ON JAINA APABHRAṂŚA *PRAŚASTI*S

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This paper focuses on the *praśasti*s, "eulogies", which became a standard in Apabhraṃśa *sandhibandha*s, a literary style used almost exclusively by Digambara Jainas. It retraces the insertion of lengthy *praśasti*s to Puṣpadanta's *Mahāpurāṇu* and, by looking at the works of Vibudha Śrīdhara and Raïdhū, it discusses its evolution to a means of social prestige for patrons. By indicating and analysing some of the information provided in these *praśasti*s, the paper further explores their possibilities as historical sources, providing information about political, social, and religious history, for times and places of which other sources are sometimes limited.

Key words: Apabhraṃśa, Jainism, classical Indian literature, political history, social history, religious history.

Despite its importance, linguistically and from the literary-historical perspective, as a connective piece in the intricate puzzle of Indo-Aryan languages and literatures, Apabhraṃśa has received relatively little scholarly attention.[1] Cohen believes this lack of interest may be due to the disappointment experienced by scholars, when they discovered that the role of literary Apabhraṃśa as a link between the older Prākrits and early Indo-Aryan vernaculars, was not as clear cut as they initially had hoped (Cohen 1979, p. iv). Modern Apabhraṃśa scholarship commenced with Jacobi's edition of the *Bhavisattakahā* of Dhanapāla, published in 1918. Nevertheless, representative Western surveys of the history of Indian literature predating Jacobi's edition, suggest an awareness of, at least, different Prākrit dialects used as literary languages (Schroeder 1887, p. 444; Oldenberg 1903, p. 214; Weber 1904, pp. 175–180).[2] These

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[1] For an overview of research on Apabhraṃśa, cf. Cohen (1979, pp. 13–14), Bubenik (1998, pp. 1–3; 2003, pp. 212–214).

[2] Frazer (1898, pp. 264, 271) appears to have been among the first to refer to Apabhraṃśa as a literary language.

surveys regularly connect Prākrit and especially Apabhraṃśa to the "popular" or "lowest and despised" classes as opposed to the "educated", who preferred Sanskrit, particularly in view of their use in classical drama. Some of these scholars explicitly state that Apabhraṃśa is of limited interest (Frazer 1898, p. 271; Weber 1904, p. 179; Macdonell 1905, p. 349).[3] This disinterest in Apabhraṃśa in part stems from the literal sense of *apabhraṃśa* as "degenerate" language, as employed by classical grammarians to indicate a lexical category of Prākrit poetry.[4] The classical Indian poeticians, however, name Apabhraṃśa as one of three languages (beside Sanskrit and Prākrit) allowed for *kāvya*, in which the term *apabhraṃśa* is devoid of the negative connotation of its etymology (cf. Pollock 2006, pp. 98–114).[5] But despite being named as, and fulfilling all the characteristics of literary languages, Prākrit and Apabhraṃśa have always been overshadowed by the factual dominance of Sanskrit, resulting in a less voluminous textual production (Pollock 2006, p. 104). Another factor contributing to the limited interest in Apabhraṃśa, is the fact that the vast majority of its surviving literature consists of religious Jaina texts. From the classical treatises on literary theory we know that Apabhraṃśa was originally an ecumenical literary language, in which also Brahminical authors composed. Unfortunately, none of these texts have survived. Over the centuries, a growing trend of reduction of language choice lead to Apabhraṃśa being used almost exclusively by Jainas (Pollock 2003, p. 73). Though there are several Śvetāmbara texts available, Apabhraṃśa literature appears predominately to have been produced by Digambaras. Western scholarly interest in Jainism is and always has been peripheral compared to the Hindu or Buddhist traditions. The earliest informants of academics with an interest in Jainism belonged mostly to a minority faction of Mūrtipūjaka Śvetāmbara Jainism with a missionary

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[3] Henry (1904, p. ix), for example, states that Apabhraṃśa dialects are the fathers of the modern idioms ("pères des idiomes modernes"), but that they have had no impact on literature. Schroeder (1887, p. 444) mentions that he does not treat the Middle Indic languages of literature, because Sanskrit was the language of prominence.

[4] Frazer (1898, p. 264) and Macdonell (1905, p. 27), for instance, stress this etymological meaning. In the *Mahābhāṣya* (Kielhorn ed., 1962: 2,18–3,5; 5,11–22; 10,4–11,14) Patañjali (?2nd century BC) describes as *apabhraṃśa* all the phonological variations of words derived from Sanskrit. A similar interpretation for a variant *vibhraṣṭa* is found in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* 18.3 and 5 (?3rd century, Ghosh ed.) in the categorisation of Prākrit recitation, which is described as being of three types: (i) *samāna*, Prākrit words identical to their Sanskrit equivalents, i.e. *tatsama*, (ii) *vibhraṣṭa*, words that deviate phonologically from their Sanskrit equivalents, but in which the Sanskrit equivalent is nonetheless recognisable, i.e. *tadbhava*, and (iii) *deśī*, for all the other words. The term *apabhraṃśa* or *vibhraṣṭa* in these cases refers to a linguistic category of Prākrit lexemes, *tadbhava*, which in reality constitutes most of the Prākrit lexicon. Pollock (2006, p. 374) mentions another instance from a Kannaḍa literary theorist, where *apabhraṃśa* is used as a synonym for *tadbhava*.

[5] The description of a closed set of literary languages is first found in Bhāmaha's *Kāvyālaṅkāra* I. 16 (7th century, Śarmā ed., 1928), the oldest Sanskrit treatise on literary theory. An inscription of Dharasena II of Valabhī (7th century) also mentions Apabhraṃśa as a literary language with a status equal to Sanskrit and Prākrit (cf. Tagare 1948, §1). Aware of the possible confusion regarding this double meaning of the term *apabhraṃśa*, Daṇḍin (*Kāvyādarśa* I. 32–36, Böhtlingk ed., 1890) specifies both meanings: when used in literature (*kāvya*), Apabhraṃśa is a language such as that of the Ābhīras; when used in theoretical works (*śāstra*), f.i. in linguistic treatises, the word refers to derivatives from Sanskrit, i.e. *tadbhava*.

zeal, resulting in a biased representation of Jainism in early Western scholarship in which the Digambara tradition and that of the majority of the Śvetāmbaras were marginalised. With regard to Jaina religious literature, academics moreover focussed almost entirely on the oldest canonical texts in Prākrit, and tended to disregard later Jaina texts, including those in Apabhraṃśa (Flügel 2010).

Against this background, it is understandable why in the past priority was never given to the study of Apabhraṃśa texts, either for their literary value, or for their importance as Jaina religious literature.[6] Nevertheless, Apabhraṃśa literature offers interesting material, not just for linguists and literary historians. Scholars in the past appear to have largely overlooked the vast amount of information contained in these texts, which can significantly further our knowledge of mediaeval religious, social and political history.

Sandhibandhas and Praśastis

Apabhraṃśa compositions come in a variety of styles and metres, and they significantly influenced early modern vernacular literature. Their styles and forms were often adopted with little change, such as the *rāsaka* (*rāsaya, rāsaṁ, rāso*), "lyrical poem" or "ballad", and in religious treatises in the *dohā* metre.[7] By far the most popular style of Apabhraṃśa literature is the *sandhibandha*, described as Apabhraṃśa *kāvya* in *mātrā* metres and divided in *sandhi*s, themselves composed of *kaḍavaka*s.[8] Like the *rāsaka* and the *dohā*, the *kaḍavaka* structure too persisted the early modern vernacular literature (Warder 1972–2004, Vol. 1, §421; Yashaschandra 2003, p. 580). The subject of these *sandhibandha*s is generally the biography of a mythological or historical hero (*cariu, purāṇa*), which has resulted in it being called the Apabhraṃśa epic (Warder 1972–2004, Vol. 1, §413ff.). Brahmanical authors, such as Caturmukha, are said to have composed *sandhibandha*s, but no non-Jaina compositions in this genre have survived.

A unique feature of Jaina Apabhraṃśa *sandhibandha*s is their lengthy *praśasti*s, "eulogies", at the beginning and the end of the narrative. In most cases, this *praśasti* material, which can take up an entire *sandhi*, forms a narrative frame enclosing

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[6] Dundas (1996, p. 148) hints at the importance of Apabhraṃśa for religious proselytisation in mediaeval Jainism.

[7] The earlier Jaina *rāsaka*s appear to focus on doctrinal teachings, rather than lyrical themes, suggesting that the *rāsaka* only became the genre *par excellence* for a ballad, in Apabhraṃśa and the vernacular languages, in a later period (cf. Kochaḍ 1957, p. 42). For Apabhraṃśa influence in Gujarati literature, cf. Yashaschandra (2003, pp. 571–576). For the *dohā*, cf. Schomer (1987).

[8] A *kaḍavaka*, a textual unit consisting of generally no less than twelve verse lines, is subdivided into three structural parts: (1) an optional opening verse of two to four rhyming *pāda*s; (2) a middle part and (3) a closing verse, called *ghattā*, generally of four to six *pāda*s with a complex rhyme scheme. A single *ghattā* is also often found at the beginning of a *sandhi*. The metres prescribed for these three structural units may differ.

Well over half of the impressive number of compositions discussed by Kochaḍ (1957) are *sandhibandha*s.

the traditional Jaina *purāṇic* frame. A typical Apabhraṃśa *sandhibandha* commences with a benediction to the Jinas and Sarasvatī. Subsequently, the poet may give a description of the locus where the narrative was composed, a country, city or region, and its contemporary rulers. He then proceeds with a detailed account of how he met his patron in this particular city, often a merchant or functionary of the court, sometimes through mediation of a middleman. These conversations between the poet and the patron or the middleman bring to light information about the patron's family's provenance, lineage, marital alliances, links with courts, and religious services to the Jaina community, such as the construction and consecration of temples and images and the organisation of pilgrimages. After negotiating and agreeing on the terms of patronage, the poet proceeds to the second narrative frame, namely that of the dialogue between Śreṇika, the king of Rājagṛha, and Indrabhūti Gautama, the first Gaṇadhara of the Jina Mahāvīra, at Mahāvīra's *samavasaraṇa*, after which the main narrative commences as Indrabhūti's answer to Śreṇika's query. At the very end of the composition, the poet glorifies the patron for his auspicious deed, and in several *kaḍavaka*s may reiterate the names of his illustrious forefathers and relatives, emphasising their most significant accomplishments.[9] Because Jaina Purāṇas, the genre of the majority of Apabhraṃśa *sandhibandha*s, are traditionally embedded into the narrative frame of Śreṇika's and Indrabhūti's conversation, the addition of a second, superimposing frame of a dialogue between the poet and the patron or middleman was probably not experienced as a breach of literary standards and therefore easily integrated, as it parallels the interlocutory layering found commonly in many other genres of Indian literature, such as the orthodox Purāṇas and the Mahābhārata. Naturally, this does not explain why these long *praśasti*s became the standard in Apabhraṃśa *sandhibandha*s alone, and not in other languages or styles.[10]

This paper will attempt to retrace and explain the provenance of this peculiarity of *sandhibandha*s and its evolution over subsequent centuries. Moreover, it will highlight the possibilities of these texts as historical sources.

Puṣpadanta

The practice appears to go back to Puṣpadanta's *Mahāpurāṇu* (10th century), which in 102 *sandhi*s narrates the biographies of the sixty-three *śalākāpuruṣa*s or *mahāpuruṣa*s of Jaina legendary history, modelled on the Sanskrit *Mahāpurāṇa* of Jinasena and Guṇabhadra (9th century).[11] The first *sandhi* begins with an invocation to the

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[9] This structure is far from rigid. In some cases, the poet does not describe the locus of the patronage, and in some cases the narrative frame of Śreṇika's and Indrabhūti's dialogue is left out.

[10] Literary texts in Sanskrit and Prākrit, and Apabhraṃśa texts in styles other than the *sandhibandha*, also contain some *praśasti* information, but the *praśasti*s of *sandhibandha*s are in comparison considerably lengthier and more detailed.

[11] The *Mahāpurāṇu* was edited by Vaidya (1937–1941). Vaidya's edition was republished and accompanied by a Hindi translation by Jain (2001–2006).

Jinas (1.1) and Sarasvatī (1.2), whereupon the poet states that he will narrate a Purāṇa in the year Siddhārtha, i.e. 959 (1.3.1). After roaming the earth for days, avoiding "evil people" the poet describes how he arrived near the city of Mepāḍi, where emperor Tuḍigu, identified as Kṛṣṇa III of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa dynasty, resided, "after cutting off the head of the Coḍa".[12] Inscriptional evidence confirms that Kṛṣṇa III was indeed stationed in Melpati, North Arcot district, in 959 after his overthrow of the Colas (Altekar 1934, pp. 117−119). Tired and emaciated from the journey, the poet rests in a park (1.3.5−6). Two men approach him and ask him why he did not enter the city (1.3.5−11). Puṣpadanta answers that he feels disgusted with the world and its "evil people" (1.3.12−4.6). The two strangers then describe Bharata, a minister of Śubha-tuṅgadeva (Kṛṣṇa III), and invite Puṣpadanta to visit him (1.4.7−5.12). Reluctantly accepting, Puṣpadanta finds comfort and shelter with Bharata (1.6.1−8). After some days, Bharata requests the poet to compose a biography of the first Tīrthaṅkara, Ṛṣabha, as an expiation (*pacchittu, prāyaścitta*) for the fact that Puṣpadanta had pre-viously written a poem for a further unidentified Vīrarāu, who had become a "king of falsehood" (*micchattarāu*) (1.6.9−15). The poet hesitates as he feels he may lack the proper qualities and fears reproach from the "evil people", but Bharata reassures him. After a long discussion, he agrees (1.7−9) and commences the portrayal of the *purāṇic* narrative setting of Mahāvīra's *samavasaraṇa*. In the concluding *praśasti*, consisting of the two last *kaḍavaka*s of Sandhi 102, Puṣpadanta blesses the Jinas and his patron, and states that he completed the work in the year Krodhana, i.e. 965, living like an ascetic in the house of Bharata in Mānyakheṭa.[13]

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Note that Svayambhūdeva, the only author predating Puṣpadanta of whom *sandhibandha*s are extant, does not include any information about his patron or the context in which the patronage was arranged.

[12] *ubbaddhajūḍu bhūbhaṃgabhīsu*   *toḍeppiṇu coḍaho taṇaṃ sīsu*
     bhuvaṇekkarāmu rāyāhirāu   *jahiṃ acchaï tuḍigu mahāṇubhāu*
     taṃ dīṇadiṇṇadhaṇakaṇayapayaru   *mahi paribhamaṃtu mepāḍiṇayaru*
     avaheriyakhalayaṇu guṇamahaṃtu   *diyahehiṃ parāiu pupphayaṃtu*
                                            (*Mahāpurāṇu* 1.3.2−5)

Warder (1972−2004, Vol. 5, §3978) believes that Puṣpadanta in fact met his patron and composed his work in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa capital Mānyakheṭa, and that the reference here to Melpati is merely due to a convention of indicating the location of the king when a date is given. However, the texts unambiguously states that Puṣpadanta came to Melpati (*taṃ... mepāḍiṇayaru...parāiu pupphayaṃtu*). I see no reason to doubt this statement, since the patron Bharata is described as a having partaken in battle (*raṇabharadhuradharaṇugghuṭṭhakhaṃdhu, Mahāpurāṇu* 1.5.4) and likely would have accompanied the king to Melpati. At the completion of the biography of Ṛṣabha, Puṣpa-danta inserts another *praśasti* passage, parallel to the rupture between Jinasena's *Ādipurāṇa* and Guṇabhadra's *Uttarapurāṇa*, together forming the *Mahāpurāṇa*, in which he reiterates his doubts to Bharata, who again reassures him (38.2−5). This passage contains no reference to any location.

[13] According to Vaidya, some verses were later added to 102.13 by Puṣpadanta himself, listing the names and activities of Bharata's sons and grandsons (cf. Jain 2001−2006, Vol. 5, pp. 430−431).

Puṣpadanta seems to have stayed close to Bharata and his family, for his other two compo-sitions were commissioned by Bharata's son Nanna (cf. Warder 1972−2004, Vol. 5, §4007 and §4022).

The picture that Puṣpadanta paints of the circumstances in which his *magnum opus* came to be commissioned, is vivid and moving. Other scholars do not doubt its genuineness, and hold true that Puṣpadanta indeed had suffered a falling out with an unidentified king for whom he had composed a poem, resulting in him having to flee.[14] Under these circumstances Bharata's hospitality was of such an impact on his life and work, that as a sign of gratitude he included the account in his poem.

Puṣpadanta's unique situation made a deep impression on later poets, who also began to insert a description of where and how the patronage of their composition came to be. They developed the *praśasti*s further, giving lengthier descriptions of the location and its rulers and including more information on the patron. Apabhraṃśa *sandhibandha*s became a favourite style for Digambara patrons, who not only benefited from the *karmic* gain from donating for the composition of a religious text, but also increased their social prestige through the immortalisation of the names and deeds of themselves and their relatives in the *praśasti*s.

The historical references in Puṣpadanta's *praśasti*s add little to our knowledge of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, as there are multiple other sources available.[15] But for some later periods and locations, the *praśasti*s of Apabhraṃśa *sandhibandha*s are important historical sources.

Vibudha Śrīdhara

This is the case with Vibudha Śrīdhara's *Pāsaṇāhacariu* (1132), a biography of the twenty-second Tīrthaṅkara Pārśvanātha in twelve *sandhi*s, the *praśasti*s of which are the primary historical source on the Tomara dynasty of 12th-century Delhi (Cohen 1979, p. 54).[16] After invoking the Jinas (1.1), Śrīdhara describes how, while he was roaming the country, he one day crosses the Yamunā river (1.2) in the region of Hariyāṇa and reaches the city of Ḍhilli (Delhi) and its fort (1.3), ruled by king Anaṅgapāla (II) (1.4.1−4). There he meets a merchant, Alhaṇa, who had heard his story of Candraprabha, the eighth Tīrthaṅkara, and duly commends the poet's prowess (1.4.4−5.4). He then mentions and praises another merchant family living in Delhi, of the Agravāla Naṭṭala, who is famed for having constructed a Jaina temple and whom Alhaṇa suggests is a great lover of poetry (1.5.5−6.11). Reluctantly, Śrīdhara, together with Alhaṇa, goes to meet Naṭṭala (1.7−8). Alhaṇa suggests to Naṭṭala that a biography of Pārśva would add considerably to his status (1.8.11−9.5). Naṭṭala agrees and requests Śrīdhara to compose such a work, relieving him of his fear of "evil people" who would chastise him for his inferior poetic capabilities (1.9.6−10). In 1.11 the poet then commences the *purāṇic* setting.

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[14] Cf. Vaidya's introduction to the *Mahāpurāṇu*, Jain (2001−2006, Vol. 1, Introduction, pp. 33−44); Warder (1972−2004, Vol. 1, §491 and Vol. 5, §3978).

[15] Puṣpadanta's statements about Kṛṣṇa III are corroborated by other sources, including Somadeva's *Yaśastilaka* (cf. Altekar 1934, pp. 115−123 and Handiqui 1968, pp. 2−3).

[16] The *Pāsaṇāhacariu* was edited and translated into Hindi by Raja Ram Jain (2006). Richard Cohen edited and translated the first four *sandhi*s into English (1979).

Though Śrīdhara's roaming the country, his initial reluctance and fear of "evil people", and the reassurance offered by Alhaṇa and Ṇaṭṭala seem to mimic Puṣpadanta's account, the circumstances and conditions of this patronage are quite different, for Śrīdhara, already a poet of renown, was not in the same dramatic situation as Puṣpadanta. Alhaṇa's suggestion to Ṇaṭṭala (1.9.1−5) indicates that this commission was a transaction, whereby a patron "bought" social prestige, from having his name attached to a composition, for which a poet probably received financial support.

Contrary to Kṛṣṇa III of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, the Tomaras of Delhi hardly figure in historical records, wherefore the information provided in Śrīdhara's *praśasti*s has far greater bearing than that of Puṣpadanta (Cohen 1979, pp. 52−54). The *Pāsaṇāhacariu* appears to contain the earliest attestation in literature of the region Haryana (*hariyāṇae*, 1.2.14) and Delhi (*ḍhillī*, 1.2.15). The description of the fort (1.3), identified as Lāl Koṭ, north of Mehrauli, agrees with the findings of archeologists. Lāl Koṭ was constructed by Anaṅgapāla II, whom Śrīdhara describes in 1.4.1−4, though apparently was not a contemporary of the poet. Anaṅgapāla II is most famed for having erected Delhi's famous Iron Pillar in Lāl Koṭ, attested to by a partial inscription from 1052. Particularly striking in Śrīdhara's description, is the enigmatic statement that he "caused the king of snakes to tremble by the weight of his pillar".[17] This suggests that the modern popular legend, which claims that Anaṅgapāla erected the pillar on the head of the mythological snake Vāsuki, was already current in 1132.[18]

Raïdhū

By the 15th century Apabhraṃśa *praśasti*s, as exemplified by the writings of Raïdhū, had become even more inclusive. Raïdhū lived and worked mostly in Gwalior during the reign of the Tomara kings Ḍūṅgarasiṃha and Kīrtisiṃha.[19] Apart from being a poet, he was also the *pratiṣṭhācārya* of many of the Jaina sculptures in the walls of Gwalior fort.[20] Some of the patrons mentioned in the *praśasti*s of his literary work, were the same as those of some of these sculptures, and the combination of the information of both these sources has a unique bearing.

Like in Puṣpadanta's and Śrīdhara's texts, the patron is central to Raïdhū's *praśasti*s. However, after invoking the Jinas and Sarasvatī, the poet generally inserts a contemporary Digambara monastic lineage of Bhaṭṭārakas, "pontiffs", described as the spiritual descendants of the Gaṇadharas. In several cases a Bhaṭṭāraka functions as the mediator between the poet and the patron. Closer examination has revealed

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[17] *vala-bhara-kaṃpāviya-ṇāyarāu* (*Pāsaṇāhacariu* 1.4.4)

[18] For a full analysis of these historical references, cf. Cohen (1979, pp. 55−68; 1989).

[19] Rajaram Jain collected manuscripts of twenty-five individual compositions of Raïdhū, edited and translated five of them into Hindi and studied many of the others in a separate volume, including a rough edition of some *praśasti* passages of sixteen of Raïdhū's texts (cf. Jain 1974; 1975−1988; 1982; 2000). Aside from these, Nalini Balbir (1987−1988) edited and translated one of his smaller poems.

[20] This abundance of sculptures is discussed by Granoff (2006).

that Raïdhū lists four seemingly independent Bhaṭṭāraka lineages: three Kāṣṭhāsaṃ-gha Māthuragaccha and one Mūlasaṃgha. From other *praśasti*s and epigraphical evi-dence we know that the three Māthuragaccha lineages were closely related, but Raïdhū appears to deliberately avoid indicating the common predecessor, which suggests possible animosity or rivalry between the personalities of these lineages. The texts further evidence that these Bhaṭṭārakas were often ordained while a predecessor was still alive and active, while previous scholars seem to have taken for granted that a Bhaṭṭāraka ascended the throne only at the death of his predecessor (cf. Hoernle 1891, p. 344).[21] The considerable number of Bhaṭṭārakas in Gwalior indicates the presence of a sizable and prosperous lay community to support them. It is unlikely that Raïdhū considered himself an adherent of all four lineages. The particular lineage described is therefore probably that with which the patron was associated. Although there ap-pears to be no strict linkage between different Jaina castes and specific monastic line-ages, Raïdhū's texts already reveal a closer connection between the Mūlasaṃgha and the Paravāḍa caste, and the Māthuragaccha and the Agravāla caste. This seems to sub-stantiate the claim made by the Paravāḍa caste after the rise of the Digambara Terā Panth, over their historically close association with the "original" Mūlasaṃgha, as opposed to the Agravālas' association with the "heterodox" Māthuragaccha (Fluegel 2006, p. 341).[22]

After listing the Bhaṭṭāraka lineage, Raïdhū describes the locus of the patronage, in most cases Gopācala (Gwalior). The Tomara kings are portrayed as forthcoming to the Jainas, as is revealed in the *Sammattaguṇaṇihāṇakavvu* (1.9–11) where the patron reiterates a dialogue between himself and Ḍūṅgarasiṃha and how he received the king's cordial blessings for the installation and consecration of a Jina image. Two poems were composed in cities other than Gwalior, whose rulers hardly figure in sec-ondary literature on the history of 15th-century India (e.g. Lal 1963, Jackson 2003 and Asher–Talbot 2006).[23] The patron of the *Puṇṇāsavakahākosu* (1.3) is said to live in Caṃdavāḍu under the rule of a Payāvaruddu (Pratāparudra) of the Cāhuvāṇi (Cāhamāna or Cauhān) dynasty. Candravāḍa is identified as the now ruined site of Chandwar, a few kilometers south of contemporary Firozabad. Other sources, mostly Jaina, suggest that this town has always had a close association with the Digambara community. Though these Jaina sources give the impression that the Cauhāns ruled over the area of Candravāḍa continuously from at least the early 13th century, Islamic sources reveal it to have been a volatile place of many battles between Muslims and Hindus, as well as between competing Muslim rulers, resulting in occasional plunder.[24]

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[21] Note that the *paṭṭāvali*s he examined corroborated his assumption. Nevertheless, Raïdhū's texts and several instances from Johrapurkar's sources of Kāṣṭhāsaṃgha and Mūlasaṃgha Bhaṭṭā-rakas suggest that after the installation of a new Bhaṭṭāraka, his predecessor was sometimes still alive and active; e.g. Johrapurkar (1958, p. 78 – overlap between Devendrakīrti and Ratnakīrti, and p. 229 – between Śrībhūṣaṇa and Candrakīrti).

[22] For a full analysis of Raïdhū's Bhaṭṭāraka lineages, cf. De Clercq (forthcoming)[1].

[23] This is probably due to the fact that these works rely mostly on Islamic sources.

[24] Compare Gupta–Bakshi (2008, pp. 103–105), Jackson (2003, pp. 10, 134 and 136) and Lal (1963, pp. 8, 74, 81 and 124). For more details on the Cauhāns and Candravāḍa, cf. also Jain (1974–1976, Vol. 1, pp. 77–83 and 107–114) and Shastri (1954–1963, Vol. 2, p. 17).

Raïdhū composed his *Jasaharacariu* in Lāhaḍapura (4.16), which was ruled by Sulitāṇa Sāhi and his son Īsappha. Neither Lāhaḍapura, nor the names of these rulers are mentioned in secondary literature. It is probably either the current village of Laharpur near Sadhaura in Yamunanagar district, Haryana, or current Laharpur in Sitapur district.[25]

The negotiations about the commission took place in a temple, where Raïdhū is mostly introduced to the patron by a Bhaṭṭāraka or another mediator. The poet provides a lengthy family lineage, much more substantial than in Puṣpadanta's and Śrīdhara's texts, going back several generations and listing the most important feats of the patron and his relatives. In the *praśasti* at the end of the poem, he gives an even longer family lineage. Interestingly, in these family lineages Raïdhū often mentions and describes the cities where the patrons' ancestors used to live and ultimately moved away from, in most cases Yoginīpura, "the city of the Yoginīs", an older name for Delhi, favoured in some Jaina sources (cf. Mani 1997, p. 114 and Khanna 2003, pp. 69–70). It is not indicated when or why these families decided to move, though it appears to have been around the end of the Tughluq reign, probably some years prior to Timur's attack on Delhi (1398). Oddly, despite its frequent mention, the poet nowhere actually describes Yoginīpura, despite giving poetic accounts of all the other cities he mentions. This was probably not a coincidence, since most of Raïdhū's compositions were written in the first decades after the complete destruction of Delhi by Timur's soldiers, and a portrayal of the city may have stirred up dire memories (cf. De Clercq forthcoming[2]).[26]

The ruler of greatest historical significance mentioned by Raïdhū is Firoz Shah, the last great Sultan of the Tughluq dynasty, popularly believed to have been a staunch Muslim and repressive iconoclastic religious bigot, according to biographies in different Muslim chronicles (e.g. Basu 1971, pp. 133ff.; Juneja 1989, p. 32). The image presented by Raïdhū is, however, very different.[27] In *Sammaïjiṇacariu* 1.6.4–7.10 the poet describes Hisāra-peroju, the city built by Firoz in 1354, which is said to hold a Jaina temple and several Jina statues there and in the surrounding area. Despite being accorded the status of *zimmi*s, "People of the Book", Hindus, and supposedly Jainas too, were forbidden by strict Islamic law to construct new temples in areas under

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[25] For a detailed discussion, cf. De Clercq (forthcoming)[2].

[26] In view of these recent events, the designation of Delhi as "city of the Yoginīs" in itself came to hold a connotation of the violence and destruction associated with Yoginīs, as is evidenced by a verse from Gaṅgādhara's *Gaṅgadāsapratāpavilāsa* (second half of the 15th century), where a messenger describes the city of Delhi as follows: "As the lineages of the sultans have come to an end in the city of Ḍhillī, while masses of Mlecchas are fighting each other head to head and fist to fist, now the clan of Śrīyoginīs firmly enjoys sporting in countless streams of blood, oozing from mouths [of heads,] cut off by swords." (Sandesara 1973, p. 39.)

I thank the participants of the Budapest conference and Francesca Orsini for bringing this to my attention.

[27] It should be noted that some scholars have already exposed this image as too extreme from a closer reading of the Islamic sources, cf. Z. Islam (1990, pp. 65ff.) and R. Islam (1997, pp. 215–229).

Islamic jurisdiction (Z. Islam 1990, pp. 67, 74).[28] Evidence, however, suggests the presence of a Digambara community, including a temple, in Hisar at least from the 15th century, indicating that Raïdhū's statement about a Jaina temple in Hisar was probably accurate.[29] Like other Delhi Sultans, who allowed the building of new temples under their regime, Firoz Shah too appears not to have been strict in implementing Islamic law, in order to attract Jaina merchants to his new commercial centre (Jackson 2003, pp. 287–289; Asher–Talbot 2006, p. 48). A second reference to Firoz Shah illustrates how highly the Digambara community thought of him. In the already mentioned discussion between a patron and Ḍūṅgarasiṃha concerning the installation of a Jina image in Gwalior, the king compares himself to two other kings, known to have acted in support of the Jaina community (*Sammattaguṇaṇihāṇakavva* 1.11.10–3). The first is king Vīsala of Saurāṣṭra, during whose reign Vastupāla and Tejaḥpāla (*vatthu-teyapāla*) are said to have constructed several *tīrtha*s, places of pilgrimage. The second is Firoz Shah (*perojasāhi*) of Yoginīpura, under whose rule a certain Sāraṃga Sāhu is said to have conducted pilgrimages. Vastupāla and Tejaḥpāla are well known as ministers and generals of the Vāghelā dynasty in Gujarat in the 13th century, who hold an important spot in the historical imagination of the Jainas in and beyond Gujarat (Cort 2001, pp. 37–38). For Raïdhū to place Firoz Shah on the same level as Vīsala and Ḍūṅgarasiṃha, indeed great benefactors of Jainism, suggests that in his memory and that of the Digambara community, Firoz was quite the opposite of an iconoclastic bigot, but on the contrary, an example to be followed. Aside from having the reputation of a represser of non-Muslims, Firoz Shah is furthermore considered as the sultan under whom the decline of the Delhi Sultanate set in. Portraits of his character tend to mention him as a military leader of very limited capability and as having a dislike for administration, thereby encouraging corruption.[30] But for him to be remembered as such a benefactor of Jainism, the Jaina merchants must have prospered under his regime. This is probably due to the length of his reign, thirty-seven years, which was fairly stable and free of foreign invasions and natural calamities such as famines, plagues, etc. Firoz is moreover considered one of Islamic India's greatest builders of monuments and cities. These very visible illustrations of his prestige probably eclipsed his military and administrative failures from his contemporary citizens (Welch–Crane 1983, p. 126; Asher–Talbot 2006, pp. 43–45).

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[28] According to Jackson, the restoration of old temples would also have been forbidden (cf. Jackson 2003, p. 287).

On the *zimmi* status, cf. Z. Islam (1990, pp. 74–75), R. Islam (2002, p. 7), Jackson (2003, pp. 281–287), Asher–Talbot (2006, p. 47).

[29] Johrapurkar (1958): pp. 101–102 (*lekhāṃka* 256), p. 102 (*lekhāṃka* 258: composed in the Candraprabha temple in Hisar in 1484), p. 103 (*lekhāṃka* 259) and p. 145 (*lekhāṃka* 370: composed in a temple (*caityālaya*) in 1556).

[30] Descriptions of Firoz Shah Tughluq and his leadership range from very negative to more moderate and sometimes even positive (cf. Lal 1963, p. 1; Jauhri 1968, pp. 194–195; Welch–Crane 1983, p. 126; Jackson 2003, pp. 296–305; Asher–Talbot 2006, pp. 43, 45).

Conclusion

In discussing these three examples, I have demonstrated how the inclusion of long *praśasti*s in Apabhraṃśa *sandhibandha*s over the centuries evolved from Puṣpadanta's moving gesture of gratitude towards the man who rescued him from his dire situation, to an opportunity for patrons to further their prestige by having their names and actions immortalised. Inadvertently these *praśasti*s include interesting historical information on times, places and issues, about which other sources are sometimes limited. By briefly analysing the information of these three poets, I have attempted to give an idea of this wealth of information, and how it could further our knowledge on many levels of Indian history, especially combined with other contemporary material.

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