Cosmopolitismes en Asie du Sud

Sources, itinéraires, langues
(XVIᵉ-XVIIIᵉ siècle)

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Regional Perceptions

Writing to the Mughal Court in Sanskrit

From the 1580s to the 1640s, Jain and Brahman writers authored numerous Sanskrit praise poems addressed to members of the Mughal elite*. To date I have identified seven Sanskrit panegyrics, composed by four authors, that were directed to individuals within the administrations of Akbar (r. 1556-1605), Jahangir (r. 1605-27), and Shah Jahan (r. 1628-58). All four authors wrote at the instigation of regional rulers or religious communities that sought to negotiate their political relationship with the imperial center. Although scholars remain largely unaware of these works, they have significant impli-cations for how we understand the contested boundaries of Mughal impe-rial culture. Mughal courts have generally been represented as dominated by Persianate culture with little room for other languages and traditions. On the contrary, however, the Mughals fostered a series of engagements between Sanskrit and Persian traditions that included cross-cultural patronage and translations. Sanskrit encomia are part of this largely untold story of Mughal cross-cultural interests and demonstrate how a variety of Indians envisioned the Mughal ruling class as open to engaging with Sanskrit literature. This rich body of materials provides insight into regional perceptions of high Mughal culture and shows how individuals and communities participated in creating Mughal cosmopolitanism.

The early modern Sanskrit tradition was itself cosmopolitan, encom-passing people from various cultural and religious backgrounds. The Mughals regularly interacted with both Brahman and Jain Sanskrit intellectuals, and I touch upon texts authored by members of both communities here. Mughal connections with the Sanskrit world are rarely commented upon in Persian

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* Note on transliteration: In order avoid excessive diacritics, I omit them for Persian terms but retain them for most Sanskrit names and titles.

court chronicles, appearing even less frequently than mentions of Hindi poets and intellectuals.[1] Due to the reliance on Persian sources, Mughal historians have repeatedly ignored Sanskrit as a part of Mughal court culture. There were limits to imperial interactions with Sanskrit. Mughal support for Sanskrit never rivaled the resources poured into Persian literature, and (as I discuss below) few Mughal elites and no members of the royal family learned Sanskrit. Nonetheless, a sustained Mughal interest in Sanskrit helped make the central court a site of repeated intercultural exchanges, a project also enabled by support of Hindi literature and periodic European visitors. Sanskrit praise poems for the Mughals proclaim a political place for Sanskrit in the Mughal imperium and, more specifically, a cultural space for Sanskrit aesthetics.

Visions and Realities of Mughal Cosmopolitanism

Sanskrit texts addressed to imperial figures attest that many contemporaries of the Mughals viewed the ruling elite as willing and able to receive Sanskrit texts. This projected reception and its relationship to reality are key components to parsing this collection of materials and merit discussion before delving into specific praise poems. Modern scholars have repeatedly asserted that Akbar's choice of Persian as the official administrative language in 1582 allowed no significant roles for other Indian tongues at the Mughal court (Alam 2004: 148; Asher & Talbot 2006: 247; Thackston 2002: 84). This unsubstantiated claim perpetuates a misleading but still common view of the Mughals as an exclusively Persian-language dynasty. In reality, however, the Mughals cultivated a notably multilingual and multicultural courtly environment that included royal support of Hindi, Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit. The Mughals actively engaged with the Sanskrit tradition as patrons from the 1570s through the 1650s. As I detail elsewhere, dozens of Jains and Brahmans visited the central court during this period and worked as resident scholars, musicians, political negotiators, intellectual informants, and astrologers (Truschke 2012a: chap. 1). The Mughals also underwrote Sanskrit textual production and sponsored Persian translations of Sanskrit texts. Crucially for my purposes here, the Mughal interest in Sanskrit was well known among local Indian rulers and communities who interacted with the imperial elite.

The seven Sanskrit praise poems produced for Mughal consumption emerged across a range of religious, social, temporal, and geographical boundaries. First, in the late 1580s, Śānticandra composed his *Kṛpārasakośa* (*Treasury of Compassion*) for Emperor Akbar. Śānticandra was a Jain monk from

Gujarat who wrote in order to secure political favors for the Tapa Gaccha, a branch of Shvetambara Jainism. Next Rudrakavi authored four encomiums beginning in 1603 and stretching into the first decade of Jahangir's reign; these were devoted, respectively, to Akbar's son Danyal, 'Abd al-Rahim Khan-i Khanan, Jahangir, and Prince Khurram (the future Shah Jahan).[2] Rudrakavi's patron was Pratap Shah, a Deccani ruler near modern-day Nashik who desired to preserve a degree of political autonomy as well as good relations with the Mughals. A member of the ruling family in Mithila, Harideva Miśra, authored a work in the first quarter of the seventeenth century praising Jahangir. Last, Jagannātha Paṇḍitarāja wrote his *Āsaphavilāsa (Play of Asaf)* between 1628 and 1641 to honor Asaf Khan, the royal vizier and brother of Jahangir's queen Nur Jahan. Jagannātha was supported by the central Mughal court throughout much of his life, but he penned this particular work at the request of Mukunda Raya, a chieftain in Kashmir. In the interest in space, I primarily discuss three of these works here.[3]

Despite their generous patronage of Sanskrit and being recipients of Sanskrit works, however, the Mughal elite generally did not study Sanskrit. Even Mughal translators and those engaged in cross-cultural projects relied on native informants in lieu of learning Sanskrit themselves (Haider 2011: 120-21). Bilingualism in Sanskrit and Persian was limited to a select few, most of whom were based in the Sanskrit tradition.[4] As a result, the question remains open of how the Persian-speaking Mughals could have meaningfully received Sanskrit praise poems. Far beyond the issue of basic linguistic comprehension, Sanskrit panegyrics written for imperial notables also presuppose familiarity with literary and cultural conventions that have traditionally been considered outside of the Mughal experience.

The encomia I analyze here attest to the prevalent conviction in early modern India that it was appropriate and advantageous to write Sanskrit texts for Mughal consumption. Certainly, many of these works were also simultaneously directed towards an audience of Sanskrit intellectuals. In respect to this second set of readers, these praise poems advance important aesthetic claims concerning how to incorporate (or reject) aspects of the Mughal imperial world in Sanskrit literature. Nonetheless, if we wish to take the claims of these materials seriously, then their projected imperial reception cannot be presumptively dismissed. Different texts suggest several possible means for a cross-linguistic, Mughal comprehension of Sanskrit praise poems in both the imaginations of their sponsors and the reality of imperial court culture, and it is helpful to outline the major ideas at the outset.

Some Sanskrit texts may have been verbally translated, likely into Hindi, for their Mughal addressees. Francesca Orsini reminds us of the importance of foregrounding orality in studies of multilingual milieus, even when this aspect

can be difficult to recover (Orsini 2012: 242-43). Additionally, verbal textual recitation was a common feature of early modern Islamic societies, and Ronit Ricci has even suggested that we speak of "audiences" instead of "readers" for texts in order to capture this prevalent oral dynamic (Ricci 2011: 3). There were also precedents in the Sanskrit tradition for the verbal vernacular explanation of certain works, such as *purāṇas,* for the sake of a non-Sanskrit knowing audience. The Mughals emperors from Akbar on forward were fluent in a spoken register of Hindi, as were many members of the imperial service.[5] Additionally, the verbal third-party in Sanskrit-Persian exchanges was typically Hindi, which served as the default intermediary language for translation activities, for example. No Sanskrit texts explicitly profess to have been rendered into Hindi, but some of their authors were renowned in the Mughal court for their skills in oral vernacular traditions.

Additionally, select Mughal nobles may have grasped a limited amount of spoken Sanskrit. Sudipta Kaviraj has argued that educated Bangla speakers could comprehend significant portions of some recited Sanskrit works (Kaviraj 2003: 511-13). This type of transverse understanding worked because of shared Sanskrit-Bangla vocabulary and a minimal use of verbs. The Mughal elite actively supported textual production in Braj Bhasha, a literary form of Hindi that employs substantial Sanskrit vocabulary, which might well have enabled some degree of cross-language facility (Busch 2011: chap. 4). It would certainly have helped that many of the praise poems focus on topics familiar to the Mughals, such as the royal lineage and crucial military victories.

Last, there may have been different ideas regarding what it meant to grasp a text in Mughal India, including modes of reception that did not require linguistic understanding. Praise poems could have been appreciated as objects whose value was found in the act of gifting, an important part of Mughal court ceremony, rather than in being understood. Certain features, such as the use of alliteration, could have been pleasing even absent understanding the content.[6] While this suggestion requires the least revision to accepted scholarship on the Mughals, we ought to be wary of assuming it uncritically. In the past few decades, scholars have increasingly argued that relying on court-sponsored Persian histories allows for only a partial, often deeply flawed vision of Mughal history.[7] Yet, Persian texts form the exclusive basis for rejecting Sanskrit as a meaningful (and perhaps quasi-intelligible) language at the imperial Mughal court. Sanskrit and vernacular sources offer an altogether different picture of the Mughal elite as seriously engaging with Sanskrit literature that is surprising only in contrast to our longstanding ignorance.

While the question of reception is important, it ought not to obscure the fact that early moderns viewed the Mughals as suitable addressees for Sanskrit poems and prose. Perception is itself a historical phenomenon, and

there was widespread agreement that Sanskrit was an effective communicative medium within the Mughal imperium. As we shall see, some works even invoked live political issues and so posit that Sanskrit was a relevant language for intervening in current imperial affairs. Other texts brought the Mughals into a Sanskrit-defined world and explored the implications of that literary act. In both cases, authors promoted a particular vision of Mughal cosmopolitanism as multilingual and advanced Sanskrit as language of imperial and aesthetic consequence.

Enlightening Akbar with Śānticandra's *Treasury of Compassion*

Śānticandra wrote during the height of Jain relations with the Mughals and portrays imperial culture as incorporating both Sanskrit and Jain ideas. Gujarat came under Mughal control in 1572-73, and Jain ascetics from the region began traveling to the royal court a decade later to seek political concessions, such as control over pilgrimage sites, bans on animal slaughter, and tax relief.[8] Śānticandra joined several fellow monks on one such trip in the 1580s, during which Jains secured a series of beneficial imperial orders *(farmans)*. Śānticandra claimed that Akbar granted these Jain-friendly commands after being enlightened *(pratibodha)* by his *Treasury of Compassion,* a text of one hundred and twenty-eight verses that detail the Mughal king's life and lineage. I will return to the question of whether it is historically plausible that Akbar received this Sanskrit poem (not to mention that the panegyric was politically exigent). But first it is worthwhile to explicate the work's contents and see how Śānticandra envisions a cosmopolitan Emperor Akbar operating across multiple cultural realms.

In the first half of the text, Śānticandra describes Akbar's lineage, birth, and childhood. In his account of Akbar's ancestors, he mentions their ancestral lands of Kabul and Khurasan and uses specific imagery to set these areas apart from the Indian Mughal kingdom. For example, he identifies Khurasan as distinct from the subcontinent *(viṣayāntare)* and overflowing with things associated with that region, such as walnuts, dates, and horses *(Kṛpārasakośa* vv. 8-12). Nonetheless, he employs entirely conventional Sanskrit methods of praising sovereigns, such as lauding Babur (r. 1526-30) as formidable on the battlefield *(Kṛpārasakośa* vv. 18-20). When Humayun (r. 1530-40; 1555-56) assumes the throne the poet likens him to the Hindu hero and god Rama, "fit to rule in every way" and proclaims that Akbar's mother "receives the riches of love. She is to the king as Lakshmi is to Vishnu" *(Kṛpārasakośa* vv. 25-26). In this approach, Śānticandra followed a long line of Sanskrit authors who

typically treated Perso-Islamicate rulers as if they were no different than traditional Indian kings.[9]

As Akbar enters the narrative, Śānticandra increasingly portrays events according to more specifically Jain sensibilities. During her pregnancy, for instance, Akbar's mother (here called by her common nickname Coli Begam)[10] experienced intense cravings (dohadas), which incited her to play with a lion on her lap and mount a mad elephant without reins (Kṛpārasakośa v. 37). Such irrational actions, done without fear by an expectant mother, frequently augur the birth of a great hero in Jain stories (Claus et al., eds., 2002: 163). Śānticandra also marvels at Coli Begam's increased compassion during her pregnancy that compelled her to forgo courtly pleasures such as musk and pearls that are obtained by harming living beings.[11] Once Akbar is born, Śānticandra further integrates him into the Sanskrit literary realm by explaining the king's name according to a Sanskrit etymology that celebrates Akbar's predominance above Hindu deities.

> a means the Supreme Lord, k Brahman, a the Soul
> and vara best, so that he [akabara] is the best of these [three]
> (Kṛpārasakośa v. 44)

After bringing Akbar within the purview of the Sanskrit language, Śānticandra details the prince's education and military training. This description continues until nearly halfway through the poem, when Humayun dies.

After Akbar ascends the throne, Śānticandra begins to tackle more political concerns, such as the Mughals' major territorial expansions, but he maintains a largely Sanskrit cultural framework. Until this point in the text Śānticandra has not discussed any Mughal land acquisitions, leaving his readers with the impression that the kingdom is still based in Babur's Kabul. He portrays Akbar as singularly responsible for the Mughal subjugation of the subcontinent.

> Even though enjoying his father's kingdom,
> [Akbar] desired greater victory in all directions.
> There was no restraint in that yearning
> since the son has exceeded the father in fame
> (Kṛpārasakośa v. 67)

Over the next twenty verses, Śānticandra narrates the methodical extension of Mughal control. He draws a vivid picture of the royal army but mentions no historical opponents or kingdoms. Notably, contemporary Jain texts typically portray Akbar's martial feats in fairly concrete terms. Nearly all name specific conflicts, and many give further details such as the military strategies and major players involved.[12] But Śānticandra expressed the growth of the Mughal imperium through the conventions of Sanskrit poetics, a cosmopolitan tradition that nonetheless precluded other worldviews.

Śānticandra frames the Mughal expansion as a "conquering of the four directions" *(digvijaya),* a central ritual of universal Indian kingship. Akbar's army first advanced east where even the landscape submitted to his rule and facilitated his progress.

> A skillful tree on the banks of the Tapi River
> revived his horses and elephants with shade,
> delighted the infantry with fruit,
> and served him with blossoms while he reclined
> (*Kṛpārasakośa* v. 77)

Trees lining the Kaveri River likewise fanned the toiling Mughal troops until they turned south and conquered the Malaya Mountains known from the Indian epics (*Kṛpārasakośa* vv. 78-89). Then Akbar moved west, appearing like a sun that never sets (*Kṛpārasakośa* vv. 79 and 81). Last, the Mughal king headed north to the Himalayas and vanquished the land of Kubera, the god of wealth (*Kṛpārasakośa* v. 84). In this depiction, Akbar does not dominate sixteenth-century India but rather maps the Mughal empire onto the topography of a timeless, idealized subcontinent demarcated by mountains, rivers, and mythological associations. He does not leave Indian geography completely untouched by Mughal rule, however, and returns to contemporary politics with several verses that celebrate the establishment of Fatehpur Sikri, Akbar's city of victory (*Kṛpārasakośa* vv. 89-91).

After his treatment of Mughal military victories, Śānticandra devotes the remainder of his laudatory poem to the nature of Akbar's rule and highlights several features of Mughal cosmopolitanism that operated outside of the Sanskrit tradition. He mentions Akbar's strategy of ensuring Rajput loyalty by marrying the daughters of local rulers.[13] He also refers to Akbar's imperial discipleship program writing: "Khan-i Khanan and the other Khans took a vow of firm devotion (*ūrdhvadīkṣāvrata*) / and turned towards that king like pupils to a teacher" (*Kṛpārasakośa* v. 94). He hails Akbar's cancellation of certain taxes and compassion towards cows that benefited all Indians (*hindūbhyaḥ sakale-bhya eva*).[14]

In his final section, Śānticandra also frames Akbar as partial to Jains and himself having inclinations towards Jainism. Both approaches were well-practiced methods of praising kings within Jain thought.[15] Śānticandra frequently unites these two tactics to cast certain concessions to the Jain community as ethically motivated on the part of Akbar. For example, he hyperbolizes that even the cranes were moved to obey a royal ban on fishing in a particular lake because of the king's personal devotion:

> In consideration of the virtue of Akbar, Great Moon of the Earth,
> cruel cranes that have captured fish with their beaks

sympathize, and their hearts fill with wonder.
Even though fish are their only food, the cranes abandon them at once
(*Kṛpārasakośa* v. 111)

While Śānticandra makes no explicit connection here with the Indo-Islamic world, such imagery is also in concert with Persianate ideas about how the Mughals, like King Solomon, extended authority over all the animals of creation.[16] Such implicit overlaps were a hallmark of Mughal cosmopolitanism that enabled people of diverse backgrounds to participate in imperial culture.

Śānticandra identifies Akbar as the chief recipient of his *Kṛpārasakośa* and indicates several times that the Mughal king heard and understood the Sanskrit text. In addition to addressing Akbar throughout the work, he frames his *Kṛpārasakośa* at both the outset and close as composed "for the sake of enlightening glorious Shah Akbar."[17] Some manuscript copies have additional closing verses that elaborate on the results of this enlightenment.

> He removed the *jizya* tax.
> He rescued temples from Mughals who were difficult to restrain.
> He who is compassion embodied *(kṛpāṅga)* broke the chains of prisoners.
> Even base kings hospitably receive the Jains, lords of ascetics.
> For six-months of the year, beings are born without fear.
> Large groups of cows were born unafraid.
> Among the causes of the arising of such decrees,
> This book was the primarily reason *(paraṃ nimittaṃ)*.[18]

Other Jain writers bolster Śānticandra's claims. One of Śānticandra's pupils records that his teacher was the enlightener *(prabodhaka)* of Akbar (*Kalpasutrāntravākya*, fol. 82). A contemporary Sanskrit text attests that Śānticandra gained imperial concessions by repeatedly reciting his *Treasury of Compassion* to the Mughal sovereign (*Hīrasaubhāgya* 14.271). If we take these claims seriously, we are left with a few knotty questions. How did Akbar understand praises and solicitations in a language he did not know? What does such incongruity tell us about the perception and truth of Mughal cosmopolitanism?

Śānticandra may have verbally translated his verses into Hindi for his imperial audience. Śānticandra was renowned for his oratory skills and publicly debated in other royal contexts, which makes verbal transmission in a vernacular a plausible option (Sheth 1953: 273). Even if Śānticandra read the work in Sanskrit, the *Kṛpārasakośa* is written in a relatively simple register with vocabulary that Akbar may well have been able to partially understand given his exposure to Hindi poetry.[19] Additionally, Śānticandra was narrating Akbar's personal history. In this view, the multicultural and multilingual aspects of Mughal culture facilitated their reception of Sanskrit materials.

An alternative explanation is that Śānticandra envisioned a more local audience for his text: his fellow Jains. Śānticandra says in his final verse: "The *Treasury of Compassion* is to be examined, recited, followed, and cherished by those who have abandoned malice and know good conduct" (*Kṛpārasakośa* v. 128). Here "those who know good conduct" are certainly the Jain faithful, most likely Tapa Gaccha affiliates in particular, and one can easily imagine them welcoming a text that celebrates recent successes at the Mughal court. This closing verse is missing in some manuscript copies and so may have been a later addition (perhaps along with imagining a Jain audience).[20] Nonetheless, Śānticandra's work opens with verses praising Jina that appear to be directed towards a Jain readership (*Kṛpārasakośa* v. 1-7).

It is tempting, then, to postulate that it was more important for Śānticandra to represent himself to his own community as writing a text for Akbar rather than to actually speak to the Mughal emperor in Sanskrit. Perhaps the vision of Mughal cosmopolitanism was more crucial, at least to Śānticandra, than its reality. Even so, Jain readers likely understood this notion of a Mughal sovereign convicted by a Sanskrit text as accurate. Tapa Gaccha Jains received many real political concessions from Akbar, and thus, Śānticandra's projection of Sanskrit and Jain ideas having potency in the Mughal milieu appeared all too real. Moreover, to return to the possibility of an imperial reception for his text, it would be presumptive to conclude that the *Kṛpārasakośa* was not also intended for Mughal consumption because it seems unusual to address a Persianate court in Sanskrit. The number of Mughal praise poems in Sanskrit so far unearthed belies any flippant dismissal. Moreover, the next batch of materials, namely Rudrakavi's panegyrics, advance more complex claims regarding the expansive boundaries of Mughal cosmopolitanism and the ability of imperial elites to receive, understand, and act upon Sanskrit texts.

Rudrakavi Plays Politics in Jahangir's Empire

Rudrakavi composed four encomia for Mughal figures, of which his *Khānakhānācarita (Acts of Khan-i Khanan)* is the most revealing concerning regional appraisals of Mughal imperial culture.[21] Rudrakavi wrote his *Acts of Khan-i Khanan* in 1609 in praise of 'Abd al-Rahim, an important courtly and military figure often known by his title, the Khan of Khans.[22] Rudrakavi worked for Pratap Shah, head of the Baglan kingdom in central India. The political back-story is that Jahangir attempted to take Baglan by siege in 1609, and, while holding off Mughal forces militarily, Pratap Shah called upon Rudrakavi to pursue diplomatic channels (*Works of Rudra Kavi*, 1959, Appendix 2, p. 38). The resulting Sanskrit work mixes poetry and prose in

four chapters and evinces a two-fold approach to enlisting the assistance of Khan-i Khanan. First, Rudrakavi heavily flatters Khan-i Khanan in terms that fancy the general as no less than a king himself. Second, in the final chapter, Rudrakavi describes the current military situation and directly implores Rahim's mediation. As I discuss below, this second tactic strongly indicates that Pratap Shah intended Rahim to comprehend the panegyric's contents. Both approaches advance strong claims concerning the ability of Sanskrit poetics to express and counter Mughal power.

In his first three chapters, Rudrakavi eulogizes Khan-i Khanan based on known Sanskrit conventions. He exaggerates Khan-i Khanan as the one true sovereign who controls the entire earth, repeatedly referring to him as king (e.g., *kṣitipa, nṛpati*) and world-conqueror (*cakravartin*). But the lesser rulers who submit to Rahim's authority are not the kings of Gujarat and Mewar, the true subsidiaries of the Mughal empire. Rather the Hindu gods of the eight directions serve Rahim, here called simply "Navab:"

> Indra with power, Fire with rage, Death with a sword, Destruction with brutality in battle, Varuna with waters of destruction, Wind with the speed of his steed, Kubera with his cache of wealth, Shiva with his cruel eye set on an adversary, the lords of all directions, who rule everywhere, serve glorious Navab.
> (*Khānakhānācarita* 1.6)

Rudrakavi also rhapsodizes on Khan-i Khanan's prowess in battle and his resulting fame with other Sanskrit tropes. For instance, he invokes the common theme of enemies falling before Khan-i Khanan and their wives weeping in grief.

In prose, Rudrakavi draws on the cataloguing tendencies of Sanskrit thought to introduce an array of culturally specific information. He often nearly loses sight of his Mughal addressee in a haze of comparisons to Indra, Kamadeva, Arjuna, Bhagiratha, and so forth (*Khānakhānācarita* 9). In one particularly compelling section, he says that when King Khan-i Khanan is ruling over the earth, a series of things flourish that are negative in general life but positive in respect to specific intellectual and literary standards.[23] He lists around seventy items in this vein, of which I offer a sampling here:

> Debate (*vivāda*) among the six philosophies,
> atheism (*nāstikatā*) among atheists,
> imagination and censure (*utprekṣākṣepau*) among poetic ornaments,
> deceptive war in the *Mahābhārata*,
> deceit in the crooked glances of southern Gujarati (*lāṭa*) women,
> languidness in the charming movements of Mathura women,
> despair among women separated from their lovers,
> rashness among women going to meet their lovers,

[all these things] flourish when Khan-i Khanan rules over the earth.
(*Khānakhānācarita* 6-8)

Even in this short excerpt, Rudrakavi touches upon a vast range of Sanskrit learning, including philosophy, poetics, regional characteristics of women, and the types of heroines *(nāyikā-bheda)*. Without some grounding in these traditions, the praise would make little sense to a reader or listener. Moreover, some items depend upon the Sanskrit concept of double entendre *(śleṣa)* where a word or set of phonemes intentionally possesses multiple meanings. Thus, Rudrakavi esteems "the mixing of colors *(varṇas)* in paintings," while the intermingling of castes *(varṇas)* is undesirable *(Khānakhānācarita* 7). Such formulations suggest that Rudrakavi viewed Rahim, a Mughal general, as conversant with a wide breadth of Sanskrit knowledge systems.

'Abd al-Rahim Khan-i Khanan was reputed to be a connoisseur of Indian traditions, and Rudrakavi likely appeals to these skills when soliciting him in Sanskrit. Rahim's patronage to many languages, including Persian, Arabic, and Hindi, was well documented during his lifetime, and he also personally wrote in Hindi.[24] Whether he had command of Sanskrit is more dubious, although there are Sanskrit verses attributed to him as well as a Sanskrit astrological treatise mixed with heavy Persian vocabulary.[25] Even Persian texts remember Rahim as a poetically gifted polymath, such as the eighteenth-century Ma'asir al-Umara (1: 709) that attests: "Khan-i Khanan had unique skills in his age. He was fluent in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Hindi (Sanskrit?). He understands and writes good poetry." Thus, Rudrakavi may have used Sanskrit not only because of its general valence in Mughal culture but more pointedly in order to appeal to a lover of Indian literature. Nonetheless, Rahim participated in Persianate culture to a far greater extent than his contributions to either the Sanskrit or Hindi traditions (Lefèvre 2014: 81). Rudrakavi offers little to no overt recognition of Rahim's broader cultural interests, thus indicating one of the tensions in how Mughal cosmopolitanism incorporated multiple traditions that each (mis)represented the Mughal world as skewed to their own linguistic-cultural realm.

In the panegyric's fourth and final chapter, comprised of five verses, Rudrakavi speaks more directly to the ability of Sanskrit poetics to participate in Mughal politics. First Rudrakavi stresses Pratap Shah's high opinion of Rahim and Pratap Shah's historically good relations with Akbar. In his final two lines, Rudrakavi outlines his patron's precise wish and makes a series of crucial political plays through the language of Sanskrit poetry.

> Like Vishnu with Bali, victorious Khan-i Khanan checks powerful kings.
> His two sons, Mirza Iraj and Darab, are two Kamadevas fighting the Shambara-like demon [Malik] Ambar *(ambaraśambaramadanau)*.

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Heroic Shah Jahangir has become attached to union with the deer-eyed lady
of the South who is agitated by the fierce glory of his rising passion.
If Khan-i Khanan, ruler of the entire earth, extends his hand
to touch her garments, she will be pleased.[26]

In the penultimate verse, Rudrakavi invokes both classical and contemporary
references to promote Khan-i Khanan as a kingmaker. First, he exalts Rahim as
able to control the maniacal tendencies of rulers, just like Vishnu in his dwarf
incarnation rescued the heavens and earth from the demon Bali *(balinṛpaba
ndhanaviṇṇur)*. This praise had a strong basis in reality, and Rahim exercised
his resources against the wishes of the royal center on several occasions.[27]
Whereas Persian texts generally viewed such resistance as problematic,
writing in Sanskrit enabled Rudrakavi to openly celebrate Khan-i Khanan's
independence from the throne.[28]

Next, in the above verses, Rudrakavi names Rahim's sons, Mirza Iraj (better
known as Shahnavaz Khan) and Darab. Both sons performed well on military
campaigns, particularly in the Deccan, and are remembered in the Indo-
Persian tradition as fierce warriors.[29] Mirza Iraj was particularly distinguished
for repelling Malik Ambar, a powerful Ahmednagar minister, in a battle at
Telangana in 1602.[30] Rudrakavi compares this feat to the legendary battle
between Kamadeva (Pradyumna) and the demon Shambara.[31] The parallel
between Rahim's sons and Kamadeva also furthers identifies Rahim with
Vishnu. After this extended metaphor, Rudrakavi suggests that Pratap Shah
wishes Rahim, perhaps with his sons, to intervene on behalf of the Baglan
ruler. Poetically put, Rahim should touch the garment of Pratap's kingdom
that is being threatened by Jahangir's army.

Notably Pratap Shah's plea is expressed through Sanskrit poetry. The penul-
timate verse also invokes Indian mythology, and the final lines contain heavy
compounding. Rudrakavi imagined that Rahim would not only grasp such
complexities but also that he would value the expression of current concerns
and his ability to act decisively through a Sanskrit literary medium. We possess
no account of whether Rahim received this text or its impact on military events
in the early seventeenth century. However, one way or another, Pratap Shah
successfully warded off Jahangir's army at this time and was later received
amicably at court.[32] More importantly, Pratap Shah and Rudrakavi treated
Sanskrit poetry as a communicative language through which they could partici-
pate in political negotiations and even subvert Mughal imperial objectives. This
fusion of literature and power advances an influential role for Sanskrit aesthetics
in a cosmopolitan Mughal world. Here Rudrakavi declares unambivalently that
the classical tongue of India, the so-called "language of the gods" could be
reimagined as an idiom for expressing and countering Mughal expansionism.

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While Rudrakavi intended for Rahim to appreciate the content and style of his *Khānakhānācarita,* he did not pursue a similar approach in his other three Sanskrit encomia. Neither the *Dānaśāhacarita* (*Acts of Generous Danyal Shah,* 1603) nor the *Kīrtisamullāsa* (*Brilliance of Fame,* c. 1610s), for Akbar's son Danyal and Jahangir's son Khurram respectively, requests its recipient to take specific actions. The *Jahāṅgīracarita* (*Acts of Jahangir,* c. 1610s) is still unpublished and exists in a single, fragmentary manuscript housed in Baroda, Gujarat. We remain unclear about the political and social circumstances surrounding these three compositions. These other praise poems in no way lessen the cultural implications of Rudrakavi's Sanskrit appeal to Rahim. Rather they highlight that even a single poet employed divergent tactics in his cross-cultural panegyrics.

One feature of all four of Rudrakavi's encomia for Mughal figures is worth mentioning in closing. Rudrakavi repeats a high percentage of verses verbatim across the four texts, and some are also found in his literary history of the Baglan dynasty, the *Rāṣṭrauḍhavaṃśamahākāvya,* completed in 1596. For instance, approximately sixty percent of the extant portion of the *Jahāṅgīracarita* is recycled material, including from the *Khānakhānācarita.*[33] Would the Mughals have appreciated this overlap, particularly in works addressed to members of different status in the same imperial system? Would Emperor Jahangir have been flattered to be exalted with verses earlier applied to a commander in his army? Sanskrit (and Indo-Persian) poets frequently repeated verses in commissioned panegyrics, most commonly to different courts.[34] Following his predecessors, Rudrakavi intended his four works not to be read intertextually with one another.

Jagannātha Paṇḍitarāja's High Literature for Asaf Khan

Jagannātha Paṇḍitarāja followed Rudrakavi in directing an encomium to a Mughal elite at the petition of a regional ruler. By Jagannātha's own admission, he spent the majority of his youth within the central Mughal court (*Bhāminīvilāsa* 106, v. 44). Shah Jahan even granted him the title *paṇḍitarāja* (King of the Learned), the name by which he is often known today (*Āsaphavilāsa* 96). Between 1628 and 1641, a Kashmiri ruler named Mukunda Raya commissioned him to compose a Sanskrit panegyric for Asaf Khan, the royal vizier. The text, titled the *Play of Asaf,* is a relatively short work primarily in prose that commemorates a visit Asaf Khan paid to Kashmir in the company of Shah Jahan.[35] It is unclear why Mukunda Raya addressed the work to Asaf Khan (others had written in Persian to Shah Jahan to celebrate his sojourns

in Kashmir).[36] Jagannātha admits notably few traces of any social context into his Sanskrit œuvre, and his *Āsaphavilāsa* proves no exception.[37] Nonetheless, within a largely conventional treatment, Jagannātha exhibits several ways of writing cross-culturally in Sanskrit about Mughal India.

Jagannātha opens by commending Shah Jahan and even directly addresses the Mughal king at times. Unlike in Rudrakavi's praise of Rahim as able to control Jahangir, there is no tension here between Asaf Khan, a major power-broker in the empire, and Shah Jahan, who owed his coronation to his vizier's stratagems.[38] Instead, Jagannātha vociferously exalts the emperor in lines replete with dense Sanskrit imagery.

> Many kings—resplendent with bows that buzz with lines of bees swarming to meet the liberal rivers of juices oozing from the lobes of dense legions of elephants that are blind with madness and shaking the city gates— rely upon your eye, shining, intoxicated, lovely, and brilliant as a lotus. You [Shah Jahan] are the sun that pierces the darkness of destitution. (*Āsaphavilāsa* v. 1)

Jagannātha transitions to a loose prose narrative for the majority of his work, first relating that Shah Jahan once came to Kashmir accompanied by his stunning cavalry. He vividly depicts the lush, dramatic landscape of the region, which loomed large in the Mughal imagination and frequently appears in Indo-Persian works (Zutshi 2004: 28-34). In this respect, while Jagannātha drew on Sanskrit norms to describe Kashmir, his Mughal audience would have heard resonances with their own literary tradition.

Jagannātha introduces Asaf Khan near the middle of his panegyric and lauds the vizier using Sanskrit standards of comparison. He likens Asaf Khan's fame, a virtue associated with whiteness in Sanskrit, to the waves of the Ganges and the snow-capped peaks of Kashmir's Himalayas. He exalts the vizier as beneficial for all people, "helpful as a sacrifice for the twice-born" and "pleasing to the mind like the cool-rayed moon to women (*Āsaphavilāsa* 94-95)". Perhaps the most interesting passage in the *Āsaphavilāsa* occurs at the end of this prose section where Jagannātha places Asaf Khan within numerous hierarchies of Sanskrit aesthetic theory.

> If all the neighboring kings who are related to the world-conqueror are said to be made of speech, then among them he [Asaf Khan] is literature (*kāvya*). If they are literature, then he is poetic suggestion (*dhvani*). If they are poetic suggestion, then he is aesthetic emotion (*rasa*). If they are aesthetic emotion then he is erotic love (*śṛṅgāra*). Navab Asaf Khan, who bathes in the essence of all *śāstras*, is esteemed thus because of his sweetness and greatness that stirs the hearts of all sensitive critics.[39]

Here Jagannātha invokes a technical Sanskrit vocabulary to pay tribute to the Mughal vizier. This approach harkens back to earlier Sanskrit panegyrics for the Mughals but deserves fresh consideration in respect to Asaf Khan.

Asaf Khan falls short of Rahim's renown as well-versed in Indian traditions but nonetheless had a history of engaging with Sanskrit knowledge. For example, in the 1630s Asaf Khan commissioned an Indian astronomer named Nityānanda to prepare a Sanskrit rendering of Shah Jahan's horoscope, which is one of the rare Persian-to-Sanskrit translations known today (Pingree 2003: 269). This connection hardly demonstrates that Asaf Khan personally desired (or was able) to access Sanskrit texts, but it suggests that interest in the Sanskrit realm characterized Mughal cosmopolitanism more broadly. Moreover, by Asaf Khan's time, the basics of *rasa* theory were available in multiple Persian and Hindi sources.[40] However, if Asaf Khan was informed in such matters, then awareness of traditional Sanskrit learning was far more common among Indo-Persian elites than modern scholars have generally acknowledged. Even if we assume that *Āsaphavilāsa* was translated into Hindi in order for Asaf Khan to understand it, only someone already familiar with Indian poetics could understand the import of "if they are *rasa,* then you are *śṛṅgāra*."

After his succinct treatment of Asaf Khan, Jagannātha dedicates the remainder of his *Āsaphavilāsa* to retelling old stories set in Kashmir, parts of which also had contemporary resonances. He begins with the adventures of Kamadeva who uses Kashmir as his playground for various dalliances. He also narrates how Indra came to Kashmir to worship Shiva and became ashamed of himself after meeting a truly illustrious deity. Within these tales, Jagannātha frequently lingers on generally appreciable points, such as the allure of Kamadeva's female companions and Kashmir's verdant scenery, including its famed gardens. He concludes by declaring that Indra "does not think highly of his own *Nandana* gardens that bring no joy to his eyes because their beauty was robbed by the lovely pleasure gardens [of Kashmir]" (*Āsaphavilāsa* 96).

In the seventeenth century, the Indo-Persian tradition strongly associated Kashmir with both manicured grounds and spiritual practices. Asaf Khan personally sponsored the construction of a pleasure garden in Kashmir known as the Nishat Bagh (Garden of Joy) in the 1630s.[41] There is even a legend that Shah Jahan wished Asaf Khan to gift him the Nishat Bagh, but the vizier risked the king's wrath and declined in order to avoid parting with such lovely grounds.[42] Mughal texts frequently dwelled more generally on Kashmir's beauty.[43] Additionally, court histories, such as the A'in-i Akbari, depicted Kashmir as a sacred space, saturated with Hindu myths and spiritual energy (Zutshi 2013: 204-5). Given these social and literary factors, Asaf Khan may well have understood Jagannātha's poetic portrayal of Kashmir's gardens and mythology to echo his interests in the region more than is made explicit in the text itself.

Like earlier Sanskrit panegyrics addressed to the Mughals, Jagannātha's *Āsaphavilāsa* remains puzzling in many respects, above all its potential reception. The encomium makes no direct appeal for action and thus may have been designed as a gift to please a high political official instead of a means of imparting specific information. Perhaps precisely because he wished this panegyric to be recognized as a gift, Mukunda Raya engaged a known Mughal court poet as its author. Jagannātha's name would certainly have been recognizable to the imperial elite, although his Sanskrit works were not typically read within Persianate circles. Jagannātha was also appreciated as a Hindi singer at the Mughal court, which at least tangentially suggests his ability to translate the panegyric aloud for Asaf Khan.[44]

While the reception of the *Āsaphavilāsa* remains speculative, Jagannātha's work adds an important layer to the ways that different patrons and authors made Sanskrit relevant within the Mughal cultural order. In threading Kashmir's landscape throughout his work, Jagannātha exploits the overlapping interests of Sanskrit poets and Mughal elites. He wrote within his tradition but nonetheless produced a cosmopolitan text that reverberates with the Mughal imagination and experience of Kashmir. In simultaneously writing specifically and transversely, Jagannātha provides a remarkable exemplar of how Sanskrit literati spoke across cultural lines and invoked the Mughal Persianate tradition without ever stepping outside of their accepted conventions.

Sanskrit in Mughal Cosmopolitanism

Taken as a whole, the praise poems of Śānticandra, Rudrakavi, and Jagannātha suggest a few key points about how regional figures perceived and participated in cosmopolitanism at the Mughal court. First, many early moderns viewed Sanskrit as a potent political language in negotiations with the Mughal ruling class. Whether these texts were read by their addressees or received as objects, their efficacy relied on the prestige of Sanskrit within Mughal culture. The Mughals may have used Persian as their administrative medium of choice, but local rulers constructed and solidified imperial alliances through a variety of languages, including Sanskrit. This multilingualism was a hallmark of Mughal cosmopolitanism that permeated relations between the peripheries and the imperial center.

Moreover, many rulers and communities conceived of Sanskrit poetics as a relevant discourse for expressing and adjudicating political ideas within Mughal India, in large part because of the ability to speak in decidedly cosmopolitan ways in Sanskrit. Śānticandra celebrated the power embodied in Mughal *farmāns* through depicting Akbar as an almost Jain, Sanskrit sovereign

who simultaneously embodied Persianate ideals of kingship. Rudrakavi sought to influence the course of military actions through Sanskrit poetry and its associated freedom to celebrate 'Abd al-Rahim Khan-i Khanan's power. Jagannātha expressed the lofty position of Asaf Khan, the royal vizier, by equating him with the highest level of Sanskrit aesthetic expression while concurrently invoking Mughal interests in Kashmir. These texts present Sanskrit literary conventions as able to express and negotiate ideas current in Mughal culture.

Lastly, these works incorporate the Mughal into a specific cosmopolitan tradition, namely Sanskrit literary culture. All the praise poems portray the Mughals as steeped in Sanskrit norms. While many also embrace overlaps with Mughal ideals, as I discuss above, none of the poems overtly mentions the Perso-Islamic culture that pervaded imperial court life. This effacing perspective reminds us that cosmopolitanism need not be syncretic, open, or tolerant. Writing the Mughals into a Sanskrit-prescribed world was a deeply political act that, on one level, reimagined an Indo-Persian empire within an alternative cultural model.

Notes

1. Several scholars have noted the historiographical problems with reconstructing Indo-Persian patronage of vernacular poets (e.g., BUSCH 2011: 130-33 and LEFÈVRE 2014: 81-82).

2. The titles are *Dānaśāhacarita, Khānakhānācarita, Jahāṅgīracarita,* and *Kīrtisamullāsa.* Three are printed in *Works of Rudra Kavi,* whereas *Jahāṅgīracarita* is available in a single fragmentary manuscript (Ms. Baroda Oriental Institute 5761).

3. In my count of seven praise poems I do not include the *Jagadvijayacchandas* (Verses for the World Conqueror), which K. Raja attributes to Kavīndrācārya and identifies as a praise poem to Jahangir (introduction to *Jagadvijayacchandas,* 29-34). I reject K. Raja's reasoning regarding the addressee because Jahangir is not explicitly mentioned in the extant manuscripts. I am

not the first to doubt K. Raja's reasoning in this regard (CHAKRAVARTI 1946: 321). Similarly, R. Miśra (Harideva Miśra's brother) is often credited with a *virudāvalī* in praise of Shah Jahan. However, the work never mentions Shah Jahan, and even the preface to the printed edition doubts this connection. Additionally, there is a fragment of an anonymous Sanskrit work titled *Jahāṅgīrakāvya* that is extant in the Bodleian library and has yet to be examined (Ms. Or. Stein. g. 3).

4. For example, Sanskrit intellectuals wrote bilingual lexicons and grammars (TRUSCHKE 2012b), and Siddhicandra, a Jain monk and Sanskrit author, claims to have learned Persian at the imperial court (*Bhānucandragaṇicarita* 4.90 and 4.104).

5. BUSCH 2011: 135 discusses the evidence for Akbar's facility in Hindi. Jahangir and

Shah Jahan both had Rajput mothers and presumably spoke a dialect of Hindi from an early age.

6. Harideva's *Jahāṅgīravirudāvalī,* for example, uses heavy alliteration at times.

7. For example, MAYARAM 2003 : 78-96 criticizes Persianate court chronicles and MOIN 2012: 14-17 underscores the problems in relying solely on elite texts for Mughal history. A. Busch has uncovered some rich aspects of Mughal court culture by using Braj Bhasha materials (e.g., BUSCH 2010a).

8. For secondary accounts of political negotiations between Jain religious leaders and the Mughals, see DESAI 1941: 1-75; JAIN 2012; and PRASAD 1997: 99-108.

9. CHATTOPADHYAYA 1998 provides the most in-depth treatment to date of how Sanskrit authors depict Islamicate rulers.

10. *Colī* refers to her wanderings in the desert (*chul* in Persian) during Humayun's exile from India (SMITH 1917: 556). Montserrate, a Jesuit visitor to Akbar's court at around the same time as Śānticandra, also referred to Akbar's mother by this name (MONTSERRATE 1922, Appendix, p. 9).

11. *Kṛpārasakośa* v. 38. On Coli Begam's compassion, also see vv. 39-41.

12. E.g., *Jagadgurukāvya* (vv. 41-121), *Jambūsvāmicarita* (chap. 1), and *Bhānucandragaṇicarita* (chap. 1).

13. *Kṛpārasakośa* v. 92. The second half of the verse praises Akbar for even marrying a disfigured (*aṅgahīnā*) woman.

14. *Kṛpārasakośa* v. 100. The term "hindū" was often used as an ethnic or geographic (rather than a religious) description in early modern India (TALBOT 1995: 700-1).

15. See John Cort's continuum of Jain perspectives on kingship that range from a non-Jain king who patronizes the community to a converted ruler (CORT 1998: 85-106).

16. Ebba Koch has discussed Mughal attempts to model themselves on Solomon (e.g., KOCH 2010).

17. *Śrīmadakabarabādaśāhapratibodhakṛte* (*Kṛpārasakośa* 1) and *pātasāhiśrīakabarama hārājādhirājapratibodhakṛte* (21). Harideva makes a similar claim that his work "enlightens Glorious heroic Padshah Jahangir" (*pātisāhavaravīraśrījahāṅgīraprabōdhanāya; Jahāṅgīravirudāvalī* 3).

18. *Kṛpārasakośa* vv. 126-127. These verses are missing in Ms. Ahmedabad, LD Institute of Indology, 11878.

19. There are several indications that Akbar was conversant with Hindi literature. For example, Abu al-Fazl attests that Akbar was skilled in "composing Hindi poetry" (*guftan-i nazm-i hindi; Akbarnama,* 1: 270-71), and Shaykh Mustafa Gujarati, a visitor in the mid-1570s, records that Akbar delighted in vernacular *dohras* (MACLEAN 2000: 203).

20. This verse is omitted in Ms. Ahmedabad LD Institute 11878.

21. The *Khānakhānācarita* is by far the longest and most sophisticated of Rudrakavi's four Mughal-directed Sanskrit works. It is also the only one that, so far as I can see, makes a direct appeal for imperial action. I discuss his other panegyrics in more detail elsewhere (TRUSCHKE 2012a).

22. For a brief biography of ʿAbd al-Rahim, see SEYLLER 1999: 45-48. More recently, see LEFÈVRE 2014.

23. We might consider this a form of "praise by blame" (*nindāstuti*) or "feigned praise"

(*vyājastuti*). On these literary devices, see BRONNER 2009.

24. On Rahim's patronage in general, see SEYLLER 1999: 48-58 and SCHIMMEL 1992. While Rahim gave far more support to Persian poets, he also sponsored Hindi authors (NAIK 1966: 463-97; also see Corinne Lefèvre's more sober account in LEFÈVRE 2014: 78-86). On Rahim's Hindi production, see BUSCH 2010a: 282-84 and BUSCH 2010b: 108-14.

25. Rahim's purported Sanskrit verses are collected in *Rahīmgranthāvalī*, 171-74. The mixed astrological text is titled *Kheṭakautuka*.

26. *Khānakhānācarita* 4.4-5; read verse 4.5 with variants given in KARAMBELKAR 1952: 245. Verse 6 as printed by Chaudhuri should be omitted (note the break in Ms. British Library Buhler 70, fol. 13a and also the omission of the verse in other manuscript copies).

27. For example, during Akbar's rule Rahim clashed with Prince Murad over operations in the Deccan. In Jahangir's reign, Rahim fell out of favor due to his alliances with Deccani rulers and later supported Prince Khurram's rebellion against his father.

28. I am grateful to Corinne Lefèvre for this point.

29. *Maʾasir al-Umara*, 2: 645-48, and 2: 14-17, respectively.

30. In the mid-1610s, both of Rahim's sons participated in a major defeat of Malik Ambar's forces in the Deccan and the subsequent burning of his capital in Khirki (i.e., Aurangabad). But, based on the date of the *Khānakhānācarita*, Rudrakavi must refer to the earlier 1602 engagement here.

31. I am grateful to Phyllis Granoff for her assistance in interpreting this verse. Note

that Pradyumna would have been familiar to the Mughals from the *Mahābhārata* translation, although he was not always portrayed in a positive light (*Razmnama*, 4: 252-53).

32. *Jahangirnama*, 225-26. A Dutch chronicle by J. de Laet from the first quarter of the seventeenth century (translated by J. S. Hoyland under the title *The Empire of the Great Mogol*) confirms that Pratap Shah and the Mughals were on good terms (quoted in *Rudrakavi's Great Poem*, 1968: 129).

33. *Jahāṅgīracarita* 3.18 is from the *Rāṣṭrauḍhavaṃśamahākāvya* (6.8), and 3.19 is from the *Khānakhānācarita* (1.10). In chapter 4, at least eleven of seventeen verses are recycled from Rudrakavi's other three praise poems for Mughal figures, and all the prose is reused from the *Khānakhānācarita* (verses 4.1-9, 4.12, 4.16 and prose fol. 55b-59b and fol. 61a–63b). In chapter 5, at least four of ten surviving verses are repeated from the *Khānakhānācarita* and the *Kīrtisamullāsa* (5.1 and 5.3-5), but the final prose passage appears to be new (fol. 69b-74b). It remains unclear whether Rudrakavi composed his poem for Jahangir or Khurram first. Several verses overlap between these two and are included in my calculations here.

34. E.g., compare Jagannātha's *Prāṇābharaṇa* and *Jagadābharaṇa* (see analysis in introduction to *Pandita Raja Kavya Samgraha* 8-10). An example from Indo-Persian literature is Zuhuri (d. 1616) who reused verses in works composed for the Nizamshahis and the ʿAdilshahis (SHARMA 2012: 169). Another instance is Mutribi al-Asamm Samarqandi's *Tazkira-i shuʿara* (written for the Ashtarkhani ruler Wali Muhammad), which he revised and later presented to Jahangir under the new title of *Nuskha-i ziba-yi Jahangiri* (I am grateful to Corinne Lefèvre for this example).

35. Some scholars have postulated that the extant text of the *Āsaphavilāsa* is

incomplete because of its brief nature and abrupt ending (introduction to *Pandita Raja Kavya Samgraha* 8). I find this claim dubious given the existence of a full colophon.

36. E.g., Zafar Khan Ahsan (d. 1662), governor of Kashmir, composed a *masnavi* when the emperor visited the province.

37. POLLOCK 2001: 408-12 suggests traces of Persianate influences in Jagannātha's poetry, which are notable partly because they are unacknowledged.

38. On the central role of Asaf Khan in Shah Jahan's ascension, see FLORES & SUBRAHMANYAM 2004: 88-92.

39. *Āsaphavilāsa* 95. Jagannātha refers to Asaf Khan here as "Āsapha Jāhī," an alternative title that also provides a nice alliterative effect with –*avagāhī* (bathing).

40. Abu al-Fazl covers Sanskrit aesthetic theory at some length in his *Learning of India,* part of the *A'in-i Akbari* (*A'in-i Akbari,*

2: 130-34). In addition, several musical treatises that draw on Sanskrit aesthetics were available in both Hindi and Persian by the mid-seventeenth century (e.g., *Kitāb-i Nauras* by Ibrahim ʿAdil Shah II, ruler of Bijapur 1580–1627).

41. KOCH 2006: 74 mentions that this garden had nine terraces, as noted by Lahawri.

42. It is not clear to me how far back this legend dates, but it is retold in many modern sources.

43. E.g., see Chandar Bhan's description of Kashmir in his geography of Mughal India (translated in KINRA 2008: 466-68).

44. A Braj Bhasha work that details Jagannātha Paṇḍitarāja's life attests that he was well versed in Hindi music (ATHAVALE 1968: 415-20). Persian histories from Shah Jahan's reign confirm that Jagannātha sang at court and was well remunerated for his efforts (QANUNGO 1929: 49-50).

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Abstract

From the 1580s to the 1640s, Jain and Brahman writers authored numerous Sanskrit praise poems addressed to members of the Mughal elite. In total, four authors dedicated seven full Sanskrit panegyrics to kings, princes, and members of the imperial administration during the reigns of Akbar through Shah Jahan. In this essay, I introduce these virtually unknown texts and analyze the insights such materials provide regarding regional perceptions of high Mughal culture and how individuals and communities participated in creating Mughal cosmopolitanism. All four authors wrote at the instigation of regional rulers or religious communities that sought to negotiate their political relationship with the imperial center. In large part, these authors and their patrons were responding to the sustained Mughal interest in translating Sanskrit works and supporting Sanskrit textual production. Sanskrit encomia are an untold part of the larger story of Mughal cross-cultural interests and demonstrate how a variety of Indians envisioned the Mughal ruling class as open to engaging with Sanskrit literature. Through these works, Jain and Brahman authors proclaim a political place for Sanskrit in the Mughal imperium and, more specifically, a cultural space for Sanskrit aesthetics.

Résumé

Perceptions régionales
Écrire à la cour moghole en sanskrit

Des années 1580 aux années 1640, des auteurs jains et brahmanes ont composé de nombreux poèmes de louange en sanskrit adressés aux membres de l'élite moghole. Au total, quatre auteurs ont dédié sept panégyriques entièrement en sanskrit à des rois, des princes, et des membres de l'administration impériale entre les règnes d'Akbar et de Shah Jahan. Dans cet article, je présente ces textes pratiquement inconnus et j'analyse les apports de ces matériaux concernant les perceptions régionales de la haute culture moghole et la manière dont des individus et des communautés variés ont participé à la création du cosmopolitisme moghol. Les quatre auteurs ont écrit à l'instigation de leaders régionaux ou de communautés religieuses qui cherchaient à « négocier » leur relation politique avec le centre impérial. Ce faisant, ces auteurs et leurs mécènes réagissaient en grande part à l'intérêt nourri de Moghols pour la traduction d'ouvrages en sanskrit et à leur soutien à la production de textes en sanskrit. Les panégyriques sanskrits sont une partie inédite de l'histoire plus large des intérêts interculturels moghols et montrent que différents Indiens ont perçu la classe dirigeante moghole comme étant ouverte à la littérature sanskrite. À travers leurs écrits, ces auteurs jains et brahmanes revendiquent une place politique pour le sanskrit dans l'empire moghol et, plus précisément, un espace culturel pour l'esthétique sanskrite.