

# Introduction: Jain Transcreations and the Creativity of Similarity

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This volume centres on one of the main topics in the global history of literary thinking, namely literary mimesis and its relation and possible tension with poetic originality. It offers the perspective of the Jains, a religious minority yet historically literary productive community, to discuss their contribution to literary practices of reuse in the subcontinent. Within contemporary Translation Studies, often the Roman literary theorist Cicero is evoked as the first to have expressed the idea of sense-for-sense translation in his musings on imitation in practising oration.<sup>1</sup> The premodern Indian literary critics Ānandavardhana (9th c.) and Rājaśekhara (10<sup>th</sup> c.) described categories of poetic resemblance in their *Dhvanyāloka* and *Kāvyaṃimāṃsā*, respectively, on what constitutes poetry.<sup>2</sup> Especially Rājaśekhara problematised the unoriginal poet at length, refuting forms of literal (*śabda*) or topical (*artha*) mimesis in texts on the basis that they are cases of plagiarism (*haraṇa*).<sup>3</sup> Unlike Cicero, these Sanskrit theorists did not address interlingual translation

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<sup>1</sup> Later Western theorists distinguish the sense-for-sense translation from the word-for-word translation. Cicero does not explicitly define sense-for-sense translation but mentions how in his translations of the Greek orators he freely rendered what he had read in Greek into Latin, using a mixture of elegant Latin expressions and words imitating Greek (*De Oratore* 1.155, Cicero 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Ānandavardhana distinguishes three types of resemblance (*saṃvāda*): (1) “like one’s mirror image” (*pratibimbavat*), (2) “like one’s portrait” (*ālekhyaḥkāravat*), (3) “like the body [of a person] which resembles one’s own” (*tulyadehivat*; 4.12 in Ānandavardhana 1990). He refutes the first two (4.13). Rājaśekhara restructures the first two under the borrowed “topic” (*artha*) of a poem (*anyayoni*, in contrast to a topic indefinite in terms of borrowing, *nihnutayoni*, and not borrowed, *ayoni*). The third resemblance, that in terms of one’s body, together with an additional fourth subtype, “like entering into a foreign city” (*parapurapraveśasadṛśa*), is structured under the *nihnutayoni* topic. (Chapter 12 in Rājaśekhara 1934).

<sup>3</sup> Rājaśekhara discusses plagiarism of words as well as of meaning (*śabdaharaṇa* and *arthaharaṇa*) in separate chapters (Chapters 11, 12 and 13).

Besides the categorisations by Ānandavardhana and Rājaśekhara, repetition of words has also been addressed by, for example, Kṣemendra, who, similarly to Rājaśekhara and to Cicero, discusses imitation as a process of exercising poetic writing (see Salomon 2019: 331). In the Jain context, Hemacandra draws from Rājaśekhara and Kṣemendra in discussing poetic resemblance (see Upadhyay 1987: 49–52, 456–57).

as an independent practice,<sup>4</sup> a consideration that may have been less pertinent to their multilingual approach to poetry.<sup>5</sup> Their criticism also did not rely on fidelity as in the Western tradition,<sup>6</sup> nor did it apply to all cases of repetition in literary texts. Indeed, an outright rejection of all forms of repetition seems unlikely to have been accepted in a context where retellings and adaptations of famous works, such as the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, were abundant and widely acknowledged across the subcontinent. The recognition of these many retellings has led modern Indian critics, such as A.K. Ramanujan or G.A. Devy, to suggest that Indian traditions are organised through a reflexivity "which constantly generate[s] new forms out of the old ones" (Ramanujan 1989: 189), or that "Indian literary communities ... possess [a] translating consciousness" because of the normality of being multilingual (Devy 1999: 187). What these postcolonial literary critics point to is the fact that the relation and perceived tension between originality and mimesis has been understood within the particular frame of a Western interpretation of literature, and that repetition can be productive to literary creation.

The present volume adopts this perspective in presenting discussions of works from the Jain literary tradition that are all examples of creative engagements with existing literary themes, motifs, or entire texts. The volume calls these engagements "transcreations", a term borrowed from P. Lal, in order to emphasise the productivity of bringing across earlier literature into a new context and language. Recent years have seen several other publications discuss literary reuse in South Asian Studies, including Freschi and Maas (2017) and Williams et al. (2018), but this is the first to focus on Jain authors and their literary works. Their contribu-

<sup>4</sup> This does not mean that they were not conscious of literary transpositions between languages (see also the final chapter in this volume). Rājaśekhara describes one subtype of the *pratibimbakalpa*-type of the borrowed topic (see fn. 2 and 12) as "changing a composition in a certain language into another language" and calls it "costume of an actor" (*naṭanepathya*; in Chapter 12). However, his discussion is limited to the verse level, and the same denomination is also used for an alteration in the mode of expression (*ukti*) (Chapter 13).

<sup>5</sup> I refer here to the accepted *bhāṣātraya* ("threefold of languages") for classical *kāvya*, Sanskrit, Prakrit and Apabhramsha.

<sup>6</sup> With fidelity I mean the acknowledgement of literary property so that an author should acknowledge the textual source he drew from. Note that while the idea of literary property is important in Roman literary culture, Roman theorists never developed clear measures to distinguish between the allowed and encouraged practice of imitation and plagiarism (McGill 2012: 22). Fidelity can further refer to a sufficient amount of closeness to a source text when translating, which also does not seem to have been a concern in the Indian tradition. Debates about this form of fidelity arose primarily in discussion on Biblical translation in the Christian tradition.

tion to the literary history of India, in general, has not been appreciated sufficiently and is especially relevant to the topic of transcreation.

### *The Contribution of the Jains?*

The Jains have contributed particularly in three significant ways that could all be interpreted as signalling a concern for preservation and transmission: the first is the production and preservation of manuscripts, the second is the creation of adaptations and translations, and the third is the privileging of multilingualism. An important stimulus for these must have been the fact that Jains throughout history quite famously have held positions in the wealthier echelons of society as administrators at various courts, or as merchants and moneylenders. This continuity of Jain communities as part of the social elite has led to a cultivation of intellectualism and cultural production.<sup>7</sup> This resulted, on the one hand, in the establishment of the largest collections of manuscripts of texts by Jain as well as Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic authors. These were kept in *bhaṇḍāras* (“libraries”) which Jains had already early on installed at their temples and monasteries to support the self-study (*svādhyāya*) of Jain mendicants.<sup>8</sup> The importance of this accumulation of written texts by Jains to a discussion of transcreations by Jain authors is intuitively easily understood. However, such recognition becomes even more relevant in consideration of Pollock’s influential theory according to which Indian literary expression was transformed internally by being written down and, in fact, only *became literature* (as *kāvya* opposed to the purely oral) with the introduction of writing (2006: 4). Regardless of the many possible criticisms one may have against such a limited understanding of literature, it is hard to disregard the advantage of written

<sup>7</sup> I write this without resorting to an explanation as that of Weber (1958 [1916-17]) who studied the Jains as part of his project to correlate religious beliefs with the rise of capitalism. His brief discussion of Jainism, which he compares to ascetic Protestantism, has been proven to be flawed for decades, yet is still influential in directing research themes in Jaina Studies (Cort 2011: 5; see also Babb 2020).

Laidlaw also pointed out that “the extent to which Shvetambar Jainism especially has remained a religion of the commercial élite is by any standards remarkable” (Laidlaw 1995: 87).

Cort’s (2019) article “Bhakti as Elite Cultural Practice” is insightful into how religious praxis can be read as a cultural performance defined by a complex of social locations.

<sup>8</sup> We do not know when the earliest libraries were established. Wujastyk discusses this in the wider Indian context (2014: 167), while Cort (1995) focuses on the case of the Pāṭaṇ Jain temple libraries to argue for the importance of the Jain manuscript tradition.

texts in terms of pace and geographical extent of literary transmission, and for that reason also in terms of poetic influence and innovation. Another result of the intellectualism Jains cultivated for themselves was the translation and transcreation of many works of poetry, philosophy, grammar, astrology, and political and other sciences, besides religious and didactic texts. While the influence of the Jain belief system is visible in many of these texts, it is important to point out that Jains as a community organised by means of their religious affiliation contributed to all genres of Indian literature. This is to counter arguments against discerning religious affiliation as an effective category in studying cultural production. Moreover, the refusal of any theory that excluded multiple languages for the writing of ritual or religious texts, as the Brahmins had with *mīmāṃsā* theories, suggests an ideological advantage to stimulate multilingual literary writing including transcreations across languages.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, Jain authors wrote extensively in various Middle Indic languages (including Prakrit and Apabhramsha), besides Sanskrit, and were the first to start writing in vernacular languages, the extent of which one author in this volume has called “a major chapter in the global history of translation”.

### “Transcreation” and its Indian Origins

The term “transcreation” originated and has been often used in post-colonial contexts, although today it is very popular in the world of marketing. Secondary literature in Translation Studies refers to the Calcutta-based post-Independence writer and literary critic Purushottama Lal and to the Brazilian poet and critic Haroldo de Campos as the first authors to coin this term. Both litterateurs wanted to make explicit that a good translation requires creativity by the translator so as to make a poem comprehensible to the targeted audience. In a number of essays, de Campos stressed the transmission of “phonosemantic” (*verbivocovisual*) elements, by which he meant that a translation should integrate

<sup>9</sup> Balbir discusses intratextual multilingualism particularly in the hymns by Jinaprabhasūri as a product of a highly learned culture among Jain monastics (Balbir 2007; see also Vose forthcoming). The same author exemplifies translation practices of the Śvetāmbara canonical texts on word-, sentence-, and paragraph-level with source and target language presented in the same text (Balbir 2022). Examples of translation practices on different textual levels are given with regards to narrative texts also in De Jonckheere (2020: Chapter 3). These do not involve source and target language present in the same text, but clearly illustrate the use of a source text to create a translation.

the sound, image, and meaning of an original text – he also referred to this as ‘aesthetic information’ (Cisneros 2012: 24). This requirement poses significant difficulty which is exactly where the attraction to translate lies, according to de Campos, because the more intricate a poem is the more creativity the translator must muster (Cisneros 2012: 25). The attraction in poetic complication may remind the Sanskrit scholar of the (albeit contested) popularity of Śrīharṣa’s *Naiṣadhīyacarita* to vernacular translators from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries (see Patel 2014: 175–201), but Jain literary reuse shows little evidence for such an approach to translation.<sup>10</sup> Lal focuses on the transmission of the meaning and value, both narratively and ethically, of an original literary work. In his English translations of Sanskrit epics and poems (including *Mahābhārata* and *Abhijñānaśakuntala*) he aims to appeal to a Western as well as an Indian audience. To bridge the two cultural audiences, the translator should “edit, reconcile and transmute” (1957: 5). Most discussants of his work have focused on the target orientation of Lal’s approach to translation (see Sales Salvador 2005: 194–95). Gopinathan (2006) even sees the audience-oriented logic of how he interprets “transcreation” as applying also to the premodern vernacular renderings of Sanskrit compositions (he mentions Tulsīdās’s *Rāmcaritmānas* or the works by the Cākyaars of Kerala). In the context of this book, there is another side of Lal’s thinking about translation that is worthy of elaboration. In *Transcreation: Two Essays* Lal explains that he came to his understanding of “transcreation” through his love for English. Writing in that language, however, soon stirred a conflict in him between “the milieu and tradition of English” and the values he found around him as “an experiencing Indian” (1972: 1). As an author in post-Independence India, Lal together with other English-writing Indian authors sought to cultivate a new English idiom that reflected the emergence of an independent nation and culture, while also fighting against politically powerful voices who criticised that “‘Indo-Anglian’ poetry is a blind alley” (Bose in Lal 1969: 5). For Lal English was a pan-Indian language crossing regional borders and able to express the symbols, values and concepts of the Indian tradition (1969: xvi). To address his inner conflict, he started translating Indian texts, as he argues:

<sup>10</sup> While the meaning of a source text was usually transmitted into the transcreation, the form and sound of the new text were guided by the metrical conventions of the genre in which the Jain authors wrote. The *Paūmacariu* by Svayambhū illustrates quite beautifully the “phonoaesthetic” innovations authors could include (see De Clercq’s translation in Svayambhūdeva 2018 and 2023).

in the hope that the intimacy that only translation can give would enable me to know better what the Indian “myth” was, how it invigorated Indian literature, and what values one could pick up from it that would be of use to me as an “Indian” human being...(1972: 1)

He goes on to argue that the strength of Indian literature lies in its myth content, because myth “impregnates literature not only with literary value but moral and religious value as well” (1972: 2). To him, the denomination “classical literature” can only be applied to literature that carries myth in it. In the essay, Lal steers away from a validation of translation or transcreation based on its target, to find an internal worth in transcreation that is consequently also valuable to himself. Returning to the contents of this book, it is an easy exercise to think of parallels between the value he finds in “editing” and “reconciling” Indian myth for a modern foreign-language audience and the motivations Jain authors had to transmit moral, religious, and literary expressions to an audience of another time, place or with another language. The presence of myth is immediately apparent in the transcreations of Jain versions of the famous Indian epics, which are the topic of five out of the ten chapters of this book. But also the other chapters discuss texts that bring across a complex of poetry and ethicising discourse that is imbued with a mythical understanding of the world, as also Lal understands the “Indian myth”. The parallel between Lal’s rediscovery of his Indianness through the act of transcreation and the apparent motivations of the authors discussed in the following chapters highlights the critical message rendered in this volume, namely that beyond displaying erudition in literary creativity, transcreations give the opportunity to work creatively with one’s tradition and thus to bring across the aesthetic moral complex thereof.<sup>11</sup> Of course, Lal’s reflections bear the stamp of his postcolonial context and its hierarchised cultural difference, which was not a factor influencing the premodern Jain authors. As such, the methodologies he applied to bring across specific Indian literary works are quite different from the methodologies applied by the authors discussed in this volume. The next section will therefore elaborate on what exactly is meant by “transcreation” in this book.

<sup>11</sup> This parallel could also be read as a confirmation of the thesis by Ganesh Devy that there is indeed an Indian “translating consciousness” which continues in contemporary literary practices by Indian authors, although we should not disregard that indeed “most literary traditions originate and gain substance through repeated acts of translation” (1999: 184). On the other hand, Devy’s claim (1999: 187) that literary significance, by which he means something like a soul or essence, is ahistorical in the Indian context should be nuanced, as premodern Indian authors did seek innovation and opposed certain forms of plagiarism.

## “Transcreation” in this Book

The authors and editors of this volume take a broader approach to the phenomenon of transcreation than the above-discussed twentieth-century critics. Besides explicit translations from a single source text, they include adaptations of famous narratives – often with traces of an authoritative version, the reuse of motifs, plot elements, and verses from a variety of textual sources, as well as uncredited translations. Transcreation in our sense, therefore, implies an approach to textual resemblance in continuation with the theoretical discussions by the pre-modern Sanskrit literary critics, notably by Rājaśekhara. He discusses in his *Kāvyaṃimāṃsā* a wide array of resemblances of the literal (*śabda*) and the topical (*artha*) type, including different categories of paraphrase, metre-transposition (*chandovinimaya*), or adaptation into another language or style (*naṭanepathya*) for the latter type, and the borrowing of words, stanzas, or sentences for the former.<sup>12</sup> The premodern theoreticians did not all agree on the acceptable types of poetic resemblance, but their main criterion seems to have been poetic creativity (*pratibha*). In this volume, we do not disregard a priori any forms of transcreative practices as being unpoetic or unliterary. Instead, the authors of this volume look closely at instances of textual resemblance and ask what innovations Jain transcreators applied in the larger setting of the text. They do so in order to understand how these innovations inform us of the meaning of the transcreations for the poets and their audiences. In this way, the volume works with the material that must have underpinned the criticism of elite scholars of the Sanskrit tradition against certain transcreative literary practices and scrutinises how transcreation continued alongside and after the establishment of a scholarly discourse on literary reuse (or plagiarism: *haraṇa*). We, thus, take a bottom-up approach to the question of originality within mimesis that has been asked in literary traditions around the world (see above).

<sup>12</sup> This is not an exhaustive list of all the subcategories mentioned and illustrated in the *Kāvyaṃimāṃsā* of Rājaśekhara. The five types of *śabdaharaṇa* are discussed in Chapter 11, while the thirty-two types of *arthaharaṇa* structured into eight types for each of the four subdivisions of appropriation (belonging to either *anyayoni* or *nihnutayoni*, see fn. 2) are listed with examples in Chapters 12 and 13. Notice that the type *naṭanepathya* is used to designate both a transposition in terms of language, which is “like a mirror” and therefore problematic, as well as in terms of style, which is “like one’s portrait” and not as problematic. Rājaśekhara’s types are only illustrated by means of verse and so their significance to entire works is unclear, but we could assume that different types could be present in one work.



The chapters ask primarily two questions concerning transcreation: (1) What methods did Jain authors use in writing their transcreations? Or what did they do with the source material? (2) Why did Jain authors transcreate? Or what are the motivations for their alterations? These two sets of questions are related to each other in the sense that most methods are an immediate result of the motivation behind the transcreation. Perhaps the clearest example is that of the translations which are often, though not exclusively, made to render a text clear to an audience illiterate in the original language (see Chapter Ten). Another rather clear example is the addition of poetic ornaments or metrical transposition in order to fit the genre in which a poet wanted to render a known story. Genre conventions could also require changes in the emotional arcs so that plot elements would be restructured. The same method of plot restructuring, however, could also be applied for different purposes: in order to clarify the story or text, to strengthen the argument of a text, or to reorient the ethical message of a text for community purposes or just to ethicise the audience more clearly. Elements could also be added to or removed from the plot for similar purposes. Religious affiliation seems to have motivated many of the transcreative processes illustrated in this volume. Often, innovations to earlier texts served to emphasise certain values or beliefs specific to the Jain system: thus, we find that Jain authors humanised epic characters because they believed only humans can be rational agents (see Chapter One and Two), that some ascetic authors highlighted a correct understanding of dharma (see Chapter Four), or that they purified and de-eroticised poetic texts to comply with the ascetic image of Jains (see Chapter Seven). However, not all Jain authors shunned away from the full poetic range of aesthetic emotions, so that certain later transcreations that did so seem to reinterpret one's own religious positionality. Such reinterpretation remains relevant in contemporary times where Jain authors transcreated well-known verses to align with a universal form of religion (see Chapter Nine), or where non-Jain authors transcreated Jain narratives for their universal value to contemporary society (Chapter Eight). A consideration for being literary and creative is also visible as a motivation for the transcreations discussed here. The authors' choice to transcreate into a different poetic genre, as I mentioned above, could be a choice for creativity by itself. Some authors expressed their poetic erudition in a new language so that their transcreation would become a classic in that literary language (Chapter Two and Eight), others transcreated narrative motifs to explore character development (Chapter Five and Six), or they exploited the potential of emotional arcs in drama (Chapter Three). In this regard, the



explicit mentioning of the author's textual sources may also be seen as an expression of their own creativity, besides being an honouring of their literary predecessors.

To close this introduction, I present an overview of the volume summarising the main arguments of each chapter within the context of our understanding of transcreation.

### *Contents of this Volume*

The first chapter by Mary and John Brockington offers the broadest lens to the practice of transcreation. They draw from their career-long research on the Rāma story to assess the narrative structure of different versions of the famous story, here in particular of Vimalasūri's *Paiūmacariyaṃ*. Not unlike Lal's motivation, the premodern transcreators modified certain events and characterisations of heroes to adapt the Rāma story to audiences of a different religious, local and historical background, while maintaining the overarching plot of the battle between good and evil. Vimalasūri's telling serves as a good example as it undoes any godly associations of Rāma and other characters, making it thus suitable to the ethicising purposes of Jain congregations. The Jain text even makes a parody out of some elements of the authoritative Vālmiki *Rāmāyaṇa*. In this way, unlike Lal (1957: i), Jain transcreative practices were manifestly non-neutral and drew meaning upon this non-neutrality.

Eva De Clercq (Chapter Two) also discusses Vimalasūri's Prakrit *Paiūmacariyaṃ*, alongside the *Padmapurāṇa* by Raviṣeṇa in Sanskrit and the *Paiūmacariu* by Svayambhū in Apabhramsha. Prominent in her analysis of the passage occurring after Sītā's abduction by Rāvaṇa is the poetic genius of each of the authors. While the three versions are clearly adaptations of their respective predecessor – Raviṣeṇa's of Vimalasūri's text and Svayambhū's of Raviṣeṇa's work – the distinctive poetic tastes of their authors are expressed in differences in the emotional range or ethical involvement of the story's characters. Especially Svayambhū seems to take liberty in his approach to transcreation. His lengthening of the emotional arcs captures more efficiently the audience's aesthetic sentiment. Conversely, Raviṣeṇa follows his example at points quite literally, but he amplifies and elaborates on the emotional and ethical contemplations of the story's characters.

The exploration of Jain Rāma stories is continued in Chapter Three, where Gregory Clines analyses the seven-act play the *Añjanāpavanañ-*

*jaya* by Hastimalla. This play stages the love story of Añjanā and Pavanañjaya, the parents of Hanumān. Clines reads the theatrical adaptation in comparison to the “classical” *purāṇa* version by Raviṣeṇa and focuses on the emotional aesthetic (*rasa*) structuring of the Sanskrit drama. Hastimalla’s transcreation is bound both by the emotional aesthetic expectations of the *rūpaka* form in which he writes and, simultaneously, by his own Jain theological commitments. While the former boundary suggests the predominant *rasa* to be the heroic one, the latter proposes the sentiment of *vairāgya*, or weariness of this-worldly life, as the concluding emotion. The analysis by Clines contributes to recognising emotions as significant constituents of the transcreative process, adding specifically the complex way in which emotions are closely related to both genre and religious morality in the Jain context.

In Chapter Four, Basile Leclère reevaluates textual repetition as a defining characteristic of the *prabandha* genre in his study of Jinamaṇḍanagaṇi’s *Kumārapālaprabandha* in comparison to Yaśaḥpāla’s *Moharājaparājaya* (12th c.) and Jayasiṃha’s *Kumārapālabhūpālacaritra* (1365). Jinamaṇḍana’s methodology bears similarities to how historical discourse is predominantly understood, as he adds clarifying details to the “historical events” of Kumārapāla’s life told in the sources from which he draws. At the same time, he seems inspired by Jayasiṃha to retell the allegorical episode of King Kumārapāla’s wedding to Fair-Compassion with an orientation in support of Jain ideals. With this inclusion of moralising elements, the *Kumārapālaprabandha* portrays a vision on the *prabandhas* as a historicising genre in which the accounts of recent persons are narrated because they can have cross-temporal relevance, which in this case involves serving as a model of morality.

The multi-layering of transcreative processes appears clearly in Chapter Five by Simon Winant. He discusses the *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa* by Devaprabhasūri for how it foregrounds the Pāṇḍavas who are usually minor characters in the Jain *Mahābhārata* versions, the main hero being Nemi, the Jina-to-be. The transcreation raises the five brothers to the level of the *śalākāpuruṣas*, the mythological men whose lives structure the idealised Jain history. Devaprabha employs for this purpose the trope of auspicious dreams before the birth of each of the Pāṇḍavas by their mothers Kuntī and Madrī, which he reuses from the life stories of the conventionally accepted *śalākāpuruṣas*. His depiction of the dreams is attentive to the symbolism of similar dreams in the Jain *purāṇas*, but also incorporates imagery related to the births of the Pāṇḍavas in Vyāsa’s epic. His transcreation draws the popular Pāṇḍavas more closely into the

logic of Jain mythology, while remaining within the boundaries of its set structure, namely that they do not fully become *śalākāpuruṣas*.

The Jain *Mahābhārata* is also the topic of Chapter Six by Neha Tiwari. She studies the destruction of the city of Dvārakā and the subsequent death of its king Kṛṣṇa in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* by Jinasena and the *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacaritamahākāvya*, and compares their accounts with the Vyāsa version. Tiwari focuses on the structural level of the text to question how the tragic event is differently rationalised in the two religious traditions. The difference in causal explanations between the Hindu and Jain versions, but also between the texts by Jinasena and Hemacandra, supports the fact that there were varying *Mahābhārata* traditions on the subcontinent. The material further suggests a particular Jain logic in the occurrence of the events, as intoxication becomes instrumental in the fall of Dvārakā, Kṛṣṇa's agency is downplayed for that of Nemi, and the karmic consequences of past lives are stressed over those of the characters' current life.

Shubha Shanthamurthy (Chapter Seven) studies transcreations of Nemi within the *jalakrīḍā* episode of the Jain *Mahābhārata* between the eighth and sixteenth centuries. The trope of the *jalakrīḍā* or "play in the water" is underlain by erotic sentiment and is therefore contentious in the context of Jain ideals, while also having the potential to illustrate Nemi's unwavering character in front of female seductions. Shanthamurthy illustrates how this potential is explored in post-twelfth-century Kannada Digambara versions, in contrast to the earlier Digambara accounts by Jinasena, Guṇabhadra, Puṣpadanta and Cāvuṇḍarāya. The later texts portray Nemi as steadfast in front of Kṛṣṇa's women and describe the women themselves as devoted to the hero who they already recognise as the future Jina. Shanthamurthy suggests that this alteration in Nemi's behaviour is grounded in a stricter sectarian alignment in the context of upcoming Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva groups. Another stimulus was the greater influence of Śvetāmbara literary traditions in the Deccan, which does not allow any human flaw to soil Nemi's steadfastness of the mind.

In Chapter Eight, Anna Aurelia Esposito analyses the classic Kannada retelling of the story of King Yaśodhara by Janna (13th c.) together with its modern transcreation by the playwright Girish Karnad. Janna's version of Yaśodhara's spiritual journey deepens the story's characters in comparison to his Sanskrit predecessor Vādirāja, as his writing oscillates between Jain moral discourse and a poetic discourse that expresses the complex range of human emotions. With this, his transcreations differ from the seemingly sectarian-focused orientation of the Kannada texts studied in Chapter Seven by Shanthamurthy. While the story that focuses

on non-violence was retold exclusively by Jains from at least the eighth century and used in a ritual context, Girish Karnad sought to highlight the ethical relevance of the Jain narrative in modern times. His single-act theatrical adaptation translates the primacy of non-violence into questions of social and religious freedom. His bridging of two historically distinct cultures reminds of Lal's quest to transpose Indian myth.

Anil Mundra (Chapter Nine) too investigates what modernity does to transcreativity in his analysis of the twentieth-century transcreation within present-day Śvetāmbara communities of the most famous verses within the *Lokatattvanirṇaya* attributed to Haribhadrasūri (8<sup>th</sup> c.). This is itself a transcreation that adds comparisons between the Jina and other religious deities to its source, in order to highlight the excellence of the Jina. Modern Jain leaders, particularly Ātmarām, reused the text to argue for a religious universalism claiming that the differences between religious philosophies are merely nominal. Mundra notes that such reading of Haribhadra conforms with a wider modern rhetoric of Hindu humanism. Especially Ātmarām's *Chicago Praśnottara*, prepared for Virchand Gandhi's presentation at the Chicago World's Parliament of Religions and his subsequent U.S. tour, and its English translation, frames the teachings of Jainism in the context of modern science and the modern religious landscape. On the other hand, his *Tattvanirṇayaprāsāda* refers to classical Indic terminology. This illustrates the balance the ascetic scholar upheld between classical Indian epistemologies and modern global understandings.

In the final chapter, John Cort takes a critical approach to an issue that is implicitly present in several chapters of this volume, namely translation from one language into another. He particularly asks what we may learn from the extensive translations into the early-modern North Indian literary language (Bhasha) by Śvetāmbara and Digambara authors. Cort focuses on the genre of *bālāvabodhas* in his attempt to complicate the boundaries of the term translation, here in comparison to commentary. He illustrates how *bālāvabodhas* include both word-for-word trots in Bhasha of the Sanskrit or Prakrit (or Apabhramsha) verses they are transposing as well as explanations of these verses which resemble traditional Sanskrit commentarial discourse. The translatory methods of this genre are in continuation with a tradition of interlingual practices and Cort discusses some of these (e.g. *chāyā*) to contextualise his discussion. Cort concludes that translatory practices could vary along a continuum including commentarial and poetic transcreations, as some of the other chapters in this volume illustrate. Alongside these chapters, Cort's discussion suggests that language was one of the constitutive markers

of difference in transcreating earlier material that co-existed with other methods of transcreation. While Jain authors were cognisant of their interlingual endeavour and the literary effects that had, translations were not seen as a practice independent from other transcreations.

Bringing these ten chapters together, the volume presents a detailed exploration of the methods, strategies and motivations Jain authors employed in their transcreations. It serves as an illustration of the originality with which Indian authors reused older literary material, and thus challenges the binary between mimesis and creativity. Additionally, the volume highlights the contribution by Jains in shaping and establishing transcreativity as part of the literary “consciousness” – in the words of G.N. Devy – of the Indian author. While the Jains’ status among India’s elites, for most of their history, undoubtedly facilitated their prominent role in the history of Indian literature, it is equally important to consider the influence of their commitment to transmitting the aesthetic moral complex particular to their religious community. In this way, the editors of this work hope to underscore the significance of religion as a vital factor in literary development.

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