around which particular places pivot and radiate. They are, at the very least, the bounds of places. In my embodied being I am *just at* a place as its inner boundary; a surrounding landscape, on the other hand, is *just beyond* that place as its outer boundary. Between the two boundaries—and very much as a function of their differential interplay—implacement occurs. Place is what takes place between body and landscape.[71]

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[70] I take the phrase "politics of exclusion" from Chidester and Linenthal who use it in reference to Gerardus van der Leeuw. See Chidester and Linenthal, *American Sacred Space*, 8.
[71] Casey, *Getting Back Into Place*, 29.

The wish-granting cow (or, perhaps more accurately, the authors of the *ELP*), establishes a specific place, the region of Mewar, through an engagement with divine and human bodies and through her creation of the larger landscape of Mewar. Let me now turn to the specific narratives of the wish-granting cow to place this point clear.

As mentioned above, in the mythological narrative of the creation of the temple to Ekaliṅga a wish-granting cow pours her milk down upon the ground that covers a hidden liṅga. That liṅga is, of course, Ekaliṅga himself who had been forced to dwell in the underworld (*pātāla*) due to a curse placed upon it by the goddess Pārvatī. The wish-granting cow spills her milk upon the earth and Ekaliṅga, arising from the underworld into Mewar states that from that moment forward the wish-granting cow will wander the entire earth establishing *liṅga*s, which will serve as forms of Ekaliṅga.[72] Importantly, Ekaliṅga also says that the wish-granting cow will take the form of Brahmans, or Hindu priests, and will become impassible at the border of the kingdom. *ELP* 8.53 reads: "Having obtained the form of brāhmaṇas [Hindu priests], you [the wish-granting cow] will be impassible (*ālaṅghanīyā bhavasva*) in your control over the border [of the kingdom]. Those [people] who have passed over you at the borders of fields, villages, temples (*tvām ullaṅghya*) will become [as if] the killers of Brahmans."[73] This verse, simple though it may be, is telling us something quite important about how power—political, religious, and symbolic—is being exercised in fifteenth century Mewar. This verse is an *active* claim to the territorial limits of the kingdom, such that any foe trespassing beyond the boundaries of Mewar—presumably in order to commit violence—should be understood as a killer of Brahmans (*brahmaghna*), perhaps one of the most vile and polluting types of people in the world, according to Hinduism.

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[72] *ELP* 8.48-49.
[73] *ELP* 8.53.

The narrative of the wish-granting cow comes early in the *ELP*—chapter eight of thirty-two chapters—and it takes place immediately after Ekaliṅga emerges from the underworld into the kingdom of Mewar. This mythic moment is the most important expression of the territorial limits of Mewar since the opening myth of the dismemberment of Madhu and Kaiṭabha described above. After the region of Mewar was constructed from the fat of the two demons—a region that was in fact the entire surface of the earth—the next expression of spatial boundaries is in the movements of the wish-granting cow across, and up to the very limits of, Mewar. The macrocosmic space created from the bodies of the two dismembered demons was coextensive with the limits of the kingdom of Mewar, and we see that those beings that live beyond the boundaries of the kingdom, whether they are tribal groups, demons, or ghosts, present a very real cosmic and political threat to the stability of the kingdom. Hence the establishment of Hindu temples, populated with Brahmans, created by the wish-granting cow in her movement across the social, political, and religious landscape. What is being expressed in the narrative of the wish-granting cow is an active engagement on the part of the authors of the *ELP* toward the "inside" and the "outside" of Mewar as a cultural and political territory, a territory whose rulers were constantly negotiating relationships of power inside and outside of that region. As a political space, the rulers of Mewar had to make the most forceful claims to the control of territory at the peripheries, for the obvious reason that it is on the boundaries and peripheries where the kingdom's stability was most at risk.

In chapter sixteen we are presented with an interesting episode again involving the dangers that exist just beyond the limits of the kingdom of Mewar. When the gods come to Bṛhaspati and ask how they remove the sins acquired after killing the demon Vṛtra, Bṛhaspati tells the gods to go to the limits of Mewar (*medapāṭāntikaṃ*) and bathe in the Kurumā River.[74] The Kuruma River—

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[74] Despite having performed something of a "good deed" for killing the demon Vṛtra, the demon was nonetheless a Brahman, and as such those responsible for his death accrue the "sin" of Brahmanicide.

today known as the Karmoī River—flows through the Chittorgarh District in Rajasthan, east of the temple of Ekaliṅga and near the modern border of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. The *ELP* also states that there is a bathing tank there, known as Karttarī Kuṇḍ, situated at the bank of the river that removes all sin.[75] It is unclear the role of the wish-granting cow in the travels of the gods to the Kurumā River, but the *ELP* states that after the gods bathed in this river at the limits of Mewar they left for their individual abodes and the wish-granting cow continued on to (and possibly beyond) the limits of Mewar, and as she was admiring the beauty of the scenery she saw a great army of the Kirāta people. The term "Kirāta" is something of a generic term in Sanskrit literature referring to tribal groups living in the mountains and other "wild" places. According to the editor of the *ELP*, the Mewari language commentary to the *ELP* states that the term "Kirāta" is referring to the Bhil tribe. This reading makes sense, as Bhil tribes certainly lived in the forests and hills of Mewar during the composition of the *ELP*, as I noted above.

After seeing this army of the Bhils, who were carrying all manner of weapons, the wish-granting cow became angry at the sight of them. The authors of the *ELP* state that the wish-granting cow knew that those in the tribal army were of a wicked nature (*duṣṭabhāvaṃ*), and she attacked them with her horns, hooves, snout, and tail. After attacking the tribal army and driving them away in the four directions, the wish-granting cow cursed the tribal army. She says that in the future this tribe will be subservient to preeminent kings and will always have a fear of water-born illnesses (*jalādrogabhayaṃ*). Similarly, but in opposition to this curse given to the tribal people, the wish-granting cow states that any king living in the Mewar region will not have any fear of water-born illnesses, nor will they have any fear of the tribal people either. After uttering this curse the wish-granting cow continued with her journey.[76]

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[75] *ELP* 16.15-17.
[76] *ELP* 16.31-41.

This incident is important for several reasons. First, we again are given another characterization of the Bhil tribal people as violent, prone to war, and outside of the Brahmanical fold. As the wish-granting cow is at the very margins of the kingdom of Mewar, I think it is reasonable to assume that the tribal army in this episode is either at the borders of the kingdom or just beyond. By routing the tribal army, the wish-granting cow—or more to the point, the authors of the *ELP*—are making claims to the territorial boundaries of the kingdom. This is consistent with how Edward Casey understands peripheries and their relationship to the center, particularly in any evaluation of historical events. He notes that "the most important arena of action is not in the center of the stage but at the periphery—or better, peripheries, as there is always more than one kind of edge in a given circumstance. Rather than being the zone in which human action gives out or comes to an end, the boundary is precisely where it intensifies: where it comes to happen in the most effective or significant sense." [77] By characterizing the tribal army as wicked and warlike, the authors of the *ELP* are stating that what exists beyond the boundaries of the kingdom, and beyond the boundaries of the dismembered body of the two demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha, is dangerous and a threat to the political stability of the kingdom. This is a claim to territory, both political and religious, on the part of the rulers of Mewar, and it is an expression of symbolic power over center and periphery in a politics of property.

This claim to territory and expression of power is exercised through the very interesting curse given to the tribal group by the wish-granting cow. As described above, the wish-granting cow stated that, aside from being subservient to preeminent kings, the tribal people living in the region would always have a fear of water-born sickness.[78] What this curse means exactly is not

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[77] Edward S. Casey, "Boundary, Place, and Event in the Spatiality of History," in *Rethinking History*, Vol. 11, No. 4, December 2007, 508.

[78] *ELP* 16.39: *deśe 'smin nṛpamukhyānāṃ tasmād vaśyā bhaviṣyatha | jalād rogabhayaṃ cādya dinān nityaṃ bhaviṣyati ||*

altogether clear, but I will venture an analysis based on my understanding of sacred space and political territory described thus far. I understand this curse to mean that the tribal groups living either within or outside of the territory of the kingdom will have a fear of water in bathing tanks and other sacred bathing areas, such as rivers. Bathing tanks are an important element of the built environment in Hinduism because they serve as locations of purity where a devotee can, essentially, wash the sins off of their physical and spiritual body. By cursing the Bhil people to be afraid of water is to exclude those people from participation in this orthodox Hindu ritual. What I believe is happening here is the appropriation of the geographical and built environment through a politics of exclusion, and this is done through defining who or what is fit—sacred—enough to bath in these tanks and rivers. As the non-Hindu body is considered biologically and inherently impure, the Bhil people are excluded from all such sacred places and pushed deeper past the boundaries of the kingdom. The symbolic and political appropriation of space is fundamental in the exercise of political power in Mewar, as in other places and times in human culture. As Chidester writes: "In a similar way [as the appropriate of physical space], symbolic space can also be appropriated. The sacred character of a place can be asserted and maintained through claims and counter-claims on its ownership. The sacrality of place, therefore, can be directly related to a politics of property."[79] What this "curse" does, in part, is to define both political and religious boundaries between those dangerous groups who live beyond the borders of the kingdom and those who live within.

Conclusion

At the beginning of his well-known essay "Map is Not Territory" Jonathan Z. Smith relates a story of his experience as a young man on a dairy farm in upstate New York. In this anecdote Smith

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[79] Chidester, *American Sacred Space*, 8.

describes the locative map that the farmer, his employer, constructed of his world—a world which was a microcosmic map of the larger cosmos in which that farmer dwelled. Smith describes the space that the farmer constructed wherein everything had its assigned place and role in the social and natural environment. By operating in conformity to the natural word such as the planting season and the breeding season, and by conforming to the social world delineated by the boundaries of fences, walls, and other borders, the farmer ordered his world in conformity to the social world of personal and private property. Smith writes,

> What he [the farmer] established within the walls of his house and within the fences that surround his farm was the carving out of a space which was separate from other spaces and yet in harmony with his perception of the larger social and natural environments. By limiting the space over which he had dominion, he strove to maximize all of the possibilities of that space. He sought to create, in both his home and farm, a microcosm in which everything had its place and was fulfilled by keeping its place…He conferred value upon that place by his cosmology of home and farm and by the dramatization of his respect for the integrity of their borders…I would term this cosmology a locative map of the world and the organizer of such a world, an imperial figure.[80]

What I have proposed in this chapter is something very similar to what Smith describes for his farmer. Through the establishment of built structures at the center of the kingdom of Mewar, and through building smaller temples, bathing tanks, and other structures on the borders of the kingdom, the imperial figures who composed the *ELP* and disseminated the text throughout the territory created a locative, microcosmic map that was meant to be organized in harmony with the larger map of the Hindu cosmos.

What lay beyond the boundaries of the kingdom of Mewar was mythologized as chaotic, dangerous, and impure in relation to the inside of the kingdom, particularly as one comes closer to the center of the region and its most important site of political and religious power, Ekaliṅga temple. What I have demonstrated is the manner in which this temple, and other built structures

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[80] Jonathan Z. Smith, "Map is Not Territory," in *Map is Not Territory* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1993 [1978]), 292.

on the periphery of the kingdom, mediated between cosmic chaos and political instability beyond the borders of the kingdom on the one hand, and the order of proper political rule and cosmically harmonious geographical place on the other.

Conclusion

At the Confluence of Text, Temple, and Landscape

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said writes:

> What I have tried to do is a kind of geographical inquiry into historical experience, and I have kept in mind the idea that the earth is in effect one world, in which empty, uninhabited spaces virtually do not exist. Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings.[1]

For Said, history and culture exist within a geographical context, and the political struggles encountered by those in power are ultimately struggles over land and geography, space and place. To understand the relationship between culture and power we have to attend to the ways in which narratives (oral and written), the built environment, and geographical place come together in the production of cultural identity. What exists at the confluence of text, temple, and landscape is human identity—political, religious, regional, personal—and what emerges therefrom are textual and visual cartographies of power which map that identity. In the introduction to this dissertation I defined a cartography of power as the "capacity to exercise control—ideological control as well as sociocultural control—over the ability to orient a group in a particular space and time." Understanding how these cartographies are constructed and deployed is important because of the power they have in defining one's orientation in a cultural landscape.

In the argument of this dissertation I am not using the terms 'cartography' or 'map' in the strictly modern sense; rather, when I talk about maps and cartographies, I mean textual representations of geographical space, both real and imagined. If we think of the term 'map' in a broader sense, then we can release it from its narrower analytic range and apply its power in a

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[1] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 7.

wider discursive way to define the human desire for orientation. Edward Casey urges us to do just this when he writes:

> 'Map' needs to be liberated from its alliance with modern cartography so that it can resume its original sense of charting one's way in a given place or region. Hence it can be something quite informal—indeed, anything that indicates a sense of direction and gives a basis for orientation. Construed in this way, mapping is placefinding, a term that is in the same league as place-taking and place-making.[2]

When we think of maps in this broader sense then we can also view texts such as the *ELP* as cartographies composed in order to structure and organize disparate, and perhaps even dangerous, space into a clearly defined place "in which to meaningfully dwell." This is the implicit goal of the *ELP*: to take a disunified territory, replete as it is with stories of gods and goddesses, demons and outsiders, and develop a unified vision of locality that serves as a map of the kingdom and the homeland. This production of local space is directly connected to the production of local identity, akin to what Appadurai called a 'neighborhood,' as I discussed in the introduction. Neighborhoods, according to Appadurai, are "inherently colonizing," involving as they do "an exercise of power over some sort of hostile or recalcitrant environment, which may take the form of another neighborhood."[3] What the *ELP* presents is a vision of this exercise of power in its desire to assert political, religious, and regional boundaries against the perceived external threats from the Delhi Sultanate and internal threats from the Bhil tribe. The *ELP* presents an active claim over political space, as well as religious and social space, and it asserted this claim through the composition of a cartography of the homeland of Mewar.

The agents who were involved in this map making process—the authors of the *ELP*—sought to locate their narrative within the larger web of textual relationships on a pan-Hindu scale. In chapter two I argued that the intertextuality of the *ELP* is directly related to its implicit

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[2] Casey, "Boundary, Place, and Event in the Spatiality of History," in *Rethinking History*, Vol. 11, No. 4, December 2007: 512.

[3] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 184.

discursive goals of producing local identity and establishing territorial boundaries. Geographical place is central to the concerns of the authors of Indian literature, and for the authors of the *ELP* place served as the primary organizational structure for their narrative. Sanskrit narratives and their geographical orientations were fundamental to the formation of local as well as pan-Hindu identities in the so-called "Sanskrit cosmopolis." On this very issue Pollock remarks: "So important, in fact, was the geographical mode of thought to Sanskrit literati that space not only became an object of knowledge to be fully organized in their discourse, but, as we will see, wound up organizing discourse itself by providing a basic framework for structuring cultural knowledge."[4] There is no doubt that this "geographical mode of thought" so persistent in the Sanskrit world worked as a form of narrative organization—a framework—throughout Mewar's long literary history. The authors of inscriptions dating to as early as 977 C.E. were concerned not only with the lineages of rulers; more importantly, they were concerned with emplacing those lineage claims in the sacred and political landscape. As the capital of the Guhilas moved from Āṭapura to Nāgdā, and then to Chittorgarh, the authors of the epigraphical records worked to situate their genealogical claims in the local landscape of rivers, mountains, bathing tanks, and temples. The authors of the *ELM* and the *ELP* in turn drew upon these records and fashioned their own narratives on those models.

The authors of the *ELP* also sought to locate their local narrative within the larger literary context of the *Vāyupurāṇa*, and perhaps implicitly with other well-known narratives. I have borrowed Bakhtin's notion of centripetal and centrifugal narrative forces in order to account for the ways in which the authors of the *ELP* sought to locate their text in the larger intertextual web of Purāṇic literature. Perhaps the most unifying feature of *sthalapurāṇa*s and *māhātmya*s as a genre is their desire to link local concerns with the trans-local, either in terms of the associations they

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[4] Pollock *The Language of the Gods,* 191.

make between their own narrative and other, more well-known texts, or the connections they make between the local landscape and built environment with the pan-Hindu world, or both. Elizabeth Rohlman makes very much the same claim in her study of the *Sarasvatī Purāṇa*, a local *māhātmya* from Gujarat. The *Sarasvatī Purāṇa* moves back and forth between the local world of Gujarat and Maharashtra and the pan-Indian geographical and mythological world found in well-known Purāṇas. As she notes: "The narrative design of the text thus simultaneously asserts a distinctly regional identity and enters into discourse with transregional and pan-Indic mythological and literary traditions, in essence defining the nature and status of its own assertions of regional identity through this discourse."[5]

Similarly, the *ELP* moves back and forth between its local environment and the larger cultural world of (mostly north) India. In so doing it ties its local geographical and built environment to the greater Hindu mythological, historical, and literary ecumene. As Diana Eck notes on the relationship between landscape and myth:

> We have seen also that the parts of a landscape, like the stories, are connected to one another. They are systematized and patterned…Rarely does a *tīrtha* stand alone, but rather it is grouped with others in pairs, threesomes, fours, fives, sixes, sevens, tens, and twelves. Each group contains a set and, as such, creates its own landscape through its imagined connections, even if the pilgrims rarely think about visiting each part of the set.[6]

Purāṇic narratives do not stand alone in the broader cultural landscape, and through the work that they do in producing sacred and political space they link themselves to the geographical landscape and the built environment of temples, shrines, and bathing tanks.

The relationship between literary narratives and the built environment is, I argue, similar to the intertextual relationship between narratives in any textual landscape. What I argued in chapter three is the view that architectural sites such as Hindu temples do not exist alone in the

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[5] Elizabeth Rohlman, "Geographical Imagination and Literary Boundaries in the Sarasvatī Purāṇa," *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 15, 2: 144.

[6] Diana Eck, *India: A Sacred Geography* (New York: Harmony Books, 2012), 448.

physical landscape, just as they do not exist alone in the textual landscape. To understand the role that built environments play in the construction of cultural identity in South Asia we must consider their "intertextual" relationships to other local and trans-local places of pilgrimage. Just as religious narratives communicate values and transmit culturally important messages, so the built environment also can tell the historian, and the pilgrim, a great deal about what is valued in a given culture. I agree with Casey who writes:

> Buildings are among the most perspicuous instances of the thorough acculturation of places. *A building condenses a culture in one place*. Even if it is more confining than a landscape, a building is more densely saturated with culture than is a landscape (unless the landscape is a cityscape). As itself a place, a building is a *focus locorum*—indeed, a *locus locorum*, a place for places. It exists between the bodies of those who inhabit or use it and the landscape arranged around it."[7]

It is with the built environment and its relationship to textuality and geographical place that we can begin to think more deeply about how temples and other built structures relate to the production of regional identity.

As I have tried to demonstrate, the body is a central metaphor for the construction of Hindu temples, and of the geographical landscape as well. Where we dwell, and the landscape in which we live, are centrally connected to our sense of who we are; the built environment and the geographical landscape operate simultaneously toward the production of identity. In the example of Vindhyavāsinī and Rāṣṭrasenā I demonstrated that the built environment, the topography of Mewar, and narrative converged in the establishment of a new sacred landscape that was directly related to the geopolitical reality facing the kingdom of Mewar: external military incursions from the Delhi Sultanate and internal threats from the Bhils. This new sacred landscape populated with temples, and in particular the temple to Rāṣṭrasenā and her role as the protector (*kuladevī*) of Mewar and of the royal family, was produced through the very narrative that described it. As a

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[7] Casey, *Getting Back Into Place*, 32. Casey's italics.

representation of military might in the geographical and literary landscape, the temple to Rāṣṭrasenā served as a symbol of Mewar's new political and religious identity. Narrative context and geographical place both dialogically contributed to the production of a particular regional identity for the royal court of Mewar.

That built structures such as temples can "take place" in the narrative landscape as well as "make space" in the geographical landscape is exemplary of the very process of the production of regional identity that I argue for; that is, the production of a 'neighborhood' as Appadurai has argued. He states that, "In one dimension, at one moment, and from one perspective, neighborhoods as existing contexts are prerequisites for the production of local subjects."[8] But as these subjects participate in the social world in which they dwell they begin to alter, expand, or contract their existing contextual frame through trade, warfare, and, I would add, through the production of literary narratives. Places with distinct regional identities emerge from socio-historical contexts and also produce those contexts through interaction with the historical realities in which they are constituted.

This is perhaps best exemplified in the narrative of the wish-granting cow and her journey across the landscape, which itself is coterminous with the dismembered bodies of Madhu and Kaiṭabha, explored in chapter four. As the wish-granting cow moved across the landscape she established *liṅga*s that served as the architectural presence of Śiva. Perhaps most centrally for the argument here she is said to have established these *liṅga*s at the limit, or border, of Mewar and at the banks of rivers or on mountains. It is here that we come to the central theme of chapter four: the relationship that the built environment has to geographical space. I demonstrated the interrelated nature of the *ELP* narrative, the built environment of temples and bathing tanks, and the geographical landscape of rivers, lakes, forests, and mountains. The geographical landscape is

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[8] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 185.

at the same time the sacred landscape, for at each mountain, river, or lake that the wish-granting cow visits there is some connection to the divine world of Hindu gods and goddesses. The journey of the wish-granting cow as described in the *ELP* is not an innocuous trip across the geographical landscape of Mewar, however. Chapter four concludes with a discussion of just what it means for the *kāmadhenu* to travel around and up to the limits of Mewar: she was outlining political, religious, and even cultural territory through the establishment of temples and through the worship of the divine actors who inhabit those places. The geopolitical and religious cartography of Mewar was traced out in the footprints of the wish-granting cow, one could say.

The culmination of religious narrative, the built environment, and landscape (sacred and topographical) results in what I take to be the heart of my argument: the formation of a unique religious, political, and regional identity for those who knew of, read, or listened to the narrative of the *ELP*. The map of Mewar that emerges in the *ELP* is a narrativized representation of its author's aspiration to refashion their geopolitical reality after numerous threats, and occasional invasions, from internal and external military powers. Through a conscious rearticulating of past narratives found in the inscriptional record and in the *ELM*, the authors of the *ELP*, with the support of the royal court, constructed a new narrative with a Purāṇic pedigree that staked claim to contested territorial borders. This resulted in, or was intended to result in, a newly constructed geopolitical and religious identity that was uniquely Mewari, for who else but those living in Mewar could feel so connected to local deities like Ekaliṅga and Rāṣṭrasenā, or to local heroes like Bāppa Rāval and Hārītarāśi, who populated their mythological world? Thomas Tweed would call this map a "dwelling" or "homeland," Appadurai might call it a "neighborhood,'" and Smith might call it a "locative map" even still. What is consistent in these models is the notion of orientation, of world-building and place-making.

Orientation, as I have argued, begins locally and in the body. For the authors of the *ELP,* the body is the material out of which the world is made, and metaphors of the body are also central to understanding the built environment. Perhaps most importantly, however, the body is also central in any conception of identity; identity—personal, regional, or cosmic—begins with the body and moves outward into the larger world. I want to quote again Tweed's definition of his term "dwelling," a definition that resonates well with my understanding of the ways in which the *ELP* serves as a cartography of power and of orientation. He writes:

> Dwelling, as I use the term, involves three overlapping processes: mapping, building, and inhabiting. It refers to the confluence of organic-cultural flows that allows devotees to map, build, and inhabit worlds. It is homemaking. In other words, as clusters of dwelling practices, religions orient individuals and groups in time and space, transform the natural environment, and allow devotees to inhabit the worlds they construct.[9]

To add to Tweed's "mapping, building, and inhabiting" triad I further argue that those three lead to, or perhaps culminate in, the production of a unique identity that links the individual in his or her body to their home, to their immediate landscape and region, and to the larger cosmos. Narratives such as the *ELP* are exceptionally well suited to the construction of a sense of identity and sense of 'self' that is central to any identity. As Rukmini Bhaya Nair notes on the role of narrative in the construction of identity:

> As symbol-using creatures, we possess, so to speak, *two very effective mental tools that help us arrive at a sense of 'self': one, grammar; two, narrative.* That is, a narrative embedded in a cultural conversation has the same psychological importance as the sentence in grammar, in the sense that, just as all language rely on sentences to 'construct' the world for them, they rely on narratives to 'explain' the world to them. *Narrative, that is, is a structure that introduces the question 'why?' and the connective 'because' into the world.*[10]

The *ELP* is a narrative about the creation of the world, about the sacred landscape, about the built environment—but more than that, it is about the unique place that is Mewar and the unique identity

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[9] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*, 82.
[10] Rukmini Bhaya Nair, *Narrative Gravity: Conversation, Cognition, Culture* (London: Routledge, 2003), 344.

that those living in Mewar have in connection to their stories, to their temples, and to the very landscape in which they dwell.

Appendix A

Ekaliṅgapurāṇa Chapter Colophons

The following is a list of the individual chapter colophons given in the *ELP*:

1. First chapter
2. Second chapter
3. Third chapter
4. Fourth chapter
5. Fifth chapter
6. Sixth chapter
7. Seventh chapter
8. The boon of the wish-granting cow
9. Indra's boon
10. The fruits of pilgrimage
11. The manifestation of Raṣṭrasenā
12. A description of the self-arisen Kali Age
13. A description of Lomaśa Āśrama
14. A description of Māhendrī and the greatness of Somanātha
15. The greatness of Kṣīreśvara
16. The greatness of Gautama
17. The greatness of Gautameśvara
18. A conversation between Vāyu and Nārada
19. The practice of Bāṣpa's mantra
20. A description of Bāṣpa's lineage
21. A description of Bāṣpa's lineage
22. The morning ritual in Bāṣpa's lineage
23. The accomplishment of the mantra
24. The story of the ritual of the five-faced (god) in the description of the lineage of Baṣpā
25. The narration of the *pūjā* in the description of Bāṣpa's lineage order
26. A description of the lineage of king Bāṣpa
27. The manifestation of Śrinārāyaṇa
28. A description of the pilgrimage places
29. The rules for the worship of Rāṣṭraśyenā
30. The narration of the Gaṇeśa mantra
31. A description of the lineage of Bāṣpa
32. A description of the festival rules for the pilgrimage

Appendix B

Translation of Selected Chapters from the *Ekaliṅgapurāṇa*

Chapter 11: The Manifestation of Rāṣṭrasena

Nārada said to the wind god Vāyu: "You taught to me the glory of Lord Ekaliṅga and I have learned it. Now would you extoll for me the virtues of the pilgrimage places and liṅgas in these vicinities, and, O omnipresent Vāyu, introduce me to the goddess named Rāṣṭrasenā."

Vāyu replied: "If one goes to Ekaliṅga, the place one arrives at there is, in fact, the supreme peak that is Mt. Kailāśa[1], what had itself become the steeply horned Trikūṭa Mountain[2] covered in thickets of trees.

Lake Mānasa which springs from Kailāśa is the Ganges River, which itself has become Mewar's winding Kuṭilā River. Moreover, in the southeastern direction from Ekaliṅga a great bathing tank was built.

Bhavānī[3] deposited with her own hands the five substances[4] that come from the wish-granting cow[5] into that bathing tank. Because of that, the bathing tank is called 'Karaja,' meaning 'born from her hands.'[6]

And the Goddess constructed that bathing tank, the embodiment of all pilgrimage places, in order to purify the people of this world. A person whose mind is devout should bathe with water taken from that tank, and perform the virtuous acts there that please Ekaliṅga. In this life he will obtain all his desires, and in the end he will reach Śiva's world.

Whatever fruits a person might obtain upon seeing the Karaja well will be availed to him always merely by remembering it.

Dear sage! Know that the water that is seen in Indra Lake[7] near Ekaliṅga is the true form of Agni and Soma that bestows all desires. Whoever does ablutions there will obtain the benefits of all the pilgrimage places in this world.

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[1] This is referring to Mount Kailash in the Trans-Himalayan mountain range. It is thought to be the home of Śiva.

[2] The Trikuṭa Mountain here is referring to the mountainous around surrounding Ekliṅgjī temple in Mewar.

[3] This is another name for the goddess Pārvatī.

[4] The five substances (*pañcagavya*) that are produced by a cow are milk, curds, ghee, urine, and dung.

[5] The wish-granting cow (*kāmadhenu*) is considered to be the divine mother of all cows who provides her owner with anything he or she may desire.

[6] The author is playing with the words "*svakareṇa*" meaning "by her own hand," and "*karaja*" meaning "born from the hand."

[7] This is referring to Indra Sarovar, a lake directly behind Ekliṅgji temple and an important place of pilgrimage.

Whosoever bathes in that lake and performs the rite of pleasing the ancestors, and then performs the ancestor rituals (śrāddha)[8] and honors Vindhyavāsā and Hara,[9] that person obtains all of their desires and enters the world of Rudra.[10]

Present to the north of Ekalinga were two supreme pilgrimage places—Kedāra bathing tank and Amṛta bathing tank. O Sage, whoever bathes in the Kedāra and Amṛta tanks and worships the lords Kedāreśvara in one and Amṛteśa in the other, obtains all desires, and at the end of life reaches immortality.

The Sūta said: "Then, O Nārada, Vindhyavāsā went in the eastern direction, to the summit of a mountain where there was a garden where flowers bloom in all seasons, and having installed herself there upon a glorious golden lion's throne inside the walls of a palace she performed the acts of devotion that served to protect the empire.

Vindhyavāsā then emitted the goddess Rāṣṭrasenā from her own body, after which she installed her there. Delighted in seeing herself in the form of Rāṣṭrasenā, she said these words to her:

"O goddess, take fully the form of a hawk and protect the kingdom! With vajra in hand destroy the evil Daityas, Rākṣasas, Piśacas, Bhūtas, and Pretas[11]. While in the form of a hawk it is your

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[8] The *śrāddha* rite is a ritual for deceased ancestors, specifically for one's paternal and maternal parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. During this ritual a son offers balls of rice (*piṇḍa*) to the ancestors that nourish the deceased in the afterlife and provide for them a body so that they can move on from the world of the hungry ghosts (*preta*) to the world of the ancestors (pitṛloka).

[9] This is another name for Śiva.

[10] The Sanskrit term used is *Rudraloka*, the world or realm of Rudra. Rudra is a deity associated with fierce winds and storms, and is a Vedic forerunner of Śiva.

[11] The Daityas are demons or anti-gods (*asura*) born of Diti and the sage Kaśyapa. Rākṣasas are generally demonic beings described as being ugly in appearance, having fangs and long claws, and being large in size and desirous of human blood. Piśācas are impish, demonic creatures that eat human flesh and often lurk in the darkness and haunt cremation grounds and other inauspicious places. Bhūtas are malevolent ghosts. Pretas are ghosts who haunt the living, and are sometimes described as having large, distended stomachs and very thin necks so that they are in a constant state of hunger and dissatisfaction.

duty to protect Medapāṭa[12] from Yoginīs and Jṛmbhakas, Evil Seizers,[13] and others. If some evil people come to this country desiring war, you should destroy them with your spells and powers."[14]

If the local king and people in Medapāta are to be victorious, then the ruler of these people should perform *pūjā* to Rāṣṭrasenā daily.

On the eight and fourteenth days of the waxing and waning moons, and when the sun passes from one zodiacal sign to another, and on other solar days, one should worship Rāṣṭrasenā and, in the same way, women who embody her form.

One should properly worship all Brāhmaṇs in order to please the Goddess completely. By doing so Rāṣṭrasenā, delighted, grants wishes to those who performed that worship.

Therefore, one should worship Rāṣṭrasenā with complete devotion in the proper way. One should worship her daily with devotion during the bright half of the month of Caitra.[15]

The Goddess named Rāṣṭrasena is the protector of Medapāṭa. Because of her the empire will not be destroyed by outsiders[16] or by any other invader.[17]

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This eleventh chapter is called the "Manifestation of Rāṣṭrasenā" given in the
Ekaliṅgamāhātmyam of Medapāṭa, part of the Glorious *Vāyupurāṇa*.

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[12] Medapāṭa is the Sanskrit name for the region of Mewar. It means "an expanse or extension of fat." This unusual name is explained at the beginning of the *ELP* where the earth itself, and specifically Mewar, was constructed by leveling or flattening out the bones and fat of two mythic demons after they were killed in a battle with Viṣṇu.

[13] Yoginīs have a long history in India, and the bird-headed goddesses described above, interestingly, share many of the features of yoginīs. There are sometimes said to be sixty-four yoginīs, many of which are bird-faced, who derive from the Eight Mothers (*aṣṭamātṛkā*). They can be either benevolent or dangerous. See White 2003 for a detailed study of the Yoginīs. Jṛmbhakas are a type of demonic being. The word itself comes from √jṛmbh, meaning "to open the jaws wide, yawn, or gape," probably indicating the frightening appearance of a mouth opening wide to consume a person.

[14] The term used is *māyā* can be translated a number of ways as illusion, fraud, trick, or ignorance. Here I chose to highlight the negative and destructive nature of māyā as magical powers and spells.

[15] Caitra is the name of the second month in spring.

[16] The term here is "*yavana*" which can translate to "outsider," "foreigner," or "barbarian."

[17] The author of the *ELP* uses the active verb in a passive construction here.

Chapter 29: The Rules for the Worship of Rāṣṭraśyenā

Nārada said to Vāyu, "Earlier you spoke about Rāṣṭraśyenā, the goddess who destroys her enemies. Please explain the rules for her worship, she who is the family deity of the venerable Bāṣpa.[18] In which manner did the sage Śiva Śarmā[19] perform the worship of Rāṣṭraśyenā properly? O Vāyu, you are able to cut through all of my doubts quickly."

Vāyu replied: "O Nārada, listen attentively to the auspicious words I am about to speak. From the mere act of hearing these words a person is released immediately from their faults.

Now, having bathed in the eight pilgrimage places beginning with the Kuṭila River and ending at Indra Lake, Śiva Śarmā came to Rāṣṭrasenā together with his sons and grandsons in order to worship her. Firstly they worshiped a local Bhairava, and then they worshipped the host of other attendant deities there, O best of sages.

That best of sages Śiva Śarmā saw her seated upon a throne made of jewels, inlaid cat's-eye gems, crystals, and adorned with gold. That pale limbed goddess dressed in resplendent red, adorned in golden ornaments, who resembles the glory of the sun and who is like the splendor of the moon, who has eyes like glorious lotus petals and who has a beautiful nose, whose voice is like a nightingale, who wears an opulent pearl and coral necklace, who has large and rising breasts, who is heroic, who holds a sword, a shield, and equipped with a bow, and arrows, who always has a pleased face, and who is like a living autumnal moon, who is the great goddess who has four arms, who is endowed with external signs of youth and other qualities, who is served by the kinnaras and the gandharvas[20], O best of munis. Śiva Śarmā himself honored her with devotion.

Having offered incense, sandalwood paste, various types of fruit, eatables, and betel nut mixed with thickened milk, candied sugar, clarified butter, according to the rules given in the Āgamas, one should then perform ārtī. O best of sages, reciting the root mantra according to his ability of Rāṣṭrasenā after performing aṅganyāsa,[21] Śiva Śarmā, having offered prayers, said:

"O sinless Mother! Please give me your command to stay right here in your presence," and then he praised her saying, "by your grace let there be no obstacle."

Vāyu then said, "From that time on the great sage Śiva Śarmā lived at that pilgrimage place together with those Brahmins who know the Atharvaveda and together with the students and the student's students of Ekaliṅga Śiva Śarmā held together in his heart."

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[18] In the *ELM* Bāṣpa is the name used for Bappā Rāwal, the mythico-historical progenitor of the Mewar royal lineage and, according to the narrative, the king who had Ekaliṅga temple built.
[19] Śiva Śarmā is the father of Bappā Rāwal as given in the *ELM*.
[20] Kinnaras and Gandharvas are classes of celestial beings associated with music and song.
[21] The *aṅganyāsa* rite is part of a larger ritual wherein the body is purified and made fit to worship a deity. The rite of *aṅganyāsa* entails touching certain parts of the body with one's hand while reciting mantras in order to make those body parts, and the entire body, pure.

Nārada said, "O Vāyu, please relate to me entirely the rules for the worship of Rāṣṭraśyenā with all of its constituent parts. Please also tell me her mantra and the nyāsa that are used to avert great dangers.

Vāyu replied, "That highest power famous in the world known as Rāṣṭraśyenā, was honored by sages beginning with Hārīta, Takṣaka and Indra, and many others.

I will tell you her mantra, which bestows all accomplishments. Her mantra is "ramalavara" together with the sound "yūṃ." Then [after reciting ramalavarayūṃ] the knower of the mantra may pronounce "to Rāṣṭraśyenā." Next "namaḥ" should be pronounced, giving the mantra eight syllables [ramalavarayūṃ (Rāṣṭraśyenāyai) namaḥ].[22]

He should recite the mantra one hundred thousand times [and] for the purpose of pleasing the goddess [Rāṣṭrasenā] he should make offerings with the milk preparation into the reverential fire one tenth portions at a time.

The ṛṣi of the mantra is called Brahmā, and the metre is Gāyatrī. The goddess of the mantra is Rāṣṭraśyenā, the seed syllable is raṃ and the śakti is yūṃ. The wedge [kīlaka] is said to be a fan [vyajana]. The purpose of this mantra is for the perfection of the four varṇas. After reciting the mantra one should form the [divine] body with the aṅganāsya beginning with "ra."

First performing the mātṛkānyāsa[23] and having performed the ṣaḍaṅga nyāsa and having prepared the body through the rite of bhūtaśuddhi[24]one should then perform the establishment of the breaths [prāṇasthāpana].[25] Then the mantrin, his body purified, his mind free from greed, should worship the goddess in due order with the five services.[26]

When the mantrin has offered the eatables and so forth, next he should perform the Amṛtīkaraṇa Mudrā by means of the root mantra, the Veiling Mudra by means of the armor, and the Protection Mūdra by means of the weapon. This should not be forgotten in any case.

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[22] The mantra as described in these two verses is unclear. Shaman Hatley has recommended the following emendation to the text, which as printed is hypometrical: 29.19.ab *rāṣṭraśyenāntāṃ*] *rāṣṭraśyenāṃ*. I follow that emendation in my translation. Gudrun Buhnemann has also suggested a translation of the mantra as "*yūṃ rāṣṭraśyenāyai namaḥ*" based upon a reading of 29.18.cd as "vara that ends in ramala means yū," where "vara" means "ya and "ramala" means "yū." I follow Michael Slouber's suggestion for a translation of the mantra as "*ramalavarayūṃ namaḥ*" where the utterance of "*Rāṣṭraśyenāyai*" as part of the main mantra of eight syllables is optional.

[23] In the mātṛkānyāsa Tantric rite the practitioner calls down and installs the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet onto the body in order to make it pure.

[24] *Bhūtaśuddhi* (Skt., 'purification of the elements') is a ritual that involves washing the body in order to remove physical impurities so that the physical body is fit for initiation and worship. See David White, *The Alchemical Body* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 270-72.

[25] What is meant here is the ritual known as *prāṇapratiṣṭha*, the infusing of life-breaths into an icon (*mūrti*) before it can be worshipped. The rite of *prāṇapratiṣṭha* brings the deity into the icon, transforming it from an inanimate object into the deity itself.

[26] Typically these five are sandalwood paste (*gandha*), flowers (*puṣpa*), incense (*dhūpa*), a lamp (*dīpa*), and food (*naivedya*).

After this one should offer water respectfully to the Goddess and recite the root mantra. The mantrin should pronounce the mantra for the Goddess with the word "svāhā" but he should not say the word "mama" at the end.

[The worshipper] should give water for sipping to Rāṣṭrasenā and he should offer her betel nut. Next, he should give her unguents and adorn her with various kinds of garlands. Having given these objects pleasing to the mind to the Goddess the worshipper should present flowers to her with open hands.

Next, the worshipper should perform the complete worship of the coverings beginning with the limbs of Rāṣṭrasenā. He should draw a lotus with eight petals inside of which is a six-cornered diagram, and a square furnished with four doors.

The worshipper, having performed the worship of the pīthaśaktis of the divine Mother(s)[27], should then worship the six principle parts of the body[28] in the six corners of the maṇḍala. In the eight petals of the lotus one should worship different forms of the Goddess beginning with Brāhmī, and in the square one should worship the Goddesses beginning with Indrā together with their weapons and vehicles (vāhana). One worships Rāṣṭrasenā sequentially with the five groups of divinities (pañcāvaraṇa).[29]

That lord of sages, having worshipped Rāṣṭrasenā one last time, should dismiss the Goddess according to the rule. O Brahman, these most supreme rules [for the worship of Rāṣṭrasenā] were told to you thus. Whoever should worship with devotion in this way goes to that highest state. The person who worships Rāṣṭrasenā will not be conquered by fear—whether they are in war, in disputation, or in a distant land.

If a person who is mentally focused listens to these rules everyday, or if that person should cause others to listen to them, they both will receive a reward from the Goddess immediately. Of this there is no doubt.

Local people, who worship Rāṣṭrasenā with the repetition of prayers, oblations, and praises, whether they are with faith or without faith—all of these lead to union with her.

The sage who is entirely engaged in meditation and who is abstemious in his appetite during the festival of Navrātra […][30]

The Sūta[31] said, "Vāyu taught this Purāṇa which bestows the highest truth. After hearing the Purāṇa thus, and having performed the worship of Rāṣṭrasenā, Nārada, the son of a Brahman, went to heaven.

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[27] This is in the genitive singular, and should be in the Plural?

[28] These six are he two arms, two legs, head, and waist.

[29] What the term *pañcāvaraṇa* is referring to here is not clear. It may be referring to the following five groups of divinities: 1) the *brahmamantras* and the *aṅgamantras*, 2) the Vidyeśvaras, 3) the Gaṇeśvaras, 4) the World-guardians and, 5) the Weapons of the World Guardians.

[30] The last half of this verse is missing in the only available manuscript of the *ELM*.

[31] The narrative voice shifts at this point from the outer frame narrative to another frame narrative. The outer narrative frame of the *ELM* is a conversation between the god of the wind Vayu and

If one worships Rāṣṭrasenā in the morning, at noon, and in the evening with devotion, then for that person there is nothing that cannot be accomplished. Those highest of men who perform Kumārīpūjā[32]--as they desire, so that most supreme goddess [Rāṣṭrasenā] gives everything to them.

Those kings who make a burnt offering there [at Rāṣṭrasenā's temple] according to the rules during times of great danger and great portents[33] will never fear their enemies.

During times of war and violence one should remember Rāṣṭrasenā in the form of a bird and holding a vajra weapon in her hand with all one's effort. Likewise, during times of peace one should remember her gentle and auspicious form.

Even Śāradā[34] is not able to tell us of Rāṣṭrasenā's ocean of qualities with her hundreds of thousand of births, and with her innumerable mouths. I spoke about this briefly, and having made this known to you, O son of a Brahman, even I am not able to speak further about her other magnificent qualities.

You have wealth, you have accomplished your goals, and above all you possess omniscient knowledge. As if ignorant, you asked about the glory of Ekaliṅga. A knowledgeable person causes people to remember that which they have forgotten for their benefit. I produce, O lord of sages, the profitableness of births of those people again and again.

Vedagarbha said, "O very wise Suṣumāṇa,[35] please attend to these words of mine. Having worshipped Gaṇeśa first, and having performed the aṅganyāsa preceded by the ṛṣinyāsa rite one should worship the god who is the protector of gods, who is the giver of rewards. If you perform worship in this way, there will not be any obstacles anywhere for you."

This twenty-ninth chapter is called the "The Rules for the Worship of Rāṣṭraśyenā" given in the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmyam* of Medapāṭa, part of the Glorious *Vāyupurāṇa*.

Nārada, a wandering bard. The next narrative frame is a conversation between the Sūta, a Purāṇic bard, and Śaunaka, a famous sage.

[32] Kumārīpūjā is a ritual where a young girl (*kumārī*) representing the divine feminine is worshipped during particular ritual and festival occasions.

[33] This refers to major, unexpected events such as earthquakes, eclipses, and the like.

[34] This is an epithet of either Durgā or Sarasvatī.

[35] Suṣumāṇa is the name of the king of Mewar as given in the *ELM*. Vedagarbha is his royal priest.

Chapter 15: The Glorification of Kṣīreśvara

Śaunaka said, "O Sūtanandana, everything that was asked [by me] of the greatness of Ekalinga, which is difficult to obtain even for all the gods, was answered by you. In the same way, [you told me] of the greatness of Somanātha together with the linga of Vaidyanātha. How did the [wish-granting] cow go from Ekalinga to Amarakaṇṭaka[36]—by which path, and in which direction? Please tell this to me completely, as you are the one who knows the meaning of this [Ekalinga] Purāṇa." [1-3]

The Sūta said, "[In the past] Vāyu was asked that [question] by the sage Nārada in detail. I will tell that [to you, so] listen, O attentive twice-born one. From Ekalinga the [wish-granting] cow went into the western direction. Having travelled two leagues, she began to roar. Holding Ekalinga in her mind she began to dig in the earth with the tip of her horn. Śiva [was] pleased by that, [and] from the middle of the hole [that the cow dug] the lord known as *Kuṇḍeśvara*[37] arose. Through the mere sight of *Kuṇḍeśvara* one does not sink in the ocean of Being [samsara]. [4-7]

Having stayed there a long time [at *Kuṇḍeśvara*], she [the wish-granting cow], went quickly to the north. She went to the limits of Mewar, which has been made to consist of *linga*s. Then, [the wish-granting cow] who was joyful, remembering the god Maheśvara, arrived [in the north]. Moreover, wherever that cow would wander on this earth, there, O Brahman, hundreds of millions of *linga*s arose. [8-10ab]

The lord who is known as Guheśvara, Somanātha, Vaidyanātha, Nīlakaṇṭha, Kāpileśa, Viśvanātha, Kuṇḍeśvara, Pātāleśvara, Acaleśa, and Rāmeśvara is remembered by the gods, the sages, the celestial singers, the tree-spirits, the wizards, and nāgas, O great sage. [He is worshipped] by the Brahmans, the warriors, the merchants, and even the servants according to the rules spoken in the Vedas with mantras that are born from the Vedas. [10cd-13]

The establishment and worship [of *linga*s] by those three [highest] *varṇa*s is auspicious. The *śūdra*s [worship Śiva] with nāma-mantras[38] [according to the] eternal rules. They [*śūdra*s] should not worship with Vedic [mantras] [and should] maintain their own dharma. Better to do one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than to do the duty of another well discharged. Better is death in one's own duty; doing the duty of another brings danger. [14-15]

Whatever *linga* is established wherever by whomever is known by the name Maheśa. The Lord is composed of all *linga*s. One should worship Śankara with devotion, whether unmoving [established], moving, or natural, and one should not dwell in the inner chamber of a temple. [16-17]

Having established a thousand lingas [there in Mewar] the wish-granting cow, going to Amarakaṇṭaka, then saw a most beautiful lake. And then having seen the majesty of that lake, the

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[36] Amarakaṇṭaka ("The Peak of the Immortals") is the name of a range in the Vindhya Mountains.
[37] Jugnū notes that there is a small temple to Kundeshvar near Eklingji Temple. See *Śrīmadekalingapurāṇam*, ed. and trans. into Hindi by Dr. Shrikrishna 'Jugnū' (Delhi: Aryavarta Sanskrity Sansthan, 2011,) 179. This is the same temple and bathing tank I visited in Kasniyawad. See figure 4.3 (pg. 213) of the present dissertation for a picture of the bathing tank.
[38] Only the name of the deity.

wish-granting cow became over-joyed. And thinking about the place of those Rudras, she remembered those eleven [Rudras]. Desiring the welfare of the world, [she wanted] to make the Rudras have a single location. Then she who was located there [the cow] worshipped the blue-colored one [Śiva]. [18-20]

She covered the earth there with warm milk, and from the union between milk and earth a river sprang up. In the world [this] river came to be known as Gomatī River there.[39] The earth was sprinkled abundantly with the milk that is indeed *amṛta*. After this [the wish-granting cow] manifested six Rudras and five secondary Rudras. Producing a calf, the cow then discharged her urine [upon the ground]. There [at that place] the wish granting cow established three wells [that were just like] the three supreme [wells at] Puṣkara. [21-24ab]

The Candrabhāgā River split into sixteen parts on all sides.[40] And this most supreme river came into existence there for the purpose of the adornment of the Rudras. [This river] known as the Candrabhāga came together with the Gomatī River. The river which sprang up from the wells of the Gomati and the Candrabhāgā Rivers having become three, it later became one [river]. [24cd-26]

A man, having bathed at the confluence of those [three] rivers, obtains the [same] merit [as bathing at] Prayāga. Whoever should let loose a bull [as an act of merit] there near Kṣīreśvara, that person [will obtain] the liberating fruit of that pilgrimage place, a fruit which [is equal to] an offering to the ancestors in Gayā. [The pilgrim] obtains that equal result, [and] he will not become a demon, nor will [he become] a ghost-ancestor, or die with ill fortune, O Brahman. He will obtain liberation quickly. This is certain even if he is one of great sin. [27-29]

Because of a desire for the welfare of people Brahmā made Prayāga. Thus in the Kali Age this confluence was [created by Brahmā] for the giving of pleasure and liberation. Whoever bathes in that tank [and] performs the *tarpaṇam* and the *śrāddha* rite, that person [obtains the merit equivalent of] three times the fruits of [the three wells of] Puṣkara. All that [merit] becomes immortality. Having drunk the waters and having bathed in [the waters] of Kedāra and Pṛthūdaka[41], he obtains the same result in the bathing tank here [at the Gomati, at Kṣīreśvara]. There is no doubt. [30-32]

The wish-granting cow established the eleven Rudras there. In that manner, the eleven Rudras manifested on the surface of the earth. Having seen them [the Rudras], the murderer of a Brahman will be purified. What else can we say about these others that are [merely] wicked minded? Oh great sage, he is known as Kṣīreśvara, the preeminent in the world. Having worshipped him [Kṣīreśvara], people, as if they are a hoard of gods, go to heaven. In a manner that is similar to the way that the wish-granting cow [fulfills desires], in that same way the wish-granting jewel [fulfills desires]. In which way the wish-granting tree grants desires, and Prayāga gives results, in that same way Kṣīreśvara grants all desires to humans. [33-36]

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[39] The Gomatī River is in Mewar, just north of Ekliṅgjī, flowing into Rajsamand Lake.
[40] Chandrabhāga River is one of the major rivers in Amravati district of Maharashtra. It is a tributary of the Purṇā and it forms a part of the Tapti-Purna river system.
[41] A *tīrtha* near the Sarasvatī River.

Kṣīreśvara, he who gives milk, who grants all desires, is together with the ten Rudras there, without a doubt. [He is] the Lord who bestows enjoyment and liberation, and he is the lord who bestows wealth. Furthermore, he is lord who bestows desires, liberation, and he provides good wives. He bestows wisdom to Brahmans, the earth to kings, and sons to men. Similarly, he bestows good fortune to women. He bestows non-widowhood on them [women], and he bestows well-being and health [on women]. He also bestows victory on kings and grace on [his] devotees. Fasting for Śivarātri, and staying up the entire night, a man and a woman obtain all [their] desires." [37-41]

Śaunaka said, "Now, why is [Kṣīreśvara] known by the name *kṣīra* [and] from what [reason was Kṣīreśvara] born? Please tell me the *māhāhtmya* of Kṣīreśvara in detail." [42]

The Sūta said, "A *linga* rose up from the cow's milk [that was poured upon the ground]. Therefore, he became [known as] Kṣīreśvara [the "Lord born from Milk"]. Milk, the nectar of immortality, and cow's urine simultaneously [were] there in that lake. Hence, he is also known as Beautiful Lake. There the Lords of the Multitudes dwell [and] destroy the troubles of men. Moreover, nearby the Seven Mothers also dwelled. [43-45ab]

He is the Lord, he is Vivasvān,[42] Karmasākṣī,[43] he consists of the three Vedas, he consists of Brahmā and Viṣṇu, and of Rudra; he is the Lord who consists of knowledge and light, that universal souled one, the creator of all things. He is the earth, the intermediate realm, and heaven, and the 'day-maker' [the sun]. He is the god who consists of Agni and Soma, [and] he is the Lord who consists of all the deities. He is the pervading sun who consists of the syllable OṂ from the very beginning, [and] in whose body are all the gods, rivers, and worlds. Furthermore, all the pilgrimage places, oceans, rivulets, mountains, and serpents [are within him]. And whatever [else] is known in the world. [45cd-49]

Just as the moving and unmoving world is seen [to be] Brahman, he became the lord who is the sun, the one who sees all, and the master of the world. Moreover, Nārāyaṇa, who is the creator of the universe dwells here with [his] ten forms, beginning with the fish [avatara], [and] joined with [to the Goddess] Śrī. [50-51]

Likewise, he [Kṣīreśvara] is the lord of the field, the god who is the best protector of the fields. He is [the lord] who always dwells in the cremation grounds together with the ghosts and spirits of the dead. He is one who has a terrible mouth, who is frightful, whose tongue moves, who is emaciated, who wears a skull necklace, who has a robust head,[44] who is beloved of dogs, who protects [his] devotees, and who deceives ghosts and spirits. For that reason [because of this form of Śiva] one should worship him in order to please the king with devoted attention, [and this worship should be] accompanied by meat and liquor, etc. for the effective accomplishment of the four classes (varṇa-s) [52-55ab]

Now, Hanumān, the son of Añjaneya, who burned down the city of Lankā, who was famously "Hanumān" the helper of gracious Rāma, who was afflicted by the curse of Brahmā [and] who

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[42] The sun god.
[43] Another word for the sun.
[44] *Sthūlamūrddhā.*

depended on the knowledge of his own *vīrya* [was there near Kṣīreśvara].[45] He did not make a show of heroism, nor did he make a show of strength. He pleased Sītā, who was immensely dear, with a message from Rāma. He obtained grammar from Sūrya [and] he killed innumerable demons, [and] lept over the the ocean [and] the earth up to the sight of Meru. The Lord quickly took the mountain and the medicine equally. [He is the one] who, in childhood jumped up at a mistaken fruit [which was in actuality] the disc of the sun. He is a shower of strength, having abandoned that [disc of the sun] [and] came quickly to eat Rāhu, [and] who, having obtained a boon from the gods [that he will] become immortal [and] undestroyable by [any] power. [55cd-60]

In the northern region [he] stands like the victory pillar of Rāma. He who [is] on the standard of Arjuna surrounded by five hundred beings, and there saw the vast destruction of the Kurūs by the Pāṇḍavas. He is the celibate lord, the mighty son of Vāyu. He is the eleventh Rudra [who] was caused to descend on the earth by the gods. He is the great lord who is always honored even in his childhood, who destroys the great fear [caused by] demons, ghosts, fiends, and female demons and so forth. He drives off the great fear of ghosts [and] Ḍākinīs, etc. Hanumān dwelled there [with Kṣīreśvara], united with all good qualities."[46] [61-64]

Nārada said, "You told me in its entirety the *māhātmya* of that pilgrimage place [of Kṣīreśvara]. O Vāyu, narrate to me the proof [of its efficacy so that] I [will] have faith in that manner once again." [65]

Vāyu said,[47] "It was heard [in the past] that there was a king named Dhruvasandhi[48] born into the lineage of the sun, who was eloquent in speech, a sacrificer, intelligent, and who looked after his people. O Brahman, sometimes this king was [felt] very much devoted to hunting. Surrounded by an extremely noble army he went to the forest. [66-67]

The king was fastened with "female monkey armor" and holding a bow and arrow in his hand [and] consigning unchanging burden of the kingdom upon his people went from one forest to another forest following the deer closely. On one occasion, the great king went to [the city of] Daśapura.[49] [68-69]

Day and night the king who sported in hunting in the deep forest wished to tame good and bad creatures, O twice-born one. Two evil souled demons named Jambhaka and Rambhaka, the sons of a Daitya, who had the forms of lions, were desirous of killing the king [Dhruvasandhi] because of the enmity [created by the killing] of their own father [by Dhruvasandhi]. Those two who were searching [for the king] came together in that forest through the strategy of a trick. On that occasion the king saw a herd of deer. [70-72]

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[45] Its not entirely clear why Hanumān has been introduced into the narrative. It could be that the author is thinking of a specific temple to Hanumān, perhaps near Kṣīreśvara, and hence his description here.

[46] This can be taken in two ways… He drives off the great fear of Ḍākinīs of [upon] living beings

[47] C.f. Raghuvaṁśa 2.8

[48] This is the name of a son of Suṣaṃdhi or Suṣaṃdhi and father of Bharata.

[49] According to Jugnū, the Mewari commentary calls this town "Daśor." He writes, "At the limits of Mewar there is a place with the ancient name Mandsaur." See *Śrīmadekaliṅgapurāṇam*, 188. Here again we are in a dangerous place that is also at the limits of the territory of Mewar.

The king, seeing [that herd] rushed toward [it] with a horse [who was as] quick as the mind, and he pursued one deer amongst that alarmed deer herd. Those two wicked demons who were in the form of lions, desireous of killing [the king], swift as the wind pursued the king deceitfuly. [73-74]

Those two saw that king, who was [himself] the son of a king, alone in front of them, [and] that best of kings having seen them, let loose arrows as if they were rain. Speedily, he filled the mouth of the first [demon] with a shower of arrows. The other demon, seeing [the first demon] killed, his mouth filled like a quiver [of arrows], speedily picked up a bow [and] attacked the king together with his chariot. Then that heroic demon [cut off] his [the king's] head with an arrow. [75-77]

Having taken that [severed] head, the demon went far, from one forest to another. Taking the two ear ornaments [for himself], that demon threw the head into the forest. Quickly retreating from there he became free of the debt of [the killing of] his father. [78-79] The next morning a hawk took that [the king's] head into the sky. [The hawk] arrived there quickly, where Śaṅkara [known as] Kṣīreśa [is]. He saw a tree situated near the confluence of three rivers. The hawk, having sat down there quickly, devoured the head. The skull was placed hanging on a branch of that tree. Being pleased with the meat the hawk went to its own nest." [79cd-81]

Vāyu continued, "Meanwhile, O Brahman, the attendents of the king went along the horse path to investigate [where] the king [went]. Then they were sad, having seen the king there killed by a lion. Having surrounded him [the king] they wept, [and] they said, "we've been robbed [of the king]." [82-83]

Not seeing his [the king's] head they wandered [and searched] in all the directions. They burned the body of the king according to custom. They took [the king] to the city of Dāśaratha [Daśpur], with the timber of the *agaru* tree. According to the rules spoken in the Veda, that prince went to heaven. [84-85]

One who is pure, who is virtuous in having the [cremation] ritual performed [properly] goes by a vehicle that moves as one pleases. At that time, from the non-burning of the head [which is an improper cremation] one is born with a deformed mouth. [86]

The king practiced ascetisicm, O Brahman, thinking [about] his own actions/karma. He went to the god Śaṅkara, [and] having seen [Śaṅkara] did not grieve [any longer]. Then the king, having offered homage to Śiva, and singing a praise, said this:

 "O Lord, I who am a king of the lineage of Sūrya have come to you for refuge. O Lord, [I] did not perform any wicked actions with which to make my head disfigured/severed. I remember that today I was born [and I] did not [perform] any [wicked actions] from my birth until my death. Also, if there should be in me [wickedness] O stationary one, please tell me immediately." [87-90]

The Lord said, "O best of kings, you were killed by a lion in a dense forest. Having cut off your head, it [the head] was left far [in the forest] by an angry evil-souled demon. That head was taken by a bird as swift as the wind, O king, to the pilgrimage place known by the name Lāvaṇya Lake near Kṣīreśa. It was dropped at the confluence of the river Gomatī on a tree at the river bank. Having gone there, O best of kings, to the glorious confluence of that river, cause that skull [to fall] from the tree [and] enter into the water of that [river]. O king, thus your mouth will once more

become similar to a soma lotus stalk. This because of the majesty of the pilgrimage place and of Sankara." [91-95ab]

Vayu said, "Having heard that [speech] the best of kings honored Vṛṣabhadhvaja.[50] Quickly [the king] went there, where Śankara [is]. Having thrown that skull at the confluence of the three [rivers], and having bathed [there]), and having honored Śaṅkara, the king went by chariot near to the Lord [Śiva]. He was praised by the Gandharvas [and] served by the Apsarasas. Thus was told to you the great fruit of that pilgrimage place. Whoever should praise the pilgraimge place will go forever to the world of Rudra." [95cd-98]

This fifteenth chapter is called the "Glorification of Kṣīreśvara" given in the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmyam* of Medapāṭa, part of the Glorious *Vāyupurāṇa*.

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[50] "*Vṛṣabhadhvaja*" is an epithet of Śiva.

Chapter 16: The Glorification of Gautama

Vāyu said, "Now, going to Amarakaṇṭaka [the wish-granting cow] by dint of that path [arrived at] the Kurumā River[51] that was known of old, which was a hidden river on the earth.[52] I will now explain how her splendor became manifest, that best of rivers. [1-2ab]

In the past, the demon Vṛtra was killed deceitfully by the thirty gods on the shore of the ocean. [Those gods] who were afflicted by his killing because of their association with Vāsava [Indra], asked Bṛhaspati the guru of the gods: "O Bṛhaspati! Whatever means releases us [from the sin of] killing a brahman, by that means act, O illustrious one. The destruction of this sin must be [performed]." [2cd-4]

Bṛhaspati said: "All you gods together must go to the end [boundaries] of Medapāṭa. [At that boundary there is an] auspicious river known as Kurumā, situated on Jāṅgla mountain. Having gone there to the peak of that mountain, the lord Dharma Vaivasvata [the son of the sun god, i.e. Yama] will cleave the earth with his club, and in that place [the Kurumā river] will become manifest." [5-6]

Vāyu said: "The gods, having been addressed [by Bṛhaspati] and having taken their leave with Dharma at their head, assembled there on Jaṅgla Mountain together with Vidhyādharas, Kinnaras, Maharṣis, and troups of Gandharvas. Then Dharmarāja cleaved the summit of the mountain with his club, and from that [mountain top] the river Sarasvatī, whose waters are meritorious, was born. Like the Ganges [this river] has many currents, with waters [that are] sometimes hot and cold. She, who is known as the goddess who destroys debts and abolishes sins, became famous across the surface of the earth." [7-10ab]

Nārada said: "Why is [the Kurumā that] was born [there] known as the destroyer of debts and the abolisher of sins? O Vāyu, please explain this in its entirety, since you are omnipresent." [10cd-11ab]

Vāyu said: "In the past the kingdom [of heaven] was bestowed singly onVṛtra by the gods. Due to the friendly affections of that speech that was given [by the gods to Vṛtra] it was taken away deceitfully [from Vṛtra by the gods]. Then those gods who were afflicated by his killing bathed [in the Kurumā river].

From [her ability to] liberate debt she [the Kuruma river] was born as the "destroyer of sins"and the "abolisher of debt." There the three-fold thirty millions of gods [330 million] [came] to Ṛṇamocana. [11cd-13]

Those [330 million gods], who fulfilled their vows set forth, and having bathed [there] were liberated from the debt incurred through speech, [and] hence were released from [their] sins. Then they went elsewhere. For that reason [that place on the Kurumā river] is called "Yama bathing tank" [because] it removes the killing of Yama. And in this world [that bathing tank] is known as Karttarī and various other [names]. [14-15]

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[51] This river is known locally as the Karmoī River. See *Śrīmadekaliṅgapurāṇam*, 194.
[52] This could also read "which was a hidden Sarasvatī on the earth" (*bhūmau guptā sarasvatī*).

Whoever should bathe in those tanks, that person will be released from the debt of speech, and other [debts] as well, immediately [here] on earth. Having bathed there, whatever sin is done through speech, [and] what is upheld by speech, all of that will be destroyed. There is no doubt [about this]. [16-17]

Then the gods, having finished bathing [there], were purified, O great sage. Having mounted their vehicles they left for their individual abodes. [18]

Then by dint of her path the [wish-granting] cow went to Ṛṇamocana.[53] She was overjoyed, having drunk the water at that very place, [and] knowing the pilgrimage place [to be efficacious]. The Goddess [the wish-granting cow] remembered Śaṅkara, [and] Śiva, who was remembered, became manifest. Maheśvara is known on the earth [there] [by] that name Ṛṇamocana. By worshipping him there a bather is freed from all sins. [19-20]

Near to this *liṅga* appeared a very great forest with Banyan trees, mango trees, the Butea Frondosa tree, the rose apple tree, the cluster fig tree, the trumpet-flower tree, the Pippala tree, the Buchanania latifolia tree, marking-nut plant, Oleander, the pomegranate tree, Pandanus odoratissimus, the tamarind tree, Calamus Rotang (a sort of cane or reed), and the Terminalia Arjuna tree, Jasminum Grandiflorum, the orange tree, the Campaka tree, and yellow jasmine. Also, [that forest] was similarly filled with vines and with thousands of other [types] of trees, with beautiful Bassia Latifolia, citron trees, plantain trees, together with Karnika, Kadamba trees, citron trees, and the bread-fruittree, the fragrant Pongamia Glabra tree, Hibiscus, [a kind of] jasmine (*mucakundaiḥ*). That very great forest always has fruit and flowers, is the refuge of hosts of deer and birds, together with intoxicated bees, and is filled with the cry of the cukoo. [21-26ab]

Then, having seen this forest, the [wish-granting] cow became delighted, O great sage. She saw that great river Sarasvatī which flows uninterruptedly. Whichever person bathes in the current of that [river] on earth, having shaken off [his] sins he will dwell forever in the world of Indra. [26cd-27]

On a Sunday and during the Saṃkrānti, during the day of the new moon, or on other full or new moon days, and/or on days of the conjunction of the sun and moon when they are on the same side of either solstitial point one should [perform the acts of] bathing and giving in the current of that river. Whichever man bathes [in that river on those occasions] satisfies/pleases the [ancestors] [and] honors the gods. O Brahman! He who does that becomes imperishable in this world. There is no doubt about this. [28-29]

Having seen that flowing [river] and having remembered Maheśvara, the [wish-granting] cow, by dint of her path, traveled again to the Māhendrī River, O best of the twice-borns.[54] The [wish-granting] cow, having drunk water there [at the Māhendrī River], went along the path again/continued on the path [when] a great army of the Kirāta[55] tribal people emerged from the summit of a mountain. [The Kirāta people] were made strong with bows, nooses, knives, [and]

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[53] I believe this is still referring to the bathing tank and local river Kurumā.

[54] Jugnū states notes that Māhendrī might be referring to the Mahī or Māhī River. See *Śrīmadekaliṅgapurāṇam*, 198.

[55] Jugnū notes that in the Mewari commentary the Kirāta people as glossed as Bhils. See *Śrīmadekaliṅgapurāṇam*, 198.

with an abundance of arrows, [and] were endowed with spears, lances, swords, and other weapons. [30-32]

Having seen them, and knowing the bad nature and disrespect of that army, the fragrant cow then sought asylum on Janaka Mountain. The god who is encountered here is known as "Janakācala." She [the wish-granting cow], knowing the evil nature of that army, was furious. Quickly raising up her tail and lifting up her her neck, and making the sounds *huṃ*, she roared again and again. That broad-breasted one terrified that army of the Kirātas with her speared horns, by striking with [her] hooves, with [her] tail, [and] even with [her] snout. Immediately upon that [attack by the wish-granting cow] the fleeing [tribal] army, distressed with fear, was driven into the [four] directions. Then the [wish-granting] cow angrily cursed the [tribal] army of that forest dwelling people. [33-37]

"Because you Kirātakas were an obstacle to me with your cruel minds today while [I was] drinking the water of the Māhendrī as I so desired, so for that reason you Kirātakas will become under the control of preeminent kings in this country. And [from] today you will have a fear of sickness from water eveyday. They who become kings here will be generous [and] will have long life. Among them [those kings] there will not be the arising of a fear of water-born illness, nor should [will] there be a fear of you." Having cursed [the tribal people] thus the [wish-granting] cow went to [the place] known as Godvāra, where the lord Jagadvāpī is established in a cave. [38-41]

Nārada said: "O Vāyu, how did that [place] which is called "Godvāra" arise? In what manner did Lord Śambhu, master of the world, manifest [there]? O sinless one, please tell all this to me in detail." [42-43]

Vāyu said: "[There was] a celebrated [sage] named Gautama, the illustrious son of Brahmā. One day he entered a wooded forest[56] [in order] to perform austerities. There on the earth was a famous mountain by the name Brahmagiri. That highest sage Gautama, who is lord and master practiced austerities accompanied with [his wife] Ahalyā on the slope of that [mountain]. This sage always performed the three ablutions at dawn, noon, and sunset, always delighted in reciting the Vedas, [and] in the hot season was satisfied with the five fires, in the rainy season slept upon the open ground, and in the winter lived in the water, and endured the cold wind. [44-47]

He who was superior did not drive away the little [creatures] among the living through that [his austerities]. He was unafraid of forest fires, nor did he fear thunderstorms there. Because of [the sage] Gautama there is no fear of hunger there. Clouds always rain according to one's wishes [there], the land is always cultivated, and [because of that the earth] always provides grain [and] various kinds of fruit. O Brahman, [the earth] is always abounding with green grass [there], cows always give milk, there is never fear of sickness, and there is never the fear of sadness at that place. Because of the majesty of the sages there on the earth [there], perpetual happiness arises [at that āśrama]. [58-60ab]

But then one day the earth was troubled by famine. Furthermore, because of the wretchedness of people in all countries rain clouds did not let their rain fall [on the ground] for as long as twelve years. Then twice-borns, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras, who were all afflicted with famine went [to see] that sage Gautama. Having arrived there [at Gautama's āśrama], they all became happy

[56] Or the Daṇḍakāraṇya in the Deccan.

and nourished. They ate fruits, [and other types of] food, honey/wine, and [other types of] beverages always, in accordance with their desires. They all became fat-limbed [healthy], together with their children, animals, and family members. [60cd-64ab]

At that time Indra was suffering the pains [caused] by the arrows of Kāma. He was burning with desire always remembering the wife of that sage [Gautama] Ahalyā, who was an ascetic. [Because of his desire] That fool [Indra] went quickly to that place [Gautama's āśrama]. [64cd-65]

Oh sage! Having gone there, [Indra] took the form of Gautama when that bull among twice-borns had gone to get fuel and *kuśa* grass. [Indra] requested that the beautiful [and] beloved Ahalyā [come] to the house, and that modest one, being doubtful, entered the house. After some time Indra, suffering from the pain of Kāma's arrow, went [to Gautama's house]. At that very moment Gautama inevitably came home. [66-68]

Indra, who was distressed with fear having seen Gautama, trembled. Taking on the form of a cat [he] prepared to leave. Then Gautama knew [that Indra was] embodied in the form of the cat through meditative concentration. [Gautama] who was very angry said to Ahalyā: "Who was that who came to my house?" [69-70]

That fearful sādhaka [Ahalyā] said to the sage: "A cat." Then Gautama, that highest of sages, cursed that chief of gods [Indra]: "You are deluded by sin, due to which you seduced my wife. On all sides [of your body] will be thousands of Apsarasas. Therefore your body will become joined with a thousand female reproductive organs." That angry one [Gautama] [also] cursed Ahalyā, who was shaking like a leaf: "And from today you will be in the form of a stone due to my curse, O fornicator. The lord [Gautama] was humbly entreated by her [Ahalyā], and [she] again and again bowed before him. [71-74]

[Ahalyā said]: There was no appearance of fault in any of my thoughts, words, or actions. I was made wicked by your deception of an assumed appearance. O brahman, please forgive me! In which way [the curse] does not cause a hindrance, in that way, O best of sages, do what is right, being compassionate to me." [75-76]

And then Gautama, reflecting upon his curse said these words: "Until today my words were not lies; the curse is indeed inevitable. O auspicious one! please listen single-mindedly and I will tell you the [method of] liberation from this curse. [In the future there will be] born [a child] known as Rāma by Daśaratha in the family of the Sun dynasty. The righteous souled Lord [Rāma], together with his brother Lakṣmaṇa and Sitā, will go to the forest at the command of [their] beloved father. Being purified by the dirt of his foot, you will find deliverance from this dreadful curse." Then Gautama, that highest sage, sympathizing with Ahalyā, engaged in vigorous asceticism on that [mountain named] Brahmagiri, O sage. [77-81ab]

Then Indra, looking at his vile form, covered with female reproductive organs, was disgusted at himself because of the delusion of desire. [He said:] "Shame on desire! Sin always causes pain, which sets one on a wicked path, as long as there is a consideration of the family, of moral conduct and of Śruti; as long as there is fear of mother and father, of one's own people, of the king; as long as there is shame of the body among people; as long as there is reflection upon the meaning of the śāstras; That much of this desire, which is sinful, among men will adhere to their minds. This killer is the destroyer of the meaning of dharma. [81cd-85]

Having conquered this desire that is a heap of sin, one can increase [in their] happiness. Having seen the form of a woman, men become bewildered, just like me. [This body is merely] a column of bones bound together with fat, muscle, a body [full of] blood, covered with skin. It is impure, filled up with feces and urine. [The body] is always protected by the [inner] master until it is brought into union with death. Having seen the body of a woman, such as it is those men like me become deluded. [86-88]

What should I do? Where should I go? I have lost my virility [and I am] like a snake." Thinking in this way [Indra], going to the ends of the world, came to Manasā Lake. Having arrived there he became a very minutely formed insect in a forest of lotuses, O sage. Having pierced a stalk [of a lotus], he disappeared, [and] being fearful due to his [sinful] actions condemned [himself]. [89-90]

When Indra was gone the gods, accompanied by all the sages, having seen that there was no king, were aware of the reason [why Indra was not there]. Knowing of the purity [one receives] in bathing at the pilgrimage places [Indra was] ordered [to go to them], and he bathed at the pilgrimage places beginning with Puṣkara according to the rules. O sage! Then the effect [of the] pilgrimage places was accomplished and [Indra's] sin went away. He was made one thousand eyed by the sages, and obtained a kingdom unharmed by enemies. [91-93]

Then Gautama, that best of sages, was fixed in mighty asceticism. One time, having seen the fat bodied happy twice-born ones with well-fed limbs [bodies] near himself he spoke a prepared speech to them. [94-95ab]

"Brahmans, Brahmans, you ascetics intent upon the great soul for the protection of dharma, [know] the meaning of the satisfaction of the gods and ancestors. Therefore brahmans are the root of asceticism [and] do not bring an end to asceticism. Why [live] with a well-formed physique, with [due to] the impermanence of the body?[57] Through asceticism heaven is obtained; through asceticism even liberation is obtained. Through asceticism endless happiness is obtained. Indeed, what is not accomplished by the ascetic?" [95cd-97]

Having heard Gautama's speech, the sages all [became] jealous. They concentrated on a method to abandon the body of Gautama.[58] Then [the sages created] a cow together with a calf from their *māyā*, [and the cow] came near the rice-field close to Gautama [his aśrama], who was powerless [to stop it]. Having seen her, Gautama ran toward her quickly to protect [his field]. He [Gautama] quickly struck that cow with the end of a blade of *kuśa* grass. She, who was struck with the end of a blade of kuśa grass, was parted from her life breaths [killed] immediately. [98-101]

Then Gautama, having seen her [the cow] dead [by his own hands] became bewildered. Greatly suffering, he regained consciousness again [and] cried. The sages, hearing the crying of that great-souled Gautama, arrived near him and then said "Alas!" Gently offering their condolences, the sages all went to their own *āśrama*s. When the sages went [away] that highest of sages Gautama, knowing thus [that they sages were giving false condolences] from his own meditation, began to perform asceticism. [102-105]

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[57] I think it is saying why focus on maintaining the physical form when it is impermanent.

[58] The meaning of this half verse seems to mean that the Brahmans were intent on killing Gautama.

That ascetic, his limbs covered with the cow-hide, who was fasting, who in the cold, wind, heat [was] engaged in the welfare of all living beings, [and] standing on only one foot he worshipped Śiva. He also performed the Tryambaka *pūjā* of him [Śiva]. O Brahman! About ten thousand years went by. That entire forest was set ablaze by the asceticism of Gautama. [He was] Made tawny with splendor; [he] became like Mount Meru seen from afar. He became like the great fire that burns unceasingly in the Vahnijvāleva Hell. [106-109]

O great sage Nārada of great mind! Being aware of the powerful asceticism of Gautama, Śambhu, being pleased, became manifest there through his devotion. That god of gods, Jagannātha, three-eyed, whose vehicle is the bull, who became manifest, Śaṅkara, Śaṅkara of the world, said to the sage [Gautama]: [110-111]

The Lord [Śiva] said: "O sage! You should not perform this rash asceticism and restraint in eating. With your ascetic [practices], what is known in the world that cannot be accomplished? It seems nothing is difficult [for you]. What should I do? Please instruct me." [112-113ab]

Gautama said: "The cow went through my rice field, and she was struck with the tip of a blade of *kuśa* grass. She, who reversed my fate, was killed by me right there. O lord save me from being a cow-killer! O Maheśvara, save us from sin!" [113cd-114]

The Lord said: "This cow was made in an assumed form by the sages through deceit. In the removal of the sins of humans by you how does the destruction [of that sin] arise? He who has commited the killing of a cow, the killing of a brahman, has sexual intercourse with the [wife of] the teacher, drinks liquor, steals gold, or commits other serious sins sees you [experiences darśan], he is released at once from those sins without performing sacrifice, donations, or asceticism." [115-117ab]

Gautama said: "If, O lord, you are satisfied, please be compassionate toward me! In heaven, upon the earth, or in the underworld you bear the form of the *liṅga*. Just as you bestow strength [to people], having become accessible in the world of humans, so O Maheśa, you should abide in the three-fold world. O Lord, quickly lead the Gaṅga on [from] this Brahmagiri Mountain." [117cd-119]

The Lord said: "O sage, at Kuśāvartta [Hardvar] you should come down into this world from the mountain. In that way, O Brahman, the Ganges will manifest from below here [on the earth]. O sage! I, the three-eyed one who bears the form of the *liṅga* in the three-worlds will dwell forever on the best of mountains for the welfare [of the world], and likewise [I] will be established on the earth and below [in the underworld] as Tryambaka. In the country of Ujjain there is a famous mountain known as Janaka Mountain. Having gone close to it you should quickly go to Godvāra. There I am established in the form of a *liṅga* by the name Gautameśvara. Therefore, [I am] remembered triply in heaven, in the underworld, and on the earth. I will become highly honored by the snakes, gods, and humans." [120-124]

Nārada said: The Lord of the world who was pleased with praise and devotion, having given that boon thus to the great-souled Gautama, became invisible. [125]

This sixteenth chapter is called the "Glorification of Gautama" given in the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmyam* of Medapāṭa, part of the Glorious *Vāyupurāṇa*.

Chapter 28: A Description of the Pilgrimage Places

Nārada said, "By which order did the sage [Śiva Śarmā] perform his bathing in the eight pilgrimage places of Kuṭila etc. according to the rules? Please tell me, O Vayu." [1]

Vāyu said, "So, Shiva Sharma, that highest sage, having honored Bhairava with the *tīkṣṇadaṃṣṭra* mantra, accepted that command. Then, having bathed in the tank that emerged at the Kuṭilā River, he worshipped Śaṅkara. Having offered a gift [to Śiva], with his sons and grandsons he made [offerings] daily. Ascetics, great siddhas, yogins, those who restrain their senses, those who live only on seeds, those who fast, those who live on wind, those who have conquered their senses, those who eat roots [were engaged in asceticism there]. Those intelligent ones lived [in that place which was] filled with lions and tigers. Insects, deer, oxen, boars, wolves, and jungle cats [also] lived [there], O best of sages, as did birds with their families. Due to a previous birth, they are all fittingly high-minded [animals]. [2-6]

There was the uninterrupted service by the lotus eyes of the of the Gandharvas, siddhas, sages, kinnaras, and demi-gods, and so on. The beautiful jingling sounds of ankle bracelets [was heard] at that place. Where peacocks danced, in the middle of the jewel adorned *vedi*, [there] Ādhāreśa Maheśa [Śiva] was, O Nārada. From the depth of his *darśan* millions of great sins heaped up through previous births are destroyed in a moment. [7-9ab]

In the southern direction Takṣakeśa Maheśvara [is worshipped]. O Brahman, formerly, for the purpose of living near [Eklingji] Takṣaka established himself there. [Therefore] this highest pilgrimage places is known by his own name. [59] Henceforth in that place there is no great fear of snakes. From bathing [in that tank] with the best of one's ability one is not fearful of those born into the snake family. Having bathed there, Shiva Sharma honored Takṣakeśa Maheśvara. That sage did puja according to the rules by Nāgasūkta. [9cd-12]

Additionally, they who meditate in the pilgrimage place that consists of all pilgrimage places with Bhairava, they accomplish [obtain] the results of the first pilgrimage place. In all the pilgrimage places, the results of which are said by eminent sages [to be obtained there], how much more will a person obtain those results from *darśan* and from bathing. O Narada, there is no fear of ghosts, hungry spirits, or demons there. Nor in the same way (is there any fear of female demons, protectors of the land [local gods], tree spirits, or demonic half-man creatures there. Having seen that man there [Śiva Śarmā], those demons become frightened, [and] they escape into the ten directions. If a person who has a fear of ghosts and hungry spirits should bathe there, thenceforth [that person] will not have a fear of the hosts of ghosts and hungry spirits. Pay attention to my words: [this is the] truth of the highest sage. [13-17]

Then having bathed in the Karaja tank, he should worship the goddess [Vindhyavāsinī at that kuṇḍa]. According to the rules stated in the Veda, all daily rituals are completely accomplished there [only through bathing in that tank]. The *darśan* of the manifestation of Shiva [causes] the destruction of the heap of great sins [and] the destruction of strife of the sages established there. [18-19]

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[59] That is, Takṣakeśa bathing tank near Ekaliṅga Temple.

After that, O best of sages, [one should bath in] the auspicious discus bathing tank,[60] which was built with Vishnu's supreme discuss [in order] to destroy [all] sins. Also, grasping in the hand *kuśa* grass and mud etc., the wise person, having washed the feet and having rinsed the mouth [with that water], having bathed according to the rules, should then worship Visnu. There, having worshipped Laksmī, [who sits] on a seat of lotuses [and] who dwells in the heart, with flowers and incense, honor [her] according to the rules. [20-22]

Then, in the northern region,[61] she who grants happiness to all humans, is that celebrated Vindhyavāsā. She who brings reward, [Vindhyavāsinī] is the foremost of those who are devoted to Ekaliṅga. She was worshipped by the wish-granting cow, Hārirta, Takṣaka Nāga, and also by Indra the carrier of the thunderbolt. Indeed, she was first seen by me [to be] a reward-giving goddess. [23-25ab]

Near to that [temple to Vindhyavāsinī] in a deep forest is a great hut. It is completely covered in various trees and vines, by mango trees, neem trees, white mustard trees, etc; with citron trees, with pomegranate trees, with the bread-fruit trees, coconut trees, white lotus trees, Indian rose chestnut trees, with fan-palm trees, false mangosteen trees, marshy date trees, trumpet flower trees, with royal jasmine trees, campaka trees, kutaja trees, karnikara trees, with rose apple trees, waved-leaf fig-trees, bahera trees, citron trees, oleander trees, orange trees, plantain trees, banyan trees, butea trees, with khadira trees, bamboo trees, cluster fig trees and with the wood-apple trees. [And] it is [also] completely surrounded by groups of various birds. [25cd-29ab]

And it is populated by sages, singers, perfected ones, by *kinnara*s together with their wives with sonorous women youthfully dancing, singing, and performing music. There are abundant pilgrimage places there created long ago by Bhairava. [29cd-31ab]

Having bathed there [in the tank built by Bhairava], that best of sages worshiped Vindhyavāsā. That best of sages completed [his] karma right there [meaning, he burned off all his negative karma there]. [31cd-32ab]

After that, O best of sages, you should know the most auspicious of the pilgrimage places, situated in the northern direction on the shore of the Kuṭilā River. [That place is] filled by sounds of birds, deer, tigers, and flocks of [other types of] birds. This pilgrimage place is known as Kedara; Shiva is known as Kedareśvar [there]. That priest [Śiva Śarmā] duly bathed there according to the rules. [32cd-34]

After that, [Shiva Sharma arrived] in the eastern direction from the place of Kedara, at a great pilgrimage place known as Amṛta, where he served siddhas and sages. It is said [that] all these pilgrimage places etc. give liberation to all embodied ones. From the divine seeing of those men [all] desire is [obtained]. He bathed there [and] he obtained the desired results. [There was] the destruction of sins and minor offences, [and he was] given his highest desires. All the sages who were established there obtained immortality. [35-38ab]

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[60]Cakrapuṣkariṇīm. It is often associated with the well-known Maṇikarṇikā Ghāṭ in Vārāṇasī.
[61] That is, north of Eklingji temple, where in fact there is a temple to Vindhyavāsinī.

O best of sages, having been seen by me women, herdsmen, birds, insects, and others beings who are born into a bad birth, are released from their sins, [and] obtain immortality according to their very own free will there. [38cd-39]

Then, having bathed in the eight pilgrimage places, Śiva Śarmā went to Indra Lake. It was filled with swans, ducks, birds, and cranes. Furthermore, it was adorned by lotuses growing in the water and on the land. It was also filled with various types of birds and covered over by various kinds of trees and vines. In these four specific directions dwell ascetics who are pure in soul, who have great minds, [and] who delight in the welfare of all beings. Some learned ones are reading, while other yogis are meditating. Some highest twice-born ones are reading to their immensely intelligent students. Some who do daily offerings, having bathed according to the rules, having fixed the mind in meditation, are reciting [prayers]. Some who are conversant with the Purāṇas, who are renunciants, who have subdued their anger, who have renounced the world, who are seekers of the highest meaning recite [the Purāṇva as] to many people [there]. Through the highest virtue/religion, diverse types of Bhils, by abandoning violence toward living beings, are converted through heroic devotion to Śiva. [40-46ab]

The great sages dwelled [there at Indra lake] surrounded by the divine daughters who are adorned with heavenly form, occupied by sages, celestial singers, gandharvas, kinnaras, and by the seven ṛṣis, plus half that. That best of sages Śiva Śarmā, having bathed [there at Indra lake] according to the rules, having performed the daily rituals there, having given [gifts], having made the oblation, worshipped there. Together with his sons and grandsons and so forth, he worshipped that great lord Ekalinga. After that the sage went back to his own home. [46cd-49]

O Brahman, the most important sequence [according to which one should visit] of the pilgrimage places was told to you. [This is] the destruction of all sins, the destruction of all obstacles. [These pilgrimage places] produce all good fortune [and] visibly destroy great faults. Whichever adept, immovable in his mind, who studies after having woken up in the morning, goes to that highest place which is difficult to obtain even by the gods. [The merit of] one thousand horse sacrifices and one hundred Vājapeya sacrifices are gained by that [reading], and other meritorious actions on the earth [are gained]. Therefore, a virtuous man should listen with all great care. [50-53]

Whichever person [should] hear [this text] or have it recited by the highest virtuous sages, being deeply devoted [and] having seen Ekaliṅga, [that person] will receive all the results they have wished for. [They are] adorned with those who are intent upon *yoga* and *dhyāna* for subduing their wicked minds [and] they are served by the highest female attendents night and day. In the past this [place] called Nāgahrada, in which bliss pervaded, measured five *krośa*s. They who lived in this region (*kṣetra*) obtained liberation with ease, spread over as it is with beauty. In this region whatever exists as water, all of that is the Gaṅga; whatever trees are in the forest, all of those are divine trees; those humans become devotees of Śiva [and] obtain perpetually the highest accomplishments. [54-55]

This twenty-eighth chapter is called "A Description of the Pilgrimage Places" given in the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmyam* of Medapāṭa, part of the Glorious *Vāyupurāṇa*.

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