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Jain Multiple Language Use and Cosmopolitanism

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Abstract   An important development in the study of South Asia in recent years, and a development of direct importance to the ICEMLNI project, has been the extensive renewed attention to multiple language use in South Asia. We all owe a big thanks to Sheldon Pollock. His monumental 2006 *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men* and the related 2003 edited volume *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia* have done much to generate research and theorization on this topic. Extensive subsequent scholarship, in some cases in direct response to Pollock's work, and in other cases independent of it, has moved the discussion beyond Pollock's in important ways. This chapter brings Jain literary history into the conversation. The vibrant use of multiple languages by Jain authors throughout the history of the tradition provides an important contribution to our understanding of language use in South Asian literary history. The Jains have long been committed to writing in multiple languages, so much so that many Jain authors have written in two, three, four, and even six languages. Jains have not privileged Sanskrit as the only cosmopolitan language; on the contrary, to be a cosmopolitan Jain author has involved being able to write in multiple languages.

Sheldon Pollock on the Sanskrit and Vernacular Millennia

Let me first summarize Pollock's grand theory – for it is indeed grand in scale. My discussion here unavoidably assumes some prior knowledge of his argument, and in the interests of space will be very brief – in the eyes of some readers, no doubt, too brief.

Around the beginning of the first millennium CE, Sanskrit rose to a position of hegemony in South Asia as the principal language suitable for literature *(kāvya).* This development happened not in Brahmanical Vedic ritual circles, but in royal courts. Pollock (2006: 67) identifies the area of northwest India dominated by peoples newly immigrated from central Asia, in particular the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas, as a major location of the 'radical reinvention of Sanskrit culture' in the early centuries CE. These were people only slightly touched by Brahmanical Vedic ritual culture, so the rise of Sanskrit to primacy was not a matter of the expansion into literature of Brahmanical Vedic theological presuppositions that Sanskrit was the eternal language undergirding the divine order. Instead, these immigrant groups first adopted Sanskrit for 'public political purposes' (Pollock 2006: 72). The primacy of Sanskrit then expanded from Sanskrit being seen as the ideal language for inscriptions and other government records to its use as the ideal language for literature, which was also largely a courtly and political activity. Over what Pollock terms the 'Sanskrit millennium', the hegemonic position of Sanskrit spread from the Hindu Kush to Indonesia, and from the Himalayas to the southern tip of India. This large area was united into what he terms the 'Sanskrit cosmopolis', in which Sanskrit reigned supreme. Sanskrit was a language of power: it was both the medium through which power was expressed and its usage was itself an act of cultural power. Pollock (2006: 14) has clarified: 'The work Sanskrit did do was beyond the quotidian and the instrumental; it was directed above all toward articulating a form of political consciousness and culture, politics not as transaction of material power – the power of recording deeds, contracts, tax records, and the like – but as celebration of aesthetic power.'

This monopoly position in what Andrew Ollett (2017) has aptly called the 'language order' of South Asia began to be undermined around the turn of the second millennium CE with the rise of vernacular languages to the status of languages in which literature could be written. While earlier scholars have generally attributed the rise of vernacular languages and literatures to religious motivations, especially the rise of bhakti theologies, Pollock argues that it was a courtly development. Over the course of the second millennium CE, vernacular languages throughout India gradually came to supplant Sanskrit as the language of choice for the production of literature.

Pollock's theory has come in for extensive discussion, critique, and criticism. His identification of the first millennium CE as the Sanskrit millennium minimizes the extent to which Prakrit (Ollett 2017) and

Apabhramsha,[1] even if they didn't have as broad a reach as Sanskrit nor the same density of usage, were also pan-Indian cosmopolitan languages,[2] and Pali was a pan-Southeast Asian cosmopolitan language. He also pays insufficient attention to the importance in South Asia of Persian and Arabic as alternative cosmopolitan languages in the second millennium CE. The Persian and Arabic ecumenes tied large parts of South Asia to even larger cultural and literary spheres than the Sanskrit cosmopolis (Eaton 2019; Jha 2019: xxvi; Ricci 2011).

Second, he explicitly downplays the role of religious authors and texts in the development of vernacular literatures, and argues for the centrality of courtly locales. Heidi Pauwels has recently questioned the extent to which Pollock seems to take an either / or approach to the rise of the vernaculars. The existing literary archive from medieval India is very haphazard, with the result that 'what happens to be attested is what happened to escape destruction or decomposition, depending on the vagaries of history' (2021: 146). Asking whether courtly or religious vernacular literature occurred first may therefore be a relatively fruitless question, and instead scholars should ask about the courtly *and* religious factors that led to the popularity of vernacular literary production in different regions of South Asia.

Third, Pauwels (2021: 146) also argues that Pollock employs a definition of 'literature' that is far too narrow. His insistence that literature in South Asia consists solely of *belles lettres* or *kāvya* (Pollock 2006: 2–3) allows him to exclude from literature a large number of other genres. I would add that here he is following a distinctly Brahmanical definition of literature, and so he ends up following Brahmans in denying the practice of literature to other literary actors. This again, says Pauwels, results in a circular argument in which his conclusions are to a large extent predetermined by the way he has framed his questions. Pollock's restrictive definition of literature results in his thesis pertaining to only a narrow range of literature, and does not adequately address multilingual use in the full range of written genres. Whether we define literature narrowly as *belles lettres* or broadly as written works makes a huge difference.[3]

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1 We sorely need a social history of Apabhramsha on a par with Ollett's pathbreaking survey of Prakrit.
2 See also Balbir (2014) on some of the ways that Sanskrit and Prakrit poetry existed in a polysemic relationship.
3 A fourth criticism is simply that his 'millennium-by-millennium paradigm', of a Sanskrit millennium followed by a vernacular one, is over-determined and even simplistic (Jha 2019: 51).

A number of authors have shown that Pollock's argument that vernacular literature emerged only in courtly settings doesn't work in the cases of specific languages. To the cases in which scholars have directly addressed and critiqued Pollock we can add other studies of the rise of vernacular literatures that upon close reading also problematize his theory. The list of such sources is extensive, so I here list only a few representative citations: for Bengali, Knutson (2014) and Manring (2019); for Gujarati, Bhayani (1999), Koṭhārī (1993), and Yashaschandra (2003); for Hindi, Bangha (2018 and forthcoming) and Williams (2024); for Kannada, Ben-Herut (2018), Gurevitch (2020 and 2022), and Taylor (2016 and 2020); for Marathi, Keune (2015), Nemec (2007), and Novetzke (2016); for Maru-Gurjar, Bangha (2018 and forthcoming), Dundas (2020), and Miśra (1989–1999: Vol. 1, 1–21); for Telugu, Fisher (2018); for Tamil, Akeyipapornchai (2019) and Shulman (2016); and for South India as a whole, Shulman (2007).[4]

Given the extent of these explicit and implicit problematizations of Pollock's thesis concerning vernacularization, one is struck by the comment of Michael S. Dodson in his review (2007: 481) of *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men*: 'The question that will engage scholars over the next years, therefore, will be whether such problems substantially undermine the theoretical framework and the detailed points that Pollock makes here, or whether they stand as minor qualifications to an otherwise impressive piece of scholarship.' Dodson's question is still valid.

Multilingual Literary History in South Asia

Pollock's model tends to be a binary one: first there was Sanskrit, then there were the vernaculars. Recent works by Francesca Orsini (2012), and Eva De Clercq and Heidi Pauwels (2020),[5] among others, explore multiple language use in specific times and places that problematize an either / or approach. They show that in Sultanate and Sufi socio-cultural locations in early modern North India we find

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4   Jha (2019) is a valuable extended discussion of multilingual literary production in early modern North India that stands as a sustained response to Pollock's thesis in general.

5   In addition to Pauwels' (2020) introduction, see the other articles in the special issue (Vol. 11, Issue 1, 2020) of *South Asian History and Culture* edited by De Clercq and Pauwels on multireligious literary production in multiple languages (Apabhramsha, Arabic, Hindi, Persian, and Sanskrit) in early modern Gwalior.

Persian–Bhasha[6] bilingualism. In orthodox Islamic locations, we find Arabic added to the mix. In Rajput and other courtly locations, we find Sanskrit–Bhasha bilingualism. In Digambar Jain locations, we find Apabhramsha–Bhasha bilingualism. In the public sphere of bhakti, we find an emphasis on Bhasha. I would add to the examples advanced by these authors that in Śvetāmbar Jain locations, as we see below, we find Bhasha–Prakrit–Sanskrit trilingualism, and sometimes Bhasha–Prakrit–Sanskrit–Apabhramsha quadralingualism. In many locations, Bhasha is present in multiple registers. All of these 'language continua' (to borrow a term from Pollock [2006: 415]) could appear in the same city or region.

In this chapter I move beyond the work of Orsini, De Clercq, Pauwels, and their collaborators. Their studies emphasize multilingual settings, but in a manner that focuses largely on individual authors, each of whom writes usually in one language, with the aggregate of authors creating a multilingual climate. In some ways the picture they paint is of multiple simultaneous and coterminous monolingualisms that together create multilingualism. I investigate a different expression of multilingualism. In his recent book on the multilingual Vidyāpati in fifteenth-century Mithila, Pankaj Jha (2019: 69) says 'we do not have too many extent instances' of individual authors who practiced multilingualism by composing texts in more than one language. He does then allow that the extant examples of such multilingual practice are 'not as few as generally believed'. If he had turned his attention to the Jains he would have found a literary culture in which multilingual authors were more the expected norm than the exception.

Looking at Jain material, we find that from very early in the tradition there has been an emphasis on, and even valorization of, individual authors using multiple languages, sometimes in separate texts, sometimes in the same text.[7] To explore Jain multilingualism more

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6   I use the term Bhasha to refer to what some scholars call Maru-Gurjar, and others either Old Gujarati or Old Rajasthani, depending in large part on whether the scholar lives in Gujarat or Rajasthan and studies Gujarati or Rajasthani literature and language. As Bhogīlāl Sāṇḍesarā (1953: 4) says, in a comment echoed by most other scholars of western Indian languages and literature of the period, 'For the period of the sixteenth century [vs] and before, the terms 'Old Gujarati' and 'Old Western Rajasthani' are used to describe the same thing'. The extensive overlap between 'Old Gujarati and 'Old Rajasthani' or 'Old Hindi' is seen in that many of the authors and texts I discuss are found in both Deśāī and Koṭhārī's *Jain Gūrjar kavio* (1986–1997) and Miśra's *Hindī Jain sāhitya kā bṛhad itihās* (1989–1999).

7   The same argument has been made by Gregory Clines (2022: 107) in relation to the fifteenth-century Digambara author Brahma Jinadāsa, who wrote in

thoroughly, I have chosen to follow the life of one text, the *c.*1200 CE Prakrit *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* by Nemicandra Bhaṇḍārī, through a large number of other languages – arguably as many as nine, although the fuzzy boundaries among different vernaculars in medieval and early modern western India make it difficult to differentiate individual languages with great precision – during its 800-year history. The languages into which the original Prakrit *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* has been rendered include Maru-Gurjar, Sanskrit, Old Rajasthani / Marwari, Old Gujarati, Dhundhari, Braj Bhasha, Old and Modern Standard Hindi, Modern Marathi, and Modern Gujarati.[8] Even though the text was never rendered in Apabhramsha, Nemicandra and some of the other relevant authors did write in Apabhramsha, so I add that language to the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* text tradition.

Text Traditions and Multilingualism

In this chapter I adopt the approach of following a text through multiple languages and multiple centuries, what has been called a 'text tradition' by Deven Patel. This he defines as 'sets of textual and scholarly practices that grow up around a root or source text … an ongoing set of self-aware text-critical and aesthetic engagements with a powerful literary object that span centuries' (Patel 2014: 4). Patel uses this concept to explore the movement of the twelfth-century *Naiṣadhīyacarita* from its original Sanskrit into Gujarati and Telugu. The concept was adopted by Heleen De Jonckheere (2020), who uses it to study the movement of the tenth-century Jain *Dharmaparīkṣā* from Apabhramsha into Sanskrit, Kannada, Old Hindi, Braj Bhasha, Rajasthani, and Gujarati.[9] Other authors have followed a similar approach of tracing the multilingual biography of a single text, even if they don't use Patel's specific term. A good example is Ronit Ricci (2011), who follows the *Book of*

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both Sanskrit and Bhasha: 'The truth of the matter, particularly for Jain communities, is that *bhāṣā* and Sanskrit text production continued alongside one another during the early modern period. The fact that Jinadāsa wrote in both languages is not the exception for Jain authors, but, rather, the rule.'

8   In this list I have chosen, for rhetorical effect, to disaggregate Bhasha into multiple vernacular languages.

9   It is possible that the *ur*-text of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* text tradition was in Prakrit, but if so it has been lost (De Jonckheere 2020: 41 n.114). Even if there is not an extant Prakrit *Dharmaparīkṣā*, several of the authors in the *Dharmaparīkṣā* tradition either wrote in Prakrit or wrote commentaries on Prakrit texts, so we can add Prakrit as a participating language in this text tradition.

One Thousand Questions from Arabic through Latin, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Javanese, Tamil, Malay, and Buginese.

I apply this approach to the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* or '160 Verses', a Prakrit text by the Śvetāmbara Kharatara Gaccha layman Nemicandra Bhaṇḍārī that was composed in the middle of the thirteenth century vs.[10] Where I move beyond the earlier studies of text traditions is that at a number of points along the way I stop to show that many of the authors who wrote commentaries and translations of the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* were themselves multilingual authors, or at the very least were members of literary circles in which authors composed in multiple languages. It was the rare Jain author who was monolingual, in either Sanskrit or a vernacular.

Nemicandra Bhaṇḍārī and his *Ṣaṣṭiśataka*

Nemicandra (also Nemicand) Bhaṇḍārī was a Jain layman who lived in Maroth in eastern Marwar (about midway between present-day Jaipur and Nagaur) in the thirteenth century vs.[11] The Kharatara Gaccha is a Śvetāmbara mendicant lineage that emerged in the early centuries of the second millennium CE as a Śvetāmbara reform movement. It emphasized strict mendicant practice, in contrast to the perceived laxity of the majority of contemporary Śvetāmbara mendicants. Nemicandra Bhaṇḍārī was evidently dissatisfied with the state of Śvetāmbara mendicancy as he experienced it in Marwar, and heard about the reformist work of Jinapatisūri, then head of the Kharatara Gaccha. In vs 1253 Nemicandra went to meet Jinapatisūri in the Caulukya imperial capital of Patan, where he was staying for the four-month rainy-season retreat. In 1256, Nemicandra accepted Jinapatisūri as his guru, and took the vows *(vrata)* of an orthoprax layman from Jinapatisūri in Patan.[12]

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10   Unless specifically indicated otherwise, I use vs (Vikram Samvat) instead of CE (Gregorian dates) throughout this chapter. In many cases it is not clear if the vs dates for a text or person are according to the North Indian or Gujarati version of the Vikram calendar. The two start six months apart, and so for a rough conversion to a Gregorian date one should subtract 57 from the Vikram year if using the North Indian calendar, and 56 if using the Gujarati calendar (see Johnson 1938). Using vs dates, therefore, provides for greater accuracy.

11   Information on Nemicandra comes from several Kharatara Gaccha chronicles, several of the Bhasha *bālāvabodh*s that I discuss below, and Vinayasāgar 2005.

12   The connection between Nemicandra and Jinapatisūri went much deeper. Nemicandra brought with him his young son Ambaḍa, who in 1255 vs was initiated as a Kharatara Gaccha mendicant at the age of ten with the name

Nemicandra wrote three texts under the tutelage of Jinapatisūri. He wrote a short nine-verse Prakrit *stotra* to Pārśvanātha, and a thirty-five-verse Apabhramsha hymn of praise of Jinavallabhasūri. The latter was a twelfth-century vs Kharatara Gaccha mendicant and copious author who was famous for his trenchant criticism of the lax conduct of his contemporaries, and who was an inspiration to Nemicandra.[13] He referred directly to Jinavallabhasūri thrice in the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka*. Nemicandra's most famous text is his 160-verse Prakrit *Saṭṭhisaya* (Sanskrit *Ṣaṣṭiśataka*).[14]

This text is an incisive description of the correct conduct of an orthodox Jain mendicant, and the orthodox Jain layman who accepts such a mendicant as his guru. Nemicandra harshly criticized the conduct of the lax mendicants and their lay supporters. Whether or not mendicants were following orthodox conduct has been a matter of concern for Jains throughout the past millennium, and for this reason the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* has continued to be a popular text. There are many manuscripts of it in Jain libraries throughout western India; the large libraries at Koba and Patan, for example, have more than 120 copies. Many of these manuscripts contain only the Prakrit root text, but many others contain commentaries and translations in various languages, as I discuss below. Its popularity and relevance are also seen in the text tradition I outline here. In addition to the seventeen versions in Sanskrit and Bhasha for which we know the authors, there are a number of anonymous versions in these languages in the Jain libraries of western and northern India.

Kharatara Gaccha Multilingualism

Nemicandra wrote a hymn in Apabhramsha in addition to his two Prakrit texts. So while Apabhramsha is not directly in the text tradition

Vīraprabha. In 1278, upon the death of Jinapatisūri, Vīraprabha became head of the lineage with the name Jineśvarasūri, and lived until 1331. He was a prolific author in four languages: Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsha, and Bhasha.

13 Jinapatisūri wrote a commentary on Jinavallabhasūri's *Saṅghapaṭṭaka* while he was in Patan, so it is quite likely that he and Nemicandra read the text together. In their *Bālāvabodh*s (pp. 1 and 3 respectively), both Somasundara and Merusundara asserted that Nemicandra based his *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* on Jinavallabhasūri's texts. Some manuscripts and manuscript catalogues even misattribute Nemicandra's *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* to Jinavallabhasūri.

14 In conformity with standard Jain practice (Jaini 1979: 47 n.11), I use the Sanskrit title of the text. Both Digambaras and Śvetāmbaras have long referred to both Prakrit and Apabhramsha texts by Sanskritized versions of the titles. This is yet another expression of multilingualism in Jain intellectual culture.

Table 2.1 Compositions by Language by Heads of the Kharatara Gaccha (Main Branch), vs Eleventh through Fifteenth Centuries.

Author	Years as Head of Gaccha	Sanskrit	Prakrit	Sanskrit–Prakrit mix	Apabhramsha	Bhasha
Vardhamāna	d. after *c.*1080	3	2	0	0	0
Jineśvara	d. between 1108 and 1120	2	10	1	0	0
Jinacandra	*fl.* 1125	0	7	0	0	0
Abhayadeva	*fl.* 1120–1128	10	18	0	1	0
Jinavallabha	1167–1167	21	25	1	2	0
Jinadatta	1169–1211	9	17	0	4	0
Jinacandra	1211–1223	1	2	0	0	0
Jinapati	1223–1277	20	2	0	1	0
Jineśvara	1278–1331	9	5	0	5	2
Jinaprabodha	1331–1341	4	0	0	0	0
Jinacandra	1341–1376	7	1	0	1	0
Jinakuśala	1377–1389	12	2	0	2	0
Jinapadma	1390–1400	8	3	1	3	0
Jinalabdhi	1400–1406	5	0	0	0	0
Jinacandra	1406–1415	0	0	0	0	0
Jinodaya	1415–1432	0	1	0	1	0
Jinarāja	1432–1461	2	0	0	1	1

of the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka*, it is part of the larger Jain tradition of multilingualism that surrounds this text. It is also an example of the significant use of Apabhramsha by medieval Kharatara Gaccha authors for at least three centuries. Most scholarship on Apabhramsha has focused on Digambara texts, and paid insufficient attention to its significant role in medieval Kharatara Gaccha literary culture.

Part of the cultural power of the Kharatara Gaccha was that many of the mendicants in the lineage were prolific authors (Cort 2009). Textual production helped establish the orthodox bona fides of the mendicants in the eyes of important laymen such as Nemicandra, and also gave them cultural power in the many royal courts the mendicants have frequented over the centuries. Kharatara Gaccha chronicles and hagiographies credit many mendicants with convincing kings of the truth of Jainism, and converting merchant and warrior castes to Jainism (Babb 2004: 141–84). The Kharatara Gaccha mendicants amplified the cultural power that came from composing texts in several languages. Whereas Brahman competitors for royal and caste support usually wrote in Sanskrit, and the bards who were patronized by royalty and caste leaders usually wrote in Bhasha, Jain mendicants wrote in multiple languages. The cultural power achieved by such performance skills cannot be overestimated. A survey of the extant texts written by heads of the Kharatara Gaccha over four centuries from the vs mid-eleventh century to the mid-fifteenth century indicates just how important composition in several languages was to the Kharatara Gaccha (see Table 2.1).[15] By writing in two languages, Nemicandra participated in this multilingual literary culture, and the life of his *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* in the ensuing centuries also shows the Kharatara Gaccha preference for composing in multiple languages.

The *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* Text Tradition

There are no extant dated commentaries or translations of the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* from the first two centuries after Nemicandra composed it. Over the next two centuries eleven commentaries, with known authors and approximate dates, appeared, and there are other anonymous and / or undated versions in the Jain libraries of western India. Nine of these were by Kharatara Gaccha authors, but two were by authors in the rival Tapā Gaccha, so it had a trans-sectarian appeal. The Tapā Gaccha was the other major Śvetāmbara reformist lineage in medieval and early modern western India, and for most of the period was the major competitor with the Kharatara Gaccha among Śvetāmbara lineages. Many Tapā Gaccha authors throughout its history exhibited a similar concern that mendicant gurus observe proper practice, and that the laity only follow such orthoprax gurus.[16]

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15 Information on textual production is from Vinayasāgar 2006.

16 Thorough investigation into all of the authors who wrote commentaries on and translations of the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* indicates that most of them were involved

The first extant and dated version of the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* was written by a Tapā Gaccha author. It was written in Bhasha, and preceded the first extant and dated Sanskrit version by five years. In other words, Sanskrit and Bhasha in medieval and early modern western India did not exist in a temporal sequencing, but thrived in the very same temporal and geographical literary space. Somasundarasūri wrote his *Ṣaṣṭiśataka bālāvabodh* in vs 1496. Somasundara was head of the Tapā Gaccha from 1457 to 1499. He was a prolific author, who wrote twenty-two extant texts in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Bhasha.[17] He helped popularize the genre of the *bālāvabodh*. Seven of his *bālāvabodh*s are extant.

A *bālāvabodh* was a vernacular prose hybrid translation–commentary of a Sanskrit, Prakrit, Bhasha, or, rarely, Apabhramsha text. In some cases it added edifying stories – a common feature of commentaries in South Asia – and, as is the case with Somasundarasūri's *Bālāvabodh* on the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka*, information about the author of the original text. The earliest extant *bālāvabodh* is the *Ṣaḍāvaśyaka bālāvabodh* by the Kharatara Gaccha author Taruṇaprabhasūri, which he finished in vs 1411 (Pandit 1976). The range of possible content and style in these texts was vast; they ranged 'from word-to-word paraphrases, often equivalent to translations, to extensive and in-depth discussions bringing in innovative material' (Balbir 2020: 775). While *bāl* literally means 'child', Bhogīlāl Sāṇḍesarā (1953: 7–8; 2001: 276–7) explains that it refers not to physical age, but to level of education and understanding. For this reason, Sitamshu Yashaschandra (2003: 577 n.18) labels the genre 'handbook for students' and 'handbook for beginners'.[18] In other words, a *bālāvabodh* was an introductory textbook. Harivallabh Bhāyāṇī (1980: 5) expands on this, when he says that they served as textbooks to teach basic information on the principles of Jainism to both newly initiated mendicants and to laity. When one remembers that the majority of mendicants were initiated at a very young age, usually between the ages of five and ten, one sees that the term *bāl* is quite appropriate here. Later the genre morphed into the overlapping genre known as *stabaka* (Skt.), *ṭabo* (Guj.), and

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in criticisms of contemporary lax mendicancy and in efforts to promote Jain mendicant and lay orthopraxy. A fuller discussion will have to await another occasion.

17 He also wrote one six-language *(ṣaḍbhāṣā)* hymn; I discuss this genre below. Information on Somasundara's writings comes from Śivprasād (2000: 15)

18 I find Yashaschandra's English translation of *bālāvabodh* preferable to that of Nalini Balbir (2020: 775); Balbir's 'instruction for the ignorant' seems harshly judgmental to my ear, and misses the extensive role these texts played as textbooks for both young mendicants and laypeople.

ṭabā (Hindi), 'Meaning'. Balbir (2020: 775) points out, as we see with abundant clarity in the materials in this essay, that the vernacular commentarial tradition existed side-by-side with the Sanskrit commentarial tradition, and many authors wrote commentaries in both Sanskrit and the vernacular.[19]

As we see in Table 2.2, Kharatara Gaccha authors wrote nine commentaries and translations on the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* over the next two centuries. This number of texts is actually low, as manuscript catalogues of Jain libraries in Gujarat and Rajasthan list many anonymous commentaries and translations in Bhasha and Sanskrit.[20] This is a remarkable history of extensive interaction with a single text. Four of the versions were in Bhasha, and four in Sanskrit, with the last of the nine being in what is recognizably Rajasthani, showing that the literary interaction with the text was very much a bilingual Sanskrit and Bhasha one. Given that the original text was in Prakrit, we can safely term this a trilingual Kharatara Gaccha text tradition during this period. Only in the vs eighteenth century do we find another version with a named Tapā Gaccha author, the *ṭabo* by Paṇḍit Jaysomgaṇi, which he composed in Masuda (in contemporary Ajmer district).[21] By this time he wrote in what is recognizably an older version of Gujarati. The final Śvetāmbar version of the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* comes from an otherwise unknown Osvāl layman from Ahmedabad named Mohan or Mohanlāl. Sometime before vs 1930 – i.e., the first printing of his *bālāvabodh* – he

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19 See also Tyler Williams' important 2018 article on the significant overlap between the genres of commentary and translation in early modern literature. I extend this argument to the Jain textual tradition in Cort (2025).

20 In his introduction *(prastāvnā)* to his edition to three *bālāvabodh*s on the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka*, Bhogīlāl Saṇḍesarā (1953: 22–4) records that in 1950 CE, with the assistance of Muni Puṇyavijay, he was able to inspect the Jain libraries in Jaisalmer. There he studied the seventeenth century vs manuscript of an anonymous *bālāvabodh* in Marwari. He added that he knew of other versions in the Jain libraries of Jaisalmer and Bikaner.

21 The dating of this text poses a problem. The other four known texts by Jaysom date from vs 1703 to 1723 (for two of them we also know the place of composition: one was composed in Jaisalmer, and one in Agra), and we have other records of his activities between vs 1710 and 1718. The vs 1761 date therefore seems suspicious to me, unless Jaysom was extremely long-lived, and composed his *Ṣaṣṭiśataka ṭabo* in his old age. But the vs 1761 date for the composition of his *ṭabo* comes from the colophon of a manuscript copied by Jaysom himself (Punyavijaya 1978: 80), whereas no other manuscript of his *Ṣaṣṭiśataka ṭabo* gives a date for the composition of the text. This manuscript is available online: www.ldindology.org/manuscripts/listing-page-of-manuscripts/33849. accessed 9 February 2025.

Table 2.2 Commentaries / Translations of the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka / Upadeśa siddhānta ratnamālā* with Known Authors

Date (all vs)	Text	Author(s)	Language
1496	*Bālāvabodh*	TG Somasundara	Bhasha
1501	*Ṭīkā*	KhG Taporatna and Guṇaratna	Sanskrit
1501	*Bālāvabodh*	KhG Jinasāgara	Bhasha
*c.*1515	*Bālāvabodh*	KhG Dharmadeva	Bhasha
1527	*Bālāvabodh*	KhG Merusundara	Bhasha
*c.*1570	*Ṭippaṇa*	KhG Bhaktilābha	Sanskrit
1579	*Ṭīkā*	KhG Rājahaṁsa	Sanskrit
*c.*1580	*Avacūri*	KhG Gajasāra	Sanskrit
16ᵗʰ century	*Bālāvabodh*	KhG Dharmanandana	Bhasha
fl. 1652–90	*Bālāvabodh*	KhG Vimalakīrti	Rajasthani
fl. 1703–23 (or 1761?)	*Ṭabo*	TG Jaysom	Gujarati
1796	*Bhāṣā*	D Devīsiṁh Chābṛā	Dhundhari
1912	*Bhāṣa vacanikā*	D Bhāgcand	Old Hindi / Braj Bhasha
*c.*1930	*Bhāṣā*	Śv Mohan	Hindi
1946 (print)	*Bhāṣā-Ṭīkā*	D Pannālāl Bāklīvāl	Hindi
1955 (print)	*Bhāṣā-Ṭīkā*	D Pannālāl Bāklīvāl	Marathi
1964	*Bhāṣā*	D Bābā Dulīcand	Hindi

Abbreviations: D: Digambara; KhG: Khartara Gaccha; Śv: Śvetāmbara; TG: Tapā Gaccha

translated the text into Gujarati verse, accompanied by a Gujarati prose gloss.[22]

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22 Mohanlāl, like his Digambara contemporary Bhāgcand whom I discuss below, did not know Prakrit and so relied on a Sanskrit commentary, in this case the one by Taporatna and Guṇaratna (whom he misattributes as Guṇasundara). (Colophon to *Ṣaṣṭiśataka dohā and Bālāvabodh* of Mohan, in *Prakaraṇ ratnākar*, vol. 2, p. 698.)

Table 2.3 shows that almost all of the authors who wrote versions of the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* wrote other texts in Bhasha and or Sanskrit, and four wrote texts either in Prakrit or a Sanskrit–Prakrit mix. They were bilingual and trilingual authors. The table shows the decline in Prakrit among medieval Śvetāmbara authors, as few of them wrote a text solely in Prakrit. But even if Śvetāmbara authors rarely composed in Prakrit, the language was still a vital part of Śvetāmbara literary culture. Almost every one of the authors wrote commentaries on or translations of other Prakrit texts besides the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka*, so we can identify the Śvetāmbara text tradition as trilingual: Prakrit, Sanskrit, and Bhasha.[23]

Table 2.3 Languages of Texts by Śvetāmbar Authors in *Ṣaṣṭiśataka* Tradition

Name	Year of ṢŚ version (VS)	Sanskrit	Prakrit	Sanskrit–Prakrit mix	Bhasha
Somasundara	1496	10	2	1	9
Taporatna and Guṇaratna	1501	2	0	0	0
Jinasāgara	1501	2	0	0	2
Dharmadeva	*c.*1515	0	0	0	1
Merusundara	1527	8	0	0	24
Bhaktilābha	*c.*1570	6	0	1	8
Rājahaṁsa	1579	4	1	0	0
Gajasāra	*c.*1580	3	0	1	0
Dharmanan-dana	16th century	1	0	0	1
Vimalakīrti	*fl.* 1652/1690	3	0	0	19
Jaysom	1761	0	0	0	5
Mohan	*c.*1930	0	0	0	1

23 Information on the Kharatara Gaccha authors comes from Vinayasāgar (2006), on Somasundara from Śivprasād (2000: 15), and on Jaysom from various manuscript catalogues.

The Digambara *Upadeśa siddhānta ratnamālā* Text Tradition

One of the many needs in Jain Studies is a better understanding of the ways that ideas, doctrines, ritual practices, and texts have been shared by Digambaras and Śvetāmbaras throughout Jain history. Contemporary Digambara and Śvetāmbara intellectual communities tend to be largely ignorant of each other. To a large extent, Digambaras and Śvetāmbaras live in different parts of India; even in towns and cities with populations of both, they tend to belong to different castes, and in other ways not to intermingle. But we need to be careful not to project the contemporary intellectual divide into the past in a blanket fashion, as a careful investigation of Jain history shows that the boundaries between the two sectarian traditions have been much more porous than most scholarship indicates. The processes of this interaction and sharing, however, remain largely opaque.

Nemicandra's text is a good example of this. So far I have discussed the continuing life of his text in Śvetāmbara (and largely Kharatara Gaccha) intellectual culture, where it was known as the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka*. Nemicandra himself did not give a name to his text – in his colophon he simply said that he had spoken in verse form so that faithful people could study and come to understand the correct ritual path that leads to liberation.[24] The earliest commentators, however, all called it the *Ṣaṣṭiśataka*.

Since at least the vs late-eighteenth century Nemicandra's text has also had a presence in North Indian Digambara Jain intellectual culture, where it is known by the alternate name of *Upadeśa siddhānta ratnamālā* (Jewel-Garland of Teachings on the Doctrine). It is also found under several similar names: *Siddhāntasāra* (Essence of the Doctrine) and *Dharmopadeśa ratnamālā* (Jewel-Garland of Teachings on the Dharma). Rarely does one find just the Prakrit text; it is usually accompanied by a Sanskrit commentary, or at a minimum a Sanskrit word-for-word gloss; in some manuscripts it is accompanied by a vernacular prose commentary, a genre known in Digambara circles as a *bhāṣā vacanikā*.

There are three known Bhasha translations and commentaries of the *Upadeśa siddhānta ratnamālā*: by Devīsiṁh Chābṛā in Jaipur (vs 1796), by Bhāgcand (vs 1912) in Gwalior, and by Bābā Dulīcand in Jaipur (vs 1964). In addition, Paṇḍit Ṭoḍarmal (Bhārill 1973) of Jaipur quoted or

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24 *evaṁ bhaṁḍāria nemicaṁdaraïyāo kaïvi gāhāo /*
    vihimaggarayā bhavvā paḍhantu jāṇamtu jaṁtu sivaṁ //
    Ṣaṣṭiśataka 161. I follow Saṇḍesarā's edition.

cited nine verses of the *Upadeśa siddhānta ratnamālā*, eight with full quotation, in his *Mokṣamārg prakāśak* (Light on the Path to Liberation), which was left unfinished at his death (vs 1823 or 1824).[25]

The Digambar literary culture of early modern North India was not as robustly multilingual as earlier Digambara literary cultures; for example, in medieval Karnataka we find Apabhramsha, Kannada, Prakrit, and Sanskrit all in use in close proximity by Digambara authors. Nor did it match the medieval Śvetāmbara literary cultures described above. The active use of Prakrit disappeared, and even the ability to read it seems to have been limited to a small number of intellectuals. For example, Bhāgcand implied that he could not read the original Prakrit. He was unable to find a Sanskrit commentary, so he had to rely on a Sanskrit gloss, and as a result he was sure that there were mistakes in his version, although none of them contravened the correct Digambara tradition.[26] But the early modern North Indian Digambara literary tradition was not a monolingual vernacular one. Devīsiṁh wrote Dhundhari versions of two Prakrit texts, most likely through Sanskrit commentaries. Ṭoḍarmal also wrote only in Dhundhari, but his extensive commentaries on and quotations from Prakrit and Sanskrit texts tell us that he was comfortable in both languages, and there are some indications that he may have been able to read Kannada script as well. Almost all of Bhāgcand's texts were in what one author called 'old Hindi, with the influences of Braj Bhasha' (Paramānand 1956: 17). Three of his texts were *bhāṣā vacanikā*s on Sanskrit texts, his version of the *Upadeśa siddhānta ratnamālā* relied upon a Sanskrit gloss, and he composed an independent Sanskrit text, his popular *Mahāvīrāṣṭaka*

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25 Ṭoḍarmal knew that the *Upadeśa siddhānta ratnamālā* was a Śvetāmbara text. He expressly defended his extensive use of a text by a sectarian tradition he elsewhere excoriated as false, saying that Nemicandra criticized the lax Śvetāmbar *caityavāsī*s in ways very similar to and supportive of Ṭoḍarmal's criticisms of the Digambara *bhaṭṭāraka*s. But not all Digambara authors were aware of the text's origins. Agarcand Nāhṭā (1981) points out that Bhāgcand was ignorant that Nemicandra was Śvetāmbara, and so seriously misread the text in places where Nemicandra praised his Kharatara Gaccha guru Jina-vallabhasūri. Nor was Bhāgcand aware of the many Sanskrit and Bhasha commentaries on the text. It would appear that few of the commentaries accompanied the root text as it crossed the Śvetāmbara–Digambara divide.

26 *isa granthi kī saṁskṛta ṭīkā to thī nahīṁ parantu kichū ṭippaṇa thā tātai vidhi milāya merī buddhi maiṁ pratibhāsyā taisā artha liṣyā hai // kahīṁ bhuli avaśya hoyagī so buddhivān sodha lījyo // āmnāya viruddha artha to maiṁ naiṁ liṣyānāṁ hī parantu gāthā ke karttā kā abhiprāya aura bhī hoya to samajhi lījyo // Bhāgcand, Upadeśa siddhānta ratnamālā vacanikā* (Jaipur ms. of vs 1912), folio 44b.

stotra. Another Sanskrit text, the *Jinatāḍava*, may also be by him (Premī 1911: 50). Dulīcand wrote only in Hindi, but he wrote three translations from Prakrit and two from Sanskrit. None of these authors was as solidly tri- or quadrilingual as earlier Śvetāmbara examples in the sense of being able to compose in all these languages, but they were to varying degrees bilingual in both Sanskrit and the vernacular, and Prakrit played a role in their authorial activities.

Print

Nemicandra's text, in both its Śvetāmbara and Digambara iterations, made its way into print in the late nineteenth century CE, even while manuscript copies of it were still being made, and before Bābā Dulīcand's translation which exists only in manuscript form. The earliest known Śvetāmbara version, and the earliest known print version, is in Volume 2 of the *Prakaraṇ ratnākar*, a massive anthology edited and published in 1876 CE by the Śvetāmbara layman Bhīmsiṁh Māṇak in Bombay. This included Mohan's Gujarati verse translation. The earliest known Digambara version was published in 1889 CE. The Terāpanth layman Jaicand Sītārām Saitvāl of Wardha (in present-day Maharashtra) published a Hindi translation–commentary *(Ṭīkā)* by Paṇḍit Pannālāl Bāklīvāl of Sujangarh, Rajasthan (Jain and Agravāl 1958: 108).[27]

There have been at least eight subsequent publications of the text with commentaries and translations, three from Digambara publishers, three from Śvetāmbara publishers, and two from scholarly publishers. The transition to print involved bringing modern standard Gujarati, Hindi, and Marathi into the list of languages in which the text has appeared. To date no version has appeared in English, but I expect this is only a matter of time.

Jain Philosophy of Language and Multilingualism

Before concluding, I want to point out two other directions this inquiry could have taken to support the argument that Jains for two millennia have been committed to multilingualism, and that to be a cosmopolitan Jain author meant that one was a multilingual author. One of these involves Jain theories of language, and the other the Jain production of multiple language texts.

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27 I have not seen Saitvāl's publication.

The Brahmanical tradition famously viewed Sanskrit as not just a language, but as *the* language. In the eyes of some Brahmanical theological and philosophic schools it was even more: Sanskrit was ultimate reality itself. All other languages were human creations that exhibited the limitations of human fallibility. Johannes Bronkhorst (2015: 85–6) has described the Brahmanical claims for Sanskrit as follows:

Brahmans knew and preserved the Veda and the language of the Veda, Sanskrit. From the point of view of the Brahmans, Sanskrit was not *a* language but rather *the only correct language*, all other languages being corruptions of Sanskrit. The relation between Sanskrit and reality was also close, a presumed fact that explained the efficacy of mantras (which are in Sanskrit). The reliability of the Veda, furthermore, is directly related to the fact that it is in Sanskrit. As a matter of fact, the Veda is a pure expression of the Sanskrit language, in the formation of which no authors played a role. The possession of this unique literary document gave Brahmanism the authority it claimed. From the Brahmanical point of view, the literary traditions of other currents of thought could not but be inferior, because they had nothing like the Veda.

When the Jains did take to writing in Sanskrit beginning in the middle of the first millennium CE, they did so because it was the language used by other philosophical and soteriological schools with whom they wanted to debate, not because they accorded it any special status. To further their own use of Sanskrit, Jains from the time of Pūjyapāda (*c*.500 CE) produced their own Sanskrit grammars, and did not privilege the Brahmanical grammatical texts. As we have seen, they composed extensively in all the languages of South Asia, and viewed all of them as equally capable as Sanskrit of communicating fully.[28]

We see the Jain decentring of Sanskrit, and acceptance of multilingualism, most clearly in the depictions of the *divyadhvani*, the sacred sound by which the sermons of the enlightened Jinas were delivered (Bronkhorst 2015; Dundas 1996: 141–2). There have been disagreements as to what the *divyadhvani* is but there has been almost unanimous agreement that it is not Sanskrit.

Digambaras say that it is a miraculous sound. It is something like *oṁ*, but there is disagreement as to whether or not it consists of syllables. According to the Digambaras the Jina upon attaining omniscience

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28 See Dundas (1996, 2020) for fuller discussions of Jain attitudes toward language and Sanskrit.

ceases to have any bodily functions, so he does not physically speak the *divyadhvani*. Rather, it emanates from his body, with some Digambaras saying that the locus of this emanation is the Jina's mouth. Some Digambaras say that the *divyadhvani* contains all the 18 major and 170 minor languages. Another source says it is one language, while yet another says that it is half Ardhamāgadhī and half all the other languages. Whatever it is, the *gaṇadhara*s, the chief disciples of a Jina who are close to omniscience and will attain liberation at the end of this lifetime, have the ability to comprehend the meaning of this sound which is otherwise unintelligible to humans. They then transmit the teachings, using human languages.

Śvetāmbaras view the omniscient but still embodied and not yet liberated Jina as more human than the Digambaras, and he exhibits all the normal human functions and activities, albeit in a subtle fashion (Dundas 1985). According to the Śvetāmbara canonical *Aupapātika sūtra* (quoted in Dundas 1996: 141), the Jina preaches to an assembly of gods and humans, with the humans including Aryans and Non-Aryans. (Later sources include animals.) His speech extends for over a league, and is 'in Ardhamāgadhī' and at the same time 'conform[s] to all languages'. This speech, then, in the ultimate act of simultaneous translation, transforms itself into all the languages of all the beings in attendance. Presumably Sanskrit is among these other languages, but it was the rare Jain intellectual who thought that Sanskrit was anything other than one among many human languages.[29]

These Jain theories of language decentre Sanskrit. They give equal priority to all other languages, and posit that full communication can happen in any of them. Just as the Jina was able to speak simultaneously in all languages, the cosmopolitan Jain author should be able to write in more than one language. Anything less was to restrict communication and prevent many people from encountering the Jina's message.

Six-language Jain Texts

So far I have been addressing two modes of multilingualism. One, as described by Orsini, and De Clercq and Pauwels, among others, is a socio-cultural milieu in which different authors use different languages. While some of the authors may themselves be multilingual, this is not

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29 See also Dundas (1998) on Jain theory of *mantra*. In contrast to Brahmans who insisted that *mantra*s can only be in Sanskrit, Jains have insisted that Prakrit can also serve as a language for *mantra*s.

necessarily the case, and so this form of multilingualism could, in theory, be composed of multiple monolingual authors living in the same time and place.[30] The second mode has been my main focus: authors who write texts in two, three, or four languages. Each text is generally in one language, and so the author must choose which language he uses for any given text according to the audience and other contextualizing factors (Cort 2010). Jains have also practiced a third form of multilingualism: using multiple languages in one text.

One obvious example of such multilingual texts is commentary (Balbir 2020). The earliest level of commentaries on the Śvetāmbara Jain scriptures consisted of multiple registers of Prakrit, usually a Maharashtri Prakrit commentary on an Ardhamāgadhī Prakrit root text. In the middle of the first millennium CE, the Śvetāmbaras started using Sanskrit extensively for commentaries, so any one text would contain layers of three languages: two Prakrits and Sanskrit. In the second millennium, with the development of the *bālāvabodh* genre, the number of languages expanded in some cases to four with the addition of Bhasha.

A second example is the genre of six-language *(ṣaḍbhāṣā)* texts, which almost always were hymns *(stotra*s) (Balbir 2007; Schubring 1957; Vose 2016). In some bravura performances they were even expanded to eight languages *(aṣṭabhāṣā).* The six languages in Jain texts usually were Maharashtri Prakrit, Shauraseni Prakrit, Magadhi or Ardhamāgadhī Prakrit, Paishaci Prakrit, Chulika-Paisachi Prakrit, and Apabhramsha. Sanskrit usually 'bookended' the text (Vose 2016: 329), and was not counted among the six; these were really seven-language texts. The Jains probably did not invent this genre. The first known reference to it is in the *Kāvyālaṅkāra*, a text on aesthetics by the early-ninth-century Kashmiri author Rudraṭa (Ollett 2017: 138–9; Pollock 2006: 94). Writing two centuries later, Bhoja in his *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa* indicated that the ability to compose in six languages marked a truly cosmopolitan author. After describing the six languages, he said that the author 'who can compose in them all is the most successful, the very king, of poets'[31] (quoted in Pollock 2006: 584). Rudraṭa and Bhoja gave a slightly different list of the six than we find in the Jain six-language *stotra*s: Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsha, Paishaci, Shauraseni, and Magadhi. Andrew Ollett (2017: 139) notes that the twelfth-century Jain author Hemacandra in his *Siddhahema* grammar listed the same six as Rudraṭa

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30 A Jain variant of this are the many multiple-text manuscripts in Jain libraries, most of which contain texts in multiple languages (Balbir 2019).

31 *nirbaddhā yasteṣāṁ sa iha kavirājo vijayate //*

and Bhoja, and said, 'For most authors after Hemacandra, that there were six languages was common knowledge'.

The Jains seem to have been the main practitioners of the genre.[32] As we have seen, they had no ideological objections to composing in multiple languages. The six-language hymn is clearly a performance genre, and Jain chronicles are replete with accounts of Jain monk-authors performing in royal courts to demonstrate their cosmopolitan literary skills and thereby awakening the ruler to the truth of Jainism. No doubt the ability to perform a six-language text also impressed leading merchants, and medieval Jain monks were known for their ability to convince entire caste lineages *(gotra)* to become their followers.

Jain Cosmopolitanism and Multiple Language Use

Throughout this essay I have been using the term 'cosmopolitan', which is central to Pollock's thesis. I find it a very useful term to describe attitudes toward literature, and the institutions that support literary production. My argument is that Jain authors for 2,000 years have also been cosmopolitan, but not in the same way that Sanskrit authors have been.

Pollock defines the term in an overly narrow way. For him it applies to brahmanical literary culture, but he does not acknowledge that there have been multiple and conflicting ways in which South Asian authors throughout history have been cosmopolitan.

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32 Jains were not the only practitioners of six-language composition, however. Dalpat Singh Rājpurohit (2022b: 188–95) briefly discusses several references to six-language texts by Bhasha poets. The seventeenth-century Dādūpanthī poet Bhīkhan listed the same six languages as did Rudraṭa. Given the prominent role of Jain writers in what is now Rajasthan, one wonders whether Bhīkhan might not have been influenced by, or at least aware of, the Jain practice of six-language poems. But it is less likely that the thirteenth-century Maithili author Jyotīśvara Kaviśekhara, who listed the same six languages in his *Varṇaratnākara* (Jha 2018: 194), was influenced by the Jains. The poet and Braj Bhasha theoretician Bhikhārīdās (1721–1799 CE) in his 1746 CE *Kāvyan-irṇay* gave a different list, showing how the concept of six languages moved beyond the original list of only Indo-European classical languages. His six were Sanskrit, Persian, Braj Bhasha, Magadhi Prakrit, Avadhi, and 'Eastern' (Purvi), although Busch (2011: 119–20) says that it is not fully clear whether Bhikhārīdās refered to Avadhi or Apabhramsha. (See also Jha [2019: 60–1] on Bhikhārīdās.) The continued valorization of being able to compose in six languages is seen in the Charan poet Sūryamall Mīsaṇ (1815–1868 CE) of Bundi, for whom the six languages included Persian and English (Rajpurohit 2022a: 385).

Pollock defines the intertwined terms 'cosmopolis' and 'cosmopolitan' based on etymology.[33] *Cosmo* refers to the supraregional. It is not local or even regional, and therefore certainly not vernacular. *Cosmo* 'directs attention toward the expansive nature of the formation' (2006: 12). The second half of the term, *polis*, he says, points to 'the prominence given to the political dimension', and brings the factor of power to the fore. A *cosmopolis*, therefore, is a 'transregional culture-power sphere', and to be *cosmopolitan* is to be a participant in such a transregional culture-power sphere, in this case one that is defined by the privileging of Sanskrit as the dominant language of literature and therefore other genres of elite and prestige writing.

This is not the only way to define 'cosmopolitan'. Rather than seek for a single definition of the term to apply in a hegemonic manner to all of South Asian culture, we should see the term as a contested one. Different communities in different times and places have advanced their own definitions of what it meant to be cosmopolitan. This very approach was advocated in an article co-written by Pollock just a few years before *The Language of the Gods*. In the introduction to a special issue of the journal *Public Culture* in 2000, that was reissued as the book *Cosmopolitanism* in 2002, Pollock and his co-authors acknowledged the plural nature of the term by referring to cosmopolitanisms, and wrote: 'As a historical category, the cosmopolitan should be considered entirely open, and not pregiven or foreclosed by the definition of any particular society or discourse' (Pollock et al. 2002: 1).

The first definition of cosmopolitan in the Oxford English Dictionary is simply 'Belonging to all parts of the world; not restricted to any one country or its inhabitants'. A person is cosmopolitan who is not local, but at ease in multiple situations. Cosmopolitan in this sense is to a large extent synonymous with sophisticated. I am not disputing that for many Brahmanical authors, to be cosmopolitan was to write literature in Sanskrit, and therefore to participate in the Sanskrit cosmopolis, a 'transregional culture-power sphere' that stretched from Central Asia to Indonesia. But that was not what it meant for a Jain author to be cosmopolitan. A cosmopolitan Jain author has been someone who is not limited to writing in just one language, whether that one language be transregional Sanskrit or regional Bhasha.[34] By demonstrating his

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33 I leave aside here a criticism based on the 'etymological fallacy'. See Cort (2002: 61–2) for a discussion of this fallacy in terms of bhakti, another mega-category of analysis of South Asian history.

34 We see this criticism of Brahmanical Sanskrit monolingualism in the trenchant comment by the seventeenth-century Kannada Jain author Bhaṭṭākalaṅkadeva,

compositional skills in multiple languages he shows himself to have transcended the local and regional, and thus to be cosmopolitan. At the same time, his ability to write in multiple languages demonstrates his ability to function simultaneously in multiple locales and cultural registers.

Concluding Observations

As I stated at the outset of this essay, the subject of South Asian multilingualism is an increasingly important and fruitful one. Recent scholarship in the area is extensive, as seen in the bibliography. The ICEM-LNI project has always involved the study of multiple languages, and even with its proclaimed focus on vernacular languages has done so with constant awareness of the classical languages – Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, Prakrit, Apabhramsha – that have existed side-by-side with the vernaculars. Recent scholarship asks us to consider whether the authors and literary traditions we study have existed in monolingual isolation from each other (rarely if ever!), or have vibrantly interacted with other languages in the same time and place. It asks us to consider more deeply the readily apparent multilingualism of South Asia. How did authors situate themselves within this multilingual literary terrain? When did they choose to be vernacular, tied to a particular region? When did they choose to be cosmopolitan, writing in a manner that transcended the local? Jain authors for two millennia have chosen to write within multilingual literary environments, and for them this was what it meant to be cosmopolitan. This leaves me with a final question that I address to scholars of other literary traditions in South Asia: to what extent is Jain multilingual cosmopolitanism something that is distinctly Jain, and to what extent do we see something similar in other literary traditions?

Acknowledgements

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who in his grammar of Kannada defended the language from the 'pseudo-intellectuals, who are afflicted by the disease that is the obstinacy for Sanskrit' (quoted by Gurevitch 2022: 242).

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