



UC DAVIS UC RIVERSIDE

EMERGING SCHOLARS IN JAIN STUDIES

VIRTUAL LECTURE

Departments of Religious Studies at UC Davis and UC Riverside
Friday, May 30th, 2025 | 9:00–10:30am PT

In Memory of Johannes Bronkhorst (1946–2025)
Tribute by Dominik Wujastyk (University of Alberta)



Eric Moses Gurevitch, Harvard University

“Putting Philosophy to Use: Jains Healing Bodies and Theorizing Caste in Medieval India”

Philosophy in precolonial South Asia is often presented as the domain of otherworldly thinkers, who deployed erudite arguments to pursue questions of liberation. But starting in the medieval period, Jain authors employed in royal courts—at the center of political power—put the tools of philosophy to use as they struggled with everyday problems. This talk asks the seemingly simple question: What was philosophy in Sanskrit good for? It answers it by exploring how Jains in the world used techniques developed by epistemologists writing in Sanskrit to explore the practice of medicine and the reality—or unreality—of caste.



*Eric Moses Gurevitch is a historian of science, technology, and medicine entering the Department of the History of Science at Harvard University as an Assistant Professor. He was a National Endowment for the Humanities Postdoctoral Fellow at Vanderbilt University, and he completed a PhD at the University of Chicago jointly in the Department of South Asian Languages & Civilizations and the Committee on the Conceptual & Historical Studies of Science. Eric’s dissertation was awarded the DK Award for the Outstanding Doctoral Thesis on Sanskrit from the International Association of Sanskrit Studies; the Dissertation Prize from the Division of History of Science and Technology of the International Congress of History of Science and Technology; the Dissertation Award on the Formation of Knowledge from the University of Chicago; and the Mohini Jain Presidential Chair in Jain Studies Best Dissertation Award from the Department of Religious Studies at the University of California, Davis. He is currently finishing a book under contract with the University of Chicago Press and Permanent Black Press titled *Everyday Sciences: Practical Knowledge and Knowledgeable Practice in South Asia*.*

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