Early Modern India

Literatures and Images,
Texts and Languages

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Literatures and Images, Texts and Languages

Edited by

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Contents

Contents

PART III
AROUND NĀTHS AND SANTS

PART IV
JAINA AUTHORITATIVE FIGURES

Contents

PART V

QUESTIONS OF METRICS
AND LOCAL LITERATURES

Acknowledgements

Note on Transliteration

The contributions stem from different backgrounds, language horizons and scholarly approaches. We have decided to respect the different modes of transliteration from one article to another. Though we have encouraged scholars to adhere to a unified system, preferences are strong, as well as habits. The diversity of languages also explains differences and specificity of each contribution. Most of the presentations (original script, transliteration, formatting) are proper to each article. A certain amount of standardization however seemed useful and the editors chose to write Indian words that are listed in the Oxford English Dictionary without diacritics. We write for instance Upanishad, yogi instead of yogī; however, if the word occurs in a compound with a word that is not in the dictionary, we use the diacritics, e. g., Nāthyogī. The English spelling rule is not applied to proper names which retain diacritics (Kṛṣṇa, Kabīr, etc.).

List of Tables

List of Figures

Maya Burger and Nadia Cattoni

General Introduction

'The study of another culture must not be like the analysis and description of a piece of stone, but like listening in to a conversation.' – F. Hardy

Thinking research, delineating periods

This book brings together a revised selection of the papers given at the 12th International Conference on Early Modern Literatures in North India (ICEMLNI) held at the University of Lausanne in the summer of 2015. As such, it continues the series of proceedings previously named *Bhakti in Current Research* (1982–2006) now referred to as *Current Research on Early Modern Literatures in North India* (since 2013). We speak of early modern in the sense adopted by the editors of the previous volume (*Text and Tradition in Early Modern North India*, 2018, see Introduction, p. xxvii–xxix), as a period with distinct and specific characteristics.

Scholarship on the early modern period has emerged as one of the most astonishing fields of research in recent years. Research interests have expanded to include as a characteristic the increasing complexity of circulation, mobility, and transcultural fertilization, responding to the notion of 'connected histories' coined by Sanjay Subrahmanyam and others. Larger projects, such as Sheldon Pollock's *Literary Cultures in History*, invite us to connect specific and specialized research situated in the period to larger pictures of the literary and intellectual histories of India in a dynamic and interactive process. Looking even briefly at the historiography of research in the field reveals many drastic changes over the years, some of which have turned out to be very productive and stimulating.

This volume, like the previous ones, is testimony to research conducted in a field best seen as a mosaic of cultures and languages. Between the ancient world and modern idioms, the early modern creates research perspectives by looking back at Sanskrit and previous literatures and constructing comparative issues, as well as looking forward into modern literary productions. This is, of course, not to introduce a mere historical development, since literatures relate past and pre-

sent in more intricate ways than linear development.[1] The research in the field has expanded to include more investigations into connected histories, especially, but not only, with Islamicate cultures. The expansion of the field's horizons, and the inclusion of new questions that go with that, account for the growing interest in the period and demand more collaboration among specialists.[2]

Bhakti, manuscript search, editing, and philology were among the keywords of the early publications of the research group (starting in 1979). Over the decades since, others have been added through inquiries related to the mobility, translational, and visual turns as new horizons of investigation have been defined and shaped at the level of epistemology and methodology. These inquiries demand that approaches are adjusted to correspond with the expansion of the field.

Since the mobility turn, the attention paid to connected histories and the circulation of cultures has provoked a shift of perception from more static views, more defined corpuses, to views that emphasize exchange and cultural flows. However, overprivileging questions of exchange and fluidity may, by going to another extreme, lead to a simplified picture; we view the continuous tension between dynamic processes and the more 'stable' elements as the texture of culture to be studied. Ideological constructs may hide the essentially composite character of the period under investigation. New research questions, maybe outside well-known boundaries inherited from previous scholarship and knowledge constructions, can emerge if the material is studied without the blinkers of pre-established categories. The necessity to transcend boundaries can be seen by those works that illustrate features of early modern India thus far ascribed only to Western modernity; for example, questions of individuality and authorship (Agrawal 2009) and the question of the public sphere and critical debates (Novetzke 2018).

To take account of the perspective of cultural circulation as a new paradigm through which to read this period of history results from the need to acknowledge the many different strands at work in the making of this period. This has led recent scholarship to address more interdisciplinary questions, and to pursue new research that reflects upon questions of translation (Part III of this volume) or on various intersemiotic transpositions (Part I).

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1 See Bayard (2009).
2 See Subrahmanyam (1997), (2004), (2014); Pollock (2003); Bertrand (2013); De Bruijn and Busch (2014); Orsini (2014); Williams (2018).

Shaping a book

The book is divided into five parts, some of which are briefly introduced (Parts I, II, and III) in order to highlight a particular approach or to underline strands and methods. In spite of the fact that there is not an introduction to each section, we have maintained the divisions as they guide the reader to access with greater ease the various contributions. Parts IV and V take up issues and themes that can be related to other parts and introductions. We do not sum up here the various contributions; readers are referred instead to the introductions to the parts and the abstracts (with keywords) provided for each contribution at the beginning of each chapter.

Part I groups articles by John S. Hawley, Heidi Pauwels, and Raman Sinha, who analyze through different case studies how literary texts and visual media (miniature paintings, sculptures, TV series, etc.) interact on a same object and in which ways this interaction provides meaning for our understanding of a tradition. In the introduction to this part, Nadia Cattoni in 'How to Think Pictures, How to Visualize texts' articulates the need to problematize the relation between textuality and visuality and to discuss recent scholarship reflecting on the relation between image and text. The inclusion of visual material is one of the major changes of research as reflected in the Early Modern North Indian Literature Series, connecting textual production with a list of inquiries to textocentric approaches, which calls for elaborate and innovative methodological tools. What new stories do paintings tell that are maybe not in the text and how do paintings and texts relate to one another? What is their relative independence and specific history? Approaches from other disciplines may aid discussion about the intricate and complex relationship between image and text and their respective roles, however necessary, for our understanding of early modern India.

Part II deals with examples linked to Persian culture, explicated in papers by Arthur Dudney and Marc Tiefenauer. In the preparation for the conference in 2015, emphasis was placed on the exchanges of various Islamicate cultures and the interferences with other traditions. During the conference, several papers showed how Islamicate culture was an integral part of the period, be it from political, historical, literary, or philological perspectives.[3] However, only two papers were retained for this publication. Allison Busch in 'Reflections on Culture and

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3 Blain Auer, 'From the Mufarriḥ al-qulūb to the Akhlāq-i Hindī: Translation and the Literary Life of Wisdom in the *Hitopadeśa*'; Usman Hamid, 'Making a Gift Suitable: Rhetorical Strategies in ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq Dihlawī's *Risālah-i Nūrīyah-i Sulṭānīyah*'; Michal Hasson, 'Laila's Lotus Eyes: The Love Story of Laila and Majnun in *Dakani*'; Simon Leese, 'Imagining India and the canon of Arabic poetry in al-Yamanī al-Shirwānī's *Ḥadīqat al-afraḥli-izālat al-atrāḥ*'; Daniel Majchrowicz, 'Imagining the Deccan in Early Urdu Poetry'; Shankar Nair, 'Domesticating the Gods and Goddesses? Early Modern Muslim Strategies for Rendering the Hindu "Devas" in Persian Literature'. Abstracts for each paper are available

Circulation in Early Modern India' says a few words to introduce and situate the papers according to wider questions at stake, related to multilingualism and its consequences.

Part III comprises papers related to the Nāth and the Sant traditions by Imre Bangha, Minyu Zhang, Galina Rousseva-Sokolova, Susanne Kempe-Weber, Monika Horstmann, Daniel Gold. Maya Burger, in 'On the Nāth and Sant Traditions: Transmission, Yoga and Translationality', tackles questions related to translation, to yoga and its changes during the period, to modes of transmission and the mechanics to access authority. The important scholarship made over decades on the figure or traditions surrounding Kabīr bears fruits by allowing now for interpretations and recontextualization over time. Who is the perfect yogi? How to translate and explain the use of rasa in Kabīr? How are doctrines shared, used or opposed? How are followers shaped? Such questions are part of this more systematic introduction.

The papers forming Part IV by John E. Cort and Tillo Detige might well have been included in Part III since they discuss similar topics. But because they are both related to the Digambara Jaina tradition, they form their own unity, dealing with questions of the representation of authoritative and venerated figures such as the guru and the *bhaṭṭāraka*, as well as textual interrelation.

The book closes in Part V with two papers discussing circulation and exchanges through two specific examples. One, by Hiroko Nagasaki, analyzes the metre of the poetry of Tulsīdās, the illustrious poet also discussed in Part I, showing how diversity makes uniqueness; the second, by Anne Murphy, is related to the Sikh tradition and context, and discusses the place of Punjabi in the broader literary production of early modern India.

We are very thankful to the contributors, as well as to the reviewers who have invited the scholars to rethink parts of their work. Each contributor is, however, responsible for the content of their work and their methodological choices. The fact that the papers here form a book gives the impression of a 'concluded' process. Let us remember the provisional nature of the contributions. Since its inception, the Current Research on Early Modern Literatures in North India Series presents work in progress and this volume reflects and retains this characteristic. In spite of its book format, we wish to see this publication also as a forum of discussion. This was one of the reasons the editors opted for open access, as a format adequate to present scholarly work. Through open access this volume is made easily available around the world and facilitates knowledge-building as a dynamic process leading to new questions, links, and rethinking. However, the shape of the

under the relevant menu at <https://www.unil.ch/slas/fr/home/menuinst/recherche/asie-du-sud/colloques-et-conferences/icemlni.html>. (Accessed 6 November 2018).

book has also been retained, primarily to document the history of the studies in the field and the building blocks of epistemological inquiries.

This edited volume is the fruit of a multicultural group of scholars with different academic habitus and backgrounds. We have accepted the individual characteristics of each paper, having tried to harmonize them through the editing process wherever possible. However, the content, the transliteration, and transcription of each paper remains the responsibility of its author. All the contributions have undergone a double review process, but the authors decided to which degree they accepted the comments and gave their final shape to their contribution.

While looking at the forty years of scholarship provided by this research group in the shape of the volumes in the series, we notice the expanding variety of subjects and approaches. We hope that this continues and that scholars from *around* the world with their own epistemological horizons may *freely* look into this period and bring forward their contributions and inquiries to shed new light on it.

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PART I

LITERATURE AND VISUALITY

Nadia Cattoni

How to Think Pictures, How to Visualize Texts?

Part I includes three chapters discussing the value of studying images, as well as texts, for the comprehension of early modern literatures, authors, and traditions. It shows how much we gain from combining approaches and opening our practices to a dialogue between visuality and textuality, and addresses new questions that emerge from this cross-disciplinary perspective. Raman Sinha's 'Iconography of Tulsīdās' focuses on the various textual and visual representations through time (from premodern to modern) of the famous and celebrated author of the *Rāmcaritmānas*, Tulsīdās. He underlines the different traditions in the portraiture of the poet and shows the distinctions between textual and visual representations, considering also notions of time, context, and audience. The case studies of Sūrdās's and Nāgarīdās's poetry and its illustrations are discussed in John Stratton Hawley's 'When Blindness Makes for Sight' and Heidi Pauwels's 'Reading Pictures: Towards a Synoptic Reading Combining Textual and Art Historical Approaches'. They both question the link between a text and the image(s) related to that text. The inquiry developed by Hawley is how can an artist keep the surprise ('oral epiphany') included in Sūrdās's poems when the medium is a visual one, which implies a global vision of the story at first sight. In other words, how is the complexity of the text retained when developed step by step in the poem through an image with an immediate impact? Hawley shows the various strategies adopted by the artists navigating between Sūrdās's text and the visual reading they offer, following their own creativity. Pauwels's concern is, as a textual historian, how does one include in a textual study the visual medium which she considers as part of the reception history of a text, as it is the case for a commentary, in order to create a better understanding of bhakti poetry. By comparing illustrations based on Nāgarīdās's text and illustrations inspired, or probably inspired, by Nāgarīdās's poetry, and by taking in consideration arguments made by art historians, she shows how including the analysis of illustrations in the study of a tradition leads to new interpretations.

Since the visual turn in the nineties and the development of the visual studies,[1] supplied by cultural studies, the image has been the centre of preoccupations and has shown its interpretative potential, reconfiguring the classical frame of art history. The debates on what an image is and how they are to be studied have expanded through many disciplines and fields. It is therefore no surprise that the need has arisen to analyse images with (and beyond) art history and in dialogue with textual history for a deeper understanding of early modern literatures and traditions in South Asian studies, materialised in this volume. Starting from the various examples discussed and analysed in the contributions in Part I, I consider here three modes of thinking about visuality: First, I start with a discussion on the text-image pairing and on possible tools at our disposal to analyse their relationship, especially when they are in co-presence; second, I examine the link between images and their viewers as considered by religious studies, that is, the study of images as practices; finally, I interrogate the possible influence of images on early modern textual production with a brief case study.

The text-image pairing

The three chapters that comprise this part share the concern of studying visuality in relation with textuality and generate new questions about this relationship and about what can be produced when comparing the two media. In the various examples which are developed, the relationship between text and image is shown as complex, creative, and meaningful, since no simple and unique answer emerges when the two media express the same object (in our case, the content of a poem or an author's portraiture). This complexity and the multileveled reading generated through the text-image relation is due to a variety of internal and external factors such as the different actors (poet, painter, patron, audience) involved in the process; the context, place, and time of production, which are not always the same; the specific intrinsic constraints related to each medium; and the dialogue which is produced between the two media.

In Pauwels's and Hawley's chapters (and partly in Sinha's), the images analysed are taken as illustrations of poetical texts and discussed as such. Chronologically, they are subordinated to the text, which they transpose in a visual form. But

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1 W. J. T. Mitchell's 'pictorial turn' (see *Picture Theory* 1994) and Gottfried Boehm's 'iconic turn' (see *Was ist ein Bild?* 1994) are the main protagonists of this new perspective, discussed at the time by many authors in various fields. If their analyses differ on some points, they share the idea of a language specific to images going beyond the classical science of art (Stiegler (2008), pp. 2–3). In the German scholarship, the term *Bildwissen-schaften* is used to designate the research area of 'visual studies'.

this subordination in time does not imply a less significant impact of the image, nor a less interesting or meaningful reading. Images use their own language and are an invitation to a multileveled reading:

> Aujourd'hui cela fait longtemps que l'on ne considère plus les images contenues dans les manuscrits comme de simples « illustrations », dont la lecture serait subordonnée au texte et l'importance finalement moindre par rapport à l'écrit. Les images organisent, structurent, commentent et mettent en scène le texte (lorsque ce n'est pas l'inverse) ou, conçues comme des aides à la compréhension, attirent l'attention du lecteur sur le message que l'œuvre veut transmettre. Grâce à un langage qui leur est propre, les images peuvent même véhiculer un récit ou une lecture sensiblement différents du texte qui les entoure. Elles invitent ainsi à une lecture à plusieurs niveaux de l'œuvre qu'elles accompagnent.[2]

The complexity of the text-image relationship is due to the fact that the illustrator, working sometimes in collaboration with his patron (as suggested by Pauwels), when being in charge of transforming a text into an image, behaves not only as the illustrator but as an interpreter. And as such adds, cuts, focuses, develops, and reduces some of the elements he has selected in the text—or outside the text. This is obvious in the examples developed by Pauwels and Hawley when comparing a poem and the illustration of that poem, and the same process applies for the visual description of the biography of Tulsīdās as presented by Sinha. They both underline the additions, the differences of interpretation, or the introduction of elements from the context of production which are integrated in the final image. As they show, there is no one-to-one correspondence between the 'original' text and the image derived from it, no faithful transcription without a visible intervention from the illustrator. Quite the opposite; the process can be described as interpretative, transformative, and creative. Both Pauwels and Hawley use the term 'translation' to designate this process, which invites us to consider the issues of the dialogue between text and image in the same way we consider the translation process from one text to another.[3] Such translation from text to another medium is theorized by Roman Jakobson in his definition of categories of translation as an 'intersemiotic translation', meaning 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems'.[4] Our case studies are examples of poems (a ver-

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2 Wetzel and Flückiger (2009), p. 12.

3 On translation, see the introduction to Part II by Allison Busch and to Part III by Maya Burger in this volume.

4 Jakobson (1959), p. 233. The 'intersemiotic translation or *transmutation*' is the third kind of translation identified by Jakobson which can also cover a transposition from a literary text to other nonverbal signs systems such as music, dance, or photography. The two others are the 'intralingual translation or *rewording*', which is 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language', and the 'interlingual transpo-

bal signs system) which are interpreted in paintings (a nonverbal signs system), a creative transposition to be read not as a simple transaction but as a meaningful process of transformation.

The text-image relation can be thought of in other ways to the transposition from textuality to visuality. In contrast, the text can be itself an illustration of an image, clarifying its content, adding information or developing an idea. As Louvel and Scepi note, this passage from image to text is due to the intrinsic status of the image itself which is asking for verbalization and explanation. In other words, the image needs the text.[5] The text can also behave as if it is an image (especially in poetry), developing metaphors and searching to create a mental image for the reader. In this case, the link between text and image needs to be studied inside the text itself.[6] And finally, the image can do what a text does in narration; developing its content and meaning step by step, organising the space, and guiding the viewer's eye from one point to another. In the cases where, like in illustrated manuscripts, text and image are in co-presence, we also need to think about the place where the text is located.[7] Is it beside the painting? On the top or on the bottom? Is it on the back of the illustration? Is it inside the illustration, for example denominating some characters who are represented, as is quite common? Should we consider the text as part of the illustration or not? How do our eyes, as readers or viewers, jump from text to image or from image to text? In which order? How many times? At which moment? Is there a correlation between the text and the image? The questions are numerous and relevant.

Scholarship on the text-image relation has elaborately dealt with the moment of co-presence of the two media. For this discussion, the literary critics from the nineties coined the term of 'iconotext', taking its roots in the French scholarly community[8] and later defined by Peter Wagner as the 'use of (by way of reference or allusion, in an explicit or implicit way) an image in a text or vice versa'.[9] From this perspective, the text-image pairing is seen as mutually interdependent in the way it establishes meaning. The literary critic and theorist Liliane Louvel, anoth-

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sition or *translation proper*', which is 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language'.

5 'Si l'image, par opposition au texte, appelle une perception d'ensemble immédiate—ainsi qu'y insistait Lessing—, il reste que le perçu n'est pas le su et que le visible semble attirer à lui la parole : l'image sollicite le texte, réclame la verbalisation.' (Louvel and Scepi (2005), p. 10)

6 An example of this process is analysed in the thesis of Biljana Zrnic (2016).

7 Pauwels, in her chapter, pays attention to where the text of Nāgarīdās is positioned from one painting to another.

8 Heck (1999), p. 37, in a collection of critical essays entitled *Iconotextes* and edited by Alain Montandon in 1990.

9 Wagner (1996), p. 15. On Wagner's use of iconotext, see also his *Reading Iconotexts* (1997).

er French scholar, grasped this term and theorized it in several works published in French and translated partially in English.[10] For her, the iconotext

> illustrates perfectly the attempt to merge text and image in a pluriform fusion, as in an oxymoron. The word 'iconotext' conveys the desire to bring together two irreducible objects and form a new object in a fruitful tension in which each object maintains its specificity. It is therefore a perfect word to designate the ambiguous, aporetic, and in-between object of our analysis.[11]

In this definition, the interdependence between the two media is always present, neither the image nor the text is free from its counterpart. But in addition, their co-presence and interdependence creates a third object, a new one, an in-between object producing its own signification. This is clearly visible in the case studies presented in this part of the volume, since the new object created by the fusion of text and image carries new significations which are built on a fructuous dynamic of going and coming back. With this notion of iconotext and the idea that texts and images are in an 'infinite dialogue', Louvel elaborates a detailed typology of the various forms of relation between text and image,[12] showing the multiple variations of this dialogue. Even if strong emphasis is placed on the literary modalities of inscribing images in the text and on the narrative functions of the image, the diverse concepts elaborated by Louvel, in dialogue with the authors of visual studies, help us to rethink the text-image relationship.

The image and the viewer

The three chapters in this part are all concerned with the production of religious poetry connected to the bhakti movement of early modern India. The illustrations they discuss need to be understood as objects of communication (beside textual production) of religious ideals belonging to the Krishnaite and Ramaite traditions. In some illustrations discussed by Pauwels, it is shown how the patron, and in some cases his family, are inserted in the paintings and become 'active participants in the mythological realm'. The reasons for a patron to ask for the illustration of a specific manuscript are numerous: to reach a wider audience, to follow the fashion of major courts, to produce a parallel between a text, its author,

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10 See her *Poetics of the Iconotext* (2011), edited by Jacobs and translated by Petit, which is a selection of her previous works: *L'oeil du texte. Texte et image dans la littérature de langue anglaise* (1998) and *Texte/image: images à lire, textes à voir* (2002).
11 Louvel (2011), p. 15.
12 Her typology (see Part II of *Poetics of the Iconotext*, especially pp. 56–66) draws on Genette's categories of transtextuality, developed in *Palimpsestes* (1982).

its content, and the patron's own story, to spread religious or political messages. In the study of Tulsīdās's premodern portraitures, Sinha argues for a sanctification and a deification process in the representations of the poet, being assimilated to the content of his poetry. In modern and performative representations, on the contrary, the human aspects of the poet are depicted 'in such a way that the contemporary viewer may empathize with the poet in his distress and sublimation'. Hawley shows in one of his examples that the poet Sūrdās is represented in the painting illustrating one of his poems and suggests a simultaneous seeing-listening process for the connoisseur. As we can see in these examples, the context of production and of the diffusion of a visual representation is important and needs to be considered. Who is asking for the production of an image or a statue? For what purpose? For whom is the representation conceived? Where will the representation be shown? How is the image seen and used? These questions demonstrate how necessary it is to analyse the image and take into consideration various aspects of the transmission from the production of the image to its reception.

Scholars of the Study of religions, who have included the study of visuality in their analysis and understanding of religious movements, take especially into consideration the modalities of interaction between the image and the viewer. As David Morgan defines:

> The study of religious visual culture is therefore the study of images, but also the practices and habits that rely on images as well as the attitudes and preconceptions that inform vision as a cultural act.[13]

From this perspective, it is suggested to read images not as inert objects but as practices which produce meaning, allowing a clearer perception of their role.[14] Consequently, with this approach, the attention of the analysis is paid to the modes of seeing, encompassing various aspects which enhance an understanding of how images are interpreted and lived in religious contexts. David Morgan calls 'the particular configuration of ideas, attitudes, and customs that informs a religious act of seeing as it occurs within a given cultural and historical setting' the 'sacred gaze'. This 'gaze consists of several parts: a viewer, fellow viewers, the subject of their viewing, the context or setting of the subject, and the rules that govern the particular relationship between viewers and subject.'[15]

In the visual religious practices of South Asia, we are familiar with the concept of *darśana*, but this concept covers various aspects and can take distinctive forms[16] which gives the occasion to study this specific practice from different

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13 Morgan (2005), p. 3.
14 Knauss and Pezzoli-Olgiati (2015b), p. 2.
15 Morgan (2005), p. 3.
16 Ibid., p. 48.

angles. Also, other aspects can be the focus of research,[17] even more when considering that in the act of seeing other senses are implied:

> The gaze, as Belting (2001) also underlined, is not an abstract concept, but—individually or socially—embodied and connected to the other senses through which we perceive the world, as well as emotional and cognitive ways of meaning making: Bredekamp names feeling, thinking, touching and listening as fundamental dimensions of perception.[18]

This opens up a dynamic study of images, involving a wide range of elements and questioning the function of images in early modern religious circles. What do these images tell us about how religious practices were lived? What are their functions in a specific context?

To this can be added a gender perspective since the use of feminine figures in religious images produces its own significations and generates new questions for specific approaches.[19] To take the example discussed by Pauwels, what does it mean for the audience of Kishangarh that the mistress of the king and poet, Banī-ṭhanī, is inserted in the paintings? What is her role? How is she perceived by the viewers? Interestingly, Pauwels notes that in one of the paintings she is represented in 'her real-life role as a performer'. What are the various roles she could take or not take?

From images to texts?

I would like to end this introduction with an attempt to trace visual influences in poetry. In the early modern world, borders were porous and constantly in flux, the norm was fixed through exchanges rather than through fixed strategies: languages used for literary purposes were numerous and the authors's lexicon was large, religious traditions shared ideas and concepts, literary motives were found in various genres. These exchanges can be studied through the analysis of texts but also through orality and visuality since cultural deeds are produced by the

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17 See, for example, Burger (2010).

18 Knauss and Pezzoli-Olgiati (2015b), p. 8. Hans Belting has adopted a perspective from anthropology in his work on images; see his *Bild-Anthropologie. Entwürfe für eine Bildwissenschaft* (2001). Horst Bredekamp a perspective from art history; see his *Theorie des Bildakts* (2010), recently translated in English with the title *Image Acts: A Systematic Approach to Visual Agency* (2018). See also T*he Embodied Eye: Religious Visual Culture and the Social Life of Feeling* by David Morgan (2012).

19 See the special issue of *Religion and Gender* entitled *The Normative Power of Images: Religion, Gender, Visuality* edited by Knauss and Pezzoli-Olgiati (2015a). Two articles present examples from India: Jakobsh (2015) and Cattoni (2015).

use of various communication media. Literary historians generally study these exchanges through intertextuality, but as it is shown in this part, the study of visual sources crossed with textual sources is a great contribution (as has already been shown for orality) to the making of history. Due to our textocentric perspective and to the sources at our disposal, much of our focus is on visual material from illustrated manuscripts, that is, materials linked to a text. But we know that paintings are not always connected with a specific text and that some of them circulated independently.[20] Even if an image was at an initial stage connected to a text and produced or influenced by it, it sometimes separated from it and pursued its own life. In such cases, the image was transmitted from one hand to another without any textual link.

Connected to a text or not, visual representations were part of the early modern culture as well as literary texts. From such a starting point is it possible to read a text in order to identify traces of visual influences? For such an approach, we need a motif largely diffused through visuality and textuality. The description of the *nāyikā* is one of them. Indeed, the beautiful heroine is represented in a large number of images.[21] Some of them are directly related to illustrated texts as famous *rīti* works, specialized in the description of the feminine figure through *nāyikābheda* (for example, Keśavdās's *Rasikapriyā*[22] or Bihārī's *Satasaī*[23]). Others are not related to any texts. In addition, paintings representing other genres such as Ragamala or *bārahmāsā* also depict feminine heroines, sharing with the literary *nāyikā* common features related to female beauty and eroticism.[24] Also, a large number of independent images portraying female figures are understood as representations of *nāyikā*s.

In the example developed below, I suggest using this corpus of images to read a description of a *nāyikā* written by the poet Dev (*c.* 1675–1767?) in the first half of the eighteenth century in a work called *Rasavilāsa* (1726?).[25] This text is made up of almost exclusively *nāyikābheda*s, some of them being quite innovative for

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20 On the circulation of paintings, painters, patrons and viewers, see Aitken (2010), pp. 48–49.

21 See *A Celebration of Love. The Romantic Heroine in the Indian Arts* edited by Dehejia (2004), which compiles articles on the *nāyikā* figure and its multiple representations through the iconography of various schools. See also Aitken (1997) on the representation of femininity in Kangra style painting, Garimella (1998) on the figure of the *sakhī* in Rajput painting and the forthcoming book by Aitken and Busch on their project 'Aesthetic Worlds of the Indian Heroine'.

22 See Desai (1995).

23 See Randhawa (1966).

24 For exchanges between the literary *nāyikā* portraiture and Ragamala paintings, see Aitken (2013), especially pp. 48–51.

25 For a complete analysis of this work, see Cattoni (2019). A chapter is dedicated to the *nāyikābheda* discussed here with an intertextual perspective.

a genre deeply established in eighteenth-century Braj literature. One of these *nāyikābheda*s, developed in the three first chapters of the *Rasavilāsa*, is elaborated on the base of the *jāti* of the *nāyikā*. In it, the poet divides the description of the heroine in six groups depending on where she lives (in the city, in the village, in the forest, and so on), enumerating then the *nāyikā*s and the *jāti* they embody. One of this group depicts the *nāyikā*s who live on the road (*pathikavadhū*). According to Dev, they are four: the *vanijārī* (travelling merchant), the *joginī* (yogini, female ascetic),[26] the *naṭī* (itinerant artist), and the *kañjarini* (member of the *kañjar* community). I am interested here in the yogini (*joginī*), described as such by the poet:

Here is the yogini:

The female beggar wanders from one forest to another with the power of her youth;
  the residents of the forest remain stuck by her mastery of the raga.

She plays *cikārā*,[27] she sings sweet melodies;
  having heard this sound, the sages remain irritated with this sound in their head.

She charms the great serpent, many trees, snakes and birds;
  having listened, how many Kolas and Bhīlas[28] keep complaining?

The lion, the jackal and the leopard stand near, looking at her;
  the spotted deer, the monkey and the dark-coated antelope remain delighted.[29]

The yogini is not a common figure of *nāyikābheda*s. In fact, the entire *bheda* is very uncommon for the genre, which leaves free space for the poet's creativity and new influences. Unlike other descriptions of the *nāyikā*, the poem describing the yogini does not give many indications about her physical appearance, except

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26 *Joginī* is a polysemic term referring to various categories of human or divine beings. Here, we can assume that the poet is talking of an itinerant female ascetic. For definitions of the yogini and analyses in different contexts, see the articles collected in the book edited by Keul (2013).

27 A two-stringed, bowed instrument similar in type to the sarangi.

28 Tribes living in the forest.

29 My translation.
  jogini yathā//
  ḍolai vana vana jora jovana ke jācakani
    rāga vasa kīne vanavāsī vījhi rahe hai/
  kīgirī vajāvati madhura sura gāvati su
    dhuni suni sīsa dhuni muni ṣījhi rahe hai/
  mohe mahāpannaga aneka aga naga ṣaga
    kāna dai dai kola bhīla kete jhījhi rahe hai/
  ṭhāḍhe ḍhiga vāgha viga cīte citavata draga
    jhāṣamṛga sāṣamṛga rojha rījhi rahe hai//
  RV 3.33, as edited by Malviya (2002).

that she is young. But three elements seem important here: first, the context of the forest; second, the fact that the *nāyikā* plays music; and third, that she charms all the beings living in the forest. For the description of the yogini, the poet Dev has designed a scene in which a young woman is charming all the inhabitants of the forest (human beings, animals, and plants) with her music. We know that she is a yogini only by the title at the beginning of the poem (*jogini yathā*)[30] and by the use of *jācakani* (female beggar) in the first line. If we think of a yogini, we could imagine another kind of description. For example, Dev could have described the specific colour of her clothes, how her hair is arranged, her gait, and so on. Also, as she is categorized as a *nāyikā* living on the roads, she could have been described as walking in a middle of a lane and not in the specific context of the forest—even if the forest is the place for ascetics and seers.

Looking at images portraying the female ascetic, I found two sets of paintings sharing common features with Dev's description of the yogini, helping us to understand the choices made by the poet for his portrait. I recall here that a direct influence is not implied between the images discussed here and Dev's poem as there is no evidence of direct contact between the poet and those paintings (periods of time and places being also different). But if we assume that cultural deeds, artists, and patrons are all in circulation, if they move from one place to another, this means that literary and visual motives developed inside these works move too. Since all, in most likelihood, move on the same roads, they cross each other. In the eighteenth century, typologies of women and of men (understood in a broad sense and not in the restrictive sense of *nāyaka-nāyikā-bheda*) were well known in literature (in different literary genres) as well as in painting (in various schools of painting). Visual representations circulating around could also have been a source of inspiration for the poet of this period, even more if that poet was departing from traditional ways of writing, as was the case for Dev in his *Rasavilāsa*.

The first set of paintings, discussed by Deborah Hutton, is made of a collection of type portraits of yoginis,[31] who are represented on a single page and alone.[32] Except for one painting, they all show the yogini in a landscape with palaces in the background and for two of them, the yogini holds a musical instrument on her shoulder. One is called 'Yogini with veena' (*c.* 1590, Bijapur) and the other

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30 The term *jogini* also appear when the poet lists the *nāyikā*s of this *bheda* (RV 3.31).

31 Hutton (2006), pp. 83–96. The paintings discussed are linked to the court of Bijapur and are dated from the early 1590s to 1640. Hutton mentions later paintings, from the seventeenth and eighteenth century, also from the Deccan and from Lucknow (see note 33, p. 183). Hutton defines these yogini paintings as type portraits because 'they represent the female ascetic as a type, rather than portraying actual, individual as-cetics.' (p. 89)

32 These paintings are not folios from illustrated manuscripts. 'Most likely, at some point in their histories, the pages were part of albums exhibiting examples of painting, poetry, and calligraphy.' (Ibid., p. 89)

'Yogini playing a tambur' (*c*. 1605–1640, Bijapur).[33] Hutton analyses the whole set of images as 'intimately relate[d] to the Sufic ideals of the lover and the beloved as expressed in literature and poetry'.[34] She also shows, drawing on specific elements such as the jewellery worn by the yoginis, that the portraits are closely linked to courtly life. The women who are depicted are in fact noble women disguised as yoginis, this motif being also the purpose of a kind of Urdu romance.[35] We see here how much these visual representations are linked to literary motives, the 'infinite dialogue' we were talking about above.

Several elements of these paintings are interesting for our discussion of Dev's poem, as they are in correlation with the yogini as described by the poet. First, the representation of the yogini in a landscape in which the vegetation is prominent. Even if palaces are in the background, the yogini is clearly not in a garden but more in something similar to a forest.[36] Second, the musical instrument held by two of the yoginis, described as musicians just like Dev's yogini. Third, the fact that they are depicted alone. The yogini is in the centre of the painting and is its main subject; nothing else catches the eye of the viewer, just as the *nāyikā* is the central figure of the poem. Fourthly and finally, the treatment of the yogini as a type of woman instead of a specific individual, which is a basic component of *nāyikābheda*.

Beside these paintings specifically dedicated to the depiction of the yogini, another set of images can be understood as in dialogue with Dev's poem. These images come from Ragamala illustrations. Ragamalas share elements with *nāyaka-nāyikā-bheda*s, such as the gendered representation of male and female in *rāga* and *rāginī*. The genre was illustrated early in time and circulated very widely,[37] which increases the possibilities of exchanges. A specific *rāginī* is particularly stimulating for this discussion; it is the illustration of the *āsāvarī rāginī*. In general, she is depicted in a landscape, sometimes seated on a rock or a hill, sometimes in a cave. She is surrounded by plants and trees. Most of the time, she looks like an ascetic, with appropriate clothes and her hair tied up on her head.[38] She is always shown charming serpents, all crawling in her direction, and some-

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33 Ibid., figure 3.5, p. 86 and figure 3.6, p. 88 respectively.
34 Ibid., p. 84.
35 Ibid., p. 93–96.
36 See, in particular, plate 17, 'Yogini by a stream', *c*. 1605–1640, Bijapur (ibid.).
37 Miner (2015), par. 12 of the online version of the article <https://books.openedition.org/obp/2526?lang=fr>. (Accessed 27 September 2018).
38 A clear example is in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales: 'Asavari Ragini', seventeenth century, opaque watercolour on paper, 15.6 × 11.0 cm, 37.2010. Gift of Dr Nigel and Mrs Norma Hawkins, 2010. Donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program. Online at <https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/37.2010/>. (Accessed 27 September 2018).

Figure 1 'Asavari ragini, from a Ragamala series' by Nasiruddin, 1605, Chawand, opaque watercolour on paper, 20.7 × 18.6. Victoria and Albert Museum, IS.38-1953.

times playing the flute.[39] In some paintings, she is also shown in the middle of the forest, with all the elements just described, but also surrounded with several animals, captivated by her, just as in figure 1[40].

As in Dev's poem, the *rāginī* of the painting 'charms the great serpent, many trees, snakes and birds'. They are all attracted by her, even the trees which are bending in her direction in a movement of attraction and protection. The antelope, the deer, and the lion described in Dev's poem are also present. In other illustra-

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39 See the example in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston: 'Asavari Ragini, from a Ragamala series', late seventeenth century, opaque watercolour and gold on paper, 29.2 × 20.4 cm, 17.2913. Ross-Coomaraswamy Collection. Online at <https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/asavari-ragini-from-a-ragamala-series-149430>. (Accessed 28 September 2018).
40 Published in Guy and Swallow (1990), plate 113, p. 132, and in Topsfield (2001), figure 6, p. 23.

tions, the monkeys are represented.[41] The *āsāvarī rāginī* is close to the yogini described in the previous set of images by several aspects, and she is also very close to the *nāyikā* of the *Rasavilāsa*.

Dev, being himself an itinerant poet, having worked for many patrons in different places, was certainly familiar with this kind of visual material, which probably inspired his poetry and his description of the yogini. Images have their own life and may be a source of inspiration for poets. For the researcher they may turn out to be an essential tool to visualize a text and help to decipher its complexity.

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41 See, for example, the illustration in the collection of the Harvard Art Museums: 'Asavari ragini', illustration from a Ragamala (Garland of Melodies) series, 1973.174. <https://www.harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/215365?position=1>. (Accessed 27 September 2018).

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John S. Hawley

1. When Blindness Makes for Sight

Abstract. The relationship between poetry and painting can never be entirely direct. One medium proceeds in sound, the other in light; one straightforwardly presumes the evanescent reality of time, the other does not. Kenneth Bryant has shown that many of the most effective poems attributed to the sixteenth-century Brajbhāṣā poet Sūrdās make careful and clever use of time, proceeding rhetorically so as to reveal what is initially forecast in a way that causes surprised recognition in the hearer—what Bryant calls 'epiphany'. In the essay that follows, I study several examples from a set of paintings very likely produced at the court of Amar Singh II of Mewar (r. 1698–1710) to show how the artists involved dealt with the fact that their seemingly static representation of Sūr's poetry might destroy this oral/aural dynamic. The possibility of epiphany is not destroyed in these visual renderings; rather, it is transformed. Perhaps the miracle of the blind poet's vision of Kṛṣṇa's world emerges even more potently in this visual medium than it does in sound.

Keywords. Mewar, Illustrated manuscript, Sūrdās, Amar Singh II, Blind.

Religious poems composed in Brajbhāṣā are filled with words for seeing—*dekhnā, nihārnā, nirakhnā, biloknā, avaloknā, citavnā, bisarnā*—and some poems come right out and ask the listener to 'Look!' Often it is Kṛṣṇa whom we are asked to see, that pinnacle of beauty who functions, among many things, as a near-at-hand yet elusive human distillation of the Viṣṇu who defies every attempt to see him altogether and is therefore represented as Viśvarūp, which means 'having every form'. But how can we really *see* this beautiful, surprising god if our eyes have grown accustomed to his presence? Addressing this problem in its narrative form in his classic book *Poems to the Child-God,* Kenneth Bryant showed how some of the best poems in the *Sūrsāgar* achieved their effect by causing their audiences to forget the narrative sequences they knew so well—this so that those who heard could be reawakened to the wonder of it all; so that they could see as if for the first time. Bryant called this the production (or reproduction, you might say) of epiphany. His rhetorical analysis—an understanding of a poem or song that develops *in time*—involved a fundamental reconsideration of the rasa theory analysis that then reigned in the analysis of Brajbhāṣā poetry, just as it still does today.[1]

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1 Bryant (1978), pp. 21–42, 140–141.

As an example of what Bryant achieved, let me recall his analysis of the poem whose first line reads *naiṅku gopālahi mokau dai rī*, which appears in the edition of the Nāgarīpracāriṇī Sabhā as number 673. This is a poem of elaborate praise describing the beauties of Kṛṣṇa as a child, perhaps a quite new-born child, and it is directed by one female speaker to another. Innocently enough, this seems the sort of cooing plea that could have been addressed by any number of the women who surround Yaśodā, Kṛṣṇa's foster mother, as they admire the wondrous baby boy. 'Just give me a good look at his face/then I'll give him right back, my friend.' As the dialogue continues, with this woman addressing Yaśodā repeatedly as her friend, we fall into a somnolent forgetfulness. Our own minds as listeners are transfixed by the desire to see this beautiful child. All this, Bryant points out, until we come to the last line of the poem. There the poet's name is heard, and there too we are given one of the great titles of this divine child: *pūtanā bairī* (Pūtanā's foe). These are the final syllables in the poem, and they awaken us abruptly, shockingly to the fact that the person who has been uttering these words of praise and longing must be the very subject in that final line—Pūtanā, the enemy! The last two syllables, *bairī*, incorporate the syllable we have been hearing all along, *rī*, but this time, we see that the friend is actually the great foe. It is an epiphany on the part of the hearer, as Bryant so elegantly demonstrates—an old story made new, a familiar narrative made utterly live and present. It is a triumph of the rhetoric of the pada, the form in which Sūrdās almost always composed.[2]

Now here is the puzzle: How might such a poem be illustrated? How could the surprise in the surprise ending be preserved? This poem is not found among those that appear in dated collections of Sūrdās poems that belong to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but it does emerge in an illustrated manuscript of the *Sūrsāgar* that can be approximately dated on stylistic grounds to the mid-eighteenth century. Its contents also connect it to a dated manuscript of that period, and it is currently housed in the collection of Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras (Figure 1.1).[3]

In this painting, the artist obviously relishes the task of showing how a huge demoness emerges from the form of a lovely woman. She lies prostrate on the ground as other women in the scene enjoy the prospect of walking on her body. The child is safe in the arms of Yaśodā, it would seem, and the demoness smiles as a result of her physical contact with the child god, who has suckled at her poison-laced breast—suckled her, in fact, to death. But it is a death that simultaneously brings salvation. All this is reported in the general narrative of the conflict between Pūtanā and Kṛṣṇa, but clearly, it is subsequent to what the poem itself conveys.

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2 Ibid., pp. 48–51.
3 Hawley (1994).
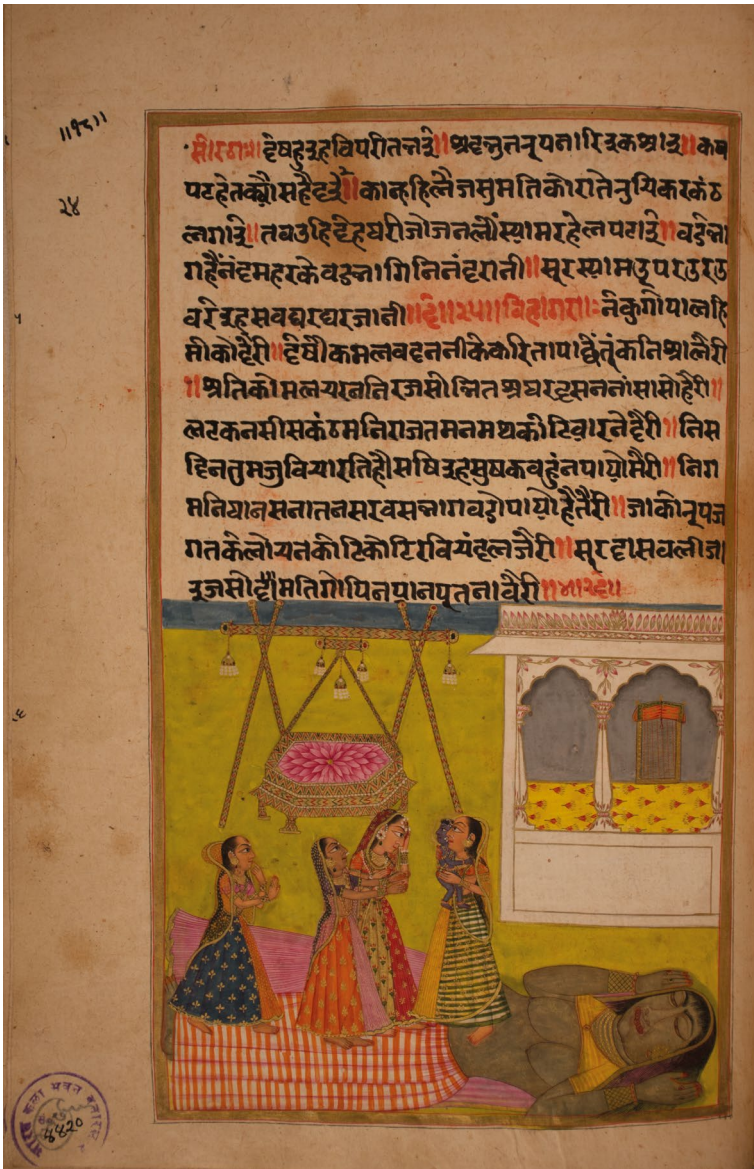
FIGURE 1.1 'Just give me Gopāl for a second, my friend!' Illustration to *naiṇku gopālahiṅ mokau dai rī*. Poem no. 25 in a *Sūrsāgar* from north-central India, *c*. 1750. Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras, 4377.

Did the artist throw up his hands and decide he could not convey that drama? We cannot know. All we can certify is that he skipped to the subsequent moment—the consequences. In a certain way, he offers us an epiphany—a vision of the demoness who hid behind the *gopī*. He depicts the shocking apparition that should have come suddenly before our eyes as we heard the last two words of the poem. But he has done so by turning to the next moment in the narration—the happy ending—rather than illustrating the dramatic moment that precedes it, the one that is brought to life in the poem itself. The image powerfully calls to mind the child's great victory, but it is hard to believe that anyone surveying the page could be surprised when the poem comes to its otherwise startling conclusion. Surveying that page, how could one possibly submit to the amnesia that the poem itself manages to spread across the field of memory? If Pūtanā succeeded in insinuating her presence among the *gopī*s as a lovely young woman in such a way that they suspected nothing of her true form and intent, this is a fate that can hardly have befallen anyone who sees this manuscript page. There she is at the bottom of the page, as the poem comes to its conclusion—huge! No one could ever forget.

The question, then, is this: Was this the curse to which an illustrator of the *Sūrsāgar* was inevitably required to submit? Did he have to spoil, with sight, what sound could conceal? And if so, was he able to supply his viewers with equally tantalizing alternative experiences that would compensate for the loss of the aural effect?

In what follows I will consider this question by turning to another manuscript that is devoted exclusively to depictions of Sūrdās poems that concern the child Kṛṣṇa. This beautifully illustrated *Sūrsāgar* (it calls itself that) is clearly done in the Mewari style and must have been produced at the Sisodia court sometime around the turn of the eighteenth century. Amar Singh II ruled then (1698–1710), and for convenience's sake, I will refer to this illustrated manuscript as the Amar Singh *Sūrsāgar*. The general development of Mewari style suggests this placement in time, although there is no mention of a date, painter, or patron on any of the fifty pages that comprise the manuscript itself. There is also the special clue that a particular style of moustache appears in some of these *Sūrsāgar* paintings, a style that is not seen before the time of Amar Singh. By wearing such a moustache himself, Amar Singh II evidently established a new style that became widely popular in his own court.[4]

Figure 1.2 displays the painting that I believe to have originally been the first page of this now widely dispersed set of paintings. One can see that number in the text that appears above the illustration. Like invocatory poems that appear in other manuscripts, it is somewhat different from what follows. This

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4 Further, see Hawley (2018), pp. 205–303.
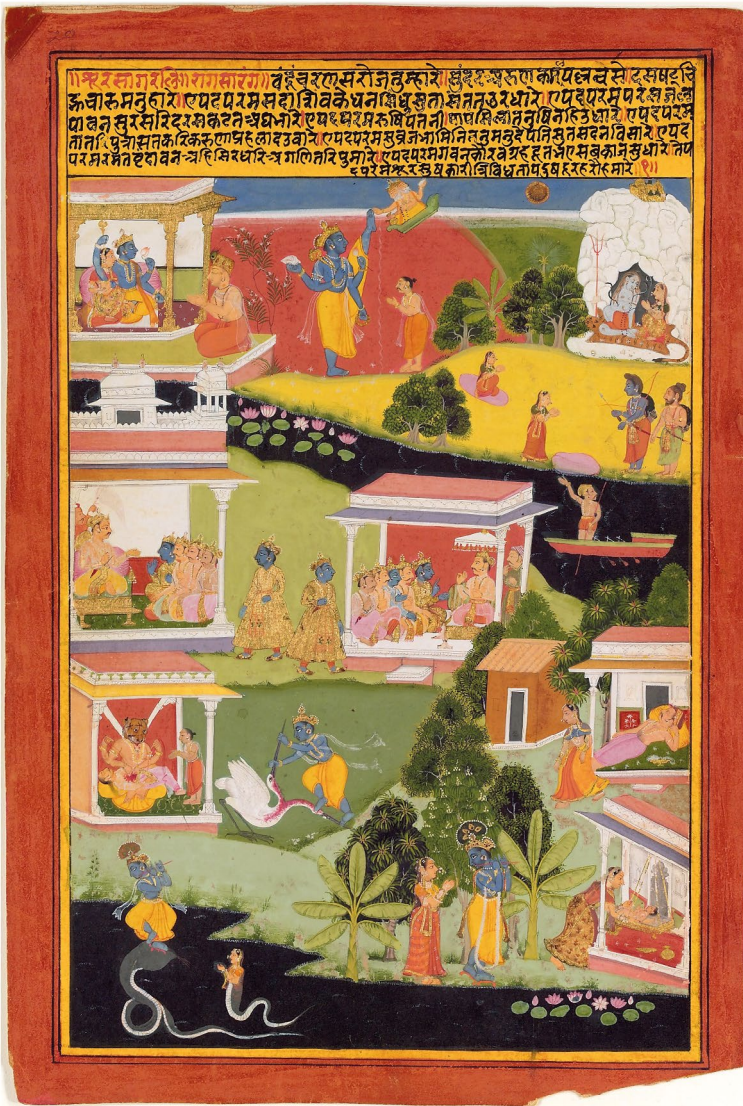
FIGURE 1.2 'I bow in praise before your lotus feet.' Illustration to *vandoṅ carana saroja tumhāre,* or as here spelled, *vaṅdũ caraṇ saroj tumhāre* (compare NPS 94). Poem no. 1 in the Amar Singh *Sūrsāgar*, raga *sāraṅg, c.* 1700, 36.9 × 24.7 cm. Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego Museum of Art, 1990.610.

is the only illustration in the entire set that we have available to us in which the poet, who is clearly understood to have been blind, takes a position outside the little hut or pavilion (*jhoṅpaḍī*) where he is normally shown to dwell. We see him at the upper left, paying obeisance to Kṛṣṇa and his consort. Why has he been allowed out—and so far up on the page? I believe it is because he speaks this poem, as it were, in the first person. From the get-go, he is directly a part of the action—not, as is typical, its reporter. The poem, a well-known one, proceeds as follows:

वंदूं चरण सरोज तुम्हारे
सुंदर अरुण कमल पल्लव से, दसषट चिन्ह चारु मनुहारे
ए पद परम सदा शिव के धन, सिंधु सुता सँतत उर धारे
ए पद परम परस जल पावन, सुरसरि दरस कटत अघ भारे
ए पद परम रुषि पतनी, आप सिला तनु षिनिहि उधारे
ए पद परम तात रिपु त्रासत, करि करुणा प्रहलाद उवारे
ए पद परम सु व्रज भामिनि, तनु मनु दे पति सुत सदन विसारे
ए पद परम रमत वृंदावन, अहि सिर धरि अगणित रिपु मारे
ए पद परम गवन कौरव ग्रह, दूत भए सब काज सुधारे
ते पद परम शूर सुषकारी, त्रिविध ताप दुष दूर हरौ हमारे

1 I bow in praise before your lotus feet—
2 Lovely as the blossoms of a pink water lily,
  beguiling, bearing the sixteen marks of beauty.
3 Those peerless feet—the wealth of eternal Śiva,
  breast to which the daughter of the ocean ever clings;
4 Those peerless feet—their touch made pure the River of the Gods,
  the very sight of whose waters cuts away the weight of sin;
5 Those peerless feet—by merely touching a stone
  they instantly freed the sage's wife whose body it had become;
6 Those peerless feet—in their compassion to Prahlād
  they rescued him from the terror of having an enemy father;
7 Those peerless feet—they caused the women of Braj
  to give up body and soul, forgetting husbands, sons, and homes;
8 Those peerless feet—through Brindavan they wandered,
  planting themselves on the cobra's head, killing countless foes.
9 Those peerless feet—they approached the Kauravas' house
  and made themselves messengers, saving the fate of us all.
10 These peerless feet—these joyful feet, says Sūr—
  let them steal away our pain, our threefold suffering.

We can learn a fair amount about the manuscript as a whole from this poem, and it would be well to do so before we proceed. Among the early dated manuscripts bearing Sūrdās poems that Bryant and I searched out in the 1970s and 1980s, this poem appears for the first time in the manuscript we have labelled J4, so called because it is the fourth oldest among those now to be found in the City Palace

Museum in Jaipur.[5] That manuscript was written in 1675 (VS 1733) by a scribe living in Gokul, and the location may well suggest the sponsorship of the Vallabha *sampradāya*, which long had a substantial presence there. Unlike the illustrated Mewar manuscript we are studying, however, this poem does not appear anywhere near the beginning of the J4 manuscript, but rather on folio 297. By the time it shows up in a Mewar manuscript, however—in U2, written at Udaipur in 1706 (VS 1763)—it had indeed been advanced to the position of first among 170 padas. Indeed, the versions of the poems found in our illustrated Mewari manuscript tend closely to resemble either U2 or two other manuscripts—undated ones—that have come down to us from the royal collection in Udaipur, U3 and U4. A1, dated 1686 (VS 1743) but of unknown provenance, also tends to be pretty close, and does indeed contain this poem. Finally, it's worth noting that this poem also appears in the first position in the earliest Sūrdās manuscript we have from Kankarauli—another Vallabhite seat, this one not far from Udaipur. That manuscript dates to 1719 (VS 1776).

I do not think it's an open-and-shut case that our illustrated *Sūrsāgar* was produced under the influence of the Vallabha *sampradāya*. True, the Vallabhite community had become a presence nearby. Following Dvarkādhīś in Asodiya (later Kankarauli), Śrīnāthjī was installed in Sinhar (later called Nathdvara) in the early 1670s, and certainly this happened thanks to sponsorship from the Mewar throne. But it is not until we come to a painting that presumes a substantial history of earlier Mewari paintings (Fig. 1.3) that we know we are seeing a Vallabhite theme. This is a painting that depicts a poem of Caturbhujdās, one of the Vallabhite *aṣṭachāp* (eight seals), which is set off from earlier paintings in which Mount Govardhan appears not only by virtue of the fact that it builds on artistic conventions established there but because of its large and unusually square size (35.8 × 31.8 cm). This painting, I believe, dates to a decade or two after the Amar Singh *Sūrsāgar* on which we are focusing.

We can get a clearer sense of the scope of this group of illustrated poems by skipping to the last painting in the set. This is page number 50 (Fig. 1.4), the highest number to appear in the set as a whole.

Like all the other paintings that precede it, this poem depicts a *bāl kṛṣṇa* theme, but we can see that its special focus—Kṛṣṇa's wondrous feet—relates to the point from which the set begins (painting no. 1, Fig. 1.2). So there is symmetry there, and we can see that the artist recapitulates one of the visual themes he had featured in his first painting: the descent of the Ganges. Again we see it up top. Here the toe that reaches up to the source of the river comes from the right; before, it came from the left. But in other respects the images are practically identical.

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5 Further on old manuscripts of the *Sūrsāgar*, see Bryant and Hawley (2015), pp. xii–xxx, xliii–xlviii.

FIGURE 1.3 'Everyone's drenched in the mood of Govardhan Pūjā.' Illustration to *govardhan pūji sabe ras bhīnẽ,* a poem by Caturbhujdās, raga *sāraṅg, c.* 1720, 35.8 × 31.8 cm. Government Museum, Udaipur 1097/26, number obscured by its present mounting.
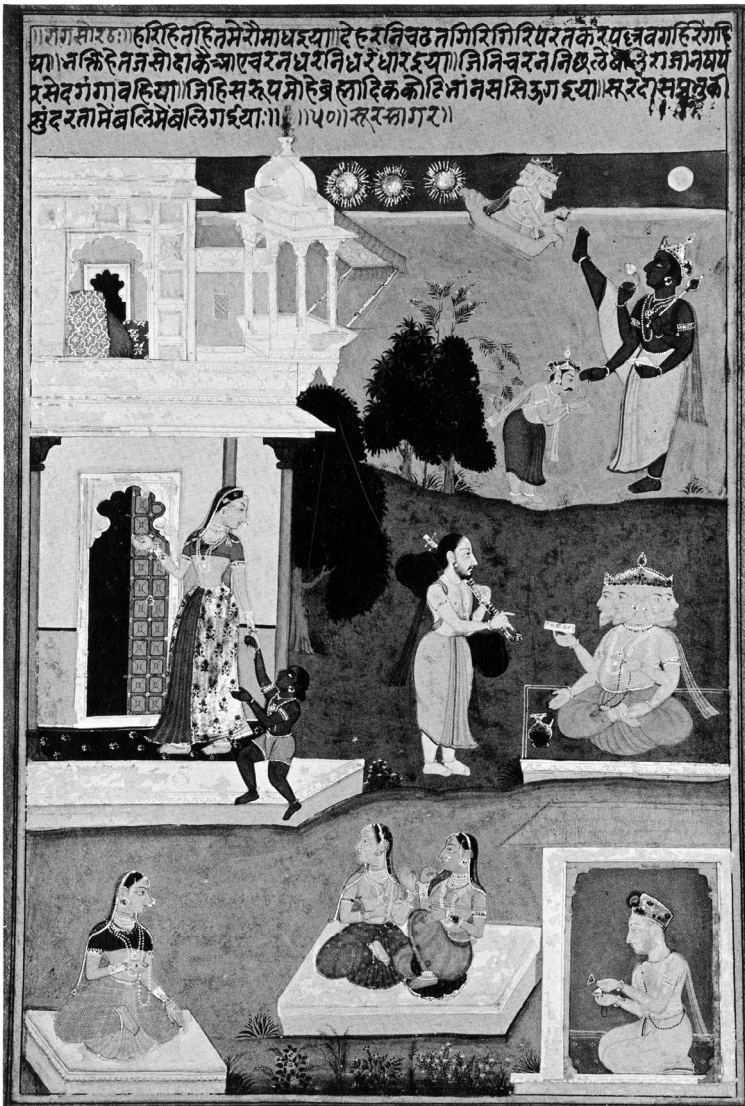
FIGURE 1.4 'Hari—how I love, love my little Mādhav.' Illustration to *hari hit hit merau mādhaiyā* (compare Bryant 10, NPS 749). Poem no. 50 in the Amar Singh *Sūrsāgar*, raga *soraṭh, c.* 1700. Present location unknown. Reproduced in University of Minnesota Gallery, *Art of India: Sculpture and Miniature Paintings, June 23–August 23, 1969*, p. 46, fig. 32, which is the basis for this image.

There is another important fact, too. The inscription ends with the term *sūrsāgar*, which was also announced in the beginning, as if to signal that the work was now complete. One intervening poem (#22) also carries this citation, but otherwise this privilege is reserved for the first and last poems in the set. Here, then, is the poem with which the manuscript ends, as critically reconstructed by Bryant:

हरि हित हित मेरौ माधइया
देहरि चढत परत गिरि गिरि कर
पल्लव गहि रेंगाइया
भक्ति हेत जसुदा कै आए
चरन धरनि पर धारइया
जिन चरननि चलियौ बलि राजा
नष प्रस्वेद गंगा बहिया
जिहि सरूप मोहे ब्रह्मादिक
कोटि भान सिस ऊगाइया
सूरदास इन चरननि ऊपरि
मैं बलि मैं बलि मैं गइया

1 Hari—how I love, love my little Mādhav.
2 He clambers over a threshold and tumbles, tumbles,
        but grasps with his lotus-petal palm and crawls on.
3 He has come to Yaśodā on account of love
        and placed his feet upon this earth, the ground—
4 The feet that he used to outwit King Bali,
        the feet from which the Ganges flowed
            as the merest sweat from beneath the toenails,
5 The feet whose visage captivated Brahmā and the gods,
        generating millions of moons and suns:
6 The beauty of Sūrdās's Lord has inspired me
        to offer,
            offer up my all.   (Bryant and Hawley (2015), pp. 22–23)

My way of reading verse 2 is rather different from what our artist hears—and therefore causes us to see. He interprets the hand mentioned there (*kar*) as reaching toward his mother's, so that the child can be steadied as he crosses the threshold. But I think it's his own hand, not ambiguously Yaśodā's as well, even though she's the narrator of the poem. My evidence is simple: he's crawling (*raiṅgaiyā*), so he's on all fours. But never mind; I like it that the artist adds his own touch. And as we will see, this helping hand motif is one that he features and plays with in other poems. So by stretching it a little, he makes it do something it doesn't seem to do in the written or oral version: it becomes part of his cumulative composition. In creating a connected text thus—a particular 'book' that has, in effect, been made out of a collection of fifty thematically related poems—our artist has added value to this particular poem.

Indeed, there is an even stronger bond between poems 1 and 50 than we have so far implied. These are the only two in the whole extant set that feature Kṛṣṇa's feet in such a deliberate way. By choosing to put no. 50 where he did, then, the artist seems to have been reaching for closure by returning to where he started—his *vandanā*. He does this without leaving behind the narrative context he has been developing all along—just the kind of firm sequential narrative connection that Bryant was trying to liberate us from with his analysis of the Pūtanā pada. The artist produces an entirely different epiphany—an epiphany of cumulative recognition. In attributing the agency that produced this wonderful effect to the artist himself, I am following the lead provided by Vidya Dehejia in her study of a set of somewhat earlier Mewari illustrated manuscripts.[6] She too is cautious, and indeed the hand of the patron may be here involved, but the visual cues are so powerful that it is hard to overlook the artist himself. At some level, certainly, he was powerfully involved.

But to return to our central query: How can a visual artist deal with the matter of *oral* epiphany? Is it a lost cause, considering that all the evidence has to be presented at once—on a single canvas that's there to be seen from the start? We have seen how the artist may compensate by producing rather a different sort of epiphanic realization—cumulative epiphany—but what about the sort that was accomplished by the Pūtanā poet?

To pursue this point, let us consider poem no. 45 in the Amar Singh series (Fig. 1.5). This is a poem that belongs to a rather well-known subset of childhood poems depicting the moment when Yaśodā wakes Kṛṣṇa up in the morning. Why should this be such a prized moment? Not just because it's one that is observed in temple practice—*mangalāratī*, the first *darśan* of the day—but because this is precisely the time when the god opens his own eyes, becoming fully, visually available to devotees. Familiarly, we also have here a brief meditation on the amazing fact that eyes can see this gorgeous vision at all (verse 6). It outranks thinking (*vicāri*). We also have a lotus positioned in the crucial concluding position (verse 7)—the lotus of his face, *vadanārabind*. Lotuses are a familiar term of comparison for hands too, not just faces, and when this happens in an early morning setting, you can especially see why: upon awakening, the child's hand unfolds like a lotus opening to the sun. But here it's the face: the lotus fully open and blooming. Except it's not: those eyes won't open. The conceit of the poem is that the blinding vision of the beauty of Kṛṣṇa's face, even with eyes closed, is such that his mother cannot bear to break the visual spell and wake him. This is what she reports to the friend who asks why he's not yet shown up for the day.

Here, as in the Bharat Kala Bhavan rendition of the Pūtanā poem, we find that a conversation set *in medias res* has been transformed into a narrative. In the

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6 Dehejia (1996), pp. 303–324.
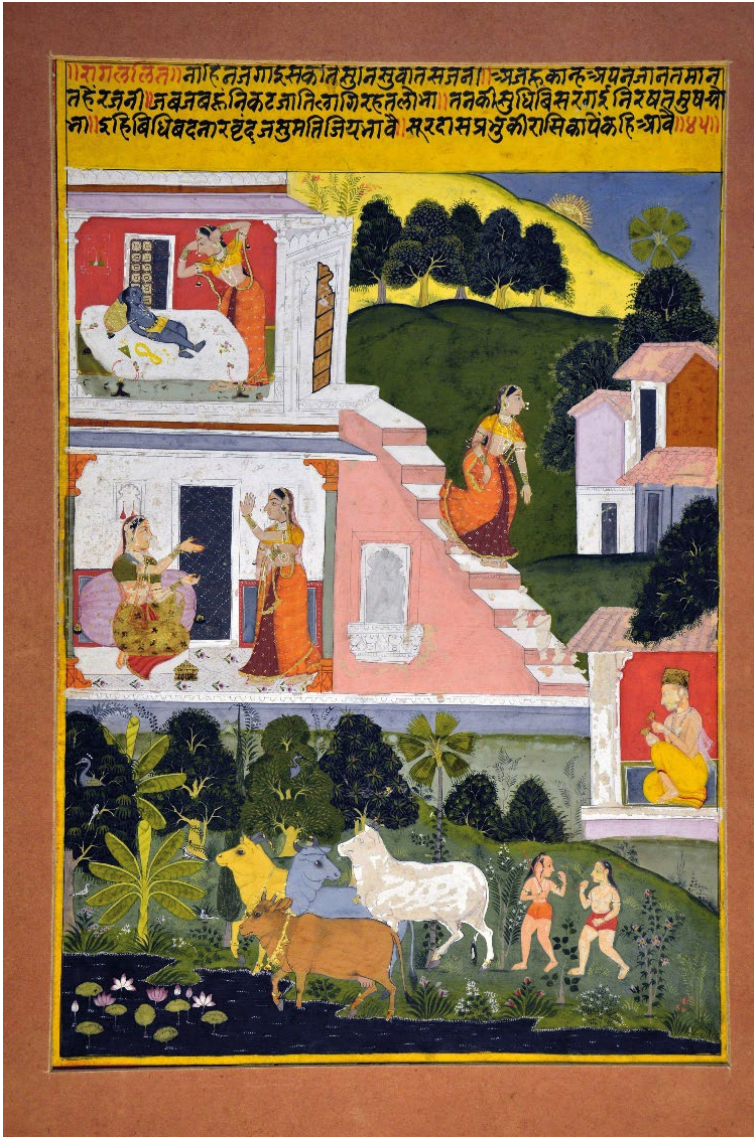
Figure 1.5 'I just can't wake him up, good woman.' Illustration to *nāhin jagāi sakati, suni suvāt sajanī* (compare NPS 819). Poem no. 45 in the Amar Singh *Sūrsāgar*, raga *lalit*, *c*. 1700. Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras, 1799.

poem, Yaśodā replies to the implied question of an equally anonymous female guest, who must have inquired, 'Where's Kṛṣṇa?' The visual artist lets us actually *see* this conversation—in the middle register—and he lets us also see what has transpired before it occurred: the aborted act of attempted awakening in the upper register, then the mother descending to the ground floor of the house in its aftermath. (Did she hear her friend ring the doorbell?) We are also shown, in the bottom register, that other cowherds have already gotten up and are about the day's business—a fact that, in other Sūrdās poems, Yaśodā sometimes tries to use to persuade her son to shake off his drowsiness.

And what about the final verse? What about the poet's signature—his presence in this scene? There we see him singing away as he holds his canonical little hand-cymbals. In the poem, formulaically, he asks how he can possibly speak of his great happiness—when, in fact, he has just done so. Nicely, the artist goes beyond formulae: he places Sūrdās at the bottom of the stairs as if he too had called Yaśodā to account through the implied voice of this other visitor on the scene. And I like it that the artist positions the poet's little pavilion between registers as if further to dramatize his position at the borderline of the poem. Usually we see him in the bottom corner, but here he is at a bottom (of the stairs) that is not ultimately a bottom. It opens onto the wider world that we see in the third register—the most public register, our register. His is the mediating voice, just as his visual placement suggests. Vallabhite interpreters could go even further, since it came to be believed in their community that Sūrdās, like each of the eight poets central to the *sampradāya*, had a perennial presence in Kṛṣṇa's world that was sometimes male, sometimes female, which explains how he could see everything. We find him perched between those two gender registers here—the cowherd women just above, the cowherds just below.

Looking back, then, we see that a great deal has been added in the artist's visual commentary on the poem—things that will fill out the viewer's appreciation for the full range of experience implied in the composition itself. But one thing he does not exposit—or rather, destroys by expositing visually what he does. He destroys our doubt about whether Yaśodā really did try to wake her little boy—or did she only pretend to have done so, so that she would have the pleasure of his company for as long as she might, before he went outside for the day, before departing for the realm of those other women so eager to lavish their attention on him? Is the drawing of the scene in the upper room sufficiently ambiguous to leave that question open, as it is in the oral poem? This dawning epiphany of ours—that Yaśodā might be trying to pull the wool over her visitor's eyes—is hard to maintain once we see the actual bedroom scene. We have to take her at her word. And maybe the poem is constructed in such a way that follows what the narrator himself says—in the two concluding verses. If so, that sense of pre-

mature closure sets this apart from other confrontations between Yaśodā and the *gopī*s —times when it's hard to determine who's telling the truth. This ambiguity, carefully cultivated in poems that make their appearance in early *Sūrsāgar* manuscripts, serves as an invitation for us to join the dramatic action and try to decide. It's not quite epiphany in the Pūtanā sense, but it's that same act of being drawn into the dramatic action, positioning us for epiphany. Does the visual artist blot this out?

Let's recall the 'complaint' poems I just mentioned. In Figure 1.6 we have one that comes from the very earliest registers of the *Sūrsāgar* to which we have access—together with the painting that gives it visual form. It is no. 42 in the Amar Singh manuscript, and as it begins, Yaśodā speaks:

कत हौ काहू कै जात
ए सब ढीठ गरव गोरस कै
मुष संभारि बोलति नहि बात
जोइ जोइ रुचै सोइ सोइ तब तब
मो पहि मागि लेहु किन तात
ज्यौं ज्यौं बचन सुनत अम्रित मुष
त्यौं त्यौं सुष उपजत मैरे गात
कौनै प्रकृति परी इनि ग्वालिनि
उरहन कै मिस आवति प्रात
सूर सकति हठि दोसु लगावति
घरहू कौ माषनु नहि षात

1 Why, why go off to somebody else?
2 They're all such rascals, so butter-smug;
        they ought to shush and hold their tongues.
3 Dearest son: this thing, that thing, anything
        at any time is yours if you ask me,
4 For each word that pours from your mouth as deathless nectar
        brings joy when I hear it, inside.
5 But they: whatever has possessed these herder girls
        to come around pretending, complaining each dawn?
6 How can they insist on blaming him, says Sūr,
        when he never even touches his butter here at home?
                                (Bryant and Hawley (2015), pp. 46–49)

Note how beautifully the artist captures the scene—with Yaśodā offering Kṛṣṇa a cup of butter with one hand while trying to restrain him with the other. But ah, the invitations of all those other *gopī* women are just too tempting for the little boy, as we can imagine from all the other dwellings that are depicted in the village that appears in the upper right, and as is emphasized by the graceful pathway that the *gopī*'s positioning within the frame seems to suggest. Visually, they lead him out without anyone's having to take him by the hand. To me, this is a lovely translation

Figure 1.6 'Why, why go off to somebody else?' Illustration to *kat ho kāhu kai tum jāt* (compare Bryant 26, NPS 926). Poem no. 42 in the Amar Singh *Sūrsāgar*, raga *gauḍī*, *c.* 1700. Kanoria Collection, Patna, GKK 89. Photo © Asian Art Archives, University of Michigan: ACSAA 4368.

of the textual moment, an instance in which the artist does not constrain or fore-close our vision but enhances it. Eyelessly, again, the poet watches, impartial in the tug of war between maternal attraction and the beginning of something quite else.

Now let us consider a further example, our last (Fig. 1.7). This is page no. 11 in the manuscript, now preserved in the Yale University Art Gallery. It features a poem whose textual pedigree is not as old as the poem we just 'saw'. This com-position surfaces in the textual record in 1638 in a manuscript (B3) now found in the Anup Sanskrit Library at Bikaner. Its colophon, however, neglects to state the place where it was actually written. The poem picks up some of the resonances we have just been hearing—that tender zone between Kṛṣṇa's own mother and his other *gopī* 'mothers'—and frames them in these words:

सूछम चरन चलावति बल करि
अटपटात कर देत अंगुरी, तब उठत जननी सुष मन धरि
मृदु पद धरत धरनि नहि लागत, इत उत लै लै भुज जुग भरि भरि
विथकित भई प्रेम अति व्रज तिय, ज्यों जल काची गागरि
सूरदास सिसुता सुष जल निधि, कहां लों कहों नहि को समसरि
बिबुधन मुनि नर नाग रमा सिव, जसोमति की छिनु पल भरि

1 His tiny little feet—she supports them, helps him walk.
2 He falters for a moment, she offers him a finger,
       then he's up again—joy to his mother's heart.
3 Those tender little feet, so tentative on the earth,
       lead him here and there till there he is in someone's arms.
4 The women of Braj are exhausted by their love
       like earthen pots soaked by the water they contain.
 5 The sea of childhood's happinesses, Sūrdās says—
       how can I express it? There's no shore.
6 Gods, sages, humans, snakes, Lakṣmī, and Śiva
       covet the enlightenment Yaśodā has this instant.

What does the artist do with this? First of all, the feet that create the contract for this poem—*sūcchama carana*—are front and centre, their position accentuated by the little step just below, which creates a connection between the level on which the main action is played out and the grassy realm beneath. We saw such a step in the last painting, used to a similarly dramatic effect. Then it is worth noting that the finger extended toward the child to steady him seems to come more from the attending *gopī* than from his own mother, whatever the poem itself may say. Thereby the artist creates a seemingly deliberate connection between the two visual realms—his mother's on the left, the *gopī*'s on the right—just as the poem does in the transition between the third verse and the fourth. And then, in a lovely act of suggestion (the word *dhvani* comes to mind, the Sanskrit term that designates a whole school of literary criticism), the artist seems to pick up the

Figure 1.7 'His tiny little feet—she supports them, helps him walk.' Illustration to *sūcham caran calāvati bal kari* (compare NPS 738). Poem no. 11 in the Amar Singh *Sūrsāgar*, raga *devagaṅdhār*, *c.* 1700, 28.6 × 20.4 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, the Vera M. and John D. MacDonald, B.A. 1927, Collection, 2001.138.28.

metaphor of 'the sea of childhood's happinesses' *(sisutā sukha jalanidhi*, v. 5) by giving us a little sea to look at, just beneath or before the action's platform. And are you looking for the 'earthen pots soaked by the water they contain' (*jyoṅ jal kācī gāgari*, v. 4)? Maybe we see a single one, at least, at the far left between the platform and the 'sea' just beneath (v. 5). To me, this is all a very creative visual use of verbal detail—something one could never have anticipated simply by hearing the poem itself.

Who are all these other creatures that fill the rest of the painting? Yes, they are the persons mentioned in the final verse, the one that comes, rather uncharacteristically, after the verse in which the poet's signature appears. Perhaps the artist takes this special position as licence to be so expansive. Gods and sages: we see them at the upper right. The gods are represented by Brahmā, who rides his vehicle, the *haṃsa* bird, and the sages by the ascetic who sits on a tiger skin just below. Humans and snakes: to see them, we need only scroll down beneath the gods and sages along the right-hand border. Lakṣmī and Śiva: alas, my translation may be misleading. For the sake of euphony, I reversed their actual position in the final verse. It is actually Śiva who comes first, and we see him in his mountain cave at the top. Lakṣmī is at the bottom, borne upon a lotus as she was at the moment of her birth from the primordial Milk Ocean. She seems to be the special object of the poet's veneration here—he casts his eyes (or would, if he had them) in her direction. Perhaps the artist thinks she is indeed an appropriate focus of attention since so much motherhood is at the centre of the poem.

And that's where the centre remains—motherhood focused on those feet, on this little child's act of walking, just as the poem says it should be. We are seeing a specific moment in childhood, one treasured by parents and grandparents throughout the world. But the connoisseur here, the archetypal *rasik*, is Yaśodā. In rendering the poem into English, I have used the word enlightenment as a point of reference for whatever Yaśodā 'has' in this instant. The original does not actually say. Yet one thing is clear: everything else is at the periphery. In the act of accounting for that periphery—the full range of the final verse—the painter draws us back visually to the centre, those tiny little, delicate, or as the original also says, 'subtle' feet. I like to think that as viewers gazed at this painting while hearing a sung performance of the poem that gave it rise, they might have been wondering what all those figures are doing in the painting. After all, it is not until the final verse that they are mentioned in the poem. If so, the mystery unravels only as that last verse is recited. At that point, both in sound and sight, these 'subtle' feet take their place at the centre of the known world, making its meanings cohere. Our artist is eager to reveal precisely that fact from the way he has arranged his composition. For the viewer, it all comes clear in a rush as word after word of the final verse is revealed.

To be sure, then, as the example just prior (poem no. 42, Fig. 1.6), we have one-to-one correspondences between what we see on the page and what we hear in the ear. What the poem says is *represented*, including the parts that the poem in its oral version tries to hide until the proper time, when they can produce, as Bryant has said, epiphany. But in the act of providing this visual record, the artist often also adds something, producing a correspondence that is not just isomorphic but complementary. And part of that complementarity is rhetorical. As in the last example, the full value of the painting depends upon the fact that the connoisseur who observes it is simultaneously listening to how the poem unfolds.

FIGURE 1.8 Sūrdās singing. Detail from Figure 1.7.

That, I think, is what ought to be implied by the ubiquitous presence of the poet himself (Fig. 1.8). He is allowed to be there—to play a part in the scene that is displayed—because, in his blindness, he cannot intrude. In that, he is a sign to all viewers that what they are seeing is not something given to the naked eye, something natural or, in the familiar term, *laukik* (worldly). No wonder he is allowed to be there when so few other poets have been given that honour. But he is there not just to see but to sing, as our artist almost always makes clear by showing us those little hand cymbals. The implication is that he sees in the course of singing, or to put it a bit more strongly, he sees *by* singing. By keeping that image before our eyes, the painter of Mewar creates an implicit analogy for himself. This Sūrdās, typically tucked into the painting at its lower corner, just as the poet usually tucks his own signature into a corner of his poem's final verse, serves as the artist's *bhaṇitā* or *chāp*. This musical Sūrdās is his visual seal.

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2. Reading Pictures: Towards a Synoptic Reading Combining Textual and Art Historical Approaches

Abstract. This paper argues for an interdisciplinary approach to bhakti studies, taking into account visual sources as part of the reception history of bhakti texts. It presents a case study of Kishangarhi miniatures, focusing on the work of Sāvant Singh of Kishangarh, alias Nāgarīdās, the eighteenth-century poet–prince who sponsored several paintings as illustrations of his own work. It pays special attention to his relationship with his muse and concubine nicknamed Banī-thanī and includes evidence from depictions of Laylā and Majnūn.

Keywords. Poetry–illustrations, Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa bhakti, Kishangarh painting, Banī-ṭhanī, Laylā–Majnūn.

This chapter studies the interface between painting and poetry.[*] Far too often art historians operate without a careful reading of the texts their paintings illustrate and textual scholars neglect the illustrated versions of their texts. This is a pity since we can learn from each other's approaches. To understand bhakti poetry we take into account written commentaries, but we should not neglect the images that form another part of our poems' reception history. Few scholars have tried to bridge the disciplines, notably J. Williams and V. Desai in art history and J. Hawley in religious studies.[1] Their promising work should inspire us to follow in their footsteps and work towards greater symbiosis between the two scholarly communities.

This chapter attempts to do so by means of a case study. The school of Kishangarhi paintings lends itself perfectly to the task, since several paintings are known to have been produced to illustrate literary texts. This is the case for some of the most famous paintings, which are inscribed with the relevant bhakti texts on the reverse.

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1 Desai (1984); Hawley (1994) and in this volume, Williams (1996). See also Cattoni (2015).

The main sponsor of Kishangarhi painting during the heyday of the atelier from the 1720s through the 1740s was Sāvant Singh (1699–1764). Under the pen name Nāgarīdās, he wrote mostly devotional poetry in Brajbhāṣā, but also some Rekhtā (early Urdu) poetry. It is well known that some of his Braj poems have been illustrated by the famous Kishangarhi artist Nihālcand (*c.* 1710–1782), yet very few of the paintings have been seriously studied in conjunction with the poems. No scholarly attention at all has been paid to the illustrations of his Rekhtā poetry. This article seeks to demonstrate that a synoptic reading of poetry and paintings brings new perspectives to both art and literature.

While the intense collaboration at Kishangarh between patron and painter is not unusual,[2] the unprecedented characteristic of Nihālcand and Sāvant Singh's symbiotic relationship is that the painter illustrated his patron's own poems—not illustrations of a whole work but of one or two selected poems at a time. This seems unique. To date, at least four such paintings have come to light that are inscribed with the patron's devotional songs featuring Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's intimate embrace.

The most spectacular of these paintings is the famous *Boat of Love*.[3] It is generally reckoned to be one of Nihālcand's masterpieces, attributed to his glory period (Haidar dates it to *c.* 1731–1735).[4] The theme of this work is the royal pastime of boating, or *naukā vihāra*, which seems to have been popular in Kishangarh with its beautiful Gundalao Lake. The painting is an illustration of Nāgarīdās's extended work *Bihār-candrikā* (hereafter BC), or *Moonlight-Play*, which is dated 1731 CE,[5] of which there are some selected verses on the reverse.[6]

Structurally, poem and painting are alike; one could say, composed in three movements, depicted on three planes respectively. At the top of the painting we see a miniature Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa seated on a hillock. This corresponds to the first part of the poem where Kṛṣṇa calls the *gopī* with his flute play (BC 5–18) and, together with Rādhā, the women assemble on Govardhan where they sing and dance in the bowers near the river (BC 19–23). They then proceed to the river Yamunā to go boating (BC 24–43), a scene that is depicted in the middle of the painting. The divine couple here are distinguished by halos and accompanied by eight female

2 Cf. that of the Mughal emperor Muḥammad Shāh with his artist Citarman II, see McInerney (2011).
3 In the National Museum in Delhi; see Dickinson and Khandalavala (1959), plate 9; Mathur (2000), plate 4; Haidar (2011b), p. 598, Fig. 1.
4 Haidar (2004), pp. 122–123.
5 1788 VS; text Khān (1974), pp. 155–167.
6 Dickinson and Khandalavala (1959), p. 36 give some verses in translation that seem to match selections from the beginning and throughout the work. Since the National Museum does not allow inspection of the reverse, I was not able to independently verify. See also Haidar (1995), p. 115 n. 53.

attendants (*sakhī*), conforming to the *aṣṭa-sakhī* convention of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa mythology. At the end of the delightful boating trip the couple alights on the banks, the scene depicted at the bottom of the painting.[7]

I have elsewhere suggested that *Bihār-candrikā* contains an allusion to Sāvant Singh's then new mistress, nicknamed Banī-ṭhanī (or 'Miss Make-up').[8] The poem contains a loving description of a 'new' *sākhī*, the beautifully 'made-up' oarswoman, clad in a gorgeous diaphanous white dress (BC 28–30).[9] In the painting, neither of the attendants who row the boat wears white, yet Rādhā does. It appears then that the painter has deliberately gone a step further by not just painting Banī-ṭhanī into the mythical world of Kṛṣṇa, but even upgrading her to Rādhā's position. It is only by reading the painting and poem together that we can uncover this little inside joke, a *līlā* in its own right.

There is another painting in the Durbar collection that features a lady in white. This is a seasonal one, called *Night of Lamps* or *Dīpāvālikā* (plate 8),[10] and has been estimated to date from *c*. 1735–1740 CE. The lady is very prominently depicted in the centre of the lower half of the painting. In her elegant, white diaphanous dress, bordered with gold brocade, she answers the description of the new *sākhī* from *Bihār-candrikā*. In this case though, the lady in white is totally absent from the poem quoted on the reverse:

> sundara sughara syā̃ma rādhā ṭhakurā̃yana jū
>   jorī jaga bhūṣana su ā̃nanda agamagī
> tārakasī basana javāhira kī jeba lasī
>   baiṭhe kurasī paĩ prīta nautana sagamagī
> jarabaphabtī simayā̃nẽ samaidā̃na kista soja
>   nāgara agara dhū̃mi dhūndhari ragamagī
> dipai dīpamāla chabi chūṭai agna jantra jāla
>   ajaba jalūsa joti jĩnata jagamagī
>
>> (*Dīp-mālikotsav* 3, *Utsav-mālā* 106, Gupta (1965),
>> p. 1.159; Dickinson and Khandalavala (1959), p. 40)

Handsome noble Śyāma, together with his lady Rādhā—
  Jewels of the world—dazzlingly joyous.[11]
Brocade garments, splendid ornaments, elegantly[12]
  Enthroned with his tender darling.

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7 This does not correspond closely to the text of the poem, where Rādhā changes clothes and then is led to meet Kṛṣṇa in an upstairs room (*aṭā*), where they make love (BC 44–48).
8 Pauwels (2005).
9 Gupta (1965), p. 2.248.
10 Dickinson and Khandalavala (1959), pp. 40–41, plate xi.
11 Gupta glosses *agamagī* as *āpūrṇa* and in the next line *sagamagī* as *paripūrṇa*.
12 The Persian *zeb* can be an adjective, meaning 'adorning,' 'imparting grace' (Platts).

Under the embroidered[13] awning, lampholder close by,[14]
  [Says] Nāgar, the smoke of the incense wafts around them.
By the light of the oil lamps, fireworks erupt, weaving shapes—
  Wondrous splendor of sparkling streamers of light.

The poem's central vignette is the scene of the two lovers under the awning. In the painting this is embedded within a larger Diwali tableau, which, as in *The Boat of Love*, is structured on three planes: a miniature divine pair at the top, the central vignette of the couple under the awning, and the entertainers at the bottom. Again, the painter adds the eight ladies-in-waiting (*aṣṭa-sakhī*), here holding musical instruments and fire sparklers. However, he foregrounds most prominently the lady in white, a ninth *sakhī*, depicted in dramatic position on a balcony. As in *The Boat of Love*, this lady in white too may well be intended to represent Banī-ṭhanī; she certainly shows the features of a prominent nose, elongated eyes, and arched brows ascribed to the young girl. She is entertaining the divine pair, which would conform to Banī-ṭhanī's real-life role as a performer.

A similar structural addition to the poem is found in another painting in the Durbar Collection, attributed to Nihālcand, *The Pavilion in the Grove* (dated *c*. 1745–48).[15] This one is inscribed with a poem from Nāgarīdās's work *Braj-sār* (hereafter BS) or *Essence of Braj* (1742 CE). This is a poetic handbook that alternates *dohā* to introduce the poetical theme, with *kavitta* that give poetic examples. The poem inscribed in the painting comes as an example under the heading, 'The description of placing betel on the beloved's lotus mouth after love play' (*siṅgārāntara priyā mukha kamala bīrī daĩna barnã*):

> *tiya siṅgāra piya pāna daĩ, citaĩ kari bhuva bhaṅga*
> *bīrī nīrī hū̃ na gaī, bhaī nainani gati paṅga*
>
> *nāgarī navala guna āgarī raṅgīlī jāko*
>   *bāṛhyo haĩ prakāsa mukha canda kuñja bhaũna maĩ*
> *bāṅkī bhauhaĩ baṛe naina kahata banai na chabi*
>   *rahyo haĩ sarasa raṅga barasa citauna maĩ*
> *cahaĩ sukhadaina mukha daĩna bīrī pyārī jū kaĩ*
>   *pai na calaĩ kara uta rūpa sarasaũna maĩ*
> *saki jāta caki jāta chaki chaki jāta lāla*
>   *sithala hvai gāta jāta bhaũha bhaṅga haũna maĩ*
>   (BS 30–31, Gupta (1965), p. 2.238)

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13 *Jarabaphta*, meaning 'embroidered fabric,' is attested in HŚS.
14 *Soj* (adj.) for *sojh*: 'straight,' 'direct;' 'near,' 'close' (Platts). *Samaidān* is *shamaʿdān*, 'chandelier.'
15 Dickinson and Khandalavala (1959), pp. 44–45, plate xiii.

The lover in love-play offers betel to his lady. She looks at him, raising a brow.
The betel stops mid-air, its gait lamed by her eyes.

A tender young girl—sophisticated, passionate—
    As her face lights up, the moon illuminates the pavilion.
Large eyes under arched brows, her beauty defies words:
    Sweet passion drizzles in her glances.
To please her, he lifts his hand to place betel in his darling's mouth,
    But stops mid-gesture, arrested by her charming beauty.[16]
The lover, mesmerized, savors to the full this moment,
    Captured just by the flexing of the arch of her brow.[17]

This vignette is a manierist character piece describing a conventional scene, a moment in the after-play (*suratānta*). The painting provides an entry into this intimate moment via the device of the ladies-in-waiting, of which again eight are depicted. Two of the girls to the left of the divine couple are lingering behind a pillar, engaged in a lively verbal exchange, presumably the poem itself, recited to enhance the pleasure of the lovers. It becomes truly a moment out of time for the viewer to savor, just as Kṛṣṇa is savoring the sight of Rādhā's beauty. The voyeuristic delight is further enhanced by the depiction of the lovers with their back to the viewer, turned to each other in profile. Nihālcand, by adding this frame, has succeeded to great effect in breaking the objectifying distance of the *rīti* work. He has done more than illustrate his patron's poem, succeeding in significantly enhancing the overall aesthetic experience. The painting makes the poem come to life in extraordinary ways.[18]

Another famous painting attributed to Nihālcand is *The Bower of Quiet Passion* or *Nikuñj līlā* preserved in the San Diego Museum of Art and dated 1740–45.[19] This is inscribed in the back with a poem that can be identified as a *caupāī* from Nāgarīdās's *Bhor-līlā*, or *The Morning After* (written before 1723 or 1780 VS):

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16 Literally: 'But his hand can't move there, in her charming beauty.' I interpret *sarasaūna* as a rhyme word derived from *sarasa*, in a causative sense, because the adjective *sarasaūhā* is attested in that meaning in BBSK.

17 Literally: 'His body is frozen (has become cool) in the arching of her brow.'

18 A very similar technique is used in a painting now in a private collection in Switzerland where the painter (possibly Nihālcand's son Sītārām) illustrates a *Bhor-līlā* poem on Kṛṣṇa's dressing Rādhā's hair (Losty (2012), p. 96). Here, too, the eight ladies-in-waiting seem to be commenting on the lovers' action.

19 Reproduced in Haidar (2011b), p. 600, Fig. 3, text 606 n. 19, translation 601. See also Welch (1963), pp. 58–59 n. 29, Randhawa and Randhawa (1980), p. 28, plate viii, Haidar (1995), pp. 133–134.

ihi vidhi kari suṣa saĩna, caĩna juta vitaī rajanī
bhaī bhuraharī bera jā̃ni, juri āī sajanī
laikaĩ ru bī̃na prabī̃na, lalita lalitā ju bajāyau
adbhuta rāga bibhāsa, kuñja mandira bica chāyau
cahacahāṭa panchīna kīyau, suṣa samaī suhāvana
sītala pavana parāga, kã̄vala jala para parasata āvana

<div align="right">

(*Bhor-līlā* 4, Gupta (1965), p. 2.254)

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The night passed delightfully in such joyous love-making.
When dawn came,[20] the maidens gathered to alert [the lovers].
They brought a veena, which skillful Lalitā played lovingly.[21]
Wondrous raga *vibhāsa* echoed in the bower,
As birds warbled—a moment of sheer bliss,
Cooled by a breeze from the water, fragrant with lotus pollen.

The painting with its dense foliage conveys vividly the intimacy of the bower where Rādha and Kṛṣṇa are lying entwined on a bed of flower petals. This time the painter is following the poem's lead in depicting the *sakhīs*, including one holding a veena. One *sakhī* is shown bending over to pick lotuses from the river, a clever visual device to suggest the lotus-pollen-perfumed breeze of the poem.

Fascinatingly, there is an uncompleted sketch from the Porret collection that seems to be a pre-study for this painting.[22] In it only one *sakhī* is depicted playing the veena, and the lotus-perfumed breeze is simply suggested by the lotuses in the river in the foreground of the picture. In this preparatory study, then, Nihālcand remained closer to the original poem. One wonders whether the painter prepared such sketches to show to his patron and discuss together. If so, it would mean that the mode of production was a collaborative process.

Other paintings of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *līlā* by Nihālcand may also have been inspired by Nāgarīdās's poems even if they are not inscribed. This is especially the case for seasonal pictures related to festivals that were celebrated with the recitation of poetry and songs. Just one example is *Sāñjhī līlā* from the Royal Durbar, attributed to Nihālcand at the peak of his career.[23] *Sāñjhī* is the autumnal North Indian festival (during the dark half of *āśvin*) when little girls get together to make flower designs

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20 The compound *bhurahare* is attested in BBSK as meaning 'early in the morning.' There may also be a pun as this also could be read as *bhura hari-ber* (*hari-velā*), which can mean at once 'Hari's time' (to depart from Rādhā) and 'the divine moment,' or *Brahma-muhurt*, 'just before dawn.'

21 The repetition of *lalita lalitā* is a *yamaka*, a repetition of the same word in a different meaning. Lalita is also the name of a raga, but the next line specifies that the raga performed is *vibhāsa*.

22 Goswamy, Losty, and Seyller (2014), pp. 58–59, plate 27.

23 Dickinson and Khandalavala (1959), pp. 32–33, plate 7.

in order to obtain a good husband.[24] The painting depicts the flower arrangements made by Rādhā and her friends, with Kṛṣṇa cross-dressing as a girl to gain proximity to Rādhā. Nāgarīdās has several poems on the topic. One possible match is:

> raṅga sarasā̃naĩ barasā̃naĩ bana bāga syā̃mā,
>   khelaĩ sāñjhī sāñjha bhau sāthani siṅgāra kaĩ
> nūpura nināda pūra rahyau haĩ drumani mā̃jha
>   jahā̃ tahā̃ leta kalī kusuma utāri kaĩ
> sā̃varī navelī bāla nīla mani belī sī
>   akelī phiraĩ bāhā̃ jorī saṅga sukuvāri kaĩ
> ḍārihi navāvaĩ mili bīnaĩ phūla pāvaĩ phala
>   nāgariyā vāraĩ mana kautiga nihāri kaĩ

(Sāñjhī ke kavitta 1, Gupta (1965), p. 283)

With youthful zeal, the Dark Lady, in the orchards and gardens of Barsānā
  plays Sānjhī, as evening[25] falls, with her friends all dressed up.
The tinkling of their anklets lingers among the trees,
  as here and there and everywhere they pick buds and flowers from on high.
A new girl, dark of skin, like a sapphire creeper,
  roams separately, arm in arm with a[nother] young girl.
As they join bending branches, picking flowers and fruit,
  Nāgariyā surrenders, gazing on at the wondrous sight.

The painting shows the dark-skinned 'girl,' Kṛṣṇa in disguise, offering Rādhā some buds (s)he has picked. There is a grove of trees in the background and the coming of evening is suggested by the spectacular sunset. Rādhā is attended by four ladies, and Kṛṣṇa is accompanied by another four, so again the painter has added the *aṣṭa-sakhī* device, rendering it into a cultic image. Most prominent is the girlfriend in green holding a musical instrument. Should she be identified with Nāgariyā, the *sakhī* of the last line, who surrenders in awe to the divine spectacle? She is depicted as making the gesture that goes with the words *vāraĩ* or *balihārī*, 'surrender,' which is a circular movement of the arm to avert evil from the beloved and take it upon oneself.

One conclusion one could draw is that the overlap between text and painting, even when they are explicitly associated with one another, is not perfect. Rather than a literal 'translation' of the words, the painting shows the painter's creativity at work: he may inventively add elements that are not present in the poem, and at the same time, omit elements that a literal-minded illustrator might have felt compelled to include.[26] A similar phenomenon has also been noticed in other illustrations of Braj poetry, though in those cases, the paintings were not made for

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24 Entwistle (1984) and Dasa (1996).

25 *Sāñjha*, 'evening,' is a *yamaka*; a pun on the festival name *sāñjhī*.

26 On this, see also Williams (1996), pp. 108–130.

the author of the poetry himself. We see this, for instance, in the illustrations of *Sūr-sāgar* of roughly the same period (a mid-eighteenth century manuscript from Bhārat Kalā Bhavan)[27] and Keśavdās's *Rasik-priyā* in its early seventeenth-century 'subimperial Mughal,' 'Malwa' (perhaps Orccha), and Mewar illustrated versions.[28] Desai speaks of a scale of specificity of the word–image relation that can range between more general and more specific identifiers.[29] She concludes that the more restricted correspondence in the case of the 'subimperial Mughal' *Rasik-priyā* may have to do with the naturalistic Mughal conventions within which the artist was working.[30] She also stresses the highly ornamental and descriptive, rather than narrative, nature of the *Rasik-priyā* text.[31] Both elements may well be applied equally to Nāgarīdās's poetry. Whereas the Mewar depictions of *Rasik-priyā* bring a dynamic element of time into play to convey the poem's action through compositional devices,[32] the images produced by Nihālcand are all focused on one action, taking place in one main plane (with the notable exception of *The Boat of Love*).[33]

The other commonality is the depiction of the eight ladies-in-waiting, or *aṣṭa-sakhī*, which lends a cultic aspect to the paintings. It has been associated with one particular sect, the Vallabha *sampradāya*, but could be more broadly related to any of the Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa sects.[34] Nihālcand used it as part of the device to embed the intimate scenes described in the poetry within a larger frame. It is a visual means of drawing the viewer into these private Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa moments via the *sakhī*, parallel to what the poet does in his poems. Several of the supporting characters are engaged in singing or reciting what may be imagined to be the very poetry by Nāgarīdās that Nihālcand was illustrating. The convention of bhakti poetry is that the composer writes himself into the divine happenings he is describing by taking the voice of a companion of Rādhā or Kṛṣṇa. He does so in the last couplet of the poem, where he gives his name, the so-called *chāpa*. This 'stamp' authenticates the poem as an eye-witness report, the poet implicitly claiming to partake in the events described in his divine role as handmaiden or *sakhī*. Thus, Nāgarīdās often signs as Nāgarī or Nāgariyā, feminine forms of his name. In cases where the

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27 See Hawley (1994), pp. 483–509.

28 Desai (1984), pp. 168–180, 104–120, 159–176, respectively.

29 Ibid., p. 69.

30 Ibid., p. 90.

31 Ibid., p. 91.

32 Ibid., pp. 162–173.

33 Desai (1984), pp. 137–138 also remarks on the relegation of the text to the back of the image in the later (1670s) Malwa *Rasik-priyā* set. In the case of Nāgarīdās, we can presume that the text was so well known to the patron, who was the poet himself, that there was no need to have it in the same plane as the image.

34 In fact, the Vallabhan *picchvāī*s have varying numbers of *sakhī*s flanking the image. Thus, in Skelton's classic work on the topic (1973), there is only one hanging with eight *sakhī*s (plate 2); there are four *sakhī*s in plates 1, 6–7, and six in plates 3, 8–9.

paintings single out a *sakhī* as singing or performing, one may well see this as the equivalent of the *chāpa* in the poems.

This phenomenon needs also to be seen in the context of other Kishangarh paintings where the royal family keenly wrote itself into the mythological scenes it commissioned. A good example is *Tāmbūl Sevā*, a painting depicting an intimate moment in which Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa exchange betel that was commissioned by Sāvant Singh's elder brother, Fateh Singh.[35] The patron appears to be the model for one of the male figures in the foreground, attired as a king, accompanied by cowherds.[36] Another example is a painting by the glamorous painter Bhavānīdās, *Rukmiṇī Garlands Kṛṣṇa*.[37] Here the whole royal family, including Sāvant Singh, is portrayed in the role of the family of the bride, welcoming Kṛṣṇa to Rukmiṇī's house. The Kishangarhi family's mythological role represents a close relationship with Rādhā and subservience to Kṛṣṇa. Such fits the poetic persona of Nāgarīdās, whose very pen name means 'Rādhā's servant,' and who often casts himself in the poetry as a companion of Rādhā. Thus, in the first half of the eighteenth century, the Kishangarh royal family had themselves portrayed by their court painters as active participants in the mythological realm.

This phenomenon is not limited to Kishangarh; we see that elsewhere in Rajasthan, too, patrons are depicted as participating in the world of the gods, or at least in theatrical performances of the myth. One example from Udaipur is *Mahārāṇā Jagat Singh Attending the Rāslīlā* in 1736 by Jairām.[38] In Kota, where the Vallabhan deity Śrī Brijanātha jī was worshiped, a painting from *c.* 1775 depicts Maharao Umed Singh I (r. 1771–1819) watching a Holi performance.[39] It was not uncommon then to depict kings as closely involved with Kṛṣṇa-related performances and to suggest identification with the characters witnessing the divine play. In several cases, such participation in the divine *līlā* is portrayed in the context of seasonal celebrations where, indeed, royal participation is desirable. Possibly this was a fad that started in the eighteenth century among Rajasthani nobility, particularly those devoted to Kṛṣṇa.[40]

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35 Dickinson and Khandalavala (1959), pp. 130–131, plate v; Mathur (2000), pp. 46–47, plate 5.

36 At least such is stated in an archival record of 1827 relating to this painting. Haidar (1995), p. 124, gives the full inscription as transcribed in Khan's thesis in n. 79; see also Mathur (2000), p. 46.

37 Haidar (2011a), pp. 533, 543, Fig. 11.

38 Pal (1997), pp. 258–259, plate 162.

39 Pal (2004), pp. 146–147, plate 68. On how the deity, in turn, promoted the legitimacy of the ruler, see Peabody (2003).

40 We should note, though, that this phenomenon was not limited to Krishnaite environments. We see it also in Shaiva contexts, such as the painting of Rājā Siddh Sen of Mandi (1684–1727) posing as Śiva the ascetic, or meeting Śiva and Pārvatī. See Michell, Lampert,

Undoubtedly Nihālcand's playful interventions were to his patron's liking, but the paintings were also enjoyed by a wider audience. They provide an intimate glimpse of the divine lovers' love-play, mediated through the presence of the eight *sakhī*s. This cult-like use amounted to providing special moments of poetry-enhanced *darśana* to the viewer.

Nāgarīdās, also experimented with Urdu, which was at the time called Rekhtā and was a wildly popular new poetic medium. While he composed several Rekhtā poems, his most sustained effort was a compilation of thirty *dohās* called *Iśq-caman* or *Garden of Love*.[41] It is replete with Persianate imagery, including that of the arch-lovers Laylā and Majnūn. One of Nihālcand's paintings is a depiction of Laylā and Majnūn that starkly foregrounds the lovers, who have eyes only for each other, immersed in conversation, presumably reciting to each other their poetry since there is a manuscript prominently placed between them.[42] They are not meeting in the desert as in the Middle Eastern versions of the story, but rather, on a grassy patch under a shady tree near a river, perhaps the Yamunā. Majnūn is not only emaciated but also badly maimed. Navina Haidar was first to speculate that this Kishangarhi Laylā and Majnūn may have been inspired by the reference to the lovers in Sāvant Singh's *Iśq-caman*.[43]

This speculation can be confirmed by evidence from a Mewar painting of Laylā and Majnūn preserved in National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, which is inscribed with exactly the relevant *dohā* from *Iśq-caman*.[44] This painting is discussed by Molly Aitken in the chapter on 'repetition and response' in her brilliant book on Mewar art, in which she discusses Rajput copies (*naql*) of Mughal originals.[45] She argues convincingly that often these were neither slavish copies nor sterile stereotypes but eclectic reworkings appreciated by their connoisseur (*rasika*) patrons. This is a very important insight and I would like to pursue its implications further.

Aitken seemingly dismisses the relevance of the inscription at the top of this particular painting: 'the painter did not reshape the archetypal composition in any

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and Holland (1982), p. 48, Fig. 292 and ibid. p. 176, respectively; the former in colour also in Goswamy (1986), p. 180, Fig. 138.

41 There are several calligraphic illustrations of *Iśq-caman*, which I discuss in my recent book (2015).

42 Plate 19; see also Haidar (2011b), p. 601, Fig. 4.

43 Haidar (2011b), p. 601, Haidar (1995), pp. 137–138.

44 The National Gallery of Victoria (India Accession Number AS31-1980) on its website dates it as eighteenth-century: <http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/col/work/53386>. (Accessed 9 September 2013). Aitken dates it as nineteenth century (2010), p. 180.

45 Aitken (2010), pp. 179–180, Fig. 428.

way to address the poet's distinct variation on the tale.'[46] She stresses the figural aspect of this and other copies, freed from their discursive relevance, that is, unrelated to narrative text. Upon closer inspection, though, there is something to be learned from taking into account the text, even if indeed the painting may not be a response to it.[47] It consists of three *dohā* from Nāgarīdās's *Iśq-caman* (33–35):

> *lagata hī lālasī rahai, pala bhī pala ugharaĩ na*
> *pūre madave husna ke, majanũ̃ hī ke naina*
>
> He remains thirsting, his eyes don't open, don't even blink.
> Majnūn's eyelids are heavy with her beauty's wine.
>
> *calī kahānī khalaka mẽ, iska kamāyā khūba*
> *majanũ̃ sai āseka nahī, lailī sī mahbūba*
>
> Their story spread in the world, and warranted much love.
> No lover like Majnūn, no beloved like Laylī.
>
> *majanũ̃ kõ kahaĩ saba asala, aura nakala ke bhāya*
> *kachū hoya dila mẽ asala, taba sakaĩ nakala bhī lāya*
>
> All say: 'Majnūn is true, the others seem fake.
> If your heart holds some truth, only then can you try to replicate.'

These lines foreground Majnūn's uniqueness: he cannot be imitated; there is only one like him. The central rhyming contrast in the last *dohā* is between *nakala* (copy) and *asala* (true), which is repeated in both lines of the last *dohā*. The irony of these verses reflecting on the idea of copy/original to illustrate an image that was a creative copy of a Mughal original seems too much for coincidence. Moreover, this painting shows Laylā and Majnūn exchanging manuscript copies, presumably of their poetry, in which they express their anguish at being separated. A yet further level of reflexivity is that the text attached to the painting is a 'copy' (*naql*) of Nāgarīdās's poem *Iśq-caman*, sent to a Mewar ruler, possibly Aḍi Singh (r. 1761–1773), who was a great patron of painting.[48] In response to Nāgarīdās's *Iśq-caman*, Aḍi Singh authored *Rasik-caman*, again a creative 'copy.'[49] The person affixing the text to the painting may well have understood the lovers' exchange of

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46 Ibid.

47 In this case, the text may have been affixed to the painting later.

48 Aḍi Singh, like his predecessor Jagat Singh II, was fond of depicting himself as a *rasika* enjoying art performances. An example is the 1765 painting by Bakhta preserved in the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne (AS183-1980, Felton Bequest; see Topsfield (1980), pp. 118–119, no. 167; p. 29, plate 14; online at <http://maharajacourse.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/indian-court-painting.pdf>. (Accessed 27 December 2013).

49 Pauwels (2015), appendix 2. A copy of Aḍi Singh's work is in the Kishangarh royal collection.

'copies' as symbolic for that of the two poet-rulers. This is a vivid illustration of how combining both the textual and painting history can enrich our understanding of these artefacts.

Finally, I want to make the case that a striking painting identified as *Laylā-o Majnūn*, while not inscribed with a poem, could be related to *Iśq-caman*.[50] It depicts a man and a woman looking on keenly at a central scene depicting a haloed Laylā in elegant Persianate attire, with lifted sword, confronting an emaciated Majnūn in chains knelt in front of her. The image has been attributed to Ghulām Rezā and estimated to date from 1780.[51] One aspect of the painting that is unusual for Laylā–Majnūn depictions is Laylā's martial stance, with raised sword in hand. She looks like a Persianate incarnation of the goddess Durgā, an impression strengthened by the halo around her head, which gives her a goddess-like appearance. This evokes a drawing from Bundi in which Majnūn is depicted as a supplicant, approaching Laylā as an object of worship, like a goddess on a pedestal (dated 1770).[52] As Aitken perceptively puts it, Laylā is here 'a wholly Hindu icon.' The Persian poetic trope of the bloodthirsty beloved has become conflated with the image of the sword-wielding goddess, ready to decapitate her victim. Majnūn becomes the archetypical Rajasthani hero, prepared to sacrifice his life on the battlefield of love, kneeling in front of the decapitating goddess.

Laylā is portrayed in this composite painting with some stylistic characteristics associated with the Kishangarhi school, in particular her elongated eyes, but also her longish nose and slender limbs. Could there also have been literary inspiration from Kishangarh to match the painting's stylistic elements?

The depiction of Laylā as the bloodthirsty Durgā is similar to the imagery in *Iśq-caman*. In additions to the verses pasted to the Mewar painting quoted above, these verses of *Iśq-caman* illuminate what is happening in this particular scene:

> 17. The eyes of the beloved make short work of the innocent.
>   When does she relent? Only when playing with a ball—her lover's head!

> 18. With bloodshot eyes, the beloved has prepared the daggers:
>   They come out stained with blood, as they go right through the lover's chest.

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50 Sotheby's (2011), p. 30. The inscription in Nastaʿlīq underneath the image that identifies it may well post-date the painting.

51 One of the leading Lucknow painters who worked on the Ragamala series that is now part of the Johnson Album in the British Library (Falk and Archer (1981), pp. 170–173). The attribution seems to be based mainly on the landscape elements and the 'paratactic' composition; see Aitken (2009). I am grateful to Dipti Khera of New York University for suggesting this to me. An additional feature may be the subtle appearance of the eyelashes of the eye that is itself unseen in the profile pose, which is also noticeable in some of the Ghulām Rezā Ragamala figures (*Todi Rāginī*, see Losty (2003), p. 123, plate 5; *Khambha-vatī Rāginī*, see Falk and Archer (1981), p. 350, plate ix).

52 See Aitken (2010), p. 201, Fig. 450.

19. He does not retreat from the battlefield, though out of breath, he pushes ahead.
    As his head flies, hit by [her] eyes, he manages "bravo" with his last breath

. . .

21. [Her] eyes wounded him, he fainted on passion's battlefield.
    [She] tied [him] with her hair's curly laces and finished by shattering his heart.

. . .

44. Where the heart is always wounded, and the mud is mixed with blood,
    Where the lover is waylaid and plundered, there, Nāgar says, is the garden
    of love.[53]

The illustration does not fit perfectly, but the images evoked in *Iśq-caman* are re-markably similar. This is not unlike what we have seen in the Nihālcand paintings studied above. Also parallel with that is the presence of spectators of the central scene. In this case, it is not eight *sakhī*s but a man and woman who witness the scene. Possibly, they are lovers themselves, as suggested by the presence of an old crone go-between, against whom the young lady is leaning. Perhaps the artist intended to suggest that the old lady has been conjured up the central scene to fore-tell a possible outcome of their own love affair. Confronted with such a vision of excess, the man seems to keep his 'heart in hand,' as he makes a protective gesture toward his chest, and his expression could be read as being taken aback. For her part, the young lady seems rather enchanted by the possibility of wielding such power; in any case she is intrigued—her expression with the finger on the lip is that of *adbhūta rasa* or 'wonder.'

These peripheral figures of the scene provide a metalevel to the painting that is not present in *Iśq-caman*. Could the painting represent one possible reading of the poem? Should we allow it to guide us toward another possible interpretation of the whole work? Perhaps it was intended as a warning against excessive love, or as a wry comment on one of the patron's own love affairs or that of a friend? Whatever the case, certainly the possibility of reading a painting as part of the reception history of a poem is an exciting one.

This chapter has presented a case study of how a synoptic process of reading evidence from literature together with visual arts can open up new avenues. Com-bining insights from the disciplines of textual studies and art history could lead to a fruitful symbiosis between these academic communities.

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53 *Iśq-caman* selections; full text and translation in Pauwels (2015), appendix 1.

Abbreviations of dictionaries

BBSK   Gupta, Dīndayāl and Premnarāyaṇ Taṇḍan (eds). 1974 (VS 2031). *Brajbhāṣā Sūrkoś*. Lucknow: Viśvavidyālay Hindī Prakāśan.

HŚS   Dās, Śyāmsundar, et al. (eds). 1965-75. *Hindī śabdsāgar.* 11 Vols. Benares: Nāgarīpracāriṇī Sabhā.

Platts   Platts, John T. (ed.). 1974 [1930]. *A Dictionary of Urdū, classical Hindī, and English.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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Raman Sinha

3. Iconography of Tulsīdās

Abstract. This paper addresses a lacuna in current scholarship on how iconography has perceived the saint–poet Tulsīdās over the years. This question is important for the cultural historiography of North India, and also for understanding, in general, how historical figures acquire iconic status by fulfilling different purposes for different ages. The representation of Tulsīdās in paintings, illustrations, murals, sculpture, and other visual art forms provides some clues in determining whether he was perceived as a poet first who achieved sainthood later or was from the very beginning seen as a saint or a Vaishnava saint in particular. The portrayal of Tulsīdās in literary chronicles and hagiographical literature projects him as a saintly, charismatic demigod–like figure who only later acquired human form. It is safe to speculate that as his magnum opus *Rāmcaritmānas* acquired divine or religious status over time, he too became subsequently to be seen as divine. It was only very late in the nineteenth century or early twentieth century, when *Rāmcaritmānas* started to be treated as a literary text, that Tulsīdās began to be considered a poet or a littérateur.

Keywords. Iconography, Tulsīdās, *Rāmcaritmānas*, Miniature painting, Illustrated manuscripts.

In Indian tradition a poet is generally considered to be a seer or a person with divine vision—it is by experiencing the divine that man becomes a *ṛṣi* (seer) or a *kavi* (poet). In his *ādikāvya* (the first poem) Vālmīki describes his creative process:

> Valmiki utters the primal metrical line when he witnesses an act of violence in the forest. He then has a vision of the god Brahma, the ultimate repository of the Sanskrit tradition, and sinks into meditation. Gaining knowledge of Rama's 'full story, public and private' he renders it as Kavya by means of the meter and 'elegant speech' just produced through Brahma's will.[1]

It is no coincidence that Nābhādās considers Tulsīdās to be a reincarnation of Vālmīki for the redemption of mankind in this perverse *kaliyuga* (age of strife).[2] In premodern times, Tulsīdās was well-known, since biographical works of the poet were plentiful, and he was largely perceived and accepted as a devotee of Rāma

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1 Quoted in Pollock (2007), p. 77.
2 कलि कुटिल जीव निस्तार हित, बाल्मीक ''तुलसी'' भयौ । त्रेता काब्य निबंध करिवसत कोटि रमायन । इक अक्षर उद्धरै ब्रह्महत्यादि परायन ॥ Prasad (2009 [1910]), p. 756.

and a seer-poet almost unequivocally.[3] Even if we leave aside these biographies and survey how he was perceived in visual media, our conclusions would not be very different.

Tulsīdās in visual media

From the seventeenth century onwards, the portrayal of Tulsīdās in visual media was largely uniform and indeed quite similar to oral portrayals. The first portrait that has survived is considered to date to around 1608 CE (Fig. 3.1). It is claimed this portrait was made in the house of Pundit Gangaram Joshi of Prahalad Ghat, where Tulsīdās was supposedly staying at the time recovering from a serious illness.

Ranchorlal Vyas, who claims lineage to pundit Gangaram Joshi, published a monograph on Tulsīdās in 1915 in which he also incorporated this painting in monochrome. According to Vyas, the portrait was made by an artist from Jaipur under the tutelage of Emperor Jahangir (1569–1627). The artist asserted his copyright on this painting since, according to him, it was registered under his name. Later, it would be widely edited, beautified, copied, revised, and circulated. Kāśī Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā first enlarged it, had the 'anemic appearance' of its subject corrected by specialist artists and published it in *Tulsī Granthāvalī* (the collected works of Tulsīdās) in 1923. However, a statement in the third volume of *Tulsī Granthāvalī* says that the published portrait was brought from the noted art collector and connoisseur Rai Krishna Das later. Gyanmandal Karyalaya published it in monochrome and the editors of the reputed Hindi magazine *Madhuri* published it in colour. According to the collector Rai Krishna Das, this is one of the two oldest paintings of Tulsīdās. The other one, he explained, is in the collection of Bharat Kala Bhavan in Kashi. He emphasized the fact that the style of building shown in the Prahlad Ghat Portrait doesn't seem so old; that the architectural style developed much later after the rule of Mohammad Shah (1719–1748).[4] A more important painting of Tulsīdās is Sankata Ghat Portrait (Fig. 3.2).

This painting belongs to the family of the mahant Radhavallabha Sharan of Sankata Ghat in Varanasi and according to him, as reported by Vishwanathprasad Mishra, it has been in their family's custody since Shahjahan's time (1628–1658). Radhavallabha ji also emphasized that Rai Krishna Das had taken the portrait to him for supposedly closer scrutiny; in fact, he got it copied after reworking it—

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3 See *Tulsī Carit* of Raghubardās; *Mūl Gosāīṁ Carit* of Benīmādhav Dās; Tulsī Sāhib's *Ātmacaritr*. See also hagiographical works like *Bhaktamāl* or its commentary of Priyādās, or the comments of Vaiṣṇavdās or Nāgrīdās in *Padprasaṅg Mālā* and *Do Sau Bāvan Vaiṣṇāvan kī Vārtā*.
4 Quoted in Mishra (1965), p. 314.

Figure 3.1 Tulsīdās: A young Vaishnava Saint. Prahlad Ghat, Varanasi. Courtesy *Gosain Tulsidas* by Viswanathprasad Mishra.
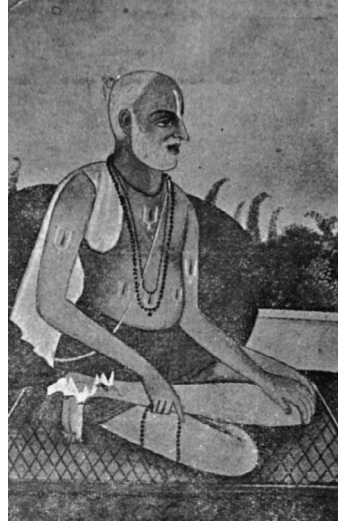
Figure 3.2 Tulsīdās: An old Vaishnava Saint. Sankata Ghat, Varanasi. Courtesy *Gosain Tulsidas* by Viswanathprasad Mishra.

Tulsīdās's beard was shaved and the setting was changed by the famous painter of Mughal tradition, Ustad Ram Prasad. There is also a painting of Tulsīdās in the Mayashankar Yagyik collection, in which he is portrayed as a typical Vaishnava saint. One of the five obligations (*pāñcasaṃskāra*) of a Vaishnava, as set out in the *Padma Purāṇa*, is to bear ornamental tilak (sectarian marks) on twelve pre-scribed parts of the body. In this painting of Tulsīdās, all but one of these tilak are prominently displayed—one, on the right abdomen, is hidden due to his posture in profile. It is evident that the painter wanted to emphasize Tulsīdās's Vaishnava identity very prominently. As Vishwanathprasad Mishra speculated, it seems that there were two original pictures of Tulsīdās—one in middle and one in old age.[5] The first tradition of iconography is based on the painting in the Kishangarh col-lection (Fig. 3.3) in which Tulsīdās is portrayed as a middle-aged Vaishnava saint with long hair and beard, tilak, sacred thread, *kaṇṭhī* mala (necklaces/rosary worn by Vaishnava), and *sumaranī* (meditating beads).

The originating painting of the second tradition of iconography is SGP (*Sanka-ta Ghat Portrait*, Fig. 3.2), in which Tulsīdās is depicted as an old saint with white beard bearing all Vaishnava identity marks. But there is also a third tradition in which Tulsīdās is portrayed as old and clean-shaven, as in the golden-syllable

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5 Mishra (1965), p. 314.
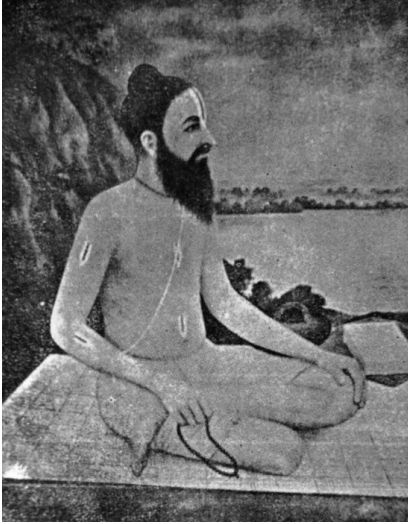
FIGURE 3.3 Young Tulsīdās. Museum of Kishangarh King. Courtesy *Gosain Tulsidas* by Viswanathprasad Mishra.
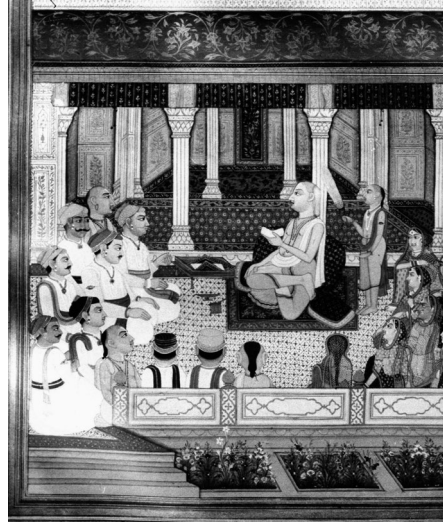
FIGURE 3.4 Tulsīdās reciting *Rāmcaritmānas* in an audience. *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa*, Late Mughal. American Institute of Indian Studies, Gurgaon, Haryana, India.

Rāmāyaṇa (*Svarnākṣarī Rāmāyaṇa*) of Ramnagar, Varanasi. This illustrated manuscript was commissioned by the then king of Kashi, Sri Udit Narayan Singh (1783–1835). It took eight years (1796–1804) to complete and was valued at around one lakh and sixty thousand rupees. Tulsīdās is portrayed in the manuscript as quite old and clean-shaven. He appears quite frequently in this manuscript and here (Fig. 3.4) is satin padmasana (lotus posture) with *kaṇṭhī* mala reciting his *Rāmcaritmānas* in front of a well-to-do gathering.

The artist of this manuscript, Sri Ramcharan, appears to be trained in Mughal miniature painting. Ananda Coomaraswamy has categorized it as 'Mughal influenced post-Rajput miniature painting. Later this style was called 'Popular Mughal style.'[6]

Another painted manuscript of *Rāmcaritmānas* was commissioned by Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II (1835–1880) of Jaipur and again Tulsīdās is portrayed prominently. There are 134 original paintings created between 1857 to 1864 for this manuscript. The final miniature of this manuscript is a depiction of Tulsīdās himself (Fig. 3.5) seated on a throne reciting his magnum opus to a group of his fellow devotees, sitting on the floor. Here Tulsīdās is depicted with beard and long hair, like his devotees around him.

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6 Coomaraswamy (1976), p. 1.

FIGURE 3.5 Tulsīdās with his disciples. *Uttarakāṇḍa*, Pahari, Mughal Art Network.
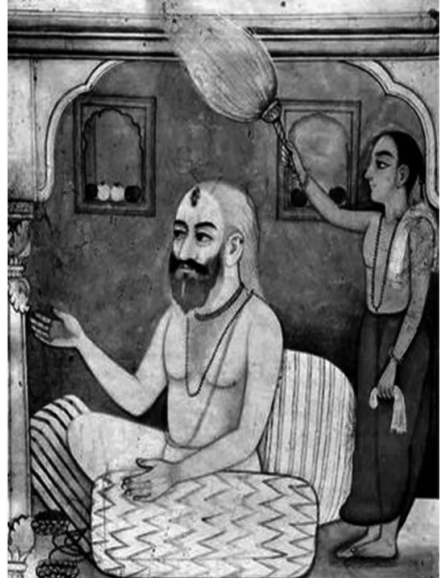
FIGURE 3.6 Tulsīdās with a disciple. Hanuman Temple, Tulsi Ghat, Varanasi, U.P. India.

Other portraits of Tulsīdās exist, such as the *Tulsi Ghat Portrait*, which was once considered to be very old and discovered late and, if we are to believe Rai Krishna Das, was 'done by a modern artist and totally artificial.'[7] This is the only portrait of Tulsīdās that is not in profile and has some resemblance in style with Sikh art (Fig. 3.6).

Another portrait of Tulsīdās is worth mentioning here, first published in London and later circulated in India. The fauna and flora, and the posture and age of Tulsīdās, portrayed in this picture is very similar to the Kashi Ghat Collection. Features in this painting—the *kamaṇḍal* (water-pot), sacred threads, hair and beard style, glance perspective, riverbank—all suggest that either this or the paintings already discussed are copies of the other. Another portrait, which first appeared in the *Tulsī Rāmāyaṇa* published by Khadagvilash Press, Bankipur, in 1889 CE, is credited as having been discovered by Dr George Abraham Grierson (1851–1941). This is the only portrait where Tulsīdās is depicted sitting in *vajrāsana*, a yogic sitting posture. The oil painting in the Rai Krishna Das collection (Fig. 3.7) has become over the years the most popular and considered authentic, though Rai Krishna Das never revealed its source. It seems that it was a reworking of an older picture and later on this painting was itself retouched, reconstructed, and reworked in various ways.

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7 Quoted in Mishra (1965), p. 315.

Figure 3.7 Tulsīdās on the river bank I. Bharat Kala Bhavan, BHU, Varanasi, U.P. India.
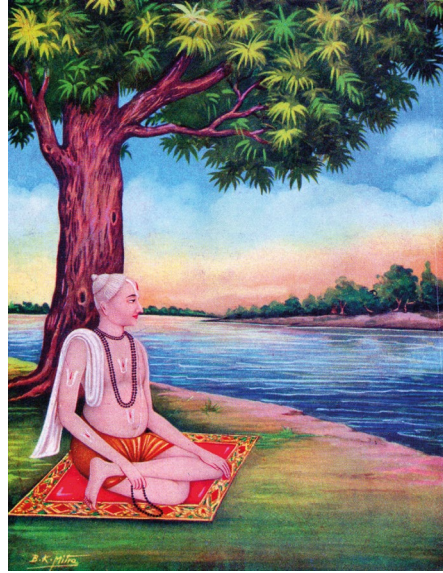
Figure 3.8 Tulsīdās on the river bank II. Gita Press, Gorakhpur, U.P. India.

In issuing a commemorative stamp of Tulsīdās, the Indian post office adopted this portrait as its only source.[8]

The picture that appears in the Gita Press publication on Tulsīdās (Fig. 3.8) is also largely based on this portrait.[9]

It can be easily observed that the Gita Press artist, B. K. Mitra, had simply reformulated the Rai Krishna Das collection portrait in such a way to make it more 'real' and so consequently more 'popular' for commercial consumption. It can be considered a measure of success of this reworking that most of publications since have used it as the most standard iconography of Tulsīdās. Gita Press has standardized and to some extant deified the icon of Tulsīdās in all its publications. Later statues of Tulsīdās installed in Hindu temples further made him more like a deity than a poet.

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8 The stamp was issued on 1 October 1952. It was one of the stamps in the first emissions printed by photogravure in India and thus an important landmark in the evolution of Indian philately. Biographical sketches portrayed on the stamps, along with accompanying couplets from each, are given in the following pages. Vertical in design and measuring 1.6' x 0.95', the stamps are printed on all-over five-pointed multiple-star watermark paper; perforation 14: Set 160.

See <www.indianpost.com/viewstamp.php/Issue%20Date/year/1952/TULSIDAS>.
(Accessed 30 October 2018).

9 Gita Press has started using portraits of Tulsīdās for its publication in a big way after its hugely popular 1938 *Manas Ank* of Kalyan.

3. Iconography of Tulsīdās

The Satya Narayan Tulsi Manas Mandir was built in Varanasi in 1964 as a memorial to Tulsīdās and is a landmark in this regard since we hardly find any temple commemorating a poet or poetry in general. This magnificent temple not only houses a marble statue of Tulsīdās and a *jhanki* (tableau) of wooden figures depicting scenes from his life. It also features engravings on the walls; frescos and the full text of the Kashiraj edition of *Rāmcaritmānas*. The marble statue depicts Tulsīdās in *abhaymudrā* (fearless posture). The tableau, which shows him continuously reciting *Rāmcaritmānas*, is another example of perception of him as a saint-poet.

Another temple in which Tulsīdās is prominently displayed is Manas Mandir in Tulsi Peeth Seva Nyas, a religious and social service institution based at Janki Kund, Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh. Tulsi Peeth was established by Guruji Rambhadracharya on 2 August (Tulsi Jayanti Day) in 1987. The white-marble Manas Mandir temple, constructed in 2008, is situated at the entrance to the site, which incorporates several buildings and has a statue of saint Tulsīdās in the centre. There is another, larger-than-life-size, statue of Tulsīdās inside the temple and three-dimensional paintings depicting different episodes of the *Rāmcaritmānas* inscribed on the walls. In 2011 the Manas Darshan, an exhibition of moving models showing various scenes from the *Rāmcaritmānas*, was opened to the public and the statues of the poet unveiled.

Statues are very common for popular iconography but require some kind of likeness with the subject since it is an art form that is essentially realist in nature. Statuary presupposes a kind of eminence of the subject and its location of installation is also crucial to understand its areas of influence. Statues of Tulsīdās are installed in Hindu temples and are made of marble, stone, wood, clay, and so forth. These statues, like his paintings, do not resemble each other in their outer physical appearance but what is common among them is their saintly persona and non-materialistic ambience.

Just as the figurative aspect of the painting lost its centrality in modern portraiture, Tulsīdās began appearing in a very subjective way. In 1925 Abdur Rahman Chugtai (1897–1975) conceived Tulsīdās (Fig. 3.9) in a way that is very similar to the portraits of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, usually chiselled by the artists of the Bengal School. Chugtai was at the time very much influenced by the work of Abanindranath Tagore (1871–1951) and this work testifies it.

Another example of the modern depiction of Tulsīdās can be found in the murals of Shantiniketan by Binod Bihari Mukherjee (1904–1980). The mural *Life of the Medieval Saints* (Fig. 3.10) is considered to be one of the largest murals of contemporary India painted using the buon fresco technique. It was executed on three walls of the Hindi Bhavan of Visva-Bharati in Shantiniketan between December 1946 and April 1947.

FIGURE 3.9 Tulsīdās in trance. Chughtai Museum, Lahore, Pakistan.

3. Iconography of Tulsīdās

FIGURE 3.10 Tulsīdās in Manikarnika Ghat. *Life of the Medieval Saints*, West Wall of Hindi Bhavan, Shantiniketan.
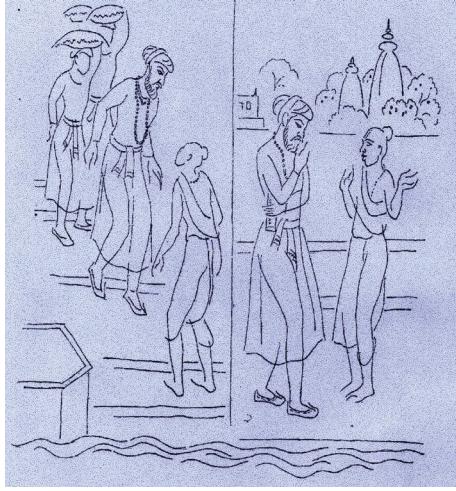
FIGURE 3.11 Tulsīdās with Rahīm. *Tulsidas: Hebbar's Narration in Lines*.

Gulammohammed Sheikh observes:

> The western wall is full of action with a dramatic image of Tulsidas in dialogue with an enigmatic character, probably Narhariyananad. The towering image of the Goswami stands in a performative gesture of supplication to an equally tall man holding a serpentine staff in one hand and gesticulating in animated exclamation with the other. . ..The Rising flames between the two protagonists indicate the location of Manikarnika ghat by the holy Ganga where the devout desire to die. A panorama of the busy Banaras Ghats surrounds the two. On the left, in a conglomeration of houses and shops, a daily drama unfolds; imbued with the rituals of death. . . . The compatibility of life with the ritual of death enmeshed in a philosophical underlayer is represented with a degree of dispassionate engagement. Or are we being led to follow the sadhu's view of samsara (world of mortals)?[10]

Whatever the case may be, it is certain that Tulsīdās is not treated here like the earlier iconography of him as someone concentrating silently on the isolated bank of Ganga or Saryu, away from the hustle and bustle of the everyday life. Rather, he is shown very much in the midst of events and historical time.

Another example of modern treatment is K. K. Hebbar's rendering, in which Tulsīdās's life story is illustrated without any 'larger than life approach.' He is depicted in two scenes in the reproduced plate (Fig. 3.11) firstly it seems in the background of plague-ridden neighbourhood leaving, he is making his point clear

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10 Sheikh (2007), date and page number not mentioned.

to Rahīm and secondly thus refusing Akbar's invitation to grace his court in such trying situation to Rahīm. Hebbar made explicit his desire to illustrate the saint's life in 'simple lines,'[11] and his renderings illustrate how a poet struggles and overcomes various kinds of hurdles in life to achieve greatness.

Tulsīdās in verbal media

There are three dramatic episodes that are said to have occurred in Tulsīdās's life that have attracted the most vivid depictions among iconographers. The first episode relates to his wife Ratnāvalī, the second his encounter with the emperor, and in the third, the Lord Śiva himself hails *Rāmcaritmānas* above the Vedas and Puranas. All three episodes may have first appeared in the *Bhaktamāl* commentary of Priyādās (1712)[12] and later, as Mataprasad Gupta believes, incorporated in Bhavānīdās's *Gosāīṁ Carit* and Benīmādhav Dās's *Mūl Gosāīṁ Carit*.[13]

The question of fact or fiction aside, these episodes have great potentiality for dramatic impact—no wonder they constitute the most poignant material for any narrative of Tulsīdās in any form. In his commentary, Priyādās describes the first dramatic episode thus:

> He (Tulsidas) had great love for his wife. Without asking his leave, she went to her father's home, and he forgot all about himself, and hastened there too. She was greatly ashamed, and went away in anger, saying, 'Have you no love for Rama? My body is but a framework of skin and bone.' When he heard these words it was as it were the day break; he felt compunction and left her and went to the city of Kashi.[14]

This story became so convincing over the years that no narrative of Tulsīdās— comic book, film, play, painting, novel, or poem—is considered authentic without incorporating it in some way.

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11 Hebbar (1989), in the acknowledgements.
12 Prasad (2009 [1910]).
13 Gupta (2002), p. 78.
14 Cited in Gopal (1977), p. 113.

3. Iconography of Tulsīdās

Tulsīdās in performative media

Poems about Tulsīdās have been very popular in classical, folk and popular music over the years; but adopting his life or episodes from his life as subject matter in a form like *viraha* is a new phenomenon. Ramkripal Yadav's *Wife's Taunts Enlighten the Husband*, a music album of *viraha*, is one such example of a performative narrative that is structured effectively on the first dramatic episode in Tulsīdās's life. Priyadās's version of the second episode, *The Emperor Visits Tulsidas*, goes like this:

> The Emperor of Delhi sent an offer to fetch him. . . they spoke so courteously that he agreed and went. He arrived before the king, who received him with honour, gave him an exalted seat, and said in gracious tone: 'Let me see a miracle; it is noised throughout the world that you are master of everything.' He said: 'It is false; know that Rama is all in all.' 'How is Rama to be seen?' he said, and threw him into prison. He prayed within himself: 'O gracious Hanumana, have pity upon me.' That very moment thousands upon thousands of sturdy monkeys spread all over the place, clawing bodies, and tearing clothes, and great was the alarm. They broke open the fort, wounding the men, destroying everything; where could one fly for safety? It seemed as though the end of the world had come. Then his eyes were open by this taste of a sea of calamities, and the king cried, 'Now I wager all my treasure; it is he only who can save me.' The king came and clasped his feet: 'If you give me life, I live: pray speak to them,' he told the king, 'Better watch the miracle a little.' The king was overwhelmed with confusion. Then he stopped it all and said to the king: 'Quickly abandon this spot; for, it is the abode of Rama.' So the king quitted the place and went and built a new fort, and to this day anyone who abides there falls ill and dies.[15]

The same episode is described in Dās's *Mūl Gosāīṁ Carit*:

> The king of Delhi requested the sage to show a miracle. Tulsi refused to oblige and was put in jail. The monkeys of Hanuman now assembled in the palace. They tore the clothes of the queens who were now exposed. They threw the king on the ground. There was terror in the palace. The saint was now released. The king asked for forgiveness. And Tulsi was sent away, with all honours, in a palanquin.[16]

Over the years, this episode has unfailingly caught the imagination of painters, film directors, comic book writers, and others.

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15 Quoted in Gopal (1977), pp. 114–115 (trans. Growse 1887).

16 दिल्लीपति बिनती करे दिखरावहु करमात । मुकरी गए बंदी किए कीन्हे कपि उतपात ॥
बेगम को पट फारेऊ नगन भई सब बाम । हाहाकार मच्यौ महल पटको नृपहिं धड़ाम ॥
मुनिहि मुक्त तत्छन किए क्षमाऽपराध कराय । विदा कीन्ह सनमान जुत पीनस पै पधराय ॥
Quoted in Gupta (2002), pp. 63–64.

Particularly in comic books, the narratives are more or less authoritative in nature as compared to novels and fiction in general. Comic books present their subjects as true stories—multiplicities of voice are not encouraged. For example, Amar Chitra Katha and Wilco both present this second dramatic episode in Tulsīdās's life in a way that is supposed to be convincing for readers. Selecting from a plethora of earlier tales, legends, and stories, they arrange the material to suit the 'taste' of their reading public.[17]

In the twentieth century, depictions of Tulsīdās moved from static, two-dimensional forms to a dynamic interpretation of his life through film and performance. Most narratives of Tulsīdās's life have been adapted from premodern hagiographical works such as the *Gautam Candrikā* or the *Mūl Gosāīṁ Carit*. The *Gautam Candrikā* describes Tulsīdās's persona and daily routine thus:

> Tulasi (sic) would get up very early in the morning and spend some time singing songs, giving discourses or writing. He would then bathe in the Ganga, do Sandhya and, with a composed mind, as laid down, offer prayers. After this, he would offer water to those who deserved it and arghya (offering of water, flowers and uncooked rice) to the sun. With due ceremonies, he would offer leaves of bel tree to Vishwanath, tulasi leaves to Bindumadhav. Afterwards, he would enter the cave of Hanumana and offer fruits to gods. Then Tulasi would recite the whole of *Adhyatma Ramayana* and eat what others gave him, or what he got by begging. He would put on the ochre-coloured clothes. He had a tuft of hair, the sacred thread and a rosary.[18]

There are five biopic films in Hindi on the life of Tulsīdās—made in 1939, 1954, 1964, 1972, and 2013. Others have been made in other Indian languages like Marathi (1939), Bangla (1950), Gujarati (1972), and Telugu (2012).

The first biopic film, *Sant Tulsidas*,[19] is made in the tradition of devotional melodrama. This is one of the founding genres of Indian cinema and, as film critic Rachel Dwyer points out, 'the devotional films are often set outside brahmanical religion or question some aspect of it, and celebrate the introduction of vernacular language into worship.'[20] The dramatic pivot of the film revolves around Tulsīdās's realization of his life's vocation after being scolded by his wife amidst howling winds and a river flood. This is the turning point in his life and it caught the imagination of film-makers thereafter. He becomes an ascetic and settles down

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17 See Pai (1977) and *Tulsidas* (2011).
18 Gopal (1977), appendix ii, p. 73.
19 Produced by Jayant Movietone and directed by Jayant Desai, with music by Gyan Dutt and Vishnupant Pagnis, cinematography by Krishna Gopal, and dialogue by Pundit Indra, this film was released in Hindi and Marathi simultaneously in 1939. Songs were sung by Vasanti and Ram Marathe, who also acted in the film. The lead actors were Vishnupant Pagnis (who played Tulsīdās), Leela Chitnis (Ratnāvalī), and Keshavrao Date (Baṭeśvar Śāstrī).
20 Dwyer (2007), p. 65.

in Benares where his magnum opus *Rāmcaritmānas* outrages the Brahminical clergy, until that point sole proprietors of the wisdom of Sanskrit texts.

A second film, *Tulsidas*,[21] was released in 1954. This critically acclaimed film[22] was technically much superior to first film. Its music compositions were a noted high, especially casting songs sung by Mohammad Rafi and songs like 'Kahan Chhupe Ho Raja Ram,' 'Hey Mahadev Meri Laaj Rahe,' and so on. The third dramatic episode of Tulsīdās's life—Śiva's hailing of *Rāmcaritmānas*—was vividly highlighted in this film.

Next came *Goswami Tulsidas*, released in 1964.[23] This film was largely in the style of films with a mythological theme; Tulsīdās is portrayed reciting Sanskrit verses about Rāma, inviting the wrath of *kaliyuga*, who instructs Kāmadeva to incite him with lust so that he abandons his vocation, marries Ratnāvalī, and devotes all his time to her. The film, however, fails to authentically make its point as its narrative was dependent on so many 'suspension of disbelief.'

Eight years later, a fourth biopic appeared. *Sant Tulsidas*[24] was made, supposedly, only for believers since Tulsīdās interacts with Śiva, Hanumān, and other mythical characters and at the same time transcends historical timelines and talks with saints like Kabīr with equal ease. This film was released in Hindi and Gujarati simultaneously in 1972.

The latest film on Tulsīdās is *Goswami Tulsidas*, released in 2013.[25] This film is more realistic in tone and far more technically superior than all earlier films. The traditional episodes of Tulsīdās's life are presented in such a way that the contemporary viewer may empathize with the poet in his distress and sublimation.

Beyond film, Tulsīdās is presented in other performative arts such as television series and theatre. One episode of the Indian TV series *Upanishad Ganga* titled 'Glory of Human Birth' depicts Tulsīdās in a much more undeified form.[26] Shekhar Sen wrote, composed, directed, and acted in *Goswami Tulsidas*, a mono-act

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21 Produced by Ratnadeep Pictures and directed by Bhalchandra Shukla and Harsukh Bhatt, with music by Chandra Gupta and lyrics by Gopal Singh Nepali; the cast included Mahipal, Shyama, Raj Kumar, Dulari, Sunder, Ramesh Sinha, and Uma Dutt.

22 Dwyer (2007), p. 86.

23 Directed by B. K. Adarsh, music direction by S. N. Tripathi, screenplay by Adarsh, and dialogue by Naval Mathur and B. D. Mishra. Leading roles were played by Shahu Modak, P. Kailash, Tuntun, and Jaymala.

24 Directed and produced by Pundit Bhalchandra. Cast includes Rekha Chauhan, Dalpat, Vijay Dutt, Shahu Modak, and B. M. Vyas.

25 Produced by Matcha Srinivasa Rao, screenplay and direction by Allani Sreedhar. The lyrics and dialogues are written by D. K. Goel and the music composed by Shashi Preetam. 'Goswami Tulsidas' is played by actor Sunil Sharma, with Pooja Baluti playing Ratnāvalī and Vindu Dara Singh playing Hanumān.

26 This twenty-third episode of the series was directed by Chandraprakash Dwivedi and produced by Chinmay Mission, broadcast on DD National in 2012.

musical play depicting the entire life sketch of the poet using mostly his work. The play begins asTulsīdās arrives on earth for a day and tells his story. It's a story of how an orphan beggar boy becomes the greatest poet in India. Shekhar Sen presents Tulsīdās as a social reformer who rebels against the exploitation of poor and ignorant people by the Sanskrit-literate priestly class and writes the *Rāmāyaṇa* in a local language. This 120-minute-long drama was presented in fifty-two musical parts. These musical parts were not mere accompaniment—they were the very structure of the play. The play was presented in 1998 on the eve of 501st anniversary of the poet's birth.

The iconography of Tulsīdās in narrative forms differs from its non-narrative forms. Portraits are like snapshots; narrative presupposes a story. The story of Tulsīdās has been told in verbal media like biography, *vārtā* (written hagiography), novels, and poems and also in visual media like film, theatre, TV series, paintings, sketches, comic books, and so on. These narratives can be classified further into two categories—premodern and modern—based on their treatment of the subject and the timeline. Most hagiographical and biographical works treat Tulsīdās as having some kind of supernatural power and this is the main characteristic of premodern iconography. In contrast, some modern renderings of Tulsīdās insist upon his human aspects in a realistic form; films like *Tulsidas*, Sen's solo play *Goswami Tulsidas*, Dwivedi's *Upanishad Ganga* episode, and Yadav's *viraha*. Not covered in this chapter, we may add to this list two novels—Amritlal Nagar's *Manas ka Hans* and Rangeya Raghav's *Ratna ki Baat*—and Nirala's long poem *Tulsidas*. All these works portray Tulsīdās as a creative person who evolves through his hardships in life. Despite this contrast in interpretation, modern presentations have continued premodern tendencies to *mythicize* this subject, as it is said, 'more the things change, the more they remain same!'

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PART II

PERSIAN ENCOUNTERS

Allison Busch

Reflections on Culture and Circulation in Early Modern India

Approaches to Indian literature have changed dramatically since I first entered the field over two decades ago. This is not the place to catalogue all of the important developments, though it seems salient to note a few. Many of us no longer relegate so much of Mughal-period Indian literature to a 'medieval past, even if scholars writing in Hindi still frequently use the term *madhyakāl*, but see it as a threshold of something new (hence the category 'early modern'). And literature of this period is no longer synonymous with specifically religious literature. The official title of our conference, the admittedly unwieldy 'International Conference on Early Modern Literatures of North India' (ICEMLNI), is a gesture toward a more capacious understanding of the textual past, even if the shorthand 'bhakti conference' is still in use among participants.

The 'Early Modern Literatures of North India' is a vast subject, encompassing a wide range of genres and subjects in a multitude of languages. Much of this textual past has yet to be explored. As Imre Bangha reminds us, Hindi manuscript culture proliferated dramatically after 1600,[1] and Hindi is only one of the major languages in play during this period. Muzaffar Alam, for his part, notes the extraordinary achievements of the Mughal dynasty in the Persian language: 'In terms of sheer profusion and variety of themes, this literary output probably exceeded that produced under every other Muslim dynasty.'[2] Most of us are only familiar with a tiny fraction of early modern India's textual culture. Often out of necessity or by inclination we burrow down into one particular tradition and this is in spite of the fact that India then and now has always been a profoundly polyglot place.

Scholars have grappled with the interplay between language ecumenes, proposing frameworks to make sense of them. Sheldon Pollock's model of the 'cosmopolitan' and 'vernacular' in literary culture has been very influential, particularly for theorizing how a whole panoply of Indian and Southeast Asian languages drew expressive sustenance from Sanskrit.[3] Shantanu Phukan's idea of an 'ecology'

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1 Bangha (2011), pp. 140-41.
2 Alam (2004), p. 122.
3 Pollock (2006), especially chapters 8–10.

of languages has been a valuable strategy for understanding the investment of Mughal-period Persian intellectuals in Hindi literature.[4] More recently, Francesa Orsini has been highlighting the importance of multilingual approaches to Indian literature[5] and a collection of essays that Thomas De Bruijn and I edited sought to foreground the cross-pollination of literary cultures within India.[6] When operating in a multilingual setting authors make certain choices that we need to understand far better than we currently do. They may have been responding to different audiences when they made these choices. Some authors then, as now, may compose in the vernacular in full view of more cosmopolitan options (Sanskrit, Persian, or, in today's world English) whether because of education and life chances or a personal leaning toward a particular mode of writing. Choosing one language over another may offer different rewards, depending on the context. But writers were usually aware of different possibilities, and their work was colored by other languages in the literary field even if they hewed closely to one.

The following essays are in part an invitation to think across and between languages. The educational and lexicographical texts at the heart of Arthur Dudney's formulations, the institutional armature of Persian in India, are a good basis for reflecting on language interactions since genres like primers and dictionaries were responsive to their immediate social and geographical contexts.[7] By the seventeenth century, Persian was no longer an essentially foreign language but was deeply embedded in Indian linguistic and literary culture. Translations, or in some cases transcreations, of prior works have been around for a long time in India and are also a productive way to think about language relationships. Marc Tiefenauer's essay studies the processes by which complex ideas from Sanskrit theology and diverse Indic knowledge systems were rendered into a Perso-Islamicate thought world.

Dudney offers a tantalizing glimpse of the life of Persian in the *qaṣbah*, the provincial towns that, though secondary centers when compared to cosmopolitan cities like Delhi or Agra, were nonetheless critical to administration. *Qaṣbah*s may also have been far more important in cultural terms than we currently understand. It is typical to associate Persian with high Mughal court culture, even if recent scholarship has pointed to the ubiquity of the language at the middle and even lower rungs of society.[8] The figure of ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ Hānsawī (fl. late seventeenth century), who

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4 Phukan (2001).

5 One programmatic statement is Orsini (2012).

6 De Bruijn and Busch (2014).

7 Lexicography has been a relatively understudied subfield in India, though R. S. McGregor's study of early Hindi dictionaries (2001) masterfully illuminates language interactions and provides some evidence of precolonial framings of language. Also see Walter Hakala's excellent recent book (2016).

8 Recent work on the Persian munshi by Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (2004) and Rajeev Kinra (2015) are now indispensable to how we think about the Persian bureau-

animates Dudney's paper, shows us another view of the Persian cosmopolis. ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ was a member of a class of everyday teachers who kept the cogs of Persian education moving. Numerous works of his can be excavated from Indian manuscript libraries. His *Risālah* (*Essay*) on the rules of Persian, in part a digest of earlier lexicographical studies, was evidently in wide circulation. His *Ġharāʾib al-Luġhāt* (*Oddities among Words*) in particular bears testament to how Indic words were encompassed into Persian. This work suggests that Persian, often hailed as a quintessentially cosmopolitan language today, could operate in something of a vernacular register. This evidence of vernacular Persian was later somewhat erased since Sirāj al-Dīn ʿAlī Ḳhān Ārzū, a more sophisticated courtly intellectual than his provincial counterpart, rewrote ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ Hānsawī's text as *Nawādir al-Alfāz̤* (*Wonders among words*), and huffily rejected expressions he viewed as rustic solecisms.[9] The boundaries of *fasāhat* (linguistic purity) needed to be policed.

Dudney makes many valuable observations about the interactions between Persian and vernacular that are legible in lexicography, but the relationship between Ārzū and ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ also speaks to larger issues in Indian literary culture, particularly some of the social geographies of the multilingual literary field. ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ did not achieve the fame of his near-contemporary Ārzū. He did not trade in the wares of courtly *fasāhat* by writing poetry but instead he toiled in the more workaday provincial world of education and lexicography. His memory has been nearly erased, but finding traces of him through the appropriation of his material by influential figures like Ārzū (whatever his snobbery about usage, Ārzū did evidently consider the work of ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ important since he drew heavily on two of his works) prompts us to examine more closely our assumptions about metropole and periphery in the constitution of literary excellence and their position along the vectors of cultural circulation. The profile of ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ Hānsawī drawn here, sketchy though the historical record is, raises important issues for early modern literary and social history and encourages us to seek richer models to handle the diverse social and multilingual encounters in the Indian textual record.

Multilingualism is equally central to Tiefenauer's essay. Probing a little known treatise on embryology, the *Upanikhat-i Garbha* (*The Secret Science of Embryology*),

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cracy in India. Sumit Guha (2004), pp. 26–27 has demonstrated the trickle-down of Persian into Marathi at the level of local bureaucracy. Certainly Persian was still an important part of Indian education well into the nineteenth century. Some of the earliest Hindi authors, like Devakinandan Khatri (fl. 1890) and Premchand (active in the early decades of the twentieth century), received a Persian education.

9 Ārzū scoffs at words like *chatrī* (a feature of Rajput architecture) that were not in Delhi usage. Linguistic snobbery was of course widespread in India over the longue durée. Witness the need for the Sanskrit language to be policed by *śiṣṭa* people, namely the Brahmins of Āryāvārtā (Desphande 1993). And many thinkers militated against using *grāmya* (rustic) words, considered a *doṣa* (flaw) in poetry.

whose translation from Sanskrit into Persian was sponsored by none other than the famous Mughal prince Dara Shukoh (1615–1659), he offers up a vision of translation theory and practice that raises larger questions about the hermeneutics of cultural exchange. In the complex act of translation, a very wide range of strategies can be followed for rendering concepts into another language. The Sanskrit embryological text in question was embedded in the Brahminical thought world, elements of Sāṃkhya, Advaita Vedanta, and Ayurveda comingled. How did Persian scholars 'cope' with all of the embedded references and prior texts?[10] Drawing on the work of Vladimir Ivir, Tiefenauer examines the strategies of borrowing (that is importing a loan word from the source language), definition, literal translation, substitution, lexical creation, omission, and addition. These techniques might also be used in combination, or in other surprising ways. For instance, borrowing loan words can itself be a multilingual act, when the translator chooses to let a combination of Sanskrit and Hindustani words speak in their own cultural register on the Persian page. Here Tiefenauer is in the good company of other South Asia scholars who have investigated the deeply cultural components of translation. Tony Stewart, for instance, has found translation theory a useful framework for exploring how Muslim and Hindu cultural systems were mediated through 'dynamic equivalence.'[11]

For Tiefenauer, translation can shade into diplomacy, as when strains of Indian theology and philosophy were rendered into an Islamic worldview. Exuberant references to theistic gods were tamped down with a generic Advaita formulation or flattened into epithets for Allah, reducing their theological awkwardness for Muslim readers.[12] Transmigration, the rebirth of souls into a womb, was a similarly unacceptable idea in Islam (which conceives of a singular afterlife of the body) and it needed to be managed. It is particularly fascinating to observe how Quranic references sometimes served as suitable glosses for the Sanskrit terminology. Quranic equivalences made Hindu concepts legible in a new framework, though they also profoundly altered their meaning. Overall, the act of translation is consistent with Dara Shukoh's larger vision of the conformity of Hindu philosophy with Islamic monotheism.

Much of today's university curriculum, in India and abroad, centers on a fairly restricted literary canon; students are naturally eager to read works deemed excellent by generations of readers. But forays into lesser known or minor works should not be seen as merely mining for esoterica, when scholars are able to excavate important patterns that bear on larger cultural issues. Reading beyond the canon, as these essays show, can expand our knowledge of early modern textual culture and the methods we can employ to approach it.

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10 On 'prior text' see Becker (1995), pp. 285–288.

11 Stewart (2001).

12 On the need to avoid theological awkwardness in the translation of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* into Persian at Akbar's court, see Truschke (2011).

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Arthur Dudney

4. Persian-Language Education in Mughal India from *Qaṣbah* to Capital

Abstract. Although education was fundamental for someone's entry into the Persian-using public sphere in Mughal India, present-day scholars have devoted little attention to the mechanics of how Persian language and literature was taught. This chapter focusses on ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ Hānsawī (fl. late 17th c.), an educator active in Hansi, a town some 150 km northwest of Delhi. As a teacher (rather than a poet or a courtier) working outside the imperial centre, he is passed over in the usual sources for reconstructing Persianate intellectual history, but his works were nonetheless extremely influential: his Persian primer became one of the most widely used schoolbooks in eighteenth-century India. Within a generation, the philologist Ārzū revised ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's pioneering lexicon of Indic words, *Ġharāʾib al-luġhāt*, and inaugurated an important reappraisal of linguistic standards in what would come to be called Hindi-Urdu. This calls into question the oft-repeated notion that Persian was never properly integrated into the Indian lifeworld, and so was inevitably replaced by a 'native' Indic language.

Keywords. ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ, Hānsawī, Indo-Persian, Urdu, Lexicography, Pedagogy.

Whatever progress has been made by scholars in demonstrating the role of Persian in premodern Indian life, it is worth reflecting on the obstacles they must continue to battle to dislodge the preconception of Persianate culture as a perennial other in South Asia. Writing in 1963, the great linguist S. K. Chatterji described the aftermath of the arrival of the Urdu poet Walī from the Deccan to Delhi, itself an overdetermined event in the imagined history of Urdu literature, in the following words:

> Delhi Urdu as a Muslim language thus came into being. The Court circles, and the Persian and Arabic scholars, and particularly Muslims in Delhi of recent foreign origin, took to the new language with enthusiasm. Coteries of poets grew up, who became language-reformers; their zeal was for introducing Persian and Arabic words to saturation, to eschew Hindi and Sanskrit words as far as possible, and to forget in their compositions everything about India. . . . Urdu poetry, up to the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century, was just a reflex of Persian poetry. . . . It was this mentality—an incapacity to

79

> appreciate or acknowledge their Indian heritage out of an excessive zeal for
> Arab and Irani Islam—which was largely responsible for half the sorrows of
> modern India, including her recent dismemberment.[1]

Several fascinating assumptions are at work here, including the implication that
Persian at least indirectly caused the 1947 Partition of British India. Chatterji pre-
sumes a sectarian identity for Urdu which in turn derives from the irreducible
foreignness of Arabic and Persian. Urdu poetry, he claims, was a mere imitation
of Persian poetry and as such could not reflect Indian life. All of these assertions
are questionable, and it is the present author's intention to continue to question
such predetermined conclusions through a study of Persian-language education in
India. The present article is intended more as a prolegomenon for research in prog-
ress rather than as a presentation of a polished thesis. The main figure of interest,
the late seventeenth-century teacher ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ Hānsawī, has so far eluded any
biographical certainty in the absence of any archival breakthroughs but he rep-
resents a class of person that needs to be better understood in order to understand
Persian in South Asian society.

 We should begin with some preliminary notes about Persian in premodern
South Asia. Firstly, the framework that this article and all of the present author's
work promotes is that of Persian as a cosmopolitan and therefore a learned lan-
guage. Attention ought to be paid to the mechanics of teaching the language, in-
cluding the various tools for handing down the tradition, which serve a variety
of skill levels: these include *tażkirah*s (collections of brief biographies of poets
generally with selections from their verses), lexicons (including the *niṣāb* genre,
which is to say, rhyming dictionaries for children), literary set texts (for example,
Gulistān and *Bostān*), commentaries on those set texts whether as free-standing
works or marginalia (*ḥāshiya*), collections of *inshāʾ* or belles-lettres, and prim-
ers in grammar, prosody, accounting, and specialized subjects. The tools matter
because of the pervasive misconception that learned language is necessarily syn-
onymous with artificial language, and we need to trace how Persian was actually
embedded in an Indian lifeworld.[2]

 Secondly, our terminology for South Asian multilingualism is inevitably
anachronistic: in describing the linguistic environment, one can either refer
to Persian as opposed to something called 'the vernacular,' or one can refer to
Persian as opposed to a named language or literature (for example, Hindi/Urdu/
Reḵẖtah/Bhāṣā). These approaches are both unsatisfactory. The former implies

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1 Chatterji (1963), pp. 146–147, with two obvious typos fixed.
2 Literary scholars have a similar distaste for early modern *rīti* Hindi (as laid out in Busch
(2014), for example), which was supposedly unable to address Indian life because it was
mannerist and courtly. Of course, Hindi literature is discussed without the overtones of
'foreignness' that have often structured the debate around Persian in India.

a binary in which Persian is the cosmopolitan language and the vernacular in its various forms is by definition non-cosmopolitan, and thus local, less valued, un-standardized, liable to corrupt other languages, and so on, as Persian floats magisterially above it. Such a fundamentally structuralist logic in which it is assumed that only one language can fill one role suffers from a double imprecision, in that it is difficult to define the language varieties in question as well as to delineate the boundaries of the roles to be filled. The absolute division of cosmopolitan and vernacular in the South Asian context has been effectively questioned for more than two decades.[3] However, even if we grant the so-called 'vernacular' its cosmopolitan roles, scholars are perhaps less willing to allow Persian to be seen as a properly Indian language and have bracketed it off in various ways that have no basis in historical texts, as we saw in the context of Chatterji's description of Urdu above, but rather reflect present-day language ideologies. The second possibility for terminology, Persian set against a named language/tradition, is if anything worse because we have to commit to a name for that language or literary tradition. Is it '*hindī*'? That is the term used in most Persian sources to refer to what is 'not Persian,' but of course it means 'Indic language and not Modern Standard Hindi. We could call it Urdu but that name would not be used until the 1780s and has its own politics. Reḳhtah seems like a neutral compromise but it too is anachronistic, laden with socio-political assumptions, and perhaps not even strictly speaking correct by contemporary definitions.[4] Bhāṣā, construed either broadly or specifically as the literary dialect Brajbhāṣā, is not Reḳhtah, but clearly some Indo-Persian writers were thinking about it as 'the Indic language that is not-Persian.' Here the issue is literarized versus non-literarized language, a distinction for which we have almost no feeling today because every language that most of us come into contact with is literarized. To avoid complexities in terminology, this article refers to 'the vernacular' but uses it in the narrow sense of the language variety spoken natively around Delhi by elites which was being to some degree literarized by ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's time. It is Khaṛī Bolī, which is to say grammatically like modern Hindi and Urdu, but it has a fuzzy relationship with what would be standardized into Punjabi that deserves to be better understood.[5] (By way of conjecture, we can observe that this linguistic situation commonly

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3 Pollock (1998), (2000); Busch (2010), etc.; Orsini and Sheikh (2014).
4 Before the nineteenth century when it became largely synonymous with Urdu, Reḳhtah (literally meaning 'poured' and thus mixed together) referred not to a language but a literary style that drew upon both Persian and Khaṛī Bolī. Viewing it as a language identity in the eighteenth century is therefore problematic.
5 The touchstone work on Urdu as it was used west of Delhi is Shirani's *Punjāb meṅ urdū* (*Urdu in Punjab*), but a great deal of discussion on Shirani's argument is a kind of nationalism played out on a regional basis.

used a number of words that were later defined as standard Punjabi at the same time as they dropped out of use in Hindi and Urdu.)[6]

The first part of this article sketches what we know about Persian education in premodern South Asia, and the second discusses what little the present author has so far been able to glean about ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's life, finally considering what a figure like him might mean for our understanding of the relationship between Persianate intellectuals in the urban centre and in the *qaṣbah* (a town that served as a local centre).

Persian in South Asia

The teaching of Persian in South Asia was like the teaching of Persian elsewhere in the early modern Persian-using world that stretched from Anatolia, across Central Asia to Khotan on the Chinese frontier, and down to nearly the southern tip of the Indian subcontinent. It depended on several years of schooling to master a set of classical texts. We know what students who had private tuition studied because there are several extant reading lists, the most notable being the one given by Chandarbhān Brāhman to his son.[7] Chandarbhān's reading list encompasses virtually the whole of Persian literature from the greats to relatively minor poets, and given its staggering length, was probably aspirational rather than descriptive of a typical upper-caste Mughal administrator's education.

Most people educated in Persian in India would have been taught in a classroom setting. The most comprehensive account of public education in Persian comes from a colonial-period study conducted by the missionary William Adam in Bengal in the 1830s.[8] He describes a four- to eight-year elementary curriculum that begins with basic Arabic, namely the *basmalah* ('In the name of God, the Beneficent the Merciful') and the thirtieth *juz* of the Qurʾān (the final section that is easy to read since the *sūrah*s (chapters) are particularly short), continuing with

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6 It is noteworthy that Punjabi tends to use informal and immediate words when compared to the Hindi/Urdu equivalents so, for example, *bolī* which typically means 'dialect' in Hindi/Urdu is 'language' in Punjabi, or in the case of the pronouns, in which *tū* serves as both the Hindi/Urdu *tū* and *tum* while the formal *tusī* (the equivalent of the Hindi/Urdu *āp*) in its form suggests a construction formed from below rather than from above. Is it possible to read something sociolinguistic into observations like these? For Chatterji, the explanation is to be found in a cavalier dismissal that has not worn well: 'The people of the Punjab were more practical and straightforward than intellectual and subtle' (Chatterji (1963), p. 255). The issue of multilingual sources around Delhi is no doubt similar to the situation in medieval Iberia described in Gallego (2003).

7 Alam and Subrahmanyam (2004).

8 Reissued as Adam (1941), see particularly pp. 148–ff and pp. 277–ff.

the *Pundnāmah* of Saʿdī (a collection of moral sayings which at this point are read without necessarily being understood), the *Āmadnāmah* (a primer on verb conjugations) then the *Gulistān* and *Bostān* of Saʿdī. At this stage, the students would also learn short sentences relating to daily life and begin to write. When the students reach a sufficient age, the instruction becomes an all-day affair, stretching (with breaks) from six in the morning to nine in the evening. The advanced curriculum involves further readings in both verse and prose from classics like *Laila-Majnūn*, *Yusuf-o Zulaikhā*, Abū'l Faẓl's letters, and various more recent poets like ʿUrfī Shīrāzī (1555–1591). Adam does not discuss the importance of commentaries on all of these works, but given the amount of effort that went into preparing commentaries, their role is obvious.[9] Some commentaries were advanced analyses meant for scholars, but others were simple and aimed at young readers. The Persianate world was held together by such educational efforts, which allowed textual interpretation to be transregional. Dictionaries served a similar function.[10] From several brief biographies of teachers that Adam provides, it is clear that even small-town Persian teachers wrote educational works themselves, and these works represent a genre that has apparently never been studied by historians. Such works might also reveal new perspectives on print culture since the traditional Persian schools, according to Adam, exclusively used manuscripts instead of published texts, even though these were widely available at the time of his survey.[11]

The colonial state did not abandon the traditional curriculum when it came to teaching Persian to its employees, but its transmission was greatly modified.[12] By the 1820s, the British in India were learning Persian from a suite of texts that were parallel to ones used by Indians but which had been adapted (in some cases with accompanying translations) by orientalists. Several East India Company figures, particularly Francis Gladwin (d. 1812), made lucrative careers out of turning traditional educational texts common in manuscript into published editions. At the same time, once the British had more direct access to Persia (for example, after Sir Gore Ouseley's diplomatic mission in 1811 to Shiraz),[13] they stated a preference for 'authentic' Iranian Persian over the supposedly degenerate Indian Persian. It is outside the scope of this article, but the present author believes that this British reorientation was a more important factor in the Indian loss of faith in the quality of their own Persian than has ever been acknowledged. There was a linguistic

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9 On marginal commentaries as valuable, see Saleh (2013); Ahmed and Larkin (2013).
10 Baevskii (2007).
11 Adam (1941), p. 148. However, in contrast to the 'constant use' of manuscript texts in the Persian schools, Bengali-medium elementary schools had neither printed nor manuscript textbooks (ibid., p. 142).
12 As the present author will argue in more detail in a forthcoming article.
13 The prefatory material in Price (1823), for example, makes the link between travel to Iran and access to supposedly authentic material explicit.

mission civilisatrice in which the British felt they were freeing Indians from the shackles of their defective Persian. This colonial disapproval of actual Indian usage should be understood as parallel to the Anglicist/Orientalist controversy in East India Company education policy. The Persian-specific aspects of the debate became largely irrelevant with the fading of indigenous patronage for Persian as English won out, but they clearly resurface in mid-nineteenth-century hand-wringing over the fact that formal Urdu was often being written in a style that was fundamentally Persian with some Urdu verbs thrown in.[14] We should not accept the colonial state's attitudes towards Persian as embodying either Indian attitudes or being free from the kind of intellectual violence that postcolonial scholars have identified in other supposedly benevolent colonial policies.

What we know about ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ

ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ is always known as Hānsawī, that is from Hansi in Haryana (today about two hours' drive north-west of Delhi). Hansi is a very old town (it had probably been settled many centuries before it was conquered by Masʿūd, the son of Maḥmūd of Ghazni in 1038) and its fortunes rose and fell at times during the Sultanate, Mughal, and Colonial Periods. It was on Delhi's periphery but was obviously quite separate from Delhi.

The mystery of ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ is that we know almost nothing about him and yet his Persian primer was probably the most popular such work in the eigh-teenth century, and his scholarship was cited and revised by the important Indo-Persian scholars of the eighteenth century, most notably Sirāj al-Dīn ʿAlī Ḳhān Ārzū (d. 1756). The easiest explanation for this blank in the historical record is the fact that he was apparently not a practising poet, and in the case of poets, we are fortunate in having obvious source material in the form of *tażkirah*s.[15] It is easy to extract traces of a network of poets and patrons from *tażkirah*s because that is not too far off the function for which they were written, namely communal memory. Mere teachers, however, are haphazardly mentioned and break into the historical record generally only if they teach the son of someone important. To the present author's knowledge, ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ did no such thing.

Later writers do not help us either. Ārzū, for example, who corrected and reissued a whole book by ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ, namely *Ġharāʾib al-Luġhāt* (*Oddities among Words*) retitled by Ārzū in the revised edition as *Nawādir al-Alfāż* (*Wonders among Words*, 1743), refers to him in the preface as 'one of the most

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14 See Bayly (1996), p. 286.
15 Ārzū (1951), p. iv.

accomplished learned men and famous scholars of blessed Hindustan'[16] but, strangely, does not mention his name. Was ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ such a household name that Ārzū did not feel the need to mention it explicitly or is some other politics of memory at work here? Perhaps the fact that Ārzū takes issue with so many of ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's conclusions meant that it was impolite to name him. There is no way of knowing. Indeed, we can only presume at this stage in the research that ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ spent most or all of his life in Hansi (which every other scholar who has considered him has also assumed) through negative evidence: his name does not turn up in any sources related to Delhi. We can only establish his dates based on the fact that he extensively used material from the dictionary *Farhang-i Rashīdī*, which was completed in 1654, and manuscripts of his works date to the 1730s.

It is an open question whether he wrote Islamic tracts or in other genres as well as other educational texts.[17] The prefaces to his extant works offer no biographical and bibliographical information. The present author has been able to trace six works likely to have been authored by him:

(1) *Ṣamad Bārī* is a *niṣāb* attributed to him.[18]

(2) He wrote two commentaries on standard teaching texts, namely Saʿdī's *Bostān* and Jamī's *Yusuf-o Zulaikhā*.[19] A cursory reading suggests that neither is particularly sophisticated, which implies that they were teaching texts rather than scholarly endeavours.

(3) He wrote *Zawāʾid al-Fawāʾid* and Ārzū wrote something called *Zāʾid al-Fawāʾid* (whose title is perhaps just a misreading for *Zawāʾid al-Fawāʾid*), which discusses Persian infinitives (*maṣādir*) and abstract nouns (*mushtaqqāt*) derived from them.[20] The two works are presumably related, but the present author has not been able to compare them.

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16 *yakī az fuẓalā-yi kāmgār wa ʿulamā-yi nāmdār-i hindūstān jannat-nishān* (ibid., p. 3).

17 A defence of Islamic revelation held in the Bodleian Library (Sachau-Ethé 1816 = MS Ouseley Add. 86) is attributed to an ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ but is undated and does not refer to its author as Hānsawī. It is unlikely to be his.

18 It has also been called *Niṣāb-i Sih Zabān* (*Niṣāb of Three Languages*); see ʿAbdullah (1965), pp. 92–93. On *niṣāb*, see Hakala (2015).

19 *Bostān* commentary: McGill University, MSS Blacker-Wood Iwanov 52 and 53; National Archives of India, Fort William College collection, MS 140; Aligarh Muslim University, MS J Per. 301. *Yūsuf-o Zulaikhā* commentary: British Library, Delhi Persian MSS 1249 and 1251; Aligarh Muslim University, MSS J Per. 240 and J Per. 302. The work is dismissed by the mid-twentieth-century scholar Sayyid ʿAbdullah as worthless (Ārzū (1951), p. vi).

20 Storey (1953), 1.2, p. 837.

(4) ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's *Risālah* (*Essay*), which is also known by other titles like *Qawāʾid-i Zabān-i Fārsī* (*Rules of the Persian Language*), was, as the title suggests, a Persian primer. It was his most influential work in terms of its circulation: in Aligarh Muslim University alone there are eight copies, the earliest of which dates to 1734–35/1147.[21] In compiling the text, ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ draws upon the standard fare of dictionaries (from the sixteenth century, *Madār al-Afāżil* and *Muʿīd al-Fuẓalā*,[22] and from the seventeenth century, *Farhang-i Jahāngīrī*, *Farhang-i Surūrī* (also called *Majmaʿ al-furs*), and *Farhang-i Rashīdī*), works on *maʿānī* (semantics), and commentaries.[23] We see in this list the range of texts that an Indo-Persian writer was expected to master. One can easily understand, even at a remove of 300 years, the appeal of this book as a straightforward digest of these various sources. ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ depends particularly on *Farhang-i Rashīdī's* preface in its account of phonology and on *Farhang-i Jahāngīrī* in its summary of the history of Persian dialects.[24] The student could learn indirectly from these touchstone books without acquiring them. (We know, for example, that the parts of *Farhang-i Rashīdī* and *Farhang-i Jahāngīrī* that discuss grammar were often copied separately from the dictionaries themselves.)

(5) ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's lexicon *Ġharāʾib al-Luġhāt* is a thought-provoking text and the only one of his works that has received much scholarly attention. It has been claimed, anachronistically, as 'the first dictionary of Urdu,' but as the present author has argued, it was not a lexicon of an Indic language in the modern concept of a dictionary so much as a record of Indic words frequently used on the margins of Persian.[25] ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ provides no clear indication as to its purpose, but Ārzū summarizes it as a record of 'Indic words of which the Persian, Arabic or Turkish [synonyms] were less common in the speech of the people of the provinces.'[26] Why was such a text written? Unlike the dictionary that is the appendix (*khātimah*) to the roughly contemporary *Tuḥfat al-Hind*, which clearly fits into that text's goal of explaining Indic poetic

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21 That one, Ahsan 891.5521/2, was copied by someone called Muḥammad Sardār Hānsawī, so it might have been locally made.

22 Baevskii (2007), p. 155.

23 Hānsawī (1872), p. 2. The works on semantics listed include '*Baḥr al-Daqāʾiq*, *Nuzhat al-Ṣanāʾiʿ*, *ʿUmān al-Jawāhir*, *Khazāʾin al-Maʿānī*, and so on.'

24 Ārzū likewise uses *Farhang-i Jahāngīrī* in his analysis of the history of the Persian language (Ārzū 1991).

25 Dudney (2010).

26 *luġhāt-i hindī kih fārsī yā ʿarabī yā turkī-yi ān zabānzad-i ahl-i diyār kamtar būd* (Ārzū (1951), p. 3). Neither *Nawādir al-Alfāẓ* nor *Ġharāʾib al-Luġhāt* appears in the most comprehensive list of Persian dictionaries compiled in South Asia, so modern editors have considered them outside the mainstream of Persian lexicography (Naqvi (1962), pp. 333–347).

conventions and vernacular language to a Persian-reading public, it is difficult to see *Ġharāʾib al-Luġhāt* having any application outside of its immediate context, a level of usage where both Persian and Indic vernacular language coexisted. Was the goal to show Indic words that are incorrect in proper Persian so that careful writers could avoid them? That seems unlikely because he goes to the trouble of defining and classifying the vernacular words. There were always different registers of Persian available, and this is the glimpse of a vernacular Persian that existed—indeed that only could exist—where the two languages came together.[27]

Ārzū's edited and expanded edition of the lexicon is called *Nawādir al-Alfāẓ* and it was completed in 1156/1743. Tracing the manuscript tradition is a bit difficult because this text is rare in ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's original edition and common in Ārzū's corrected version (cataloguers have haphazardly used the old and new titles).[28] What is clear is that Ārzū reconfigures ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's vernacular aesthetics around the imperial court. This is in line with his theory of how authority over literary usage is vested in an imperial court, or (in the case of a court that has been destroyed) in the people who represent its scattered remnants.

The *qaṣbah* and the centre

What is significant about ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's being in a *qaṣbah* like Hansi?[29] In the absence of archival work at this stage, the question evades an answer but the present author's hope is to be able to read local histories alongside texts that have circulated beyond the town to build a picture of what the literary and spiritual community was like and how it was connected with wider networks.[30] In the most general terms, we can say that Hansi was a typical medium-sized North Indian town that saw its fortunes rise and fall over the centuries. It seems to have been more successful during the early Sultanate period than at any later time since it was eclipsed

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27 Roger Wright's understanding of the relationship of Classical Latin, so-called Vulgar Latin, and Romance is useful for considering the intersection of traditions that were later understood as very different (Wright 2011).

28 A readable copy, which appears to be the only one in a Western library, is held at Cambridge University: MS Eton Pote 107 is undated but must be mid- to late-eighteenth century because it was in the library of Antoine Polier (d. 1795).

29 Recent studies of the *qaṣbah*, such as Rahman (2015), which builds in part upon Bayly (1993), relate to a much later period; 1870–1920 in the case of the former and 1770–1870 in the case of the latter.

30 As is being explored by Francesca Orsini (2012) and Purnima Dhavan (forthcoming), among others.

by Hisar when that town (some 25 km to the east) became the administrative centre of the area in 1356.[31] It was in sharp decline during the eighteenth century when Nādir Shāh and the Sikhs overran it. Well after ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's time, its fortunes turned again when the English adventurer George Thomas established his headquarters there in 1797 and, although briefly held by the Marathas, it remained an important centre for the British Indian military. The British took direct control of the region in 1818. There appears to have been a long Chishti presence in Hansi, but scattered references in recent memory to the thirteenth-century saint Bābā Farīd having spent several years there cannot as yet be textually substantiated.

A contrast could be drawn between ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ and Ārzū since Ārzū too came from a provincial town, but Ārzū, unlike ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ, built a courtly career for himself. Ārzū grew up in Gwalior (which was in Agra's orbit just as Hansi was in Delhi's), completing his early education under his father Shaikh Ḥusām al-Dīn (known by his poetic pen name Ḥusāmī), learning the *Gulistān*, *Bostān*, and *Pandnāmah*, and memorizing one or two hundred couplets of the modern poets. He studied Arabic until age fourteen. He completed his schooling and poetic training in Agra, and eventually came to Delhi.[32] Ārzū was proud of his home town, which was known both for its devotional poetry in '*hindī*' and for the Shaṭṭārī Sufi saint Muḥammad Ghaus̱ (d. 1653), who was Ārzū's ancestor through his maternal line. It would be useful to map how similar people were pulled from the provinces to the centre. Were Ārzū's spiritual ancestry and the fact that his father was a *manṣabdār* (salaried imperial officer) advantages that ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ lacked? Or perhaps Ārzū's poetic ambition, which apparently began at age fourteen, was what drew him to Agra and then Delhi.

Apart from the question of how and why people could move between towns and cities, textual circulation and the movement of ideas and aesthetic norms needs to be considered. Ārzū engaged with at least two of ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's works, after all, including completely transforming *Gharāʾib al-Lughāt*. Another question to be raised, but that can only be answered indirectly here, relates to the development of the vernacular as a medium for poetry: was it a movement that came from the provinces to the centre or from the centre to the provinces, or was it created in dialogue between the two? What we know about ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's own interest in the vernacular comes solely from his dictionary. There is seemingly nothing in the text that suggests that his relationship with languages other than Persian was different from that of people in Delhi. What is clear, however, is that Ārzū has no qualms about attacking ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ for usage he considers ineloquent on the basis of its being unknown or contrary to the usage at the centre. For example, ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ gives *chanīl* as a headword and Ārzū sputters, 'no one knows where

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31 Burton-Page (2012).
32 As detailed in Dudney (2013), pp. 31–38.

this word comes from! We who are among the people of India and who are in the Royal Court have never heard [it]!'[33] Often, Ārzū cites himself as a source. For example, in the entry on *ćhatrī* he writes, 'I have not heard' (*na-shinīdah-am*) the word used in a particular meaning. There are a number of entries in which Ārzū directly criticizes ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ for local usage.[34] One particularly withering example appears for *gupćup*. Ārzū writes:

> But what is known as *gupćup* to the eloquent has the meaning of a delicate sweet, eating which one is struck dumb; in the meaning given [by ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ], it is perhaps the usage of the compiler's homeland (*waṭan*).[35]

The usages appearing in standard texts, such as Persian dictionaries, and the knowledge of people in the court, including Ārzū himself, necessarily trump the definitions offered by ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ. This can be fruitfully connected to the discussion of *faṣāḥat* (linguistic purity) in Ārzū's other works, namely that members of the courtly elite refine a language by pruning local usages. The refined language, although originally the language of a place, becomes a translocal literary standard through this process in which the local is reclassified as the universal. Delhi usage, even in an as-yet-unstandardized vernacular, is by definition superior to the usage of Hansi in Ārzū's opinion.

Clearly the attitude of one courtly intellectual towards an intellectual from the *qaṣbah* is contempt. Ārzū is one of the most exacting scholars that premodern Persian literary culture produced, and it is unsurprising that he found ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's haphazard method insufficient, but we are left to wonder how ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ's books came to Ārzū's notice in the first place and what else we might learn if we knew the answer to that question. Furthermore, it is worth asking whether there is a larger pattern that can be found in other intellectuals' biographies of patronage for educators being available in humble towns where patronage for poets was not. This article necessarily leaves the reader with more questions than answers, but hopefully a deeper engagement with sources that relate to Persian-language educators can eventually paint a clearer picture of Persian in the *qaṣbah* and how someone might move from the *qaṣbah* to a courtly city.

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33 *malʿūm nīst kih luġhat-i kujā ast; mā mardum kih az ahl-i hind-īm wa dar urdū-yi muʿallá mī bāshīm na-shinīdah-īm* (Ārzū (1951), p. 214).
34 The editor Sayyidʿ Abdullah gives references for several such entries (ibid., p. ix).
35 *lekin ānćah gupćup mashhūr-i fuṣaḥā-st bah maʿnī shīrīnī ast nāzuk kih ba-ḵhwurdan-i ān āwāz dahan bar nayāyad, bah maʿnī kih āwardah shāyad mustaʿmal-i waṭan-i muṣannif bāshad* (ibid., p. 363).

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Marc Tiefenauer

5. *Upanikhat-i Garbha*: A Mughal Translation into Persian of a Small Sanskrit Treatise on Embryology

Abstract. In the year 1067 AH (1656–1657 CE), the Mughal prince Dārā Shukoh commissioned the translation of fifty-two Upanishads into Persian. The resulting anthology, *Sirr-i Akbar* (The Great Secret), contains a tiny embryology treatise entitled *Garbha Upaniṣad* (Upanishad of the Embryo). This paper analyzes the translation choices operating between the two languages (Sanskrit and Persian) and argues that they reveal the prince's religious agenda—demonstrating the compatibility between Advaita Vedanta—his understanding of Hinduism, and his own Sufi faith.

Keywords. Translation studies, Embryology, Hinduism, Sufism, Mughal Empire.

The most famous representative of Indian medicine, the *Caraka Saṃhitā*, was first translated into Persian and then into Arabic.[1] The great scholar Al-Bīrūnī (973–1048 CE), quotes it in his *Book on the Verification of the Treatises on India, Rational or Not* (*Kitāb fī taḥqīq mā lil-Hind min maqūlah maqbūlah fī al-ʿaql aw marḏūlah*).[2] From the ninth century onwards, other Indian works on medicine reached Arab physicians, for instance the *Suśruta Saṃhitā*.[3]

In the other direction, Greek (*yūnānī*) medicine had largely been disseminated in India thanks to the treatises of the great Perso-Arabic compilers, foremost amongst which was Avicenna (Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Sīnā, ~ 980–1037 CE) and his monumental *Canon of Medicine* (*Kitāb al-qānūn fī al-ṭibb*). This work written in Arabic gained great prestige not only in India but also Europe. It is mostly a compilation of the knowledge of Avicenna's time, inherited from Hellenic physicians, first and foremost Galen (Κλαύδιος Γαληνός, ~ 129–216 CE).[4] Among other subjects, the first book of the *Canon* deals with the forming of the embryo.

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1 Ullmann (1978), pp. 19–20.
2 Bīrūnī (1914), p. 159.
3 Ullmann (1978), pp. 19–20.
4 Ullmann (1978), pp. 10–11; Pormann (2007), pp. 12–15.

Embryology was a common topic broached by Arabic and Persian medical works.[5] One such case is a treatise by the Iranian scholar Manṣūr ibn Ilyās (fourteenth to fifteenth century CE), the *Anatomy of the Human Body* (*Tashrīḥ-i badan-i insān*). In the Islamic world, this work written in Persian is the oldest existing treatise containing illustrations of the entire human body.[6] As such, it might well have circulated in India in the seventeenth-century Mughal Empire.

In this chapter, I present a Sanskrit embryology treatise, the tiny *Garbha Upaniṣad* (*Upanishad of the Embryo*). In spite of it claiming the status of an Upanishad, a genre of emblematic works flourishing during the first millennium BC, it belongs to the collection of non-Vedic Upanishads, considered as late compositions.[7] As many other 'minor' Upanishads, the *Garbha Upaniṣad* is most often associated with the *Atharva Veda* with which it only shares its dubious origin.[8] Nevertheless, its last sentence claims a certain Pippalāda as its author,[9] which tends to relate it to the Atharva-vedic tradition.[10] Above all, as for its content, it remains at the junction of several currents: Sāṃkhyayoga, Ayurveda, and Vedanta (an umbrella term covering the exegetic traditions based on the Upanishad). The main subject of concern of the *Garbha Upaniṣad* is not medicine and cannot be compared to Caraka's and Suśruta's great Ayurvedic compendia. In the same way, the Persian translation I present here cannot be considered as descending from the great Perso-Arabic tradition of medicine.

The Prince of Translators

Much has been written on Muḥammad Dārā Shukoh (1615–1659), and justifiably so. This Mughal prince was every inch a novel character. He was the eldest and preferred son of Emperor Shāh Jahān[11] and is often depicted as the ideal sage-prince discussing with ascetics[12] and translating the Upanishads with Sanskrit scholars to bring together Islam and Hinduism. He was defeated in June 1658[13]

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5 Pormann (2007), pp. 59–61.

6 Ziaee (2014), p. 49.

7 Winternitz (2008), pp. 1.223–1.224.

8 Winternitz (2008), pp. 1.224–1.225. The *Muktika Upaniṣad* includes it in its 108 Upanishad list, but links it to the Black *Yajurveda* (*Muktika Upaniṣad* 1.2.3).

9 *Garbha Upaniṣad* 5: *paippalādaṃ mokṣaśāstraṃ parisamāptaṃ paippalādaṃ mokṣaśāstraṃ parisamāptam iti*.

10 This *Atharva Veda*-related mythic author is recalled in various texts throughout Brahmanical tradition, viz. *Praśna Upaniṣad* 1.1, *Matsya Purāṇa* 72.1, *Skanda Purāṇa*, *Reva Khāṇḍa* 42, etc.

11 Chaudhuri (1954), vol. 1, part 1, p. 1; Faruqui (2014), p. 30.

12 Gandhi (2014), pp. 65–66.

13 Rizvi (1978), p. 2.123.

after a war of succession with his younger brother Aurangzeb. Accused of heresy and apostasy, he was sentenced to death in 1659.[14]

Two years before his tragic death, at the end of 1656,[15] Dārā Shukoh, who had already written five works on Sufism,[16] gathered Hindu scholars and ascetics for an ambitious enterprise: translating the *Garbha Upaniṣad*[17] into Persian. In the summer of 1657[18]—only six months later—they completed translating fifty-two[19] of them under one title: *Sirr-i Akbar*, or *The Great Secret*.[20] Here is Dārā Shukoh's testimony of this undertaking, according to the preface of the text:

> And as at this period the city of Benares, which is the centre of the sciences of its community, was in certain relations with this seeker of the Truth (that is, Dārā Shukoh) he assembled together the *paṇḍitas* and the *saṃnyāsins*, who were the most learned of their time and proficient (in the *Veda* and) in the *Upaniṣad*, he himself being free from all materialistic motives, translated their essential parts of monotheism (*khulāṣa-yi tauḥīd*), which are the *Upaniṣad*, that is the secrets to be concealed (*asrār-i poshīdanī*), and the end of purport of all the saints of God, in the year 1067 A.H. (i.e. 1656–57 CE); and then every difficulty and every sublime topic which he had desired or thought and had looked for and not found, he obtained from these essences of the most ancient books (*az īn khulāṣa-yi kitāb-i qadīm*), and without doubt or suspicion, these books are first of all heavenly books (*kitāb-i samāwī*) in point of time, and the source and the fountain-head of the ocean of Unity (*sar-chashma-yi taḥqīq wa baḥr-i tauḥīd*), in conformity with the holy *Qur'ān* and even a commentary thereon (*muwāfiq-i Qur'ān-i majīd bal-ki tafsīr-i ān*). (trans. Hasrat (1982), pp. 266–267)[21]

Aside from the precise time and place of the translation of the *Sirr-i Akbar*, Dārā Shukoh gives us important information concerning his perception of the Upanishads. According to him, they are holy—or, at least—heavenly (*samāwī*), they are

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14 Faruqui (2014), p. 31.

15 Ibid., p. 30.

16 *Safīnat al-Auliyāʾ* (1640), *Sakīnat al-Auliyāʾ* (1643), *Risālat-i Ḥaqq-numā* (1647), *Ḥasanāt al-ʿĀrifīn* (1653), *Ṭarīqat al-Ḥaqīqat* (n.d.)—Cf. Shukoh (1957), pp. 194–256; Shukoh (1962), pp. 6–7; Hasrat (1982), p. xxi.

17 Or, more precisely, in Dārā Shukoh's words: the (one) Upanishad (Indo-Persian: *Upanikhat*), which seems to be considered by him to be a single work.

18 Faruqui (2014), p. 30, 'in the first week of July 1657.'

19 In fact, fifty to fifty-two, depending on the manuscript of the *Sirr-i Akbar* (Hasrat (1982), pp. 269–273).

20 The title of this anthology, *Sirr-i Akbar*, is not the whim of its sponsor but rather a common synonym of the Sanskrit word '*upaniṣad*' being *rahasya* 'secret' (Winternitz (2008), pp. 1.225–1.226), which is precisely the meaning of Arabo-Persian *sirr* (plural: *asrār*).

21 Amended with the terms between parentheses; German translation of the same excerpt: Shukoh (1962), p. 16; Anquetil-Duperron's Latin translation: Shukoh (1801), vol. 1, p. 5. Persian source: Shukoh (1957), p. v, lines 11–17.

the source of the belief in the unity of God (*tauḥīd*), they agree with the Qur'an and may even serve as its commentary (*tafsīr*).

Our aim here is not to trace the prince's religious and philosophical influenc-es[22] but to note the translation techniques of his team and highlight the choices of his pandits[23] when dealing with a Brahmanical text related to sexuality, physiolo-gy, mind, soul, soteriology, reincarnation, and polytheism.[24]

The five elements

Right after the *tauḥīd* claim, the *Upanikhat-i Garbha* lists the five elements con-stituting the body:

> This body is composed of five things (*chīz*), and stays into the five things, and there are six things that keep it. It is attached to six threads (*resmān*), seven *dhātu* (i. e. seven drops[25]) are in it, as well as three humours (*khalt̤*), two reproductive organs, and four means of subsistence (*khẉurāk*)—these things take place in every living being—and the five things of which it is composed, these five are earth (*khāk*), water (*āb*), fire (*ātish*), wind (*bād*) and *bhūtākāśa*. (trans. Shukoh (1957), p. 432, lines 2–10)

For comparison, here is a translation of the Sanskrit source text of this passage:[26]

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22 For this, see Roma Chauduri's critical and comparative study of *Samudrasaṅgama*, the Sanskrit version of Dārā Shukoh *Majmaʿ al-Baḥrayn* (Shukoh 1943); Erhard Göbel-Groß' preface to his thesis on the *Sirr-i Akbar* (Shukoh (1962), pp. 5–12); Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi's chapter on the Qādiriyya Sufi order (Rizvi (1978), vol. 2, pp. 54–150); Bikrama Jit Hasrat's study on the life and works of Dārā Shukoh (Hasrat 1982); Mahfuz-ul-Haq's intro-duction to the *Majmaʿ al-Baḥrayn* (Shukoh (1982), pp. 1–34); and two recent articles on the subject published by Oxford University Press (India): Faruqui (2014) and Gandhi (2014).
23 On the authorship of the *Sirr-i Akbar*, see D'Onofrio (2010), pp. 536–541.
24 The text I have used for this chapter was established by Tara Chand and Mohammad Reza Jalali Naini in Tehran in 1957 CE (1336 SH) and re-edited in 1978 CE (1356 SH): Shukoh (1957), pp. 432–436. The precise text studied here bears the title *Upanikhat-i Garbha* and, between square brackets: *az Atharban-Bed*, i. e. a Persian transcription of the Sanskrit *[Atharvavedagatā] Garbha upaniṣat* (Upanishad *of the Embryo* [*related to the* Atharva Veda]).
25 The Arabic word *nuṭfa* is used here, which means 'drop' or 'sperm.' I will come back to this word later.
26 It is not possible to know exactly if the *Garbha Upaniṣad* used by the pandit working for Dārā Shukoh corresponds to the one I use in this paper (Kapani (1976), pp. 7–8); never-theless, it seems to be very close to today's printed editions.

The body consists of five elements (*pañcātmaka*), it stays in the five, has six seats (*ṣaḍāśraya*), is made of the union of six properties (*ṣaḍguṇayogayukta*), has seven constituents, three [types of] excreta, two sources (*dviyoni*) and four kinds of nutriments (*caturvidhāhāramaya*). Whence is it consisting of five elements—earth (*pṛthivī*), water (*ap*), fire (*tejas*), wind (*vāyu*) and space (*ākāśa*)?[27]

The Sanskrit text reproduces here the vocabulary used by Sāṃkhya[28] and by Caraka in his Ayurvedic treatise[29]—*pṛthivī* 'earth,' *ap* 'water' and so on, are the five gross elements (*mahābhūta*)[30] linked to their subtle counterparts (*tanmātra*), that is, the objects of perception.[31] Interestingly, one may already identify five different translation strategies at work in this single paragraph. If I use the nomenclature defined by Vladimir Ivir:[32]

TABLE 5.1 Translation procedures.

Procedure	Source (Sanskrit)	Target (Persian)
Borrowing	*dhātu*	*dhāt*
Definition	*dviyoni*	*dū jā-yi paidāyish*
Literal Translation	*caturvidhāhāramaya śarīra, pṛthivī, ap,* etc.	*chahār khẉurāk dārad badan, khāk, āb,* etc.
Substitution	*pañcātmaka*	*panj chīz*
Addition	—	*īn chīzhā dar badan-i hama-yi jān-dārān ast*

Source: Author.

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27 *pañcātmakaṃ pañcasu vartamānaṃ ṣaḍāśrayaṃ ṣaḍguṇayogayuktam/taṃ saptadhātuṃ trimalaṃ dviyoniṃ caturvidhāhāramayaṃ śarīraṃ bhavati/pañcātmakam iti kasmāt pṛthivy āpas tejo vāyur ākāśam ity asmin pañcātmake śarīre.* (Kapani (1976), p. 8, lines 1–3)
28 Cf. Gauḍapāda's commentary on *Sāṃkhyakārikā* 38 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa and Gauḍapāda (1972), p. 141).
29 *Carakasaṃhitā* 4.4.6.
30 For example, Gauḍapāda *ad* Īśvarakṛṣṇa's *Sāṃkhyakārikā* 38 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa and Gauḍapāda (1837), vol. 2, pp. 30–31).
31 That is: *śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa,* and *gandha*.
32 Ivir (1987), pp. 35–46. The seven procedures enumerated by Ivir are: 1. borrowing (or importation), 2. definition, 3. literal translation, 4. substitution, 5. lexical creation, 6. omission, 7. addition.

Two of Ivir's procedures are not used here—lexical creation and omission.[33] On the other hand, the translation resorts to some combined procedures:[34]

TABLE 5.2 Combined translation procedures.

Procedure	Source (Sanskrit)	Target (Persian)
Borrowing and Definition	*dhātu*	*dhāt ya'nī haft nuṭfa*
Definition and Addition	*ākāśa*	*bhūtākās*

Source: Author.

With *bhūtākās*, the translation team takes the original Sanskrit word (*ākāśa*) and expands it with its category: *bhūta* (as mentioned before, *mahābhūta* qualifies the 'gross elements,' and *bhūta* is a simpler equivalent). It is close to the orthography he uses in his last work, the *Majma' al-Baḥrayn* (*The Mingling of the Two Oceans*), in which he defines the Sāṃkhya concept of *ākāśa*, that is 'space, void,' sometimes also translated as 'ether.'

I have shown here only a few examples of the strategies employed by the translation team to restore in a pragmatic manner the Sanskrit source of the *Garbha Upaniṣad*.

The impregnation process

After the enumeration of the five elements constituting the body (*īn badan az panj chīz tarkīb yāfta ast*), six flavours (Sanskrit *rasa* ≈ Arabic *ṭa'm*),[35] seven sounds (Sanskrit *śabda* ≈ Persian *āhang*)[36] and seven colours,[37] the text explains the production of sperm and the impregnation process. In Sanskrit:

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33 But they are used in other places of the *Upanikhat-i Garbha*, as I have shown previously with Dārā Shukoh's 'monotheistic' argument.
34 Ivir (1987), p. 37: 'combinations of procedures rather than single procedures are required for optimum transmission of cultural information (e.g., borrowing-and-definition, borrowing-and-substitution, lexical creation-and-definition, etc.).'
35 Kapani (1976), p. 8, lines 9–10 ≈ Shukoh (1957), p. 432, line 21, to p. 433 line 1.
36 Kapani (1976), p. 8, lines 10–11 ≈ Shukoh (1957), p. 433, line 3.
37 *śuklo raktaḥ kṛṣṇo dhūmraḥ pītaḥ kapilaḥ pāṇḍara iti* ≈ Shukoh (1957), p. 433, lines 4–5: *haft rang ki dar miyān-i badan ast: safed wa surkh wa siyāh wa sabz wa gul-gūn wa zard wa ṣandalī.* (Kapani (1976), p. 8, lines 11–12)

Why is [the body] made of seven constitutive elements (*dhātu*)?—When Devadatta's objects that are material, etc., are born, the chyle (*rasa*) [is produced] with one another, from cool and moist quality (*saumyaguṇatva*); from chyle [is made] the blood (*śoṇita*), from blood the flesh (*māṃsa*), from flesh the fat (*medas*), from fat the tendons (*snāyu*), from the tendons the bones (*asthi*), from the bones the marrow (*majjā*), from the marrow the sperm (*śukra*); from the combination of sperm and blood proceeds the embryo (*garbha*). In the heart (*hṛd*) he settles (*vyavasthāṃ nayati*), in the heart [stays] the inner fire (*antarāgni*). Where the fire stays, [one finds] the bile (*pitta*)[38]; where the bile stays is the wind (*vāyu*), from the wind [comes] the heart in the manner of the Lord of creatures (*prājāpatyāt kramāt*).[39]

In *Sirr-i Akbar* Persian, this passage is slightly different:

It is acknowledged from these seven colours that there are seven lymphs (*nuṭfa*) in the body. By eating food, *rasa* is produced, viz. chyle (*kailūs*), and from *rasa* is generated the blood (*khun*), from blood comes the flesh (*gosht*), from flesh comes the fat (*charbī*), from fat come the tendons (*pay*), from the tendons come the bones (*ustukhwān*), from the bones comes the marrow (*maghz*), from marrow comes the sperm element (*aṣl-i nuṭfa*). When the rest of blood of menstruation of the woman after purification stays in the womb, the sperm (*nuṭfa*) of the man mixes with it, and from the fire of desire (*ātish-i shahwat*) and the fire of bile (*ṣafrā*), thanks to effervescence (*parrān-i bād*), both of them form an emulsion (*josh*), with which results pregnancy (*ḥaml*).[40]

The Persian translation leaves Devadatta (a name the Sanskrit commentaries traditionally use in their examples) but explains the link between the seven colours and the seven constituents of the body. It also passes the fire and the humours of the heart in silence, and the allusion to Prajāpati, the Lord of creatures, is omitted.

At the beginning of this excerpt, the Sanskrit *dhātu* 'constitutive element' refers to the seven 'ingredients' of the body (chyle, blood, flesh, and the like),[41] as mentioned in Ayurvedic medicine;[42] but an eighth one is listed here: *snāyu* 'liga-

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38 Phlegm (*kapha* or *śleṣman*), wind (*vāta* or *vāyu*) and bile (*pitta*) are the three humours which alterations (*doṣa*) are sources of diseases.

39 Sanskrit source: Kapani (1976), p. 8, lines 12–15.

40 Persian source: Shukoh (1957), p. 433, lines 5–10.

41 Chyle (*rasa*), blood (*śonita* = *rakta*), flesh (*māṃsa*), fat (*medas*), bone (*asthi*), marrow (*majjā*), semen (*śukra*), to which are added here (Kapani (1976), p. 8, line 14) the ligaments (*snāyu*). These ligaments are not translated in Persian (Shukoh (1957), p. 433, line 7) and simply replaced by *pīh* 'fat.'

42 For example, *Carakasaṃhitā* 3.17.63–72. Gauḍapāda's commentary (*bhāṣya*) on the verse 39 of *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* gives a list of six components of the embryo; these are identical to the *Garbha Upaniṣad* list, including tendons (*snāyu*), but omitting chyle and fat (text and trans.: Īśvarakṛṣṇa and Gauḍapāda (1972), pp. 143–144; Wilson's trans.: Īśvarakṛṣṇa and Gauḍapāda (1837), pp. 123–124).

ments,' which does not belong to the usual list. The translation team meticulously retains it. Here, the Tehran edition[43] seems to reproduce a copyist's misspelling, using *pīh* 'grease' instead of *pay* 'tendon' which is the correct translation of the Sanskrit *snāyu*.

The word *dhātu* referring to these seven 'constitutive elements' is translated with the Arabic *nuṭfa* 'drop; lymph; sperm' which does not cover the Sanskrit meaning. Nevertheless, *nuṭfa* is used once again a few lines further, this time to render very closely the Sanskrit *śukra* 'sperm.' Other words could have been used to translate *śukra*, like the Arabic *minan*, the word used by Avicenna and Manṣūr ibn Ilyās in their treatises. This word would have been particularly adapted to the context, but here, *nuṭfa* is preferred, and most likely because it is often used in the Qur'an, as in this example: 'Can man not see that We created him from a drop of fluid (*nuṭfa*)?'[44]

This word, *nuṭfa*, occurs twelve times in the Qur'an,[45] each occurrence claiming that God created man from a drop of semen (*min nuṭfatin*). As I will show below, in the context of foetal development, it is not the only Qur'anic loanword used in *Sirr-i Akbar* translation. I must point out here that unlike the *Garbha Upaniṣad*, Sāṃkhya, and Ayurveda, which explain impregnation through the union of sperm and blood,[46] the Qur'an conceives humans to be created like Adam—from dust (*turāb*), clay (*ṭīn*), or dry clay (*ṣalṣāl*):[47]

> We created man from an essence of clay (*ṭīn*),
> then We placed him as a drop of fluid (*nuṭfa*) in a safe place. (Qur'an 23.12–
> 13; trans. Haleem (2004), p. 215; my additions in parentheses)

The foetal development

Compared to the much detailed depiction of embryo development in *Caraka Saṃhitā* 4.4, the same described in the *Garbha Upaniṣad* is quite straightforward:

> After a sexual union at the right time (*ṛtukāle*), after one night, there is [an embryo in the form of] gelatine (*kalala*); after seven nights, there is a bubble (*budbuda*); in half a month, there is a lump (*piṇḍa*). In one month, it becomes firm (*kaṭhina*), and in two months, a head is forming. In three months, the region of the feet appears, then during the fourth month, the regions of

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43 Shukoh (1957), p. 433, line 7.
44 Qur'an 36.77. Trans. Haleem (2004), p. 284. My additions in parentheses.
45 Qur'an 16.4, 18.37, 22.5, 23.13, 23.14, 35.11, 36.77, 40.67, 53.46, 75.37, 76.2, 80.19 (Cf. Badawī et Haleem (2008), p. 946).
46 Cf. Gauḍapāda's *bhāṣya* on *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 39 and 43, *Caraka Saṃhitā* 4.4.7.
47 McAuliffe (2001), pp. 1.230–1.231.

the ankles (*gulpha*), the abdomen (*jaṭhara*) and the hip (*kaṭi*). During the fifth month, the back (*pṛṣṭha*) and the spine (*vaṃśa*) take form. In the sixth month the mouth, nose, eyes and ears develop. During the seventh month, it becomes endowed with an individual self (*jīva*). In the eighth month, it is provided with all attributes (*lakṣaṇa*).[48]

The Persian version gives us further clues to the translation choices of Dārā Shukoh's team:

> In this world, the way to find the Creator (*Āfrīdgār*) is the following: in eight *pahar*, which would be a day and a night, this sperm (*nuṭfa*) and blood (*khūn*) emulsion together, thicken and become a clinging form (*'alaqa*); in seven more days and nights, they emulsify like bubbles (*ḥabāb*) and grow. Fifteen days and nights later, it becomes a soft bit of flesh (*gosht-pāra-yi narm*), and in one month, that bit of flesh becomes solid. In the second month, this bit of flesh gets a head; in the third month, hands and feet are produced; in the fourth month, the fingers and the toes, the belly and the waist, and the other limbs (*a'ẓā,'* plural of *'uẓw*) form, and with agitation of the prāṇa, it starts moving. In the fifth month, the bones of the back (*ustukhwān-i pusht*) become firm and strong, the sense organs (*maḥallhā-yi ḥawāss*) are completed. In the seventh month, knowledge (*shu'ūr*) forms; and in the eighth month, his limbs and strength are completed.[49]

In this passage, the translators borrow words from outside of the ordinary Persian register, be they Hindustani, Sanskrit, or Arabic. Where the Sanskrit text speaks of 'one night' (*ekarātra*), the translators clarify and develop the expression while using 'eight *pahar*' (that is, twenty-four hours), a Hindustani expression[50] that would not be understood outside of the Indian cultural milieu. This could be the reason why they then add: 'which would be a day and a night' (*ki shabāna-roz bāshad*).

Another addition is made in the context of the fourth month of foetal development, this time of Sanskrit origin: 'with agitation of the *prāṇa*, it starts moving' (*ba jumbish-i* prān *dar ḥarakat mī-āyad*). This expression is in square brackets in the Tehran edition, indicating here that this sentence is missing in some manuscripts. The concept of *prāṇa* refers to Indian physiology. The following is an example of its use in Ayurvedic context: 'Living creatures are endowed with strength, complexion, happiness and longevity due to pure blood. Blood plays a vital role in the sustenance of *élan vital* (*prāṇa*).'[51]

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48 Sanskrit source: Kapani (1976), p. 8, lines 16–22.
49 Persian source: Shukoh (1957), p. 433, lines 11–18.
50 Hindustani word related to Prakrit *paharo* and Sanskrit *prahara* (Platts (1884), p. 285, col. 1) and corresponding to an eighth of a day, i. e. three hours.
51 *Caraka Saṃhitā* 3.24.4. Trans. Agniveśa (1976), p. 1.403. To the original extract I have added the acute accent to the French *élan* and the Sanskrit *prāṇa* in parentheses. Cf. Agniveśa (2011), p. 416.

This *élan vital* may be what is suggested by the word *prāṇa* in the *Sirr-i Akbar* translation, thus explaining why the foetus starts moving. But in the Upanishadic context, *prāṇa* also means 'life organ,'[52] which makes Dārā Shukoh's addition more understandable.

The vocabulary used in Sanskrit to describe the two first stages of embryonic growth (*kalala, budbuda*) is similar to Sāṃkhya vocabulary,[53] and in the Puranas;[54] the third, a 'lump' (*piṇḍa*), is used in *Caraka Saṃhitā*,[55] but the Puranas prefer an 'egg of flesh' (*peśyaṇḍa*), which the translation team seems to follow when using a 'soft bit of flesh' (*gosht-pāra-yi narm*), instead of translating *piṇḍa* by a Persian direct equivalent like *gulūla* or even *kofta*.

Concerning the first stage of embryonic development, 'gelatine' (*kalala*), the translators once again use a Qur'anic—and enigmatic—word, 'clinging form' (*'alaqa*).[56] This specific term seems to refer to a portion of the *Sūrat al-Ḥajj* (Qur'an 22.5), which mentions foetal development:

> People, [remember,] if you doubt the Resurrection, that We created you from dust (*turāb*), then a drop of fluid (*nuṭfa*), then a clinging form (*'alaqa*), then a lump of flesh (*muzgha*), both shaped and unshaped: We mean to make Our power clear to you. Whatever We choose We cause to remain in the womb (*arḥām*) for an appointed time, then We bring you forth as infants (*ṭifl*) and then you grow and reach maturity. Some die young and some are left to live on to such an age that they forget all they once knew. You sometimes see the earth lifeless, yet when We send down water it stirs and swells and produces every kind of joyous growth: this is because God is the Truth; He brings the dead back to life; He has power over everything. (trans. Haleem (2004), p. 209; my additions in parentheses)

In the *Sūrat al-Ḥajj*, the embryonic stages are dust (*turāb* ≈ *ṭīn*), sperm (*nuṭfa*), a 'clinging form' (*'alaqa*), and a lump of flesh (*muzgha*).[57] In the context of the translation of the preceding passage concerning impregnation, I have already shown the use of clay and sperm in the Qur'an. Now, again, to translate another Sanskrit medical term, *kalala*, the translation team draws from this same source, using the Arabic *'alaqa*:

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52 Sharma (2007), p. 191.
53 Cf. Gauḍapāda's *Bhāṣya* on *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 43 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa and Gauḍapāda (1837), pp. 139–140; Īśvarakṛṣṇa and Gauḍapāda (1972), pp. 152–154).
54 *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* 11.2, *Garuḍa Purāṇa Sāroddhāra* 6.6 = *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 3.31.2.
55 *Caraka Saṃhitā* 4.4.10.
56 Cf. Lane (1968), vol. 5, p. 419, col. 3.
57 McAuliffe (2001), vol. 1, p. 230, col. 2.

In Qur'ān 23:12-4 reference is made to fetal development and growth . . . Prior to fertilization, sperm bind to the zona pellucida or outer covering of the ovum. Following such lines of interpretation, *'alaqa* could be a reference to this, i.e. to sperm 'clinging' to the ovum. However, *'alaqa* is also inter- preted by some exegetes as 'blood clot' and taken to refer to 'something that clings' to the uterus.[58]

Parallel to the subtle Qur'anic equivalents translating the specific Sanskrit words dealing with embryology, the translators substitute 'knowledge' (Arabic *shu'ūr*)[59] for what I have translated as 'individual self' (Sanskrit *jīva*).[60] This latter is a difficult term endowed with numerous meanings, the first one being 'life,' as it comes from the verbal root √*jīv*. It also means, especially in Advaita Vedanta, the 'individual self' or 'empirical ego,'[61] where it can also be equated with the 'soul' (*ātman*).[62] This ambiguity of the word *jīva* may have induced the translators to prefer using a theologically neutral 'knowledge' (*shu'ūr*) to 'soul'—Arabic *nafs* or *rūḥ*—which would have been appropriate, but potentially controversial regarding the precise time of its appearance in the human body.[63]

The foetus' monologue

After a few lines dealing with the conditions to the development of males, females, and hermaphrodites,[64] and another listing technical subdivisions and elements composing the living being plus the sacred syllable om,[65] the *Garbha Upaniṣad* offers an interesting monologue by the foetus before birth, a passage rife with potential translation traps:

Then, during the ninth month, [the baby] is endowed with all attributes and means of knowledge. It remembers its previous life (*pūrvajāti*) and knows whether a behaviour (*karman*) is good or bad: 'I have already seen thousands of wombs (*yoni*), eaten different foods, sucked many breasts. I was born and then died, there was birth again and again. For the sake of the others, my behaviour was good or bad, and because of it, I burn alone

58 McAuliffe (2001), vol. 1, p. 231, col. 1.
59 Shukoh (1957), p. 433, line 17.
60 Kapani (1976), p. 8, line 21.
61 Deutsch and Buitenen (1971), pp. 75, 80, 104, 118, 120, 182, 247, 262, 284, 292, 304–306; Narain (2003), pp. 233, 245; Sharma (2007), p. 191.
62 Deutsch and Buitenen (1971), pp. 234–235, 310.
63 Dārā Shukoh nevertheless comes back to *jīvātma* and glosses it by *rūḥ* (soul) a few lines later; Shukoh (1957), p. 434, line 7.
64 Kapani (1976), p. 8, lines 22–24 ≈ Shukoh (1957), from p. 433, line 18 to p. 434, line 2.
65 Kapani (1976), p. 8, lines 25–27 ≈ Shukoh (1957), p. 434, lines 2–9.

(*ekākī tena dahye 'ham*)—the ones who took benefit of it are gone. Alas! Sunk in an ocean of pain (*duḥkhodadhi*), I don't see any remedy (*pratikriyā*) . . . If I free myself from the womb (*yadi yonyāḥ pramucye 'ham*), I will take refuge in the Great Lord (Maheśvara) [Śiva]—the one who puts misfortune to an end, the one who frees from the fruit [of the deeds]. If I free myself from the womb, I will take refuge in [Viṣṇu] Nārāyaṇa—the one who puts misfortune to an end, the one who frees from the fruit [of the deeds]. If I free myself from the womb, I will practice Sāṃkhyayoga—which puts misfortune to an end, which frees from the fruit [of the deeds]. If I free myself from the womb, I will study the eternal Brahman!' Then, having reached the entrance of the womb (*yonidvāra*), it is oppressed by a very painful process (*yantra*); as soon as it is born, a Viṣṇu-wind (*vaiṣṇavo vāyuḥ*) touches it and, consequently, it forgets its [previous] births and deaths, and does not know whether a behaviour (*karman*) is good or bad.[66]

The main subjects broached in this single passage are important ones: reincarnation, karma, samsara, polytheism, Sāṃkhya, and Vedanta. Let us see how the translation team deals with them:

In the ninth month, as [the baby] has become complete, it remembers the whole decline (*jamī'-i tanazzulāt*) and the course of the times (*sair-i adwār*) that it spent under [the form of varied] races (*'anāṣir*), minerals (*jamādāt*) and plants (*nabātāt*), and it understands [what was his] good and bad behaviour (*'amal*).

It notices: 'I've made a long journey, I travelled in [different] epochs and in different manners, I drowned in the ocean of existential suffering (*daryā-yi ġham-i wujūd*). If I go out of the belly of my mother, I'll devote myself to the Truth (*Ḥaqq*), or I'll dedicate myself to the knowledge of Truth (*ma'rifat-i Ḥaqq*), which purify from the good and bad behaviour and affords salvation (*rastagārī*). This very path I will follow, which leads to the Essence (*Ẕāt*) of the whole world—that Essence is the Emperor (*Pādishāh*) of all and the Master (*Ṣāḥib*) of everything.' With these resolutions, ready to exit, it goes out of the belly, and while going out of this peculiar door, it suffers because of the narrowness of the way; because at that moment he cries, it forgets those resolutions. After the exit, the wind of the world (*bād-i dunyā*), which is the wind of *avidyā*, that is foolishness and ignorance (*jahl-u nādānī*), as soon as it reaches it, everything that it remembered—which would be the *praṇava*, that is the great name of God, the quest of God and other things that were remembered—all of them disappear. Again, that is why it depends on the behaviour and the way one comes to good or bad.[67]

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66 Sanskrit source: Kapani (1976), p. 8, line 27 to p. 9, line 13.
67 Persian source: Shukoh (1957), p. 434, lines 9–20.

To cope with all these Brahminical concepts, Dārā Shukoh's team uses all seven of Ivir's translation procedures.[68] The translators define samsara as 'the whole decline and the course of the times that it spent under [the form of varied] races, minerals and plants' instead of the literal 'previous life,' but they use a precise equivalent of karma with an Arabic word *ʾamal*. They gloss the Sanskrit compound *duḥkhodadhi* 'ocean of pain,' which poetically evokes samsara, with *daryā-yi gham-i wujūd* 'ocean of existential suffering.'

Then follow the successive resolutions the foetus will follow once it leaves the womb—resolutions that must have been a challenging task to translate under Muslim governance. Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahman, and Sāṃkhya are evoked, thus referring to polytheism and philosophical concepts unacceptable to the Muslim faith. The translation team shows here subtle diplomatic skills. It substitutes the epithets of Śiva and Viṣṇu with *Ḥaqq* 'Truth' and *Ẕāt* 'Essence,' both epithets of Allah. *Ẕāt* is then defined by *Pādishāh* and *Ṣāḥib*, which are both possible translations for *Mahā -īśvara* 'Great Lord.' Sāṃkhyayoga and the Vedantic Brahman are omitted, and the problematic 'Viṣṇu-wind' (*vaiṣṇavo vāyuḥ*) erasing the foetus' memories is replaced by two expressions, one a creation, the other a borrowing: 'the wind of the world, which is the wind of *avidyā*.' The 'wind of the world' (*bād-i dunyā*) does not echo any peculiar Persian metaphor. As for *avidyā*, it is a key concept in Advaita Vedānta,[69] and the translators need to gloss it with 'foolishness and ignorance' (*jahl-u nādānī*).[70]

In this way, the 'wind of *avidyā*' erases the memory of the newborn child. The translators demonstrate their skill here by opting for a much more diplomatic solution. Instead of abruptly replacing Viṣṇu with Allah, they oust the Hindu god and replace him by an Advaitic concept that could not be easily challenged by Brahmins. Then they use another Vedāntic concept, *praṇava*, another name of the sacred syllable om, which they gloss as 'the great name of God, the quest of God and other things that were remembered.'[71] This concept is absent from this portion of the original Sanskrit version in which what the child knew before his birth amnesia is described.

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68 Cf. Ivir (1987).
69 Cf. Deutsch and Buitenen (1971); Narain (2003), pp. 98–107, 203–211 and *passim*; Sharma (2007), pp. 167–183, 221–226.
70 Anquetil-Duperron translated the Persian *baʿd az bar-āmadan bād-i dunyā ki bād-i aw-idyā ast yaʿnī jahl-u nādānī* . . . with: 'Post à τῷ exire, cum *aoudia*, quòd ventus *aoudia* est; id est, insipientia et non scientia est . . .' (Shukoh (1801), vol. 2, pp. 236–237).
71 *nām-i buzurg-i Khudā wa ṭalab-i Khudā wa dīgar chīzhā ki maẕkūr shud.* (Shukoh (1957), p. 434, lines 18–19)

Conclusion

The *Garbha Upaniṣad* does not end with the birth of the child. It continues with reflections on the components of the body, namely the three 'fires' (Sanskrit *agni*, Persian *ātish*) that dwell in the body: the fire of knowledge, the fire of vision, and the fire of digestion.[72] The text links these fires with the sacrificial ones as they are mentioned in a major Upanishad, the *Chāṇḍogya*, which links together fire, offerings, and embryonic conception.[73] I will not go into detail here on these technical questions but rather summarise what may be concluded from the close observation of the translation methods of Dārā Shukoh's team.

Dārā Shukoh's team employed all the theoretical translation strategies that a modern scholar might use. The pandits mastered the Sāṃkhya and Ayurvedic vocabulary and drew on these sources to extrapolate the original text. On the one hand, they concealed the marks of polytheism and skilfully replaced them by epithets of Allah. On the other hand, they enriched the text with Advaitic terms compatible with Dārā Shukoh's plan to display Brahminical monotheism when necessary.

As I have shown with a few examples, the translation choices of Dārā Shukoh's team were very diplomatic ones. It would have been a delicate matter for them to mention Śiva and Viṣṇu; thus they chose to write *Ḥaqq* and *Ẕāt*.[74] It could have been difficult for Brahmins to see Viṣṇu disappearing as the agent of oblivion during birth; thus they replaced the Hindu god with a strong Advaitic concept, *avidyā*. In this matter, we could say today that this team was at least very professional, avoiding Islamic admonitions on the one hand and Brahmanical disapprobation on the other. In the same manner, the team did not openly refute karmic retribution nor samsara, literally translating the former and glossing the latter, without explaining these concepts or revealing any oriented opinion. Dārā Shukoh had already made his vision explicit in the *Majma' al-Baḥrayn*,[75] the treatise he wrote a year before the *Sirr-i Akbar*.[76]

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72 Kapani (1976), p. 9, lines 11–12: *śarīram iti kasmāt / agnayo hy atra śrīyante jñānāgnir darśanāgniḥ koṣṭhāgnir iti* ≈ Shukoh (1957), p. 435, lines 1–2: *in badan-rā ki sharīr mī-gūyand barā-yi ān ast ki sih ātish dar badan mī-bāshad: yak-i ātish-i gyān ki nūr-i ma'rifat bāshad, duwum ātish-i bīnā'ī ki nūr-i chashm bāshad, siwum ātash-i mi'da*. In Ayurvedic medicine, the bilious humour (*pitta*) is divided into five fires (*agni*); the three mentioned here belong to that list (Renou and Filliozat (1947), vol. 2, p. 153, § 1652).
73 *Chāṇḍogya Upaniṣad* 5.7–9 (= Ācārya (1948), p. 61)—Cf. Kapani (1976), p. 18, n. 36.
74 On this peculiar point, see Dārā Shukoh's writings on the names of God in his *Majma' al-Baḥrayn*, Shukoh (1982), pp. 98–99.
75 *Majma' al-Baḥrayn*, chap. 18–20 (Shukoh (1982), pp. 105–113).
76 Faruqui (2014), pp. 40–42.

Some scholars have brilliantly detailed Dārā Shukoh's intellectual journey.[77] However, the aim here was not to retell their conclusions[78] but to summarize some of the translation techniques of the team working for him.

Thus, the very subtle work done for the *Sirr-i Akbar* reveals the prince's beliefs concerning the 'Indian monotheists' and Muslims:

> *paribhāṣābhedātiriktaṃ kam api bhedaṃ svarūpāvāptau nāpaśyam* (*Samudrasaṅgama* (preface), Chaudhuri (1954), 1.1, line 16)

> ≈ *juz ikhtilāf-i lafẓī dar dar-yāft wa shināk̲h̲t-i Ḥaqq tafāwut-ī nadīd* (*Majmaʿ al-Baḥrayn* (preface), Shukoh (1982), p. 80, lines 11–12)

> I/he did not see any difference, except verbal, in the way they sought the Truth.

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77 Among them: Chand (1943); Husain (2002); D'Onofrio (2010); Ganeri (2012); Faruqui (2014); and Gandhi (2014).

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AROUND NĀTHS AND SANTS

Maya Burger

On the Nāth and Sant Traditions: Transmission, Yoga and Translationality

In historical perspective, the papers in Part III cover a span of several centuries and must be read against their specific backgrounds. We have brought them together here, however, since they reflect on traditions related either to the Nāths or the Sants, or to their mutual relations. The authors have written their contributions independently, but the editors and the readers may read them in the light of their shared issues and themes. Source texts, periods, and methods differ—but the collated topics on Nāths and Sants facilitate comparison. From this perspective, I will highlight some systematic points that deserve special attention. However, I will not sum up the contents of the six papers included in this part of the book—this has already been done by the authors in their abstracts. I have chosen to start with some reflections on socio-religious questions related to the two traditions, and then to approach the question of yoga in this period and its relation to bhakti. On a more interpretative level, I shall discuss the importance of translation as a challenge to comparison and interpretation for researchers in the field. The separation between these domains has more of a heuristic value—no doubt they are deeply interconnected.

Maya Burger

Transmission, authority

> 'I am a Hindu by birth, a Yogī
> through endurance, a Muslim pīr
> through understanding.
> Recognize the path, oh mullāhs and
> qāzīs, that was accepted by Brahmā,
> Viṣṇu, and Śiva.'
>
> *Gorakhabāṇī*, *sabadī* 14

All the papers relate, albeit under different angles, to modes of transmission, to the mechanics of access to authority, to processes of legitimation and transfer of knowledge in a context demanding the confirmation of socio-religious identities.[1] The social background of adherents, doctrinal discourses, critical exegeses, and gendered voices are among the topics discussed by the authors in this section to confirm sectarian identity and assure transmission. What is transmitted and how are different doctrines shared and canonized? What kind of polemics are necessary to establish one's own identity? What place does the so-called religion occupy in the wider economic, political, and literary fields?[2]

Speaking of Nāths and Sants in early modern North India opens up a large range of questions which have to do foremost with various religious attitudes and competing doctrinal interpretations, as well as sociographic dimensions. The term Sant cuts through different doctrinal ideologies that overlap regarding sectarian and religious adherences, as well as more literary ones, and it demands us to ask the question, 'Who, finally, is a Sant?' To answer this question, the circulation of cultures at the heart of the early modern world makes it meaningful and necessary to develop perspectives which discuss topics related to broad historical processes (sociological, political, and so forth) rather than to one or the other tradition, or to closed religious boundaries.[3] Similarly, controversies nourish the field of interaction of these various traditions during the period.

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1 The selected elements are in no way representative of the full scope of research the papers provide.

2 I am aware of the difficulties of applying the term of 'religion' to the Indian context, but I see it here, *a minima*, as a reference and acceptance of a transcendent 'being' translatable into institutionalized rituals and doctrines. Bhakti, also a term taken for granted, includes a huge variety of religious experiences not covered by the categories of Western religious history. Vedanta, too, is a fuzzy category into which many traditions have been placed together since the time of the Upanishads. Here again the Indian delimitations of what a category includes are not the same as Western appellations.

3 A proposition made for instance by Suthren Hirst and Zavos (2011), pp. 115–116: 'The interaction of different teacher-pupil-traditions is a significant indicator of this dynamic . . . How might a model of teacher-pupil traditions disrupt the notion of separate world religions and give us a different way of approaching religious traditions in modern South Asia?'

How does a tradition survive over time and how does it become successful? Or more successful than all the others? Who is a 'true yogi'? Is a Sant a yogi? Are all yogis Sants?[4] Who has religious authority? How is religious authority built and how does it get accepted?

The Sant tradition was right from the beginning of the early modern world an often used but diverse designation.[5] This diversity raises the question of what it is that makes a Sant? Is there any common doctrine to justify a Sant identity? Even core concepts or terms were interpreted in various and distinct ways, yet it is this umbrella term of Sant that justifies their traceability.[6] Concentrating on the origin and rise of a Sant tradition is a rewarding perspective in the diachronic and dynamic aspect of tradition and content analysis teaches us about the crystallization of one strand at a specific moment in time.[7] Who are the people who join a certain group and not another in the eighteenth century? Through the contrastive picture of two Sant sadhus, Rāmcaraṇ and Carandās, we follow the different perspectives that identify with the appellation of Sant: while one is strictly *nirguṇa*, the other espouses a more mainstream form of Vaishnavism.[8] It seems that the stricter Rāmcaraṇ was more successful in terms of assuring transmission and continuation, whereas Carandās's more lukewarm position did not ensure a distinct lineage.

The case of the Biśnoī *sampradāya*[9] reveals how to become successful in a world of multi-sectarian competition and demonstrates the necessity to establish doctrinal frontiers. To understand this requires an analysis of the choices that are made operative in a tradition that become efficient and of the presentation of Jāmbhojī as a 'Sant' and founder of the Biśnoī *sampradāya*. The *Sabadvāṇī*, the central text of the Biśnoī *sampradāya*, contains religious criticism, such as the critique of the Nāth tradition, which serve as vectors to supplant the Nāth ideologies.[10] For the Biśnoī, Jāmbhojī is the perfect yogi, superior to all others. His religious

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4 See the section below on yoga.
5 See Gold's contribution. On Sant culture, see Williams (2014).
6 Gold speaks of profound ambiguities, and points towards the doctrinal and class differences in the way dissent and opposition was expressed.
7 New Sants emerged in the eighteenth century who continued and developed the discourses of predecessors. Gold looks at processes of transmission and at what that entails in terms of the transformation of the flow of poetry to adjust to new mentalities and perspectives.
8 Neither figure sprang from the lower classes as their predecessors did but were middle class and showed a different Sant piety than their earlier colleagues. They were not householders like the earlier Sants but renouncers—celibate sadhus! Followers equally seem to stem from the middle rather than lower classes.
9 See the contribution by Kempe-Weber.
10 Other groups are also criticized, but yogis are the main target. The hypocrisy of the Nāths is well demonstrated in the verses where all exterior paraphernalia are specifically attacked.

criticism demonstrated his superiority and placed him in line with the theme of the '*true yogī*' who appears in each era to help the people.[11]

Gender is another realm that has to do with authority. The Sant tradition is an entirely male-dominated one and the feminine dimension of its key works is rarely addressed.[12] What kind of authority can we identify at this level? What is particular to the feminine voice that it should be identified as the religious experience par excellence?[13] And what constitutes the 'feminine' in the sources that have been preserved up to now?

The question of the feminine appears in the context of Kṛṣṇa bhakti, where Kabīr would speak on the emotional level like the *gopī*s, albeit the Kṛṣṇa references remain free of mythological constraints. On the symbolic level, it is not the *gopī* model that is identified, but the effort to burn the ego in fire, and it concerns poems alluding to the final deliverance. The symbolic level would be rendered more understandable through the image of the woman and her emotions assumed to be more widely known.[14]

We may ask Agrawal[15] whether the female alter ego of Kabīr corresponds to the nature of emotions that are actually lived, or whether it is a poetic convention/necessity. The Sant poetry attributed to women is not really different from that attributed to men, which might indicate that using a feminine voice corresponds to a literary convention.[16]

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11 Kempe-Weber analyses in a pragmatic manner the consolidation of authority through the mechanics that function on a village level in a very different way than in the context of the city or the court. At the village level, various teachings are confused and mixed. People would amalgamate the strands and layers that form the frame of traditions, and exchanges occurred by blurring, for example, borders of doctrinal traditions. Reflecting on the case of identity in reference to Nāthism in the *Sabadavāṇī* not only concerns shared and disputed doctrines but reveals a strategy to give authority to the founder in the process of forging a new community. The authority attributed at the time of Jāmbodhjī to the *Gorakhbāṇī* is transferred onto the *Sabadavāṇī* and hence brings authority to Jāmbhojī. He referred to the Nāths not out of interest but because of their importance. However, in the process, Nāth elements have been incorporated—just one example of the many exchanges between the Sants and Nāths.

12 In her contribution, Rousseva-Sokolova examines the paradoxes underlying the fact that male devotees may turn to the feminine to qualify different types of religious experience. Or, in other words, women are the enemy of the Sants, but at the same time, the Sants may speak, like Kabīr, with the voice of a woman. Rousseva-Sokolova uses two levels—emotional/feminine and symbolic—to guide us through the words ascribed to Kabīr.

13 Rousseva-Sokolova works at the level of interpretation, which differentiates her contribution from those who are primarily preoccupied with establishing textual accuracy.

14 Which is actually a male perception of what constitutes femininity.

15 Agrawal (2009), quoted by Rousseva-Sokolova.

16 Rousseva-Sokolova ponders over cross-gender rhetoric in the bhakti and Sant traditions. She argues that the subject of emotions and their treatment is a new field of inquiry from which we may expect new interpretative insights that are also valid for the Sant world.

Yoga

> 'When the mind and the self of the
> yogi unite like salt mixes with water
> it is called samādhi.'
> *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* 9.1.13,162

The role of the yogi as authority (see above) is only one instance of yoga in the vernacular texts of early modern North India. The word is part and parcel of many texts which hint at their ways of using the term. The appearance of Haṭhayoga texts, more tantric-oriented styles of yoga, in Sanskrit texts as well as in vernacular idioms, is a characteristic of the history of yoga during the period. The relation of *yoga and bhakti*, for instance, still needs further investigation to show how yoga is used in this context and what its exact meaning is, also along sectarian lines.

Who could qualify as the perfect yogi of this time? The answers are quite different when looking at the distinct uses of the term or the sources consulted. Though yoga was a generic term to express ways of liberation (see the Upanishads and the Gita), over centuries and through the influence of modern developments, we tend to identify yoga with the more physical meaning of the word. However, in the context of bhakti or more generally Vedanta, the meaning can be far more 'religious/philosophical' and the body be of little or no interest.[17]

One example is provided by the Dadūpanth in which yoga is based on *brahma*-bhakti.[18] In fact, yoga is defined as *brahma*-gnosis, and Dadū is the perfect *avadhūta* (yogi) who transmits *brahma*-gnosis to the disciple. Yoga without *brahma*-bhakti/gnosis is actually void. Hence yogic practices without a gnostic quest supervised by a proper guru are futile. The descriptions of the opponents, or not-perfect yogis, are interesting in so far as they suggest which yogas were important at the time and offer information about lineages. The perfection seen in Dādū places him as the *avadhūta* beyond all the other systems.[19]

The presence of discourses on yoga in Rāmdās's codex shows how important it was for the Sants to reflect on their religion in discourses concerning yoga. The doctrinal disputes indicate a direction from a more ancient Nāthyogic culture to a

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17 Mallinson in *Roots of Yoga* (2017) pays more attention to texts relating to body yoga than to those mentioning yoga in the context of bhakti or Vedanta.
18 See Horstmann's contribution.
19 The primordial Nāth is referred to as *brahma*, who resides in the interior and responds to the idea of qualifying beyond and above sectarian questions. The case study allows Horstmann to single out two models of Nāthism, a tantric-Shaiva model and a bhakti-fied form of it. She shows convincingly that codices are a good subject of study as they can be regarded as traditions in progress, having taken a number of years to be completed. Rāmdās's codex took six years of piecing together a manuscript and testifies to a wide range of Sant traditions beside the Dādūpanth.

Nāthyogic bhakti, just as many of Kabīr's poems demonstrate preference for an interpretation of rasa in a more bhakti line.[20] Through a parallel reading of what is happening in the distillation process and in the 'yogic' path of liberation,[21] we learn how Kabīr wishes to produce rasa in the sense of the immortal drink that, produced in the body, can be consumed. Kabīr, bound through this process to the Nāth tradition, will however transform it into Rāma rasa and finally it is the name of Rāma itself which is the sweet rasa to be drunk. Rāma rasa is equated with the name to obtain altered states of consciousness. We have here an example of a yogic practice transformed into one related to bhakti.

Bhakti and yoga can also be differentiated in reference to the acceptance of divine or yogic power by a bhakta or a yogi.[22] In the Sant tradition, it is the yogi who is able to receive the help of his God who has more power.

The *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* of the Dādūpanthī Sundardās is an eighteenth-century testimony to these debates and the plurality of yogas at work, in the opinion of those interested in confirming which one was the more important.[23] For Sundardās, yoga covers many fields, even if he finally establishes a hierarchy in which Advaita Vedanta is the most important path of liberation. Advaita can only be a spiritual understanding of yoga.

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20 Zhang singles out three types of origins or knowledges for the word rasa in Kabīr—alchemy, wine distillation, and Haṭhayoga. Rasa was integrated from what Zhang calls pre-bhakti thoughts into the world of Kabīr where it bears traces of these different meanings related to different contexts. A first meaning relates rasa to the world of alchemy (*rasāyana*) where rasa has the same rejuvenating properties as we find in alchemy. In a second usage rasa refers to an alcoholic drink with all the metaphors attached to the description of drinking as a way to achieving the highest liberating goal or explaining a mystical experience.

21 Zhang reads the poems referring to the processes of distillation in terms of the physical experiences of yogic nature. Images drawn from the world of distillation allow Kabīr to explain what happens inside the body prepared to enjoy rasa, here the divine intoxication. For Zhang, it is a significant feature in the intellectual history of the many layered influences in Kabīr's work and reception.

22 Pinch (2006) and Burchett (2012) have studied the disputes that differentiated yogis at the time. They discuss the two strands, one based on self-effort and the yoga which includes the idea of a 'God' bestowing power and knowledge to the yogi. This resonates with Horstmann and Zhang.

23 For Sundardās and his *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*, see Burger (2014).

Translationality and identity

'For after all, how can we know
why it is that some things are just not
sayable in certain languages?'

'All a translation can ever be is the
manifestation of one's reader's read-
ing. That means that all translators
are *creative* in that they are rewriting
for a new set of readers a text that
came into existence in another time
and place.'[24]

Susan Bassnett

All papers in Part III, and actually the entire book, are concerned with questions of translation. Thus, they document translationality, the concept coined by Matthew Reynolds to characterize the possibilities and layers of activities that are at the basis of translation. If translation is long seen as a 'noble' yet 'tricky' activity, since the so-called translational turn[25] scholars have emphasized the creative character inherent in it. We do not simply move from one language to another, but starting from the very process of reading (or listening), we create a new text with our comprehension of the 'original,' assuring the survival of texts even where their translations are very creative. Translations render a text fit to survive in a new context for which it is made intelligible. To quote Reynolds once more: 'Translations are not mere shadows of the source; nothing in translation is exactly the same as its source: the connection is, rather, one of *likeness* in which either term of the pair can become the focus of attention and in which differences can be as interpretively nourishing as similarities.'[26]

We may add two important elements valid for the early modern, especially in the realm of the large corpus of Braj poetry. The question of authorship is not decisive: even though poems are certainly attributed to an author through the ideograph[27] (*chāpa*), they belong more to a strand of transmission; hence, the *likeness* is already inherent in the way poems travel over North India by performers who add lines and change languages in the name of an author to whom they want to resemble or be identified with. Secondly, it is through this process that the poems have come down over centuries through a succession of performances—what

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24 My emphasis.
25 This is summed up well in the *Translation Studies Reader* by Venuti (2012).
26 Reynolds (2013) p. 97; my emphasis.
27 I take up Novetzke's proposition to speak of ideograph rather than signature as this shows not authorship but represents the idea of authorship within a particular tradition. Novetzke (2003), p. 238.

Hawley calls a 'storm of songs'—and of writing down (another mode of translation), of reperformances, rewritings, and copying that have ensured their survival over centuries. More so, translation is in itself an exercise of writing/performing and it *frees* the language of the original.[28]

In translation, a text is more than a 'simple' text. The relation between oral and written traditions in early modern India (as is the case elsewhere) is complex and their interdependency has to be looked at in each case. When speaking of translation, the spontaneous reference is to the 'written' text that is translated into another language. However, a text is and can be much more than the written text (a certain moment in the history of a poem or an idea); if the text lives through its translations, it also lives through performativity, which gives it a peculiar status.

Novetzke shows how in many cases there is an overlap of the oral and written in terms of performances.[29] During the performance of a poem or song, elements are woven by the *kīrtankār* into a given 'text' which could stem from any kind of source, hence submitting the text to the demands of performance: Orality and literacy existed in a symbiotic relationship, in Braj no less than in Marathi, 'Literacy is always afloat in a sea of orality.'[30] Novetzke accentuates the telling rather than the text and states 'in other words, certain texts themselves suggest that *sometimes the telling is the text*, fossilized in literacy, imperfectly cemented in time.'[31]

In the specific case of early modern poetry in North India, translation comprises the following aspects. The first consists in building a corpus that researchers can work with. The passage from oral traditions to manuscripts carry the imprints and traces of their time, space, and interest communities. These imprints and traces belong to translationality just as much as the involved technicalities and interferences. The next step leads from processes of copying down to standardization

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28 As Paz (1992), p. 159, puts it: 'The translators' starting point is not the language in movement that provides the poet's raw material but the fixed language of the poem. A language congealed, yet living. His procedure is the inverse of the poet's; he is not constructing an unalterable text from mobile characters; instead he is dismantling the elements of the text, freeing the signs into circulation, then returning them to the language.' Quoted in Bassnett (2016), p. 43.

29 The study of the figure of the *kīrtankār* in Marathi literary performances sheds light on the debate of the interplay and interrelation of the oral and the written. Writing appears in the case presented by Novetzke as a tool in the practice of performance. The *kīrtankār* uses a notebook called *bada*, in which the *kīrtankār* is used to write about performances and hence offers a good research tool. Exploring the *bada* enables researcher to learn about the performers of songs and their authors, who were the guarantee of the living tradition.

30 Goody and Watt, quoted in Novetzke (2015), p. 183.

31 Novetzke (2015), p. 183, my emphasis. Even though Novetzke speaks of the context of Maharashtra, where the written had an important place, he convincingly shows that performances seem to have been the main attraction, as people did not want to read but see and hear. 'One does not want to lose the immediacy of cultural memory, physical display, devotional interaction . . . the tongue would always make the best book.' (p. 184)

via printing. All these steps leave the traces of those who took them. Translation happens when the poems are made intelligible in other languages, and it accentuates the choices made in transposing them into different contexts, from old idioms into modern ones, or to languages in other cultures.

To pay attention to these different layers is not just an academic occupation, but the guarantee of an awareness, 'translationally' speaking, of the challenges at stake.[32] For example, for Namdev and the relation between oral and written in connection with authorship, Novetzke says:

> Here however we see the technology of writing eschewed in the Namdev tradition: it is neither a marker of oral performance as a lesser medium devoid of historical aptitude but rather just the opposite—orality is the medium of historical remembrance, yet it is centered around an individual author, perpetuated by networks of performing authors, and attributed, ultimately, to the author of the form of performance itself.[33]

Metrical changes in a transmission represent another opportunity to single out changes that occur during passages from one medium of communication to another.[34] I include the effort of attribution in the notion of translationality; the knowledge of the metres at a given time can correct previous translations and render new translations more accessible. The very fact that certain reconstructions are easier and more explicable or evident than others provides a criterion for their proximity to what might have been the 'original.'[35] This rewriting in the process of the reception history of Kabīr is a creative act that not only brings out an 'old' Kabīr but assures its survival.

The quest of the identity of the 'original,' as important as it is for the tradition under scrutiny, may be put into perspective by recent studies on issues of translation. From the perspectives of new trends in translational studies, the 'original' text, or source text, fades out of focus, as it is seen as a vibrant moment in a longer

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32 Hawley (2015), p. 318 speaks of a bhakti network to show how the different trends in bhakti were linked one to the other: 'the Kabīr who came down to us is inextricably a construction of those who received him, sang his songs, performed his words and added their own already in the early modern period.'

33 Novetzke (2003), p. 238.

34 In his contribution on the Kabīr tradition and its reception history, Imre Bangha shows a way to establish a good manuscript and a certain chronology of texts. Metric shapes and their reworking reach a layer of poetry that could be attributed to the admittedly historical Kabīr. This attribution of a poem can be considered as a point of crystallization of a chain of ideas.

35 Bangha also explains what happens when poems are put into the raga system, which illustrate a further estrangement from the original that cannot easily be reconstructed (the raga system allowing for more freedom and hence changes in the poems).

story of texts in transmission and translation.[36] Walter Benjamin already insisted on the fact that translation is what allows a text to survive over time, hence he 'diminished' the importance of an 'original' text to emphasize the need and the effort to let texts survive over time and preserve them. The problematics of the early modern concerns also the Sanskrit corpuses, and the *Rāmāyaṇa* is an illustrative example. Similarly, over centuries, stories have been enacted and brought down to new generations. The ocean of tales (*Kathāsaritsāgara*) is a memorial to this flow of stories: it is a collection, yet there is a world before this text and there is a world after it. If there is no definitive text, the following statement demands consent: 'To assume that any recombination of elements is necessarily inferior to its original form is to assume that draft nine is necessarily inferior to draft H—for there can only be drafts.'[37] Even in classical literature, storytelling is a form of performance.[38]

Another intrinsic relationship belonging to translationality is evoked by the musical tradition, which can only survive through the interplay of shastra and *prayoga*. Musical treatises have come into existence as memories of an earlier time. They become authority and a source of inspiration when musical traditions are at crossroads or in need of fresh inspiration, which occurs in the interplay of theory and actual performative practice. To see Kabīr and his tradition in the wider scope of translations to various other media (like music) brings into clearer light the creativity inherent in the process of translation and transposition.[39]

Another mode of translationality is captured with the idea of following the traces of a word in order to scrutinize a key term with a complex history, to contrast its uses and meanings.[40] Rasa is one of these terms. We all feel anxious translating it, and once more, it is the context that provides the clue to understanding the term. On a more pragmatic level, the comparison of various translations of a text is rewarding work that allows us on the one hand to confront interpretations, and on the other, to testify that translations are marked by the stamp of time. The historiography of translation reflects the state of scholarship and interests, and remains an indispensable tool to testify to epistemological options, and for the

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36 See Bassnett (2016) ; Hennard Dutheil de la Rochère (2016).

37 Borges (2002), p. 15, quoted in Bassnett (2016), p. 58.

38 'Stories are not merely utterances; they are part of the action. They change its course, but they affect the addressee. In this tale, the tales of woe are told to express and affect the speaker's own mood, to change the speaker's state of being. Telling the story is cathartic for the teller of the tale.' Ramanujan (1989), p. 249.

39 An interesting example of transposition of the *Mahābhārata* is produced by the graphic novels of Amruta Patil (2012), (2016). Though it is no longer the *Mahābhārata* in its critical edition, it is a new version, recontextualized to adopt the stories in a twenty-first-century fashion.

40 Such as we see in the case of rasa in Zhang's contribution.

scholar to clarify his or her position. The concept of translationality expresses this awareness of all the layers that are at stake in the act of moving from one language to another, including reflections such as the relation between the written and oral and the transposition of the written in oral performance (changing the experience of the written in yet another way).

What is presented in Part III of this book, however specific it is to the early modern literatures of North India, also reveals many aspects that are fine material to initiate comparative studies, be it on the level of translation, doctrinal or social authority-building, yoga or gender issues. It is, of course, not a simple comparison we are alluding to here, such as putting similar elements together, but rather the profound interest in seeing how similar topics and subjects are dealt with differently in various contexts. This cross-viewing, concerned with preserving the specific, has the potential to make us aware of new questions and inquiries that may not otherwise have emerged had we not been curious to see what happens elsewhere. The differentiation between specific and more general statements is certainly necessary to preserve and understand contexts and specificities, but it opens horizons of transversal questionings which have the potential to enrich reflections. The early modern context of North India is so abundantly rich in terms of multilingualism, literary genres, connected histories, and religious plurality (indeed, every level of cultural production) that it entails the potential to decenter scholarship and to bring new thought to academia more generally.

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Imre Bangha

6. Shifts in Kabīr Contexts and Texts from Mughal to Modern Times

Abstract. Kabīr's extraordinary popularity was made possible by the fact that his poetry could be adapted to various contexts and was able to speak to various communities over the times. New interpretive communities recontextualised Kabīr's text through various means, such as selection, textual variation or providing a new context to existing textual strategies. After a survey of the major receptive communities and presenting possible reasons for neglect from Sufi and early Kabīr-panthī circles, this paper analyses textual variation in ten poems in the pada form as they transited from one receptive community to another. Each of these poems had been recorded by at least two of the six clusters of sectarian sources produced by Sikh*, Vaishnava, Dādūpanthī, Kabīrpanthī, Radhasoami and Nāthpanthī compilers between the late sixteenth and the early twentieth century. Many of their variant readings are indicative of sectarian preferences. Divine names, the importance of the guru and hagiographic details were particularly contested aspects of the padas.

Keywords. Kabīr, Pada, Textual variation, Interpretive community, Recontextualisation.

> 'I speak for all
> but no one knows me.
> It was okay then
> and it's okay now.
> Ages pass, I stay the same.'
> Kabīr, *sākhī* 183, *Bījak*

Continuous recontextualization of Kabīr

The poet-saint Kabīr (d. *c*. 1518) is one of the most outstanding authors of Old Hindi literature.* Kabīr's message of a higher devotional consciousness and his advocacy of a direct contact with an ineffable *nirguṇa* deity, expressed in powerful poetry with striking, elemental imagery, make him one of the most popular Indian poets both in India and abroad.[1]

This extraordinary popularity was made possible by the fact that Kabīr poetry could be adapted to various contexts and spoke to various communities throughout history. He has always been considered a poet–saint but has also become more than that. In contemporary India, for example, his vigorous attacks on hypocrisy in both religions has led him to be viewed as a symbol of Hindu–Muslim unity or as one of the early representatives of low-caste Dalit literature.[2] Interestingly, he is one of the few Hindi poets who transcended the linguistic confines of South Asia and, over the past hundred years, came to speak to popular Western audiences who perceived Kabīr as a mystic either from Christian, Beat, or New Age perspectives.[3]

In academia, the focus of Kabīr studies has gradually moved from the question of reconstructing an 'original Kabīr' to the examination of the multiplicity of voices in the available material both written and oral. While scholars such as Dvivedi, Tivari, and Vaudeville tried to arrive at what Kabīr was or was not, more recent scholarship investigates the multiplicity of Kabīr images and the multiplicity of Kabīr voices.[4] This multiplicity is examined in the tradition about the persona of Kabīr, as the telling plural in the title of an important volume, *Images of Kabīr*, indicates. It is also acknowledged in the latest Kabīr-edition through, for example, the synoptic presentation of all early variant versions in *The Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī* or through Dharwadker's translation of poems from markedly different Kabīr layers.

Reception in a particular community in early modern India is reflected, among others, through the manuscripts they produce. In these manuscripts, the process of selection is determined by two major factors: the availability and quality of source material and the sectarian principles of the interpretative community and manuscript editors. In sectarian anthologies—and all early Kabīr material is sectarian—

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1 The term Kabīr in this article, unless indicated otherwise, refers not to the historical person but rather to the persona who composed or inspired songs under the name Kabīr. This approach does not deny the historicity of Kabīr but reckons with the possibility of composite authorship of Kabīrian poetry. For arguments about the approximate date of death of the historical person, see Lorenzen (1992), p. 18.

2 See, e. g., Hedayetullah (2009) and Ralhan (2004). A Google search of 'Kabir' and 'Hindu–Muslim unity' resulted in over 12,000 hits. The seminal book on Kabīr as Dalit is Dharmvir (1998). For a recent Hindi monograph discussing Indian and Western approaches to Kabīr, see Agrawal (2009).

3 On English translations of Kabīr, see Kumar (2009), pp. 165–181 and the 'Introduction' in Friedlander (2017), pp. 5–42. Tagore and Underhill's English version, *One Hundred Poems of Kabir*, has been translated into French, German, Spanish, Italian, Hungarian, Russian, and Bulgarian. Interestingly, no prominent translations exist in non-European languages. See Imre Bangha, 'International Tagore Bibliography', University of Oxford, <http://tagore.orient.ox.ac.uk>. (Accessed 27 October 2018).

4 The groundbreaking article in this approach was Hess (1987). The books of Dvivedi (1950 [1942]), Tivari (1989 [1961]) and Vaudeville (1997 [1993]) are listed in the references.

poems are selected for inclusion and their text is sometimes modified. At other times, new meanings are acquired simply by transposing the unchanged poem from one community to another.

In this chapter, I intend to examine a particular aspect of this multiple reception, namely, the changes in particular poems when they pass from one interpretive community to another. In order to show how various communities received, accommodated, and recontextualized Kabīr, I will present examples of an influential part of texts, the padas, called *sabad*s in certain sources though other sources make a clear distinction between the two.[5] Other poetic forms, such as distiches (*dohā*s) or *ramainī*s are at least as important in the Kabīr literature as the padas, but in this chapter, due to constraints of size and the easy availability of the earliest pada corpus in publication, I am considering only the latter. The examination that can be contained within the framework of an article is limited and I will only be comparing versions of single poems used in two or more different contexts. A wider search may include the comparison of entire collections and identifying dominant themes, stylistic features, or keywords.[6] It may also assess the structures of various collections or compare the various forms of *dohā*s, *sākhī*s or *ramainī*s, and include hagiography.[7] A study of a certain theme, such as Kabīr's attack on orthodoxies, Hindu or Muslim, over the centuries would also be of special interest.[8] I will not include all communities that produced a record of their reception either and I do not even aim at a balance of all chronological layers. However, I aim to sample the most important old receptive communities and then give some examples of reception under colonial modernity as well. The work of Linda Hess, Shabnam Virmani, and others show how much Kabīr is a living presence.[9] However, extending my investigations to all major modern collections of texts would have considerably increased my article. I will be primarily examining written sources, but it should not be forgotten that Kabīr may have been more of an oral than a written presence during the period under investigation. However, the oral cannot be excluded from this analysis as it is

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5 Strictly speaking, *sabad*s are brief poems made by joining together three or four couplets of the same metre, normally *čaupāī*s or *dohā*s. The poetic output of Sant Čarandās, for example, apart from over a hundred padas, contains *sabad*s in *čaupāī*, *nisānī* and other metres. Brajendra Kumar Singhal, 'Svāmījī Śrīrāmčaraṇjī Mahārāj Kī Anubhav-Vāṇī' (unpublished work), pp. 587–590.

6 Such examination was carried out by Linda Hess in the 1980s on what appears now to be a limited number of texts (1987), pp. 114–141. About the limitations and the validity of her project within the light of recent scholarship, see Hess (2015), p. 146.

7 A comparison of the structures of two early Dādūpanthī collections is found in Strnad (2016).

8 Cf. Lorenzen (2011), pp. 23–25, 27–36. Pauwels (2010) shows that within the groups that nowadays are part of Hinduism, the Śāktas are singled out for special criticism.

9 Hess (2015) and Shabnam Virmani, 'The Kabir Project,' Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology, <http://kabirproject.org/>. (Accessed 27 October 2018).

always inherently present in the written. Kabīr's poems were first performed orally and the first recordings of Kabīr, though written, are snapshots of oral performances preserving extrametrical exclamations or explicatory phrases.[10]

In the changing world of Kabīr, silences are of special interest. We do not have early recordings of his poetry from several communities with which it has been associated. For example, we do not have extant Kabīr manuscripts of Sufi provenance even though he has repeatedly been associated with the Sufis.[11] No early Kabīrpanthī or Nāthpanthī manuscript recording of Kabīr's poems seems to exist although the former claims the custodianship of Kabīr's legacy through a disciple lineage and the latter shares the tantric and yogic imagery present in many of Kabīr's songs.[12] The accommodation of Nāthpanthī imagery in Kabīrian poems went so far that entire *Gorakh-bānī* songs were included under Kabīr's name with minor modifications in a Dādūpanthī manuscript containing the works of both Kabīr and Gorakh.[13] This may be due to the fact that the Nāthpanth initially did not pay as much attention to vernacular writing as did the Dādūpanth or the Nirañjanīs. In fact, vernacular Nāth manuscripts do not seem to appear before the eighteenth century.[14]

The lack of Sufi and early Kabīrpanthī archives requires a few words about Kabīr's reception in these circles.

Reception in Indo-Persian and Sufi circles

Although in the twentieth century there have been attempts to present Kabīr as a hero of Hindu–Muslim unity, his reception amongst Muslims was rather modest.[15] Textual scholarship does not mention the existence of any Sufi recensions of his poetry, or even his presence in *nasta'līq* manuscripts, and he was not discussed by Muslims as a poet until the twentieth century. Moreover, before the nineteenth century, he had only a moderate presence in the rich Indo-Persian religious discursive

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10 Bangha (2010) and (2013).

11 It should be mentioned that Tivari in his critical edition found traces of Urdu script transmission. However, his arguments seem to be highly speculative (1989), pp. 73–79.

12 Such recordings are missing from Dharwadker's list of Kabīr sources in Dharwadker (2003), pp. 33–39.

13 Strnad (2018), pp. 151-153, discusses the example of *tatva belī lo, tatva belī lo; avadhū gorakhanātha jānī* (Gorakhnāth) and *rāma guna belaṛī re avadhū gorakhanāthi jānī* (Kabīr).

14 James Mallinson, email communication, 13 November 2015. However, Nāth works on Haṭhayoga from north-west India, such as the *Amaraughaśāsana*, are found as early as 1525 CE. See also Mallinson (2011), p. 424.

15 On the Muslim reception of Kabīr, see Rizvi (1978), pp. 411–413, Vaudeville (1997), pp. 48–51, and Gaeffke (2002). At present, I am also preparing an article including further examples of Muslim reception.

literature. Out of the twenty-seven post-1530 Sufi biographical dictionaries discussed by Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi in his *History of Sufism in India*, only five mention Kabīr. Another telling silence is in the discourses of Dārā Shukoh, in his conversations with the *bairāgī* ascetic Bābā Lāl Dās or in his philosophical treatises, such as the *Majma'-ul-baḥrain*.[16] However, we have evidence that in 1698–1699 Ālamgīr made a grant to a village for the upkeep of the tomb of Śāh Kabīr in Magahar. Further grants followed later.[17]

Muslim appreciation of Kabīr may have been hindered by the lack of Islamic terminology in the poems. Nonetheless, it was a stumbling block for later Muslims that the Hindavi Sufi poets, such as Mālik Muḥammad Jāysī, wrote in a literary idiom of Hindi and translated Sufi terminology into Hindi hardly retaining any of the terms in Arabic. How can Kabīr talk from an Islamic standpoint or to a Sufi audience? Such Sufi usages in his corpus have hardly been studied.[18]

Two questions have been posed in this context, that of the vernacular language and that of the non-Islamic terminology. There are various explanations for the existence of Hindavi poems within Indian Islamic discourse. The nationalist idea that vernaculars were used as a missionary tool by Sufis to convert Hindus to Islam has been rejected by modern scholarship.[19] Moreover, no scholar has proposed to credit Kabīr with such an agenda. Scholars from Pitambardatt Barthwal (1901–1944) to Charlotte Vaudeville accounted for the lack of use of Islamic terminology by positing Kabīr as a Muslim poet of a recently converted weaver community that has only been partially Islamicized.[20] This explanation would accord with the view in which Muslim society is divided into *aśrāf* (high, non-indigenous) and *ajlāf* (low, indigenous) groups, the former using Persian and the latter Hindavi in their discourse.[21] Consequently, Kabīr, as a member of *ajlāf*, would not have direct

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16 On Shukoh's conversations, the *So'āl o Jawāb bain-e-Lāl Dās wa Dārā Shikoh* (also called *Mukālama-i Bābā La'l Dās wa Dārā Shikoh*), see Huart and Massignon (1926). His most discussed work is Mahfuz-ul-Haq (1998 [1929]).

17 Lorenzen (1992), p. 17.

18 Welcome exceptions are De Bruijn (2014) and Hess's session on Kabīr's poems with a Muslim association at the Fifth Early Hindi/Braj Bhasha Workshop-Retreat in Bansko, 29 July 2017.

19 See, e. g., Barthwal (1978), p. 1109, xii; Rizvi (1978), vol. 1, p. 327; Ernst (2004), p. 166. According to Ernst (2004), p. 157, 'the *malfūẓāt* texts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries refer only to a few isolated cases of individuals who converted to Islam after becoming attracted to the Sufi saints.' Francesca Orsini and Samira Sheikh, in their 'Introduction' to Orsini and Sheikh (2014), p. 30, assert that 'there is little evidence of a large-scale conversion to Islam' in the 'long fourteenth century.'

20 See Barthwal (1978), pp. 250–251, and Vaudeville (1997), p. 72. This hypothesis has been sharply criticized by Purushottam Agrawal. See Lorenzen (2011), p. 31, and (2014), pp. 174–175.

21 Eaton (1978), pp. 42–43, 90–91.

access to Perso-Arabic resources and would not only use Hindavi language but also indigenous imagery.

Poems apparently lacking Islamic terminology were, however, used by Sufis in their discourses during the Sultanate period. A good example of the distribution of language functions is proposed by Carl Ernst who examined the Bābā Farīd poems recorded in the Khuldabad manuscripts of four fourteenth-century *malfūẓāt* works (preserved in relatively late, apparently post-seventeenth-century transcripts). The readership (and audience) of these *malfūẓāt* texts was restricted, consisting of elite Sufis who were familiar with the local language.[22] These verses used in Sufi discourses, where they are embedded between Persian verses and Qur'anic passages, do not convey any distinctively Islamic import. 'The purpose of this kind of poetry seems rather to be that of reinforcing the subject at hand by means of a powerful literary tool that had great appeal to an audience of Indian Sufis.'[23] This is in line with Rizvi's judgement made in the 1970s: 'Such songs were not composed for propaganda purposes but were a natural evolution from the deep and personal involvement of these two great mystics with their environment.'[24]

The equivalence or translation theory proposes an alternative to the already existing notion of different functions. Drawing on Tony K. Stewart's work, Francesca Orsini suggests approaching early Hindavi Sufi poetry in terms of translation:[25]

> In order to express their ways of imagining the world, we must assume that these Muslim authors did not 'borrow' terms but, in a more intellectually astute process, sought the closest 'terms of equivalence' in order to approximate the ideas they wanted to express.[26]

According to Stewart and Orsini, in their 'attempt to "think Islamic thoughts in the local language" they in practice thought new thoughts' in the vernacular.[27] The concept of seeking Hindavi equivalence for Perso-Arabic expressions may have even deeper roots since Ḥamīdudīn Nāgaurī (d. 1273) is credited with the translation of some verses of Niẓāmī into Hindavi.[28]

Kabīr has long been present in Sufi singing.[29] His links to vernacular Sufis show that he was not isolated in his poetry. Contemporary Sufi singers have been

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22 Ernst (2004), p. 166.
23 Ibid., p. 167.
24 Rizvi (1978), vol. 1, p. 327.
25 Pellò (2014), pp. 422, 426.
26 Pellò (2014); Stewart (2001), p. 273.
27 Pellò (2014), p. 426.
28 Rizvi (1978), vol. 1, p. 328.
29 For example, Śai<u>kh</u> Bāhā'uddīn Barnavī had a special affection for Kabīrī songs. See Rizvi (1978), vol. 1, p. 278.

documented in Rajasthan and Pakistan by Shabnam Virmani.[30] She has noted various ways in which Kabīr overlaps in language, symbol, affect, text arrangements, and narrative references with vernacular Sufi poets, such as Bulleh Shah, Shah Abdul Latif, Sachal Sarmast, and with the richly mixed Muslim–Hindu culture of the Sindhi and Punjabi mystical love legends.[31]

The archives of the Kabīrpanth

It has further intrigued scholars that no written Kabīrpanthī collection is known prior to the *Jñānsāgar* (*Ocean of Knowledge*) present in extant manuscripts from 1737 onwards, and Marco della Tomba's 1760 translation of the *Mūlpañjī*, *Register/Quintet of the Root [Teachings]*, both belonging to the Dharamdāsī branch of the Kabīrpanth.[32]

The Dharamdāsīs, now centred at Damakheda and at Kharsiya in the state of Chhattisgarh, hold the *Jñānsāgar* as the authoritative book of Kabīr. This book is presented as a verse conversation between Kabīr and the merchant Dharamdās, who is mentioned in Rāghavdās's *Bhaktamāl* verse 353 as one of the nine direct disciples of Kabīr.[33] Some modern scholars, however, tentatively date Dharamdās to the eighteenth century.[34] Rāghavdās's *Bhaktamāl* does not present later than second-generation disciples of Dādū and verse 358 introduces five disciples of Dharamdās possibly of two generations, namely those of Čūḍāmani and his son Kulapati.[35] Apparently, the *Bhaktamāl* was written at a distance of two generations from both Dādū and Dharamdās. Dharamdās, therefore, appears to have been contemporary to Dādū Dayāl.

The *Jñānsāgar* was present in manuscript form as early as 1737 and its text does not seem to have undergone major changes from della Tomba's time until Yugalanand's edition in 1906.[36] Marco della Tomba, who talks about the Kabīrpanth of the 1760s, is silent about the *Bījak* and only mentions the *Jñānsāgar* and

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30 <http://kabirproject.org/music%20with%20books/pakistan%20mein%20kabir> and <http://kabirproject.org/music%20with%20books/rajasthan%20mein%20kabir>. (Accessed 27 October 2018).
31 Hess (2015), p. 96.
32 On Dharamdās, see Lorenzen (1992), pp. 58–61; on the Dharamdāsīs, see Friedlander (2015), pp. 195–198, and Hess (2015), p. 92. On Marco della Tomba's Kabīr, see Lorenzen (2002) and (2010), pp. 78–81.
33 Nahta (1965), p. 178.
34 Agrawal (2009), p. 165; Friedlander (2015), p. 195.
35 These two names also featuring in the modern Dharamdāsī list of gurus as found on the opening page of any *Kabīr-sāgar* volume. See Vihari (1906).
36 Lorenzen (2002), p. 38–39. The published version is Vihari (1906).

the *Mulpancì* (*Mūlpañjī*) as the 'books of the Kabīr Panth.'[37] The mostly regular *dohā–čaupāī* format, the themes, and the language used suggest a relatively late stage of composition, probably the early eighteenth century for both.[38] At that time, similarly to the Vaishnava sects of Rajasthan, an urge for theological systematization may have been felt within the Kabīrpanth. The *Mūlpañjī*, which della Tomba describes as a systematic description of their philosophy ('li loro sistemi') at the end of the *Jñānsāgar*, is more elusive since no independent manuscript of it exists.[39]

Interestingly, the Kabīr-čauṛā branch of the Kabīrpanth with headquarters at Varanasi has a completely different text, the *Bījak*, as the authentic voice of Kabīr and as their sacred book.[40] Kabīr-čauṛā lore names Kabīr's disciple Bhagvāndās or Bhaggojī (d. 1576) of Dhanauti, Bihar, as the compiler of the *Bījak*.[41] The *Bījak* has been present in innumerable manuscripts and publications over the past two centuries; yet its pedigree has been questioned on the ground that its earliest recording is a manuscript dating from 1797–1798 or 1802–1803.[42] Besides, Callewaert demonstrated that the often only partial overlap between the old Panjabi–Rajasthani Kabīr song tradition and the *sabad*s of the *Bījak* is limited to about one

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37 Gubernatis (1878), p. 94. Lorenzen (2002), pp. 38–39. The *Jñānsāgar* and the *Mūlpañjī* circulated in the Kaithī script.

38 Cf. Friedlander (2015), p. 195.

39 See De Gubernatis (1878), p. 94, and Lorenzen (2010), p. 233, ch. 7, n. 1.

40 This work has been present in countless editions since Pandit Gopinath Pathak ed., *Bījak* (with commentary by Vishvanath Singh, Benares Light Press, 1868). In this study, I am using Simh (1972). This edition lists its manuscript sources and occasionally gives variants. However, it is not clear on the basis of which manuscript the text was established.

41 See Hess and Singh (1986), pp. 165–166, and Lorenzen (1992), pp. 61–62.

42 Callewaert, Sharma, and Taillieu (2000), p. 3; Hess and Singh (1986), p. 166, and most subsequent literature mentions 1805 as the date of earliest manuscript consulted by Simh. Dharwadker (2003), p. 39, further confuses the matter as he refers to a Phatua recension manuscript of 1805 by Simh. Simh (1972), p. 25, indeed mentions a manuscript from VS 1862 (1805) and refers to his source as the 'Khoj vivaraṇ' (1958) of the Bihār Rāṣṭrabhāṣā Pariṣad. Vaudeville, strangely, only mentions the Hess and Singh (1986) translation and not Simh's edition in her list of the *Bījak* publications (1997), pp. 358–360. Apparently referring to the Simh edition she states that 'Shukdev Singh, unfortunately, does not give his sources and text criticism is absent.' (1997), p. 360. Actually, Simh lists several sources in his introduction but it is unclear how he used them. For example, he does not seem to have consulted the Bihār Rāṣṭrabhāṣā Pariṣad manuscript for his edition. This manuscript is described in Shastri (1971), p. 163 (entry 80). This entry erroneously calculates *sāl* 1212 mentioned in its colophon as VS 1951 (!) and 1805 CE. If *sāl* refers to *Faslī san*, as proposed by Simh, then it should be 1802/3 CE; if it refers to Hijri, then it is 1797/8 CE. As far as the Phatua-recension manuscript is concerned, Simh discusses it on p. 67. Without mentioning its provenance, he quotes its colophon that dates it to *san* 1268. As *Faslī san*, it dates from 1858–1859 and as Hijri, it is 1851–1852.

fourth of the *Bījak*.[43] Moreover, unlike in the case of Dharamdās, the name of the compiler, Bhagvāndās, does not figure in Rāghavdās's list of Kabīr's prominent direct disciples.

The similar mercantile connotations of the names *Mūlpañjī* (root-register), and *Bījak* (belonging to the seed/inventory), suggests that they may have been compiled within an atmosphere of sub-sectarian rivalry and are therefore contemporaneous. Is it possible that the Kabīrpanth took up writing under merchant influence?

Yet, there are indications of some early roots of the *Bījak*. Kabīr's poetic output, as recorded in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, contains padas (songs, called *sabad* in the *Bījak*), *dohā*s (distiches, called *sākhī*s in the *Bījak*), and *čaupāī-dohā* stanzas (called *ramainī*s, stanzas in the (Hindi) Rāmāyan metre). Interestingly, it is the *Bījak* taxonomy that figures in Rāghavdās's *Bhaktamāl* (1660?) twice when he refers to the works of Kabīr. One of them mentions the widespread respect they are held in:

> *sabada ramaiṁṇī sākhī, satya sagalā kari māṁnī/jāṁni* (125)
> His *sabad*s, *ramainī*s and *sākhī*s—all respect/know them as truth.

The other reference is more telling as it speaks of Kabīr's works as parts of both written and oral traditions:

> *sākhī sabadī grantha ramainī pada pragaṭa hai,*
>   *sohai sarbahī kaṇṭhi hāra jaisai hīra kau.* (126)[44]

> His *sākhī*s, *sabad*s, and *ramainī*s are present as handwritten books and songs,[45]
>   Everyone knows them by heart, they shine on everyone's neck like a
>   jewelled necklace.

The interpretation of the date of this *Bhaktamāl*, *saṁvat satrahai sai satrahotarā*, is contested as 1660 (VS 1717), 1713 (VS 1770), and 1720 (VS 1777). Since the work presents no *bhakta*s later than the second generation after Dādū, the inter-

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43 Callewaert, Sharma, and Taillieu (2000), p. 4, lists thirty-two padas that show at least some partial similarity between the old corpus and the *Bījak*. Lorenzen (2015), p. 220, mentions that this list is 'quite incomplete.' MKV30/*Bījak*112 is an example of further similar poems. Cf. Friedlander (2015), p. 192.

44 Verses 125 and 126 are numbered as 150 and 151 in Narayandas' edition of the same work. Verse 125 is also repeated as 351 (427 in Narayandas).

45 There are various ways to translate this line due to the lack of conjuncts, postpositions, and plural markers. The literal translation is '*sākhī*(s) *sabadī*(s) book(s) *ramainī*(s) song(s) are public.' The phrase '*sākhī-sabadī grantha*' may refer to a book of *sākhī*s and *sabad*s, and *ramainī* may then qualify the songs. It may also be that songs are a category different from the *sabad*s. There are other possible interpretations.

pretation VS 1717 (1660) is the most likely one.[46] The second oldest extant *Bījak* manuscript is in the Bodleian Library in Oxford (MS Hindi e.1). This Kaithī script *Bījak* was copied in 1805 and contains 113 *sabad*s, 365 *sākhī*s, and eighty-four *ramainī*s. Its *sabad*-arrangement is different from the two recensions, Dānāpur and Bhagatahīā, discussed in the introduction to Shukdeo Singh's edition.[47] The structure of the manuscript corresponds to the Phatuhā recension in the number of *sabad*s (113) and the other works included into it on folios 45–74.[48] In the *Bījak sabad*s examined in this article, I will give its non-orthographic variants below the poems quoted with the siglum Ox against those of the published version Bī.

The *Bhaktamāl*'s vocabulary shows that the *Bījak* drew on seventeenth-century concepts of structuring its content. It is also important to note that the material preserved in the *Bījak* is sometimes attested in very early layers of transmission: poem 416 of the *Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī* (hereafter MKV) is already present in the *Mohan-Pothī*s (M3), dating from around 1570, and in four seventeenth-century Rajasthani sources (A J C Gop) with a minimum amount of variation in the *Bījak* (see below). This can be taken as an example of the relative reliability of the transmission between the late sixteenth and seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, when the *Bījak* gained its written form.

Continuous recording

Poetry attributed to Kabīr has been transmitted orally, in handwriting, print, and contemporary media, such as sound recording and the Internet.[49] We know that all media have different dynamics. The difference in the dynamics of the two types of 'paper recording,' namely handwritten and print, are such that people are tempted to perceive print as revolution. What has been less studied, however, is the different methods of oral transmission. In India poems can be performed in at least three different ways. Firstly, they can be recited (or read aloud) without melody

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46 Nahta (1965), *Bhaktamāl*, p. da. Singhal (2007), vol. 1, p. 31, notes that in the VS 1840 *Bhaktamāl* manuscript used by Narayandas for his edition, there is another work by Rāghavdās called *Utpatti-sthiti-četāvnī-jñān*, which was composed in VS 1717. This determines Rāghavdās's floruit as VS 1717 (cf. Callewaert (1988), p. 14). Callewaert and Friedlander rely on the modern editor of this work, Svami Narayandas, who conceives Rāghavdās to be a fifth-generation disciple and is inclined to accept VS 1777 as date of composition. Callewaert and Friedlander (1992), p. 20, however, give the *Bhaktamāl*'s date as VS 1770. Recent discussion of the dating of this *Bhaktamāl* can be found in Rajpurohit (2013), pp. 51–72.

47 Simh (1972), pp. 65–71.

48 Ibid., pp. 67–68.

49 Cf. Hess (2015), pp. 102–111. Hess (2015) pp. 226–248, discusses the relationship of orality and the Internet in the light of modern perception theories.

but making the metre clearly felt (*sasvar pāṭh*). Secondly, they can be chanted or sung to a melody set to the appropriate metre (*dhun*), since there are several set melodies to various traditional metrical forms. Thirdly, they can be sung to a raga (musical mood) and a *tāla* (rhythm).[50] In the latter, the metre does not play an important role—singers have freedom to explore and vary the text through repetitions, inversions, omissions, and additions.[51] The role of metre can be overwritten by those of the *tāla* and the raga. As far as chanting is concerned, it has, probably, been a living practice for centuries. A vivid picture of modern chanting is given by Peter Friedlander:

> When I stayed at the monastery in the summer of 1984, all the novice monks, and some full monks, would sit together in an open colonnaded hall for about three hours each morning and rapidly independently repeat the *Bījak* in a kind of monotone chant over and over again. The novices had to recite while reading the text of the *Bījak* but the full monks had all learned the complete text by heart. I was told that the novices would spend several years memorizing the entire text of the *Bījak*.[52]

This also reminds us of the interplay between the written and the oral as written props are used for singing and recitation and oral performances get written down.

Through transmission, the poetry has been in constant metamorphosis over the past half millennium. The text of lines kept changing, some particularly popular lines or phrases floated from one poem to another, new lines were added and obscure, clumsy, corrupt, or theologically objectionable lines removed, the metrical pattern of lines changed, and entirely new stanzas were also added to the poetic corpus.[53] The creation and re-creation of Kabīr-poetry has been an ongoing phenomenon right up the present day.[54] The forces of metamorphosis were so strong

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50 Classical singing of 'Kabīrīs' is attested by Śaikh Bāhā'uddīn Barnavī's (floruit 1655) love for the genre. See Rizvi (1978), vol. 1, p. 278. It should, however, be mentioned that we do not exactly know what 'raga' meant to Dādūpanthī or Sikh compilers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

51 Cf. Tanaka (2012), p. 182.

52 Friedlander (2015), p. 189. This practice has, however, stopped due to recent anti-liturgical attitudes within the Kabīrpanth (Peter Friedlander, personal communication, 8 September 2017).

53 Hess (2015) examines fluidity 'in words, lines, passages, sequences' (pp. 80–90), in 'sectarian affiliation' (pp. 91–94) and 'fluidity driven by ideology' (pp. 94–102).

54 Some recent Kabīr songs, including one about a rail journey with an admonition not to lose the ticket, are presented in Singh (2002), pp. 191–198. Hess (2015) vividly describes how contemporary singers adjust Kabīr's songs to their audiences. She observes that 'nearly every song we heard from multiple sources in Malwa has variations from one singer to another, often from one occasion to another' (p. 82). On the 'Folk Invented Kabir' (episode 4 in Shabnam Virmani's film *Koi Sunta Hai*), see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GJJcidA-Q8>. (Accessed 27 October 2018).

that, as we will see, it was not only the oral and the manuscript transmission that changed the text but also print, usually considered as a standardizing power, transformed it according to the interests of editors. Written and, from the twentieth century onwards, performed recordings from various points of the evolution of the Kabīr-poems can provide us with clues about their earlier layers and about the interconnectedness of various texts.

Later centuries added other poetic forms or genres to the song–distich–*ramainī* corpus, such as *Akharāvtī* or *Rekhtā*.[55] The 1805 *Bījak* manuscript, for example, includes *basant*, *pad kahrā*, *bel*, *hīḍolā*, and *čāčarī*.[56] However, they will only be of marginal interest with regards to how later layers developed from early versions.[57] Some later *sabads* and songs, nevertheless, will be examined in their relationship to texts recorded earlier.

Recent scholarly consensus normally deals with three old Kabīr collections: the eastern *Bījak*; the western Rajasthani *nirguṇa* manuscripts; and the northern *Gurū Granth Sāhib*.[58] This approach has been slightly modulated in recent years by taking into consideration the polyphony of the early Rajasthani tradition, which includes Vaishnava, Dādūpanthī, and Nirañjanī sources.[59]

While not denying the convenience of grouping the Kabīr-poems in eastern, western, and northern clusters, one should not neglect the fact that the Kabīr tradition has been a process of continuous recording and apparently production and reworking over the past half millennium. The academic search for the earliest forms of recorded Kabīr may date back to Shyamsundar Das's *Kabīr-Granthāvalī*, primarily based on a manuscript spuriously claimed to date from 1504.[60] Such efforts culminated in the publication of the *Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī* drawing on

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55 See, e. g., [Prasad] (1910) and (1913). A cursory search of Hindi manuscript catalogues in the Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute and the Nāgarī Pračārinī Sabhā Khoj Reports yielded thirteen manuscripts containing *Rekhtā* attributed to Kabīr.

56 Manuscript, Hindi e.1, in the Raja Chandra Sham Shere collection of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, fols. 65r–75r.

57 The earliest manuscript that I was able to locate containing Kabīr's *Rekhtā*, for example, dates from 1762 (VS 1819). It is 25187(8), fol. 6 in the Jodhpur collection of the Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute.

58 Hess (1987), pp. 114–141; Vaudeville (1997), pp. 20–33; Callewaert, Sharma, and Taillieau (2000), pp. 3–16.

59 The earliest Rajasthani manuscript with Kabīr's padas is Vaishnava and one of the earliest sources on Kabīr, the *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, mentions Kabīr as a Vaishnava *bairāgī*. See Rizvi (1978), p. 412. On the variety of approaches to Kabīr within the Vaishnava Fatehpur manuscript, see Hawley (2005). For a list of important Kabīr manuscripts and publications, see Dharwadker (2003), pp. 33–41. In this list, partially based on Callewaert, Sharma, and Taillieu (2000), pp. 19–22, Dharwadker also indicates the sectarian provenance of the manuscripts.

60 Das (1928). Das provides variants from a later manuscript as well.

sources from Rajasthan and Panjab between *c.* 1570 and 1681.[61] This study will attempt to extend this time frame in both directions by reconstructing earlier layers in the Kabīr-poems based on a metrical analysis of the *Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī* material and then give an insight into the later lives of some poems until the twentieth century. The survey is selective as it does not take into consideration the rich later sectarian anthologies such as, for example, Rambhajan Ramsanehi's *Sār-Saṅgrah-Bodh*, in which Kabīr is abundantly quoted, Yugalanand Vihari's *Kabīr-sāgar* (1906), Gangasharan Shastri's *Mahābījak* (1998), and so on.[62]

   Manuscript collections are sectarian compilations and, in the investigation below, I will consider six clusters of sectarian sources:[63]

In manuscript form:

(1)   Panjab: the Sikh *Mohan Pothī* (*c.* 1570) and the *Ādi Granth* (1604)

(2)   Rajasthan: the Vaishnava Fatehpur manuscript (1582) and Callewaert's C (1660) and J (1681) manuscripts

(3)   Rajasthan: the Dādūpanthī *Pañc-vāṇī* (S V A) and *Sarvāṅgī* (Gop, Raj) anthologies (1614–1675)[64]

(4)   East: the Kabīrpanthī *Bījak* (before 1803)[65]

In print form:

(5)   Radhasoami: *Kabīr sāhab kī śabdāvalī* (1907 [1900])[66]

(6)   Nāthpanthī: *Śrī Śilnāth Śabdāmṛt* (1923 [1915])[67]

The manuscripts represent the earliest layers as well as the later but no less influential *Bījak* linked, apparently, to the eastern region, possibly the Benares

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61 Callewaert, Sharma, and Taillieau (2000).

62 On Rambhajan Ramsanehi, see Singhal (2015), p. 45. On Yugalanand Vihari, see Friedlander (2017), pp. 11–12. On the *Mahābījak*, see Hess (2015), p. 114–117.

63 Friedlander (2015) presents in brief the Sikh, the krishnaite, Dādūpanthī and Rajasthani, Eastern, Dharamdāsī, Kabīrpanthī, New Indian, and transnational audiences of Kabīr.

64 Items 1–3 are recorded in Callewaert, Sharma. and Taillieau (2000). For details of the individual sources, see pp. viii–x, 10–11, 19–23.

65 The standard edition is Simh (1972).

66 [Prasad] (1907[1900]). According to Dharwadker (2003), it was first published in 1900.

67 Shilnath (1923).

region. The first recorded Kabīr-poems come from Rajasthan and Panjab. One can speculate that the reason behind this is not simply the unfriendliness of the wet eastern climate towards manuscripts. It may also be cultural. Rajasthan has been less Brahminical on a popular level than Madhyadesha and vernacularization happened in Rajasthan earlier. Rajasthan and Panjab were also the soil of mono-theistic writing sects such as the Dādūpanth, the Nirañjanīs, and the Sikhs. They took to writing around the turn of the seventeenth century as a powerful means of expressing their religious experience. The fact that Kabīrpanthī ascetics memorized the *Bījak*, at least in modern times but probably earlier too, may also have presented less need for writing. None of the early Rajasthani and Panjabi sources are devoted exclusively to Kabīr. All are anthologies presenting poems by several *nirguṇa* authors.

By comparing the *Bījak* with the western Rajasthani and northern Sikh traditions, Linda Hess found that the western (and northern) collections are linked to music as the *Bījak* is not. They are infused with bhakti feeling and language, featuring Vaishnava (especially Krishnaite) names for God and are linked with personal worship and devotional fervour. They also contain numerous poems of ecstatic realization, in which the poet may or may not be in the role of a lover. She has also found that the *Bījak* is more harsh and intellectual, uses more pervasive and unmitigated satire, has greater emphasis on the *nirguṇa* expression of truth by negation, riddle, and teasing mental challenge. According to Hess, such lyrics are not as appealing to the singer or to the singer's audience as those that emphasize worship and emotion. Kṛṣṇa is absent from these poems and *viraha*, *vinaya*, and ecstasy are rare in the *Bījak*. In sum, the *Bījak* is terse and unmusical, has a different set of keywords and has less Vaishnava bhakti in it.[68]

Out of the printed books, I am considering two influential selections, which apparently drew not just on manuscripts but also on oral tradition, representing the state of Kabīr songs at the time of their publication, and which also influenced some later volumes.

There is no straightforward linear succession between these groups of collections and most of them are records of different singing repertoires, which to a certain extent overlap. Nevertheless, we can assume that they reflect the image of Kabīr of their times or of the times that preceded their being committed to writing. However, it is clear in most of them that they are normally not direct recordings of oral performances but rather relied on manuscript archetypes. More importantly, they may also reflect the preferences of the community that committed them to writing.

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68 Hess (1987), pp. 117–118. Hess also noticed that at the time of her research on the *Bījak* in the late 1970s, the Kabīr-čaurā monks used a printed *Śabdāvalī* that represented padas more popular for singing. Interestingly, there was no overlap between the two collections.

The *Kabīr Śabdāvalī*, apparently edited in 1900 by Baleshwar Prasad, the head of Belvedere Steam Press, shows Radhasoami influence.[69] The Santiniketan scholar Kshitimohan Sen's edition (1910–1911) drew heavily on Prasad but by exchanging references to the guru into *prem* (love), he presented a Kabīr closer to Brahmo-concepts.[70] It was, eventually, Sen's collection that served as a basis for the English translation of Tagore (1914) that has made Kabīr world-famous. Based on the research of Peter Friedlander, A. K. Mehrotra observes that:

> As a member of the Radhasoami sect, which believes in the supremacy of a living guru, Prasad replaced the words used for addressing God—Kabir's Rama and Hari—with guru and *gurudev.* Sen's edition [relying to a certain extent on Prasad] lacks the *guru* words, instead including ones for love.[71]

The lesser known *Śrī Śilnāth Śabdāmṛt* containing 500 bhajans, the majority of which had Kabīr's signature, served as a source to many songs of Kumar Gandharva (1924–1992), which were then presented in Hess's *Singing Emptiness*.[72] Shilnath was a Nāthpanthī and his book is indicative of the esteem in which Kabīr was held by Nāths in the twentieth century.[73]

In the following pages, I will present some poems shared between various traditions and examine how poems were reshaped while being transmitted from one community to another. With the help of some standard philological tools, it is possible to speculate on diachronic changes in the poems and to assume some directions in those changes.

Continuous recontextualization

As an illustration of the similarity and difference between the *Bījak* and the western traditions, Callewaert gave the example of four *Bījak* poems (75, 99, 87, 106).[74] He pointed out that the inversion of lines and half-lines in them, as well as the insertion of floating lines, was the result of their handling by singers. Following on a similar comparison, one can also enter into an analysis of changes in the content. Keeping in mind the phenomena of textual variations within a line, changes in the metrical pattern, and anchoring floating lines, one can examine shifts within the poems as they appear in various traditions and various collections and speculate

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69 Mehrotra (2011), pp. xxvi–xxii.
70 Ibid.
71 Ibid., p. xxviii. Cf. Friedlander (2017), p. 18.
72 Hess (2009).
73 Ibid., pp. 19–22.
74 Callewaert, Sharma, and Taillieu (2000), pp. 5–10.

on how receptive communities recontextualized the poems according to their interest and understanding. It should be mentioned that not all textual change is the result of recontextualization. Many changes occur in a haphazard manner due to slips of memory, incomprehensibility of syntax and grammar, slips in copying, or damage to manuscripts.

It is, however, worth keeping in mind that recontextualization may take place simply by travelling from one community to another. For example, the *sabad* '*mo ko kahāṁ ḍhūṇḍhe bande*' (Where are you searching for me, my servant?) is contextualized in the Dharamdāsī tradition as a bhajan sung by Kabīr in response to a Dharamdās song. In the Kabīr-čauṛā understanding, and in most modern interpretations, the song contains the words of God addressing Kabīr.[75] The Dharamdāsī version elevates Kabīr to a godly status.

Before recording—metrical-sung transitions

1.

Elsewhere I have argued that when employing the criteria that John Smith used in his reconstruction of the *Vīsāḷadeva-rāsa* most early Kabīr poems can be reconstructed into conventional Hindi metrical frames.[76] I am reproducing below an extreme example of metrical confusion. The following poem is presented in the oldest *Pañč-vānī* as:

> *kāhe kūṁ kījai pāṁḍe čhoti bicārā;*
> *čhotihī taĩ upanāṁ saba saṁsārā.* (*ṭeka*)
> *hamārai kaisaĩ lohūṁ pāṁḍe; tumhārai kaisaĩ dūdha.*
> *tuma kaise bāṁbhaṇa hama kaisai sūda.*
> *čhoti čhoti karatāṁ tuma hī jāe; grabha vāsa kāhe kūṁ āe.*
> *janamata čhotī maratahīṁ čhoti; kahai kabīra hari ki nrimala joti.*
> (MKV171, S126)

> Why do you harbour untouchability, o pundit?
> Is it out of untouchability that the whole world emerged? (Refrain)
> How do I have blood, o pundit? How do you have milk? How is it that you
> are a Brahmin and I am a Shudra?
> Were you born by caring for touchability and untouchability? Then why did
> you come from your mother's womb?
> Untouchability when you are born, untouchability when you die. Kabīr says,
> God's light is stainless.

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75 Friedlander (2015), pp. 196–197. It should also be mentioned that the two versions present several further variables, though they are not immediately germane to the argument being made.

76 Bangha (2010) and (2013).

The metrical pattern is the apparently hopeless 22+19; 17+12+19; 18+15; 16+16 morae. The last two lines, however, suggest that *čaupāī* metre, the most popular in Kabīr, is the basis. More exactly, the rhyming pattern of the last couplet suggests a *čaupaī* with its long-short ending (*čhoti, joti*). If we excise the word *hī* or *tuma* from the third line, emend the two-mora *garbha* to the longer *tatsama garbha*, read the final syllable of the word *maratahīṁ* as short, and emend *kahai* to *kaha*, we arrive at a metrically correct line. But what to do with the monster-like lines in the beginning? In his reconstruction of the *Vīsāḷadevarāsa* Smith gives a list of forms most often demanding excision for a metrical reconstruction.[77] These forms include vocatives, personal pronouns, and possessive pronouns. Excising these forms (*pāṁḍe, hamārai, pāṁḍe, tumhārai, tuma, hama*) from these lines leads us, again, close to *čaupāī*s. We may need to excise the postposition *kūṁ* from the first line and the adjective *saba* from the second, as well as to read the final *ī* in *čhotihī* short, in order to get to the exact metre. The excision of the word *saba* is confirmed in the other manuscript of this poem (square brackets and dotted underline indicate editorial intervention):

> *kāhe [kūṁ] kījai [pāṁḍe] čhoti bicārā; čhotihĭ taĩ upanāṁ [saba] saṁsārā.*
> *[hamārai] kaisaĩ lohūṁ [pāṁḍe]; [tumhārai] kaisaĩ dūdha;*
> *[tuma] kaise bāṁbhaṇa [hama] kaisai sūda.*
> *čhoti čhoti karatāṁ tuma [hī] jāe; garbha vāsa kāhe kūṁ āe.*
> *janamata čhotī maratahĭṁ čhoti; kaha kabīra hari ki nrimala joti.*

Why do you harbour untouchability?
Is it out of untouchability that the world emerged?
How is blood? How is milk? How is a Brahmin? And how is a Shudra?
Were you born by caring for touchability and untouchability? Then why did you come from your mother's womb?
Untouchability when you are born, untouchability when you die. Kabīr says, God's light is stainless.

The amplification in this poem can be the result of an explicatory process linked to the loss of an original environment, which included an oral homiletic exposition. In song, this homiletic environment is reduced but due to the flexibility of this performing genre, explanation is now included within the poem. It is easy to imagine how one singer would add short unemphatic explanatory phrases into the performed lines and another learn the song in the amplified form, and that later this version would be committed to writing.

Naturally, the reconstruction of a metrically correct poem does not mean that we have arrived to what Kabīr—or the pseudo-Kabīrs—composed. We can, however, say that a metrical reconstruction is possible in most of the cases and that the

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77 Smith (1976), p. 13.

reconstructed poems do not simply take us a step closer to the earliest versions but also present more compact and poetically more polysemic compositions.

Examining metrical deviances can tell us something about the performance history of these padas as well. The relative lack of flexibility in recitation and singing to a set melody also suggests that transmission in this way did not allow so much change in the original metrical pattern as did singing in a raga. The fact that in the early manuscripts the metre is still perceptible whereas in the later Kabīr tradition it is less so leads one to suspect that the early manuscripts were somewhat closer to a recited or set-melody performance, whereas with the process of time raga singing became more and more prominent. It may also have been the case that performance became more and more linked to professionally skilled singers. As has been seen, the written repertoires of these singers, the sources of the earliest Kabīr material, such as the Fatehpur manuscript, the *Pañč-vānī*s, and the *Sarvāṅgī*s, already contain the changes effected by the performers.

The earliest recensions: *Vaiṣṇava*, Sikh, and Dādūpanthī transitions

Ideological shifts in Kabīr reception may be represented by interpolation or omission of entire poems as has been the case with two paradoxical 'upside-down-language' poems present in the earliest recorded source, the *Mohan Pothī* (1570–1572), which were first also included but then crossed out as useless in the earliest, Kartarpur manuscript (1604) of the *Ādi Granth*.[78] Following G. S. Mann's speculation on the reason for their omission, Hess writes, 'the Sikh gurus apparently had a strong preference for plain language and domestic propriety. They also emphatically avoided anything that had even a whiff of tantric influence.'[79]

Kabīr's Sikh reception has been studied extensively. Karine Schomer argued that the *Ādi Granth* verses of Kabīr underline themes that are more supportive of a sense of religious community and social morality rather than of an individualistic mystical religion.[80] The gurus often comment in this vein on the verses of Kabīr. According to Lorenzen, 'Guru Arjan sometimes uses the occasion to suggest some criticism or modification of Kabīr's point of view.'[81] Pashaura Singh summarizes the differences between Sikh teachings and Kabīr as follows:

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78 Mann (2001), pp. 114–115.
79 Hess (2015), p. 95. On pp. 94–102, Hess gives several further examples of ideologically motivated fluidity. Most of her examples (pp. 96–102) are modern.
80 Schomer (1979), p. 84.
81 Lorenzen (2012), p. 26.

6. Shifts in Kabīr Contexts and Texts from Mughal to Modern Times

> There are some disagreements between Kabir and the Sikh Gurus on essential points. Kabir remains a solitary spiritual seeker who does not seem to have a sense of social mission or the idea of an organized religious community. In contrast, the Sikh Gurus seem to have a strong sense of mission that compels them to proclaim their message for the ultimate benefit of their audience and to promote socially responsible living. While as a mystic Kabir can afford to run away from the sinners (*śāktas*), the Sikh Gurus cannot do so and they keep their doors open for them principally because of their sense of mission. Kabir regards mendicity (*madhukarī*) as a means of acquiring merit in spiritual life and this may have been the reason for renouncing his traditional family craft of weaving. In contrast with Kabir, the Sikh Gurus are strongly opposed to begging. They stress the dignity of regular labour as an integral part of spiritual discipline. Whereas Kabir seems to be resentful because of his failure to win divine favour in spite of his stern asceticism, Guru Amar Das seems to correct his view through his comment that grace is a matter of divine free choice that does not depend upon any kind of previous growth in spirituality. In the Sikh doctrine, divine grace and human effort go together in spiritual life, because human effort too is a matter of divine grace. Kabir sometimes gives the impression of self-withdrawal from active life in the world and appears to be complaining against the divine will betraying a type of negative or escapist attitude. The Sikh Gurus, on the other hand, stress the spirit of optimism to confront life with a positive attitude and to create a harmonized 'balance' by avoiding the extremes of self-withdrawal and excessive indulgence in the things of the world.[82]

The shift from the individual to the communal is well illustrated in the overlapping texts of two padas, one attributed to Kabīr (MKV423, *aika nirañjana alaha merā*) and the other composed by Guru Arjan Singh (*Ādi Granth*, *Bhairau* 3, *eku gusāī alahu merā*).[83] Guru Arjan's version includes the Kabīr-poem and extends it with a commentary. However, Arjan does not quote the final verse, which reads:

> *kahai kabīra bharama saba bhāgā*; *eka nirañjana syauṁ mana lāgā*.
> (MKV432, version of A327 in MS)

> Kabīr says: All error has fled; my mind is attached to the one Niranjan.
> (trans. Lorenzen (2011), p. 26)

Guru Arjan's final verse is as follows:

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82 Singh (2003), pp. 109–110.
83 For a detailed comparison of the two versions, see Singh (2003), pp. 101–109, and Lorenzen (2011), p. 26.

kahu kabīra ihu kīā vakhānā; *gura pīra mili khudi khasamu pačhānā.*
(*Ādi Granth*, raga *bhairau*, *mahalā* 5)[84]

I made this declaration. Meeting with pir and guru, I recognised the potential
in myself. (trans. Lorenzen (2011), p. 26)

Kabīr's Vaishnava recension was studied much less. In his article 'Kabīr in his
earliest dated manuscript,' J. S. Hawley proposed to place the Fatehpur poems on a
spectrum with Vaishnava poems at one end and yogic at the other.[85] This spectrum
may also indicate recontextualization from a *nirguṇa* bhakti or yogic context into
a Vaishnava reception. The apparently later Vaishnava layer was appealing to and
maybe created by the Fatehpur scribe as he prepared his manuscript for a Vaishnava
patron, the landlord Narharidās in Fatehpur. Signs of recontextualization may be
found in a single manuscript but the phenomenon can also be observed in one
poem in various manuscripts prepared for different receptive communities. One
can elaborate this attitude further in investigating how the Kabīr-poems addressed
Sikh, Dādūpanthī, and Vaishnava communities in the later manuscripts.

2.

Let us now see what shifts occur in poems fully attributed to Kabīr. Hawley found
the following poem to be the most Vaishnava within the Fatehpur manuscript
(asterisked words are contested in various traditions):

> *kahā karau*, *kaise tarau*; *bhava-jalanidhi bhārī.*
> *rākhi rākhi muhi* *bīṭhulā; *tohi saraṇi* *murārī.*
> [three couplets about failed efforts for liberation]
> *kahu kabīra,* *mere* *mādhavā, tohi saraba-biāpī.*
> *tohi samāna nahi ko* *dayāla, mosā nahi* *jācī.* (F14)[86]

> What can I do?
> How can I cross
> this heavy sea of being?
> Save me, save me, Viṭṭhal.
> Shelter me
> Murari.
> . . .
> Says Kabir:
> Oh my Mādhav, everything
> there is, is shot through
> with you.

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84 P. 1136 of <http://www.srigranth.org/servlet/gurbani.gurbani?Action=Page&g=1&h
=1&r=1&t=1&p=0&k=0&Param=1136>. (Accessed 27 October 2018).
85 Hawley (2005), p. 286.
86 Ibid., pp. 290–292. The text is taken from Bahura and Bryant (1982), pp. 189–190.

> None is your equal, merciful one—
> but as for me,
> I'm through. (trans. Hawley (2005), p. 292)

Apart from the Fatehpur manuscript (F), this particularly popular poem is also present in the *Ādi Granth* and in three Dādūpanthī (S, V, Gop) and two Vaishnava (C, J) manuscripts of Rajasthan. On the basis of the meaningful variants listed in the apparatus below, we can also talk of these groups as three recensions of the poem. While there is a diachronic succession in the dating of these recensions, one should be cautious in automatically translating copying dates into a diachronic development of the text:[87]

> ***bīṭhulā***] F AG, *kesavā* S V (-*e*) J C Gop; ***murārī***] F S V Gop, *tumhārī* AG J C; ***mere***] F AG, *suni* S V Gop, *kali* J C; ***mādhavā***] F AG, *kesavā* S V J C (-*e*) Gop; ***dayāla***] F (-*u*) AG, *dātā* S V J C Gop; ***jāčī***] F C (*jačīṁ*) J, *pāpī* AG S V Gop.

One can observe in the poem and its variants a proliferation of the specifically Krishnaite designations of God, Biṭhulā (Viṭṭhala), Mādhava, Murāri, and Keśava, which do not comprise Kabīr's most frequent and somewhat less sectarian terms, Hari and Rām. Unlike in other poems, these designations, including the variants, fit well into the metre.

   This poem is not an isolated case on the variation of divine names. One can find a similar proliferation in several other poems. In MKV 261, for example, where the divine names in the line *kahi kabīra raghunātha bhaja nara* (Kabīr says, worship Raghunātha) (S207) also appear as *gobyanda* (A), *hari nāma* (V), *yeka rāma* (J C), and *rāma nāma* (Gop). The *Ādi Granth* version is *kahi kabīra jagajīvanu aisā* (AG482;27) and the *Bījak* has *kahaiṁ kabīra bhagavanta bhajo nara* (Bī60). One explanation for such changes can be that the divine names in Kabīr are interchangeable precisely because his songs do not present a sectarian god.[88] However, if that had been the case, we would not be able to account for the frequent changes of divine names as well as for the scarcity of Islamicate designations of God, such as Allah and Khudā, or of Shaiva designations in the early corpus. Examining the use of divine names in the poetic corpus attributed to another Hindi poet-saint, Raidās, Callewaert and Friedlander argue that divine names occur according to context. Ramaite names tend to be used when God is evoked in his sovereign aspect. Kṛṣṇa and his synonyms are used when God's

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87 The critical apparatus is based on Callewaert, Sharma, and Taillieu (2000), pp. 578–580 (poem 473).

88 Francesca Orsini, personal communication, 7 May 2015.

grace is to be conjured, while Islamic names appear in a context where the irrelevance of sectarian divisions is underlined.[89]

The Krishnaite tint of the song above carried by the names of God cannot be missed. The fact that the different versions hardly have any major variant apart from in the divine names, and therefore the bulk of the poem remains unchanged, shows that the teaching, imagery, and emotion of such poems were accepted over sectarian divisions and they only needed to add some markers to anchor them into their own tradition.

Just as in most Kabīr-poems, divine names appear in the first and the last couplets of the poem.[90] The small apparatus shows that these names are not inalienable parts of the poem and are liable to change even within the western tradition. One can note that the obsolete word *bīṭhulā*, the name of a Maharashtrian deity who came to be identified with Viṣṇu, appears only in the two earliest sources but turns out to be useless or perhaps too closely linked to the Maharashtrian Vārkārī sect for the Dādūpanthī and the Vaishnava audiences. They introduced Keśava twice, a term that was absent in the two oldest sources. Apart from this, later books also felt uncomfortable with the alliterating phrase *mere mādhavā* expressing intimacy with God. A further noteworthy variation is the mixing up of the components of the *dayāla–pāpī* ('compassionate–sinner') and *dātā–jācī* ('generous donor–beggar') imagery. Only the two later Vaishnava manuscripts (C and J) get it right.

3.

Another example of shifts within the earliest recensions is the first Kabīr-poem in the Fatehpur manuscript. It is also present in three Dādūpanthī (A V Gop) and two Vaishnava (C J) sources of Rajasthan (these five will be marked collectively as Rāj). Since it is missing from the *Ādi Granth* and the massive early S manuscript, there is a time gap of forty-five years without recording and the five later sources populate a period of about fifty years (1627–1681):[91]

> saravara *kai* taṭi haṁsinī tisāī; jugati binā hari jalu pīyo *na *jāī.
> kuṁbha līye ṭhāḍhī *papanihārī; *leja binu *nīra kau bharahi kaisai nārī.
> *kūvau *lorai lai *khaga *bārī; uḍi na sakaiṁ doū *para bhārī.
> *kahata *kabī[ra] *ika budhi *bicārī; sahaja subhāi *muhi *mile *banavārī.[92]

89 Callewaert and Friedlander (1992), pp. 83–85.
90 On examining a corpus of Kabīr-poems in the Rajasthani *Pāñc-vāṇī* tradition, published in Shyamsundar Das's *Kabīr-Granthāvalī*, Linda Hess observed that designations for God in more than two thirds of the cases came in the refrain (ṭeka) or in the last line (bhaṇitā). See Hess (1987), p. 125.
91 The critical apparatus is based on Callewaert, Sharma, and Taillieu (2000), pp. 436–437 (poem 329).
92 Bahura and Bryant (1982), p. 76 (SSD 298, MKV329). My transcript also indicates the letters crossed out in the original manuscript.

kai] (unm) F[ac]; (omits) F[pc] Rāj. ***na jāī***] F[pc] Rāj; *narjāī* F[ac]. ***papanihārī***] (dittography) F[ac]; *panihārī* F[pc] Rāj. *leja*] F[ac]; *jala* F[pc], *guna* Rāj. ***nīra kau***] (unm.) F[ac]; *nī [rãra kā]* (unm.) Fa[pc], *nīra* Rāj. *kū*] F[ac], *hū* Fa[pc]. ***kūvau lorai***] Fa; *pīyau loṛai ta* A; *pīyau cāhai tau* V J C (-*yā*) Gop. ***khaga***] Fa[pc], Rāj; *khaka* Fa[ac]. ***bārī***] Fa[ac]; *sārī* Fa[pc], Rāj. *para*] Fa V Gop, *paṣa* A J C. ***kahata***] Fa V; *kahi* A; *kahai* J C Gop. ***kabīra***] Rāj; *kabī(?)* Fa. ***ika***] Fa; *gura* A V; *gura eka* J C Gop. ***bičārī***] Fa; *batāī* Rāj. ***muhi mile banavārī***] Fa; *mile rāma rāī* A J C Gop; *mile raghurāī* V.

At the edge of the lake
A thirsty *haṁs* bird:
But how, without the wherewithal,
Can she drink Hari's water?
There stands the watercarrier.
She's brought her waterpot.
But the well has lost its rope:
How can she draw it up?
The bird can make it
Down the well to the water,
But how can she fly back
When her wings get weighed down wet.
Kabir says, just one thought
To keep in mind:
In what's natural—what's your own—
You'll find The Forest One. (trans. Hawley (2005), p. 301)

One can observe here that the obscurities and the uncertainties of the Fatehpur manuscript have mostly been eliminated in the later versions. A good example can be found in the fifth half line, where the unclear *kūvau* (well) or *kūhū* (?) and the rare *loṛai* (is restless, craves for, clings to, etc.) are substituted with the more comprehensible phrase *pīyau cāhai* (wants to drink). The intermediary *pīyau loṛai* (is restless to drink) reading of one source (A) suggests that the substitution occurred in two steps. The original *bārī* (water) reading of the same line is corrected into *sārī* (mynah) by a later hand in the Fatehpur manuscript in accordance with the reading of the later sources. These sources also make the verse hypermetrical by the insertion of the particle *tau* (then). In all variations, the reading is slightly unclear and the syntax loose.

Some variations are the result of oral transmission, such as the inversion of the second and third lines in V and Gop and the addition of an extra line in C. This interpolation is an elaboration on the five water-carrier image *sara sūkau kāyā kumilāṁnī; vimukha čalī pāṁčau paṁnihārī* (the lake dried up, the body withered, and the five water-carriers returned disappointed). Although it does not add much to the overall message of the poem, this pada indicates that the image of the five water-carriers, referring to the five senses, was particularly appealing to some seventeenth-century performers.

The last line of the poem is unmetrical in all versions, suggesting that all have been changed at some point. Its half lines contain several elements liable to be contested, namely the poetic signature, a reference to the guru, and the name of God. The **kahata ka̱bī̲ ika** reading of the Fatehpur manuscript already suggests some previous scribal error.

In sources A C J and Gop, the punning word *banavārī*, which can refer to Kṛṣṇa but also to a flower garden and to the cultivation of sixteen-petalled lotuses, pre-sumably a chakra,[93] is given as the flat *rāma rāī* (king Rām) and in V as *raghurāī* 'Rām, Lord of the Raghus). The overall content of the poem is about the difficulty of spiritual realization and apart from the name *banavārī* (and *raghurāī*—but this is not Krishnaite), there is no Vaishnava element in it. As Kṛṣṇa devotion seems to be superimposed on the poem in the Vaishnava Fatehpur manuscript, so may the reference in the signature pada below to the enlightening guru be a later addition to an earlier yogic or tantric layer in which enlightenment comes from within (*sahaja subhāi*) through mental realization (*eka budhi bicāri*):

> *kahi kabīra guri eka budhi batāī* (Gop C J)
>
> Kabīr says: 'The guru has indicated the enlightened thought.'

Shifts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries:
Ādi Granth, Rajasthani anthologies, *Bījak*

4.

We can extend our investigation of textual shifts beyond the late sixteenth and sev-enteenth centuries. Already Callewaert compared the Sikh, Rajasthani, and *Bījak* versions of the following poem (MKV 416) and drew attention to the inversion of lines which are proofs of oral transmission. I am quoting below the *Mohan Pothī* and the *Bījak* versions, along with two Rajasthani variants:

> (*sūhī rāgu*)
> *thara thara kaṁpai bālā jīu, *nā jānā kiyā karasī pīu.*
> *raini gaī matu dinu bhī jāi, bhavara gae baga baiṭhe āi. (rahaū)*
> *kācai karavai rahai na pānī, haṁsu calia kāiā *kumalānī.*
> *kāgu uḍāvata bhujā pirānī, kahai kamīru eha kathā sirānī.* (M3)

> ***nā*] emendation from the unmetrical *na* in MKV (*nā* is also the reading of the majority of the manuscripts).
> ***kumalānī*] emendation from the unmetrical *kūmalānī* in MKV (all other manu-scripts read the word with a short *u*).

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93 Hawley (2005), p. 303.

This girl, my soul, trembles and shakes, she does not know what her beloved will do. The night has passed, lest the day also end.[94] The bees gone, now herons have come. Water, lustre, does not stay in unbaked pot. The wild goose is gone, the body withers.[95] My arm aches in beating at crows.[96] Kabīr says, this story is over.

(*rāga bhairu*)
raiṁni gaī jaisaiṁ dina bhī jāi, bhavara uḍe baga baiṭhe āi. (*ṭeka*)
tharahari kaṁpyau bārā jīva, ko jāṁnaiṁ kā karihai pīva.
kācai bhāṁḍai rahai na pāṁnīṁ, haṁsa calyau kāyā kumilāṁnīṁ.
kahi kavīra yahu kathā sirāṁnīṁ, kāga uḍāvata bāṁha pirānīṁ. (A340)

As the night has passed so is the day coming to an end. The bees are flown, herons have come.
This girl, my soul, trembles and shakes, who knows what her beloved will do.
Water, lustre, does not stay in unbaked pot. The wild goose is gone, the body withers.
Kabīr says: 'This story is over. My arm aches in beating at crows.'

(*rāga bhairuṁ*)
raiṁni gaī mata dina bhī jāi, bhavara uḍyā buga baiṭhe āi. (*ṭeka*)
kačai karavai rahai na pāṁnī, haṁsa ūḍyā kāyā kumyalāṁnīṁ.
tharahara tharahara kaṁpai jīva, nāṁ jānūṁ kā karihai pīva.
kaüā uḍāvata bahiyāṁ pirānī, kahai kabīra morī kathā sirāṁnīṁ. (C139)

As the night has passed lest the day also end. The bee flown, herons have come.
This girl, my soul, trembles and shakes, who knows what her beloved will do.
Water, lustre, does not stay in unbaked pot. The wild goose is gone, the body withers.
My arm aches in beating at crows. Kabīr says: 'My story is over.'

bhauṁra uṛe baka baiṭhe āya, raina gaī divaso čali jāya.
*thala-thala kāṁpai *bālā *jīva, nā jāṁnauṁ kā karihai pīva.
kāče bāsana ṭikai na pānī, uṛi *gai haṁsa kāyā kumhilānī.
*kāga uḍāvata bhujā pirānī, kahai kabīra yaha kathā sirānī. (*Bījak* 106)

*jīva] this reading of the Oxford manuscript (Ox) is preferred to the unrhyming *jibe* in the edition (Bī). The other non-orthographic variants, with the exception of *gā,* are either inferior or negligible: *thala-thala*] Bī, *halahala* Ox; *bālā*] Bī, *bole* Ox; *gai*] Bī, *gā* Ox; *kāga*] Bī, *nāga* Ox.

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94 The night is taken as symbolic of a youth with dark hair and the day as that of old age with white hair. The same applies to the colours of the bee and the heron. The words *bhī jāī* are separated, resulting in the meaning 'also goes.' However, the Old Hindi root *bhīj-* means to get wet and with regards to night it refers to its passing as it becomes colder and wetter. This meaning now applied to the day may also be at play, creating a more vivid texture.
95 The pot is a traditional simile for the human body, the wild goose for the soul.
96 Hess gives the note on the occurrence of this expression in the *Bījak*: 'The crow's cawing is auspicious: it means someone is coming. Women separated from loved ones chase crows to make them "talk."' In the context of this poem the phrase may stand for useless activities.

> The bee has flown, the heron remains.
> Night is over,
> Day is going too.
> The young girl quakes and shivers,
> Not knowing what her lover
> Will do.
> Water won't stay
> In unbaked clay.
> The swan flutters, the body withers.
> Beating at crows, the arm grieves.
> Says Kabir, the story sputters
> And goes out here. (trans. Hess and Singh (1986), pp. 76–77)

Indeed, the inversion of lines is one of the most conspicuous variations. Along with this, one can notice the use of synonyms (*uḍe–gae; karavai–bhāṁḍai–bāsana; čalyau–uḍyā; bhujā–bāṁha–bahiyā*) or equivalent idiomatic usages (*nā jānā* (no one knows)*; ko jānai* (who knows)*; nāṁ jānūṁ* (I don't know) in the four versions quoted. Dialectal variation is also present. Interestingly, the Rajasthani future *karasī* (will do) forms appear in Panjab, while the Braj *karihai* (will do) appears in the Rajasthani and the *Bījak* versions. The form of pronouns can also change (*iha–yahu–yaha* vs. *mori*). In the manuscripts that I did not quote above, there are some further eccentric variations. Most of these transformations can only take place in oral transmission and do not seem to carry any change in meaning. They are also lost in translation. There are, however, two meaningful changes. The *Ādi Granth* version (792;2) adds an extra line before the concluding one:

> *kuāra kaṁniā jaise karata sigārā, kiu raliā mānai bājha bhatārā.*
>
> [The soul?] decorates itself like a young girl, but what delight does it have without the Lord?

This line, found only in the *Ādi Granth*, with conventional *virah* imagery is only loosely connected to the others that lament the vain passing of life. It may have been anchored in this poem because of the opening image of the girl-soul.

A less conspicuous yet more significant change can be observed with the omission or substitution of the prohibitive particle *mati* (don't, lest). While most early records agree on it and thus express an exhortation to the listener, the Rajasthani A340 and the *Bījak* version omit it and confront the listener with a finite state. Considering the date and the number of sources, it appears to be a later variation. This variant, however, represents not an ideological but rather a rhetorical shift. It is done to trigger a stronger inner protest in the listener in rejecting the course of such a life.

5.

Let us now have a further look at the later life of the Kabīr-poem about mortality. The text of the quatrain MKV102, which shares a line with MKV350 (F2), is present in the Rajasthani (S A V J) and Panjabi (G) traditions.[97] While the quatrains in the Rajasthani manuscripts present negligible variation, the tercet in the *Ādi Granth* has an interesting shift. Two out of its three lines are present in the Rajasthani versions of the same poem, but its first line is shared with poem MKV350.

> *jhūṭhe tana kūṁ kā grabaīe*; *mūṁvāṁ palabhari rahaṇa na paīye*.
> *khīra khā̃ṛa ghrita piṁḍa savārā*; *prāṁṇa gayeṁ le bāhari jārā*.
> *čovā čandana čaračata aṅgā*; *so tana jarai kāṭha kai saṅgā*;
> *dāsa kabīra yahu kīnha bičārā*; *eka dina hvaigā hvāla hamārā*. (MKV102 S77)

> Why do you pride yourself falsely in your body? When dead, it does not remain for a moment.
> You nourished your flesh with khir, jaggery, and ghee; when the life-breath leaves it, it will be taken out to burn.
> You cared for your limbs with fragrance and sandalwood; that body will burn together with the funeral wood.
> The devotee Kabīr has thought it over; this will be your condition one day.

> (*Rāg gauḍī*)
> *jihi siri rači rači bāṁdhata pāga*; *so siru čuṁča savārahi kāga*. (2) (cf. MKV350,5)
> *isu tana dhana ko kiā garabaīā*; *rāma nāmu kāhe na driṛīā*. (1, *rahāu*) (cf. MKV102,1)
> *kahata kabīra sunahu mana mere*; *ihī havāla hohige tere*. (3) (cf. MKV102,4) (*Ādi Granth* 330,35)

> The head where you carefully tied the turban, a crow will take care of it with its beak.
> Why do you pride yourself in your body and wealth? Wy didn't you stick firmly to
> Kabīr says: 'Listen, my mind; this will be your condition.'   [God's name?

The Dādūpanthī version of this stanza talks about 'our' shared human condition without any explicit exhortation. The slightly overlapping *Ādi Granth* version is a straightforward address to the listener. The dismal admonition about death is the theme of all eight padas in the Rajasthani version. The refrain 'When dead, it does not remain for a moment' reinforcing this message becomes an exhortation in the *Ādi Granth*, 'Why didn't you keep firm in God's name?'—a reminder of one of the most important devotional practices, the repetition of the divine name.

Let us now consider another similar poem on mortality in the *Ādi Granth* (*Goṇḍ* 2), a line of which can also be found in one of Kabīr's distiches. The spirit of the *antarās* of this pada is close to the above two stanzas. However, the refrain introduces an entirely new concept, a question on the ways of the karma. The

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97 A brief presentation of variations on this poem in *Bījak* 99, *Ādi Granth* 330,35, MKV102 (S77), and Tivari 62 is given in Callewaert, Sharma, and Taillieu (2000), pp. 6–7.

repeated question, showing some discrepancy with the admonition about death, incites the listener to think about his or her karma. Another difference here is the direct address to the listener, *bābā re*, translated here as 'o my brother':

> (*Rāg goṇḍ*)
> *narū marai naru kāmi na āvai; pasū marai dasa kāja savārai.* (2)
> *apane karama kī gati mai kiā jānaü; mai kiā jānaü bābā re.* (1, *rahāu*)
> *hāḍa jale jaise lakarī kā tūlā; kesa jale jaise ghāsa kā pūlā.* (3)
> *kaha kabīra taba hī naru jāgai; jama kā ḍaṁḍu mūṁḍa mahi lāgai.* (4) (*Ādi Granth* 2)

> When man dies he becomes useless— when an animal dies it is useful for a dozen tasks.
> How can I know the ways of my karma? How can I know it, o my brother?
> Your bones will burn like firewood; your hair will burn like a sheaf of grass.
> Kabīr says: 'Man will only awake when Death's rod touches his head.'

The following *dohā* is also present in the *Ādi Granth* (AG1366,36) and in the *Bījak* (Bī174). The version reconstructed by Tivari (Ti *Sākhī* 15/7) follows the one published by Shyamsundar Das (SSD12/16). The *Ādi Granth* version is given below (in the apparatus, the siglum Bī^BH stands for the Bhagtāhī recension text of the *Bījak*, as opposed to the reference to Shukdev Simh's edition based on the Dānāpur recension marked by Bī):

> *kabīra hāḍa jare* jiu lākarī, kesa jare* jiu ghāsu;* (cf. AG, *Goṇḍ* 2,2)
> *ihu** jagu jaga jaratā* dekhi kai, bhaïo kabīru udāsa.****

> **jarai/jarai/jaratā*] AG Bī; *jalai/ jalai/ jalatā* SSD. ***ihu*] AG; *saba* SSD.
> ****ihu... udāsa*] SSD, AG; *kabīrā jarai rāma rasa; jasa kāṭhina jarai kapāsa* Bī.

With its statement about Kabīr becoming disillusioned and indifferent (*udāsa*) towards the world, the distich exhorts the listener to similarly turn away from maya, since he will end up dead. The *Bījak* version also proposes a way forward, 'Kabīr is burning in the emotion of God,' an example exhorting the listener towards bhakti.

What happened to these poems later? The *Bījak* (Bī99) presents an interesting composite text based on the three different earlier padas. It is also amplified by two more lines not found in the early corpus:

> *aba kahā̃ calehu akele mītā; *uṭhahu na karahu gharahu kā čiṁtā.*
> *khīra khā̃ra ghṛta piṁḍa saṁvārā; so tana lai bāhara kara ḍārā.*
> (cf. MKV102,2)
> **jo sira raci raci bā̃dhyo pāgā; so sira ratana *biḍārata kāgā.* (cf. MKV350,5)
> *hāra jarai *jasa jaṅgala kī lakaṛī; kesa jaraĩ *jasa ghāsa kī pūlī.* (cf. AG, *Goṇḍ* 2,2)

māyā ke rasa lei na pāyā; antara jama bilāri hoe dhāyā.
*kahaî kabīra *ajahũ na jāgā; jama kā mugadara *sira biča lāgā.* (99) (cf.
AG, *Goṇḍ* 2,3) (*Bījak* 99)

*uṭhahu] Bī, *uṭhīvo* Ox; *jo*] Bī, *jehī* Ox; *biḍārata*] Bī, *bīḍāre* Ox; *jasa*
jaṅgala kī lakaṛī] (unrhyming) Bī, *jaise lakaṛī jhūrī* Bi[BH] Ox; *jasa ghāsa*
kī pūlī] Bī, *jaise trīna ke kūrī* Bi[BH] Ox; *māyā*] Bī, *āyata saṃga na jāta*
saṃghātī, kāha bhaai dala bāghe hāthī. maā Ox; *ajahũ*] Bī, *nala ajahu*
Ox; *sira biča*] Bī *mājha śira* Ox.

Where are you going alone, my friend?
You don't get up, or fuss
About your house.
The body fed on sweets, milk and butter,
The form you adorned
Has been tossed out.
The head where you carefully
Tied the turban,
That jewel,
The crows are tearing open.
Your stiff bones burn
Like a pile of wood,
Your hair like a branch of grass.
No friend comes along, and where
Are the elephants you had tied?
You can't taste Maya's juice,
A cat called Death has pounced inside.
Even now you lounge in bed
As Yama's club
Falls on your head. (trans. Hess and Singh (1986), pp. 74–75)

Although this *sabad* can be analysed as composed of earlier, different Kabīr lines, it has developed into an organic unit. The poem becomes a powerful admonition through a longer sequence of reminders to death, kicked off with the familiar address 'my friend.' As with some of its antecedents, it leaves in the shadow any reference to the means of salvation.

The reconstruction by Parasnath Tivari (Ti62) is a purged version of the *Bījak* poem with a different refrain. His lines are picked up from the same three early sources and while such a reconstruction does not have any pedigree to represent the earliest Kabīr, it is in line with later tradition in making new poems by combining lines from early padas, as has been seen in the case of the *Bījak*:

jhūṭhe tana kaũ kyā garabāvai; marai tau pala bhari rahana na pāvai. (ṭeka)
(cf. MKV102,1)
khīra khāṃḍa ghṛta piṃḍa saṃvārā; prāṃṇa gaeṃ lai bāhari jārā. (2)
(cf. MKV102,2)

jihiṁ siri raci raci bāṁdhata pāgā; so siru caṁcu savārahi kāgā. (3)
(cf. MKV350,5)
hāṛa jarai jaisai lakaṛī jhūrī; kesa jarai jaisai trina kai kūrī. (4)
(cf. AG, *Goṇḍ* 2,2)
kahai kabīra nara ajahuṁ na jāgai; jama kā ḍaṁḍ mūṁḍ mahiṁ lāgai. (5)
(cf. AG, *Goṇḍ* 2,3) (Parasnath Tivari, 1961)

Kabīr's imagery is part of a larger tradition and was used by other *bhakta* authors. For example, the same theme also occurs in the later layers of the *Sūrsāgar*:[98]

(*rāga jhījhauṭī*)
jā dina mana pañchī uṛi jaihai;
tā dina tere tana taruvara ke sabai pāta jhari jaihaĩ;
yā dehī kau garaba na kariyai, syāra-kāga-gīdha khaihaĩ; (cf. MKV102,1)
tīnani maĩ tana kṛmi, kai biṣṭhā, kai hvai khāka uṛaihai;
kahā vaha nīra, kahā̃ vaha sobhā, kahā rāga-rūpa dikhaihai;
jina logani saũ neha karata hai, tehi dekhi ghinaihaĩ;
ghara ke kahata sabāre kāṛhau, bhūta hoi dhari khaihaĩ; (cf. MKV102,2)
jina putranihĩ bahuta pratipālyau, devī-deva manaihaĩ;
teī lai khoparī bã̄sa dai, sīsa phori bikharaihai;
ajahũ mūṛha karau satasaṅgati, santani maĩ kachu paihai;
nara-bapu dhāri nāhī jana hari kaũ, jama kī māra so khaihai;
sūradāsa bhagavaṁta-bhajana binu bṛthā su janama gã̄vaihai.
(*Sūrsāgar* 86)

On the day that the bird of your soul flies away
All the leaves of your body's tree will be shed.
Don't take pride in this body—jackals, crows or vultures will eat it.
Your corpse will turn into one of these three:[99] worms or excrement or will be blown away as ashes.
Where is the old brilliance? Where is the old lustre? Where will it show its
The people you loved will be disgusted by seeing it.　　　[beauty and colour?
Everyone of your house will say 'take it away! It will become a ghost and overpower[100] us.'
The same children that you protected so much and considered to be gods and goddesses
Will apply a bamboo stick to your skull and will burst and scatter your head.
O you dull, go to the company of the true one right away; among the truthful ones you will receive something.
If receiving human birth, one isn't Hari's servant, then he will be struck by Death.
Sūrdās says: 'Without praising the Lord he wastes his life in vanity.'

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98 *Sūrsāgar*, vol. 1. p. 28. It is absent from the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century man-uscripts of the Sūrdās poems (J. S. Hawley, personal communication, 29 May 2012; cf. Bryant and Hawley 2015).

99 Or 'fall apart into its three qualities.'

100 Cf. *dharikhāyo* ('to overpower') in Callewaert and Sharma (2009), p. 1002.

6.

The next poem to be examined (MKV261) is about the workings of maya and how to become liberated from it:

> *māyā moha mohi hita kīnha, tātai merau gyāṁna dhana hari līnha.* (ṭeka)
> . . .
> *kahi kabīra raghunātha bhaja nara, dutī nāṁhī koī.* (S207)
>
> My infatuation with illusion did good to me[101] since it snatched away my wealth of knowledge. (Refrain)
> . . .
> Kabīr says: 'Worship Rām, the Lord of Raghus, o man. There is no one else (in the world).'

The way to liberation, however, is highly contested as various manuscripts offer different objects for man's devotion. While the Rajasthani manuscripts have Vaishnava names in the last line—*raghunātha* (S), *gobyanda* (A), *hari nāma* (V), *yeka rāma* (J C), *rāma nāma* (Gop)—and propose to worship God either directly or through his name, the *Ādi Granth* and the *Bījak* deploys more generic terms, such as *jagajīvanu* (AG482,27) and *bhagavanta* (Bī60) respectively.

   This is, however, not the only variation. The *Bījak* (Bi60), as compared to the early Sikh and Rajasthani versions, interpolated a couplet that may have been useful for community building. These two extra lines (Bī60.6–7) distance the listener or the reader from the learning of both Islam and Hinduism and direct them to the true guru:

> *saiyada sekha kitāba *nīrakhai, *paṇḍita sāstra *bičārai.
> sataguru ke upadesa binā *te, jāni ke *jīvahi mārai.
>
> **saiyada sekha**] Bī, **sekha saiata** Ox; *nīrakhai*] Bī, **nīrakhata** Ox; **paṇḍita**] Bī, **sumrīta** Ox; *bičārai*] Bī, *bičārī* Ox; *te*] Bī, **tuma** Ox; *jīvahi mārai*] Bī, *jīva mārī* Ox.
>
> The sayyid and the shaikh look at the Qur'an; the pundit ponders on the shastras. Without the teachings of the true guru, they destroy their lives on purpose.

This particular importance lent to the guru in the *Bījak* is in contrast with the poem's variant readings. For example, the second half of the first *antarā* in the texts of the Rajasthani manuscripts and in the *Ādi Granth* are similar. The only difference is that the *Ādi Granth* version is more personal while the Rajasthani recension is more neutral:

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101 Alternatively, 'Illusion and infatuation are impassioned with me.' For a discussion of the word *hita* in this poem, see Strnad (2013), p. 91, n. 1. My translation makes use of the irony found in the *Hari ṭhagi* ('God the swindler') poem (MKV97) to be discussed below.

sāča kari nari gāṇṭhi bāndhyau čhaḍi parama nidhāṁna (S207)

Collecting money, man tied it into his knot-purse and abandoned the highest treasure.

sāṁča kari hama gāṭhi dīnī soī parama nidhāna (AG482;27)

Collecting money, we tied it into our knot-purse and that is the highest treasure for us.

The *Bījak*, however, takes the poem into a different direction, reminding us of the importance of the guru:

sabda guru upadesa diyo te čhāṁḍeu parama nidhānā (Bi60)

The guru gave guidance through the word but you abandoned the highest treasure.

te čhāṁḍeu] Bī, **tuma čhoḍo** Ox.

7.

The next poem to be discussed (MKV486) is one of the few 'autobiographical' Kabīr-poems with a reference to his imminent death in Magahar, a notoriously impure town for Hindus.[102] In its earliest recorded forms (in M, AG, S and V), it is an exhortation for internal devotion to a gracious God given into the mouth of the dying or already dead Kabīr. As we have seen, the use of death imagery to awaken the listener to an internal realization is a frequent theme in the Kabīr-poems. The second and the third lines remind us of God's grace. The real novelties here are the repeated inclusion of Kabīr's name, the first-person statement in the penultimate line and the reference to Magahar:

> *lokā re, mati bhorā re,*
> *jau kāsī tana tajai*[103] *kabīrā; to rāmahi kauna nihorā re.* (ṭeka)
> *jaupaiṁ bhagati bhagati hari jānai; milai ta aciraja kāhā re.*
> *jaisaiṁ jalaihi jalahi ḍhuri miliyau; yūṁ ḍhūri milyau julāhā re*
> *kahai kabīra rāma mai jānyāṁ; bhrami bhūlai jini koī re*
> *jasa kāsī jasa magahara usara, hṛdai rāma jo hoī re.* (S365)

O people, it's so foolish![104]
If Kabīr gives up his body in Kashi, then, tell me, what is the role of Ram's compassion? (Refrain)
If a devotee knows Hari through his devotion then, say, what is the surprise

---

102 Variation in this song has been discussed in Strnad (2018); the *Bījak* version has been studied by De Bruijn (2014), pp. 145–147.

103 Emendation from *jai jai*. Cf. Strnad (2013), p. 133, n. 2.

104 This formulation aims to reflect the ambiguity of the Hindi as it allows the interpretations, 'It is so foolish of you!' and 'It's so foolish of Kabīr'; cf. Strnad (2013), p. 133, n. 1. The Hindi exclamation *re* is not present in each line but its function of directly addressing the listener is indicated by phrases such as 'tell me,' 'say,' and 'you see,' or by using second-person addresses instead of third-person narration.

if he meets Him?
Just as water poured into water merged, so has the weaver, you see.
Kabīr says: 'I have known God, none of you should be lost in doubt.'
Kashi is just as the barren land of Magahar, if you hold Rām in your heart.

The interpretation of the last third of the refrain, *to rāmahi kauna nihorā re*, calls for some comment as it has several opacities and is a good example of how elusive Kabīr's texts can be for a modern translator and how much can be lost when the translator needs to pick up only one meaning. Apart from the conjunct *to* (then) and the exclamation *re*, translated here as 'tell me,' all words present some ambiguity. Firstly, this half line lacks a clear finite verb, which should apparently be a form of either 'to be' or 'to do.' The word *rāmahi* is in the oblique case and most probably stands for a direct or an indirect object, that is, accusative or dative case. Moreover, a dative is often used to express concepts to be translated with the genitive (for example, '[the role of] compassion for Rām'). The word *kauna* can stand for 'what,' 'who,' 'what kind of,' or 'which.'[105] To create some clarity and reduce the meanings to 'what,' two sources (AG and Gop) present the word *kahā*, equivalent of the modern Hindi *kyā* (what). Yet, the most intriguing word is *nihorā*, which means 'entreaty,' 'favour, compassion,' and 'support' and the line can be translated in either of these meanings. Thus, some further probable alternatives are 'who will then implore God?' and 'How does God's support work in it?'[106] The variation in meanings represents various shades of agency attributed to God or to the devotee.

In contrast with the earliest sources, the three other Rajasthani anthologies (J C Gop), which can be called the Vaishnava recension, invert lines 3 and 4 and add two lines (7, 8) after the second and the inverted third line.[107] The new line order we arrive at is as follows:

1
2
[7]
4
3
[8]
5
6

---

105 Cf. McGregor (1993); Prasad, Sahay, and Shrivastav (1992); Callewaert and Sharma (2009). Out of these, the first two meanings have been recorded in Rajasthani as well (see Lalas 1962–1988) and the first three in Brajbhāṣā (see Gupta, Shukla, and Tandan 1974).
106 Vaudeville (1997), p. 214 seems to opt for the first solution: 'If Kabīr leaves his body at Kasi, who will take refuge in Rām?
107 M has two couplets appended at the end, apparently by Nāmdev. This is a transcription mistake either by the *Mohan Pothī* scribe or by Callewaert and his collaborators.

A novelty in these versions is the inclusion of a reference to the guru, which can again be perceived as a means of community-building:

> *gura parasāda sādha kī sī saṅgati, jaga jītyoṁ jāhi julāhā.* (line 8 J76)
> Through the grace of the guru and the companionship of the truthful,
> the weaver goes —having conquered the world.

The expression *jītyo jāhi* in the second half of this line is in fact a combination of the perfective participle *jītyo* (having conquered) and the present *jāhi* (goes). To avoid confusion with the passive *jītyo jā(h)i* (is conquered), the other versions have the adverbial form *jītyeṁ jāi* (C) and *jīteṁ jāi* (Gop). The conquest refers to the fact that Kabīr has become independent of worldly customs.

In the same poem, the fifth line has contested readings in the early layer manuscripts:

> *kahatu kabīra sunahu re loī* (AG, M)
> *kahai kabīra rāma maiṁ jānyāṁ* (S, [*jānauṁ*] V)
> *kahai kabīra sunahu re santo* (J, C, [*kahata*] Gop)

The earliest recorded version (AG, M) is a fully formulaic reference to the poet Kabīr's authority, positioning his persona in dialogue with his audience. The second version omits the direct address to the audience and reinforces Kabīr's authority with a self-confident first-person statement. The third version is a slight variation on the first, already presenting a community of truthful people. The same poem with more substantial variations is also present in the *Bījak*:

> *logā tumahīṁ mati ke bhorā*
> **jyoṁ pānī pānī mili gayaū,* **tyoṁ dhuri mile kabīrā.*
> **jo maithila ko sācā byāsa, tora marana ho magahara pāsa.*
> *magahara marai marana nahi pāvai, anta marai to rāma le jāvai.*
> *magahara marai so gadahā hoya, bhala paratīta rāma se khoya.*
> *kyā kāsī kyā magahara ūsara, jo pai hṛdaya rāma basa mora.*
> *jo kāsī tana tajai kabīra; to rāmahi, kahu, kauna nihora.* (*Bījak* 103)

jo] Bī, je Ox; *tyoṁ*] Bī, te tehī Ox; **jo maithila ko**] Bī; *jauṁ meṁthī kā* Bī[BH]; *jyau maithī ko* Ox; **byāsa**] Bī Bī[BH], *bāsā* Ox; **le jāvai**] Bī, *lajāve* Ox.

You simple-minded people!
As water enters water, so Kabīr
Will meet with dust.

That Maithili pandit said
You'd die near Magahar.
What a terrible place to be dead!
If you want Ram to take you away,
Die somewhere else instead.

Besides, they say
Whoever dies at Magahar
Comes back a donkey.

So much for your faith in Ram.
What's Kashi? Magahar? Barren ground,
When Ram rules in your heart.
If you give up the ghost in Kashi
Is there some debt
On the Lord's part? (trans. Hess and Singh (1986), pp. 75–76)[108]

One is tempted to say that the chronologically earliest sources (M AG S and V) represent the earliest accessible layer of the poem going back to the late sixteenth century. Some amplification happened in the Rajasthani *vaiṣṇava* recension that came to life towards the end of the first quarter of the seventeenth century and a more radical shift took place in the *Bījak* in the late eighteenth century. The fifth line containing the contested readings in the early layer manuscripts is omitted from the *Bījak* just as the extra lines [7] and [8] of the *vaiṣṇava* recension. In its turn, the *Bījak* elaborates on the theme of Magahar in three additional *čaupāī* lines (b3–b5). The inclusion of these internally rhyming *čaupāī*s not only confuse the poetic metre, but the inversion of lines also breaks the rhyming pattern (and forces the word *bhorā* to rhyme with *kabīra*). The *Bījak* also turns the exhortation of the audience into polemics about brahmanical orthodoxy. The line correspondence between the older sources, represented here in the *vaiṣṇava* recension's line order, and *Bījak sabad* 103 is as follows:

Raj	*Bījak*
1	1
2	7
[7]	
4	2
	b3
	b4 (b5 in Ox)
	b5 (b4 in Ox)
3	
[8]	
5	
6	6

---

108 A different translation is in Vaudeville (1997), p. 156, no. 2180.

The *Bījak* version expresses a later fascination with Magahar and indeed with Kabīr hagiography, which by that time has, apparently, become an important Kabīrpanthī centre.[109] As an Indian singer relishes some poetic or musical turn and explores its variations, the pseudo-Kabīr of these three lines does the same. In his study of this *sabad*, Thomas De Bruijn found that it was moulded to suit hagiography about Kabīr's death in Magahar. Like most other *sabad*s in the *Bījak*, this one comments on, rather than narrates, a hagiographic event and by doing so it actively addresses and challenges the audience.[110] One is reminded that the hagiographic interest in the Kabīrpanth on the eve of the compilation of the *Bījak* may have been one of the major forces of sectarian identity. Marco della Tomba in the 1760s was told by Kabīrpanthīs that Kabīr had 'performed great miracles' and was also the guru of Alexander the Great.[111]

8.

The last early layer poem to be examined is present in AG, S, A V, J, and Gop:

> *hari ṭhagi jaga kūṁ ṭhagorī lāī*; *hari kai bivoga kaisaiṁ jīu merī māī.*
> *kauṇa pūta ko kāko bāpa*; *kauṇa marai kauṇaṁ karai saṁtāpa.*
> *kauṇa puriṣa ko kākī nāri, abhi antari tumha lehu bicāri.*
> *kahai kabīra, ṭhaga syūṁ mana mānyā, gaī ṭhagaurī ṭhaga pahicānyāṁ.*
> (S74, MKV97)

> That con man Hari has conned the world; but, my companion, how can I live without Him?
> Who is son and who is whose father? Who dies and who suffers?
> Who is husband and who is whose wife? Think this over deep within.
> Kabīr's heart accepts the thief. Cheating disappears when you recognise the cheat.[112]

The poetic form is the most frequent early Kabīr stanza, a quatrain of four *čaupāī* lines, although the metre needs to be emended at certain places. For example, the second half line with suggested metrical correction (underlined) and excision (in square brackets) is as follows:

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109 Kabīr legends composed from about 1600 onwards always mention Kabīr's death in Magahar (Lorenzen (1992), p. 41). Magahar may refer to the village of the same name near Gorakhpur although contesting sites exist (ibid., p. 42). A land grant from 1688–1689 confirms this site's connection to Kabīr Śāh (ibid., p. 17).

110 In his analysis of the *Bījak* version of this poem, De Bruijn (2014), pp. 145–147, demonstrated how this song had been moulded to suit hagiography about Kabīr's death in Magahar. As with most songs in the *Bījak*, this one, commenting on rather than narrating a hagiographic event, actively addresses and challenges the audience.

111 Lorenzen (2002), p. 40 speculates that della Tomba may have misunderstood the story of Kabīr's legendary encounter with Sikandar Lodī.

112 Parts of the translation draw on Hess and Singh's English version in Hess and Singh (1986), p. 53.

> *hari kai bivoga kaisaiṁ jīu* [*merī*] *māī* (S74)
> *hari ke bioga kaise jīu* [*merī*] *māī* (AG331;39)
> *hari ke biyoga kasa jiyehu re bhāī* (Bī36; *harī ke bīvoga kaise jīu māī* Ox64)
>
> *hari kě bi|vŏga kasa| jīūṁ|ˌ māī* (metrical reconstruction)
> or
> *hari bi|voga kasa| jīūṁ|ˌ māī* (metrical reconstruction)

The only noteworthy variation within the early layer is that manuscript J felt the gender incongruence in the feminine verbal form *lāī* in the first pada and emended the text to *hari ṭhaga jaga ṭhagorī lāyā*. This triggered a change of the rhyme in the next pada into *merī māyā* (my illusion). The *Bījak* inverts lines 2 and 3 and adds an extra, explicatory line before the concluding *čaupāī*:

> *ṭhagi ṭhagi mūla sabana ko līnhā, rāma ṭhagaurī kāhu na cīnhā*. (4)
>
> Cheating repeatedly, it has snatched away everyone's capital; no one recognized God, the swindler.

Such *geyavikāra*s, sung inflections, show that the *Bījak* text cannot directly derive from the early written archetype. The inverted lines, apparently less emphatic than the rest of the poem, are also more liable to change. Manuscript J and the *Bījak* also unfold and slightly confuse the simple grammar and the correct metre of the earlier forms *kaüna ko pūtu pitā ko kāko* (AG) and *kauṇa pūta ko kāko bāpa* (S A V Gop) into *ko kāko putra, kavana kāko bāpā* (J Bi). The half-line *abhi antari tumha lehu bicāri* (S A V Gop; *iā tata lehu sarīra bicāri* AG) is changed into *akatha kathā sādho lehu bicāri* in manuscript J and into *akatha kathā yama dṛṣṭi pasārī* in the *Bījak*. The result is that while the older versions exhort and instigate direct involvement, that is agency, the *Bījak* makes a threatening statement, which unlike the old versions would allow the assistance of a guru.

Into the twentieth century:
Bījak–Śabdāvalī–Kumar Gandharva transitions

Independent documentation in the twentieth century hardly had any overlap with the earliest versions published in the *Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī*.[113] To sample the rich archive surfacing in that century, I will use two early-twentieth-century sources and will examine the relationship of a few overlapping songs to their *Bījak* equivalents. The *Kabīr sāhab kī śabdāvalī* (1907 [1900]) has been a particularly popular book

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113 Cf. Callewaert, Sharma, and Taillieu (2000), p. vii, and Callewaert (2004), p. 121. Callewaert's statement is based on Tagore's translations, the recordings of Bahadur Singh in 1995–1996 in Rajasthan, and David Lorenzen's research in Benares in 1990–1992. On

of Kabīr songs. Its Radhasoami background and its being a source for Kshitimohan Sen and Tagore has been discussed earlier. Our other resource here is at the intersection of print and song culture. Hess published the transcript of thirty songs performed by Kumar Gandharva, who, in turn, relied on the print collection *Śrī Śilnāth Śabdāmṛt* (1923 [1915]), which had Nāthpanthī background and limited circulation. A concordance of the twenty-one Kumar Gandharva songs that bear Kabīr's signature is given in Table 6.1.[114]

As can be seen, there is only minimal overlap across these three selections. Only one song (*māyā mahā ṭhaganī*) is shared by all of them. The Kumar Gandharva repertoire shares two songs with the *Bījak* and eight with the more musical *Śabdāvalī*.[115] A comparison of the *Śabdāvalī* and the *Bījak* (not in the above table) shows that these two collections share four songs (*Bījak* 24, 91, 59, 54 are *bhed-bānī* 24, *citāvanī* 33, *citāvanī* 31, and *citāvanī* 11 in the *Śabdāvalī*). Nonetheless, when a text is shared, it shows much less variation than the chronological distance between the repertoires would suggest. This phenomenon can be explained by the growth of the Kabīr corpus over the centuries and with the influence of print.[116] Twentieth-century anthologists had a wider range of poems at their disposal to select from than their predecessors and with the advent of print culture many of these poems were standardized.

A good example of this phenomenon is the poem *māyā mahā ṭhaganī* (Kumar Gandharva 12/Shilnath 257–*Śabdāvalī*, *čitāvanī* 31–*Bījak* 59) a poem about the workings of maya, illusion. The only variation within its text across the three sources is that *suno ho santo* (listen, o truthful ones) of the *Bījak* becomes *suno bhāī sādho* (listen, my truthful/ascetic brother) in the *Śabdāvalī* and in Kumar Gandharva. This song is reminiscent of the early *Hari ṭhagi* poem (MKV97) discussed earlier. However, its tone is much more subdued as the swindler here is not Hari but the more conventional Māyā.

There are instances where there is variation in the imagery and sometimes in the vocabulary. An example of the former is the song *avadhūtā gagana ghaṭā gaharānī* (Kumar Gandharva 1/Shilnath 198–*Śabdāvalī*, *bhed-bāni* 9 p. 50), which

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the Rajasthan research, see Singh (2002), pp. 192–198, and on Benares, Lorenzen (1996) and Singh (2002), pp. 205–223.

114 The remaining nine songs in the repertoire, some of them attributed to Gorakhnāth, do not overlap with the other two sources. However, one of them (22 *bholā mana jāne amara merī kāyā*) opens with a line familiar from the earliest records, including the Fatehpur manuscript (*nara jāṇai amara merī kāyā*, MKV110) and later evokes the image of the well and the five water-carriers found in MKV329.

115 On the musical and non-musical contrast between these two collections, see Hess (1987), p. 118.

116 While Callewaert documented 593 Kabīr padas recorded between 1570 and 1681, Parasnath Tiwari used sources presenting 1.579 padas documented between 1604 and 1937; cf. Dharwadker (2003), pp. 54–58.

TABLE 6.1   Kumar Gandharva (*Singing Emptiness*).

	Śabdāvalī	*Bījak*
1 *avadhūtā gagana*	*bhed-bānī* 9 (p.50)	—
2 *avadhūtā kudrat kī gata*	—	23
3 *avadhūtā yugana*	—	—
4 *bina satagura*	*čitāvanī* 1 (p.1)	—
5 *dhuna suna ke*	—	—
6 *gurujī ne diyo*	—	—
7 *hama paradesī paṁčhī*	—	—
8 *hiranā samajha būjha bana čaranā*	—	—
9 *jhīnī jhīnī*	*bhed-bānī* 10 (p.51)	—
10 *kauna ṭhagavā nagariyā*	*čitāvanī* 4 (p.2)	—
11 *mana bhāvarā bhayo*	—	—
12 *māyā mahā ṭhaganī*	*čitāvanī* 31 (p.14)	59
13 *naiharavā hama kā na bhāvai*	*bhed-bānī* 5 (p.48)	—
14 *naiyā morī nīke nīke*	—	—
15 *nirabhaya niraguna*	—	—
16 *rāma nirañjana nyārā re*	—	—
17 *ramaiyā kī dulahina lūṭā bazār*	—	—
18 *sakhiyā, vā ghara saba se nyārā*	—	—
19 *sataguru morī čūka saṁbhāro*	*birah aur prem* 33 (p.79)	—
20 *sunatā hai guru gyānī*	*bhed-bānī* 22 (p.62)	—
21 *uṛa jāegā haṁsa akelā*	—	—

Source: Author.

presents considerable paraphrasing in the imagery. However, the overall sense of a half-hidden metaphor is kept in both versions and both culminate in the praise of the divine name.

9.

In two songs—9 *jhīnī jhīnī* and 20 *sunatā hai guru gyānī*—Shilnath/Kumar Gand-harva add two lines to the *Śabdāvalī* versions (*bhed-bānī* 10 and *bhed-bānī* 22). The latter poem also introduces changes in the terminology and Kumar Gandharva has *ādi puruṣa* and *āda kī bānī* where the *Śabdāvalī* reads *alakha puruṣa* and *amara bānī*—otherwise they are identical. Some changes are even more subtle. In a line about not finding help in the world in the song *sataguru morī čūka saṁbhāro* (Kumar Gandharva 19 and *Śabdāvalī, birah aur prem* 33), Kumar Gandharva uses perfectives (*dekhyo, milyo*) instead of the eastern Hindi future forms (*dekhiba, mileba*) of the *Śabdāvalī*, which expressed more conviction than experience.

> *kara dekhyo hita sāre jagata se, milyo na koū puni sahāro*. (Kumar Gandharva 19)
>
> I've looked for help
> Everywhere in the world
> And found nothing to rely on. (trans. Hess (2009), p. 96)
>
> *kara dekheba hita sāre jaga soṁ, koi na mileba puna bhāro*. (*Śabdāvalī* 33)
>
> You may look for help everywhere in the world and won't find anyone to take on its Load.

10.

The song *bina satagura nara rahata bhulānā* (Without the true guru, humans are lost) is built on two conventional images for the realization of one's true nature. The first image is about a lion brought up among sheep and the second is of a musk deer searching in the outside world for the scent coming from within:[117]

> *bina satagura nara rahata bhulānā,*
> *khojata phirata rāha nahīṁ jānā*. (*ṭeka*)
> *kehara suta le āyo gaḍariyā pāla poṣa una kīnha sayānā.*
> *karata kalola rahata ajayana saṁga, āpana marma unahuṁ nahīṁ jānā.*
> *. . .*
> *kahata kabīra suno bhāī sādho, ulaṭi āpa meṁ āpa samānā*. (Kumar Gandharva 4b)

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117 The image of the lion is found, for example, in the Ismaili *ginān* of Pīr Śams, *eji kesari siṁha sarūpa bhulāyo, ajā kere saṅge ajā hoi raheyo; ese bharama meṁ jivana kuṁ bhulāyo* (The lion forgot its lionish form, and in the company of goats it lived as a goat. In such delusion life's purpose is forgotten). Shackle and Moir (1992), hymn 5. The musk deer imagery has been so popular that the Kabīr *sākhī* corpus has an entire *aṅg* (section) dedicated to it, the *kasturiyā mriga kau aṅg* (section on the musk deer). See Simh and Simh (1993), pp. 317–319.

Without the true guru, humans are lost.
They search and wander but can't find the way.

A shepherd raised a lion cub,
He cared for him so cleverly.
That cub gambolled with the goats,
Not knowing his own nature.
. . .
Kabir says, listen seeker, friend,
Self turns, merges
With self. (trans. Hess (2009), p. 66)

The sixteen-mora first line of the refrain is presented as a proper *čaupāī* in this version, which introduces the second pada. The *Śabdāvalī* does not turn the refrain into a *čaupāī* but follows it with an extra *antarā*, 'He goes up and down without steadfastness and wanders drunk and mad.' Its markedly Perso-Arabic phrase *alamasta divānā* stands in contrast with the rest of the poem, which uses Indic vocabulary. After this, the two poems match almost exactly until the closing line. While Kumar Gandharva is more cryptic in the last line and focuses on the result, the *Śabdāvalī* is more explicit and talks of the way:

bina satagura nara phirata bhulānā. (ṭeka)
ūṁca nīca laga dhīraja nāhīṁ tāsu phirai alamasta divānā.
kehara suta le āyo garaḍiyā pāla poṣa una kīna sayānā.
karata kalola rahata ajayana saṁga, āpana marma unahuṁ nahīṁ jānā.
. . .
kahaiṁ kabīra suno bhāī sādho ulaṭī rāha sahaja mastānā.
(Śabdāvalī, čitāvanī 1)

Without the true guru, man wanders lost. (Refrain)
He goes up and down without steadfastness and wanders drunk and mad.
A shepherd raised a lion cub, he cared for him so cleverly.
That cub gambolled with the goats, not knowing his own nature
. . .
Kabir says: 'Listen seeker friend, the road to the drunken, inborn God is reverse.'[118]

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118 This rendering draws on Hess's translation of the previous version.

Kabīr as lasting presence

Many twentieth-century scholars claimed a formidable 120-year lifespan (1398–1518) for Kabīr. Yet, even this lifespan is too tight to contain all Kabīr-poetry. Many poems are indebted to centuries of earlier layers of Indian vernacular compositions and after the poet's death, poems with 'his' signature continued to evolve[119] and have been continually produced and remoulded over the past five centuries, leaving the idea of the original poet very much in a haze.

Kabīr has an extraordinary capacity to speak to a wide range of communities and to each in a different way. Kabīr's poetry has been in constant metamorphosis and with the help of forms recorded over the past four and the half centuries, we can speculate about how they kept being adopted not only to new performative environments but also to new receptive communities.

The earliest Kabīr-poems appearing in the oldest manuscripts and published by Winand Callewaert as *Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī* had already undergone two phases of oral transmission. In the earliest phase, they were metrically correct poems, probably recited or sung to a fix melody and embedded into an environment where explanation was either unnecessary or was provided along with their performance. This phase can be inferred from the fact that in the case of early sources a systematic reconstruction of metrically correct poems is relatively easy and that the reconstructed poems curtailed of explicative fillers are more compact, more polysemic, and therefore, more poetically more powerful. This phase in transmission may be called the metric phase. In the next, the musical phase of oral transmission, these poems entered into singers' repertoires and spread over wide regions. Probably it was only in this phase that they were set to raga and, in order to compensate for a lost homiletic context, explanations of certain aspects were incorporated to them in the form of hypermetrical fillers.

Circulation between receptive communities resulted in the continuous recontextualization of the poems. The earliest extant Kabīr manuscripts come from Vaishnava, Sikh, and Dādūpanthī singing environments. Although it is not possible to detect sectarian involvement in the earlier metric phase of their oral transitions, their often-cryptic nature easily lent them to sectarian appropriation. As has been discussed, one major area of contestation was the use of divine names. While the frequent use of the terms Rām and Hari for a non-sectarian God have deep roots in the Kabīr tradition, the Vaishnava origin of these terms lent the poems to a Vaishnava interpretation. Moreover, at times more markedly, Vaishnava names also pop

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119 As far as the precursors of the Kabīr verses are concerned, see Dasgupta (1962), pp. 416, where a *čaryāpad* of Ḍheṇḍhaṇa closely shares its enigmatic imagery with a Kabīr pada. The third chapter in Dvivedi (1950) compares the Nāth doctrines with the teaching of Kabīr.

up in the Kabīr-poems. Another contested area was the importance of a guru and of the community of devotees, which seem to have become more and more dominant over the centuries. A further contested area was hagiographic interest. This shift in emphasis is clearly perceptible in the *Bījak*, set into its 'final' form possibly in the eighteenth century. The twentieth century witnessed an unprecedented richness in the Kabīr corpus as well as early print standardization. A particularly remarkable later phenomenon is the multiplication of imagery, as if the performer was relishing a particularly successful image by building parallels to it.

While examining the changes in the Kabīr corpus, his recent translator, Vinay Dharwadker identified *enlargement* and *discursive variation* as major forces in operation in manuscript transmission.[120] A further study of the evolution of the Kabīr corpus reveals that changes involve shifts not only in phrasing, metre, and imagery but also in attitudes as poems travel between both performative and sectarian environments. The transforming forces, among others, include bhaktification, especially, Vaishnavization, musicalization, and community-building.

While many sectarian and non-sectarian 'Kabīrs' were created and some communities may even claim to represent a more authentic Kabīr, a contemporary reader or listener, whether in India or abroad, can relish the richness produced over the centuries by a powerful yet elusive presence.

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120 Dharwadker (2003), pp. 52–53.

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7. The Making of Kabīr's Rasa: A Case Study of North Indian Bhakti Intellectual History

Abstract. Rasa is one of the core concepts in the Kabīrian poems in early Rajasthani and Punjabi manuscripts. This paper examines the description of the attributes and production process of the Kabīrian rasa and compares these with three fields of knowledge that are known to the poet's predecessors and contemporaries: alchemy, mahua flower wine distillation, and Haṭhayoga. A number of Kabīrian poems describe rasa as a rejuvenating, gold-making mystic liquid made through a process of distillation that resembles the production of mahua flower wine. Both images were further incorporated into the body-centric yogic practices present in the poems. Though similar expressions are also found in Gorakhnāth's works, Vaishnava imprints and bhaktification distinguishes the Kabīrian version from its predecessors. Rāma/Hari was added to rasa, and the concept of rasa being a material drinkable liquid was also gradually reworked into a metaphor for 'the name of Rāma/Hari' or 'the taste of love/devotion.' This analysis concludes that the word rasa displays how the pre-bhakti thoughts were incorporated into the early modern North India bhakti discourse.

Keywords. Kabīr, Rasa, Bhakti, Yoga, Intellectual history.

Early Kabīrian literature is invaluable for the study of medieval North Indian intellectual history, especially that of the bhakti movement.[1] The corpus of poems bearing the poet's *bhaṇitā*, even in its earliest written forms, consists of both pre-bhakti tantric and Vaishnava bhakti elements, marking a significant transition in North Indian intellectual history. Traditional hagiographies such as *Kabīr Paracai* describe the transition as an abrupt yet thorough turn due to Kabīr's personal will and accomplished by Rāmānanda's initiation. Textual studies of the Kabīrian poems, however, show that a gradual evolution of the literary and intellectual tradition took place, either formally or conceptually. The use of Kṛṣṇa's names, an indicator

of *saguṇa* Krishnaite bhakti's influence upon Kabīrian tradition, mainly occurs in the refrain and *bhaṇitā* line of Kabīrian pada and often appears to be inserted later.[2] Another sign of bhaktification is the replacement of enigmatic tantric or yogic terms with more straightforward ones.[3]

This paper focuses on one single word—rasa—which appears in early Kabīrian poems. The corpus under scrutiny is restricted to the Rajasthani and Punjabi padas in *The Millennium Kabīr Vānī* and the *sākhī*s in Śyāmasundaradās's *Kabīr Granthāvalī* (hereafter KG). Rasa is among the most popular words in the early Kabīrian literature under scrutiny. A chapter (*aṅga*) of *sākhī*s is entitled under '*rasa.*' The word also occurs 187 times in forty-three out of 590 sets of early padas. Though Charlotte Vaudeville and Mātā Prasād Gupta mentioned pre-Kabīrian thoughts in their notes respectively, they interpreted Kabīr's rasa as the taste of Brahmānanda or Vaishnava devotional sentiments and stress its difference from its predecessors.[4] They are joined by contemporary and later Hindi commentators like Puṣpapāl Siṃh, Jayadev Siṃh, and Rāmakiśor Śarmā.[5] As the following study shows, the word bears different meanings in different contexts and the sole bhaktified explanation does not fit every context. Studying this word not only adds to our understanding of Kabīrian thoughts but demonstrates how the pre-bhakti intellectual heritage was incorporated into the bhakti discourse or, in other words, the bhaktification of pre-bhakti rasa.

The material prototype of rasa

The meaning of rasa ranges from material liquid—be it fruit juice, milk, or mystical nectar—to abstract aesthetic sentiment including *śṛṅgāra*, *vīra*, *bībhatsa*, and so forth. In the corpus under study, cases of the former interpretation are more frequently found as the rasa is often said to 'drip' and can be 'drunk' or 'tasted' with one's tongue. Then, what could this liquid be?

The first possible option is *rasāyana*, a word that appears both in *rasa kau aṅga* (chapters of couplets about rasa) and padas discussing rasa. For instance:

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2 Hess (1987).

3 Bangha (2013).

4 Vaudeville (1957) and Gupta (1985). Gupta referred to *Gorakh Bāṇī* when commentating on pada 1.71. Though Vaudeville mentioned both the tantric practitioner's consumption of alcohol and the Nāthyogī's concept of yogic rasa, she concluded that Kabīr's rasa is nothing but Hari bhakti. See Vaudeville (1957), p. 106, n. 101.

5 See Siṃh (2010 [1971]), p. 127; Siṃh and Siṃh (1976), p. 81; and Śarmā (2010), p. 166.

सबै रसांइण मैं किया, हरि सा और न कोइ । तिल इक घट मैं संचरै, तौ सब तन कंचन होइ ॥ (KG *sākhī* 6:8)[6]

Among all the *rasāyana* I made, nothing is like Hari. Even one drop in a pot makes the whole body into gold.[7]

दास कबीरा जुगि जुगि जीवै । रसनां रांम रसांइंन पीवै ॥ (W283/A251.4)[8]

Drinking the Rāma *rasāyana*, the servant Kabīr lives one *yuga* after another.

The word *rasāyana* derives from rasa and means specifically the elixir produced by alchemists, in whose jargon rasa means mercury. Like their peers in other parts of the world, ancient Indian alchemists sought to produce pure mercury through physical or chemical means. This was first mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* composed around 300 CE. In the *Arthaśāstra*, it is clearly stated that the superintendent of mines must know how to produce mercury, that is, rasa, through distillation and condensation. The metallurgical knowledge in using mercury to produce gold is also mentioned.[9] Such technological knowledge laid the foundations for alchemy. The alchemists viewed metals as living beings; therefore, the chemical stability of gold was viewed as metallic longevity. Since mercury helps in producing gold, why shouldn't it also be helpful in making a 'gold body'—an immortal one? By the eleventh century, systematic and sophisticated alchemical monographs like *Rasārṇava* were already composed by Indian alchemists. By Kabīr's time, such compositions included *Rasaprakāśa Sudhākara* (*c*. thirteenth century), *Rasa Ratna Samucceya* (*c*. thirteenth–fourteenth century), *Rasendra Cintāmaṇi* (*c*. fifteenth century), among others. The *rasāyana* in the Kabīrian poems above have the same rejuvenating, gold-making properties as that explained in alchemical works.

A second image of Kabīr's rasa is as a hard, alcoholic drink sold by liquor dealers. For instance:

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6 When quoting *sākhī*s from Śyāmasundaradās (1956 [1928]), the number preceding the colon indicates the number of the *aṅga* and the number following the colon indicates the number of the *sākhi* in the *aṅga*.

7 If not specified otherwise, the translation of Hindi poems in this paper are the author's own. Reference was made to extant annotated text and translation, including Vaudeville (1957), (1974), (1993); Siṃh (2010 [1971]); Siṃh and Siṃh (1976); Gupta (1985); Strnad (2013).

8 The coding of Kabīrian padas conforms to Callewaert (2000b). The number following W indicates the pada's position in Callewaert. The second capitalized letter (here A) indicates the manuscript to which the pada belongs to, followed by a number that designates its position in the manuscript. A number after a dot indicates the number of the stanza according to Callewaert. For example, W283/A251.4 means this text is quoted from the fourth stanza of the 251st pada of manuscript A, which is grouped under the 283th set of padas in Callewaert (2000b).

9 Rây (1959).

छाकि पयौं आतम मतिवाला । पीवत रांम रस करत बिचारा ॥ टेक ॥
बहुतैं मोलि महग गुर पावा । दै कसाव रस रांम चुवावा ॥1॥
तन पाटण मै कीन्ह पसारा । मांगि मागि रस पीवै बिचारा ॥2॥
कहै कबीर फाबी मतिवारी । पीवत रांम रस लागी षुमारी ॥3॥ (W22/S17)

The intoxicated self got totally drunk while drinking the rasa of Rāma [and]
meditating. (Refrain)
[I] obtained highly valuable, expensive jaggery. Having added astringent
admixture, [I] let the rasa of Rāma trickle down. (1)
I made it spread all over the city of [my] body. The wretched one drinks and
asks for more and more. (2)
Kabīr says: 'I became fond of the intoxication. Drinking the rasa of Rāma,
inebriation came over [me].' (3)

राम रसाइन प्रेम रस, पीवत अधिक रसाल । कबीर पीवण दुलभ है, मांगै सीस कलाल ॥
(KG *sākhī* 6:2)

The rasa of love, [the product] of the alchemy of Rāma is so sweet to drink!
[But] Kabīr [warns]: '[This] drinking comes at a very high price: the liquor
seller asks for one's head [in exchange].'

The liquor is made out of mahua flowers (*Madhuca Indica*), an ideal raw material
whose sugar content can reach 70 per cent.[10] The pada below displays the whole
process of spirit production, mixed with yogic terms:

काया कलाली लांहनि करिहूं, गुरु सबद गुड़ कीन्हां । कांम क्रोध मोह मद मंछर, काटि
काटि कस दीन्हां ॥1॥
भवन चतुरदस भाटी पुरई, ब्रह्म अगनि परजारी । मूंदे मदन सहज धुनि उपजी, सुखमन
पोतनहारी ॥2॥
नीझर झरै अंमी रस निकसै, तिहि मदिरावल छाका । कहै कबीर यहु बास बिकट अति, ग्यांन
गुरू ले बांका ॥3॥ (W178/S133)[11]

I shall make my body a liquor seller's yeast, guru's word I have used as jag-
gery. Having chopped thoroughly lust, anger, infatuation, conceit and jealou-
sy, [I have] added [them as] seasoning admixture. (1)
[I have] filled the oven of fourteen worlds [of the body], [and] lit the fire of
Brahma. With [the oven] sealed up with wax of passion, the sound [signalling
the state] of *sahaja* arose in the cooling [tube of] *suṣumna*. (2)
The stream of the liquid comes in trickles, *amṛta* oozes out; with this liquor
the king has become intoxicated. Kabīr says: '[Even] the smell [of it] is very
strong; only a guru of true knowledge [may] take such a strong thing.' (3)

Seen from the pada above, Kabīr's mahua flower wine is made through distillation
rather than fermentation. In hypoxic conditions, yeast converts the carbohydrates
contained in the raw material into alcohol. The production process for fermented

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10 Mahua flower wine is still produced today. See Benerji et al. (2010).
11 A similar version of this pada is also found in *Ādi Granth*. See W178/AG968–969;1.
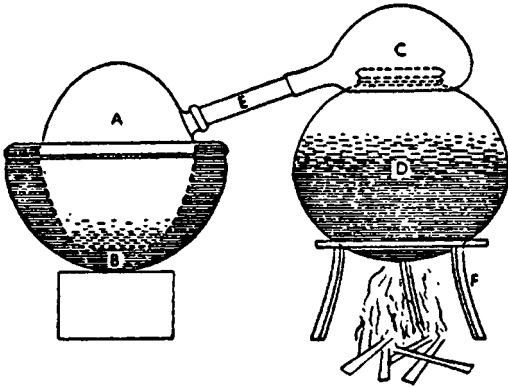
FIGURE 7.1 An oblique type of still.[12]   **FIGURE 7.2** A vertical type of still
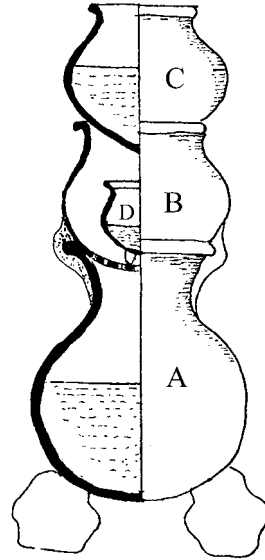
Source: Allchin (1979), pp. 58 and 57 respectively. Copyright © 1979 by Royal Anthropological Institute. Reprinted by permission of John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

liquor is relatively easier than that of distilled liquor, but the alcohol content can hardly exceed 20 per cent. The distillation of alcohol makes use of the difference between the boiling point of alcohol (78.5°C) and that of water (100°C). By controlling the temperature inside the distillation devices, the alcohol evaporates and then condenses in the receptor. Distilling and condensing repeatedly, the alcoholic content of the distilled liquor can reach 60 per cent.

Two distilling apparatuses resemble what the poem describes. Using the first still apparatus, the material prepared for distillation is put into container D. As it is heated the spirit evaporates and transfers into container A via conduit E. As it cools the liquid drips into B. The same principle applies to the apparatus in Figure 7.2. Container A is filled with material prepared for distillation while C is filled with cold water to cool down the vapour that rises through B. The condensed liquid then flows along the bottom of container C and drips down into container D. The two still apparatuses illustrate the distillation process described in the padas above. The materials include: 1) 'dregs,' the slightly fermented mahua prepared for distillation, 2) jaggery, 3) 'sexual desire, anger, confusion, infatuation, and jealousy,' all kinds of seasoning ingredients, especially spices. The mixture is

12 The figure is reconstructed from an archeological discovery in Gandhara and a similar apparatus is still used today by tribal peoples in India. Figure 7.2 is used by tribal peoples in Bihar. Allchin argues that distillation technology was first applied for alcohol production.

to be put into the 'oven,' which is heated with the 'fire of Brahma.' As the spirit evaporates, it generates the sound of boiling, or 'the sound of *sahaja*.' The vapour is condensed in the cooling device and drips down as a 'waterfall.' Thus, the intoxicating drink is produced. This pada is not an isolated case in describing the distillation of mahua flower wine. The still apparatus and the production procedure described by the poet fits well with what it is known has been used by North Indian distillers. Therefore, it is fair to say that the distilled mahua flower wine is also a material prototype of rasa. The intoxicating property of Kabīr's rasa originates in this spirit.

The two prototypes of Kabīr's rasa, mercury and mahua flower wine, though distinguishable from each other, share the same outer form as purified liquid and the same technological knowledge of distillation. Both alchemists and alcohol producers were early distillers. For the alchemists, mercury is distilled out of the various compounds available in nature. One of the most popular techniques is to heat cinnabar, the main ingredient of which is mercury sulphide (HgS). Condensing the mercury vapour, alchemists procured the purified liquid mercury. The formula is:

$$HgS + O_2 \xrightarrow{\Delta} Hg + SO_2 \uparrow$$
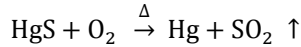
The production of alcohol and mercury bear many similarities. In the alchemy manual *Rasa Ratna Samucceya*, various still apparatuses (*yantra*), including those resembling Figures 7.1 and 7.2, are named *tiryak pātana yantra* (oblique lowering apparatus) and *vidhyādhara yantra* (expert's apparatus). *Rasa Ratna Samucceya* describes the two apparatuses as below:

> A taller vessel is taken and a tube is connected to its neck. The other end of the tube is projected into the body of another vessel on a lower plane. After depositing the necessary substances into the first vessel and water into the second, the mouths of both are closed and sealed (the connecting portions of the tube are also sealed). Then, the first vessel is placed on a fire and heated. The scholars of *Rasaśāstra* named it *tiryak pātana yantra* (*Rasa Ratna Samucceya* 9/10–12). A *saṁpuṭa*, which is prepared by joining two vessels, is called *vidyādhara yantra*. To use this *vidyādhara yantra* a suitable stove is constructed in accordance with the size and shape of the vessels. A vessel is kept on the stove and another vessel is placed upon that, the joints being sealed (*Rasa Ratna Samucceya* 9/27–28).[13]

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13 Both paragraphs from *Rasa Ratna Samucceya* are paraphrased from Reddy (2014), pp. 89–90.

The similarities between the outer form and production procedures enabled the poet to accommodate both into the single word, rasa—a magical gold-making, rejuvenating, and intoxicating liquid, so dear to the master practitioner. Moreover, there are also clues of a practical connection between the two prototypes and the Kabīrian tradition. In an alchemist work called *Siddha Vandanām*, Kabīr was accepted as the fiftieth master alchemist,[14] something which differs from all major Kabīrian biographies. Though today's Kabīrpanthīs strictly prohibit alcohol consumption, mahua spirit is particularly popular among the hill residents in northern Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, a region where Kabīrpanth has a remarkable presence. We can also read infer from Anantadās's *Kabīr Paracai* that alcohol was popular among the social group to which Kabīr belongs.[15] Besides, the seeds of mahua contains 55 per cent stable oil and are used to make soap.[16] The oil extractor, despised by orthodox high castes, also follows Kabīrpanth in many parts of India, including Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. The historical Kabīr need not himself have been an alchemist or alcohol producer to include these images in his poems. Knowledge of alchemy, distillation, and alcohol production was commonplace among the Kabīrian followers, which the author of these poems may have been familiar with. Such adoption of indigenous knowledge also reflects the grass-rootedness of the Kabīrian composition.

Rasa and yogic practice

Though we cannot rule out the possibility that some alleged followers of Kabīr consumed mahua flower wine or practised alchemy, the theory that Kabīr's rasa is more of an internal yogic rasa than external elixir or alcohol is better supported by such lines as 'keeping the mind motionless, the *āsana* motionless; rasa is generated upon the tongue' (W290/S229.1). According to Strnad, 'rasa' is among the yogic terminologies Kabīrian compositions inherited from the Nāthyogic tradition, padas related to which form a distinct yogic-centric thematic block in the early manuscript.[17] In many Kabīrian poems, the description of rasa is closely connected with other characteristic yogic terminologies, such as *suṣumṇā*, *iḍā*, and *piṅgalā*, suggesting a strong linkage between the two disciplines of knowledge. For instance:

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14 White (2007 [1991]), p. 85.

15 According to the legend, Kabīr pretended to be drinking alcohol, popular among the low castes, in order to avoid the mass group of admirers. This upset the Vaishnava followers. To the orthodox Brahmins, however, this proved a low-caste weaver like Kabīr could not be a genuine devotee.

16 Gogte (2012 [2000]), p. 687.

17 Strnad (2013), p. 489.

बोलौ भाई राम की दुहाई । इह रसि सिव सनकादिक माते । पीवत न अजहूं अघाई ॥ टेक ॥
इला पिंगुला भाठी कीन्ही । ब्रह्म अगनि परजारी । ससिहर सूर द्वार दस मूंदे । लागी जोग जुग ताली ॥1॥
मन मतिवाला पीवै रांम रस । दूंजा कुछ न सुहाई । उलटी गंग नीर बहि आया । अंम्रित धार चवाई ॥2॥
पंच जने सो संगि करि लीन्हा । चलत षुमारी लागी । प्रेम पियाला पीवन लागा । सोवत नागिनी जागी ॥3॥
सहज सुनि मैं जिनि रस चाष्या । सतगुर तैं सुधि पाई । दास कबीर इहि रसि माता । कबहूं उछकि न जाई ॥4॥ (W20/S16)[18]

O brother, call for Rāma! Śiva, Sanakādi are intoxicated with this rasa; they keep drinking till now but are still unsatisfied. (Refrain)
Iḍā, piṅgalā were made into the furnace, the fire of Brahma lit up. The ten doors of the sun and moon were closed. Thus began the yogic trance. (1)
Drinking the Rāma rasa, the mind is intoxicated, enjoying nothing else. The Ganges flew in the opposite direction (i. e., upwards), with the immortal flow dripping. (2)
Five men who accompanied me got drunk. I began to drink from the cup of love. Thus the sleeping snake lady wakes up. (3)
Having drunk the rasa from the *sahaja śūnya*, [I] obtained consciousness from the *sadguru*. Kabīr the servant is intoxicated with the rasa, never to sober up. (4)

If we compare this pada with yogic descriptions of the body and practice, we cannot miss the resemblance. The subtle yogic body consists of various channels and chakra. Among the channels, *suṣumṇā*, *iḍā*, and *piṅgalā* are the most important. The number of chakras varies from one work to another. One of the prevalent descriptions includes seven chakras (from top to bottom): *sahasrāra cakra*, *ājñā cakra*, *viśuddha cakra*, *anāhata cakra*, *maṇipūra cakra*, *svādhiṣṭhāna cakra*, *mūlādhāra cakra*.

Kundalini yoga is one such practice that involves the chakras and the channels, the ultimate goal of which is to generate a yogic elixir. To practise it, the yogi needs to control the flow of the vital breath (*prāṇa*) in *iḍā, piṅgalā* so as to awaken the sleeping kundalini. Then, the kundalini moves upwards along the *suṣumṇā*, crossing the different chakras, and finally reaches the *sahasrāra cakra*, which looks like an upside-down lotus hung from the head. Upon the union of kundalini and the *sahasrāra cakra*, the immortal elixir drips down, to be drunk by the yogi who can roll the tongue backward.

This yogic practice is not unfamiliar to Kabīrian writers. Besides the use of terminology like *suṣumṇā*, *iḍā*, and *piṅgalā*, some other typical yogic images are also found in the early padas under study. The channels and chakras are mentioned

18 A similar version of this pada is also found in two early Sikh manuscripts. See W20/AG1123;3, M45.

on various occasions, amid instructions on how to obtain the immortal rasa. In the pada W231/S180, the poet used the metaphor of an upside-down hanging well to indicate the *sahasrāra cakra* from where the rasa drips down; in pada W4/S4, lotuses with different numbers of petals were used to indicate the numerous chakras. The Kabīrian poems describing distillation convey similar secret instructions on yogic practice. The subtle yogic body is considered to contain all the messages of the universe, therefore 'the fourteen worlds were to be built into the furnace' (W178/S133.2) means to use the body in practising the yogic distillation. On other occasions, emphasis was laid more on the *iḍā* and *piṅgalā*. Thus we have sayings like '*iḍā*, *piṅgalā* were made into the furnace, the fire of Brahma lit up' (W20/S16.1). The actual fire is needed to heat the raw materials required for distillation, while the 'fire of Brahma' is, according to the poet, the force that awakes the kundalini, either referred to as 'the sleeping snake lady' (W20/S16.3) or '*yoginī*' (W16/S12.1). After her reaching the *sahasrāra cakra*, either termed as '*sahaja śūnya*' (W20/S16.4) or '*gagana*' (W16/S12.1), the intoxicating rasa pours down.

Kabīr is not the first to adopt such distillation-yogic expressions. Tantric Buddhists and Nāthyogī had mingled liquor distillation with yogic practice even before Kabīr. The Kabīrian distillation-yogic poems apparently share same inspiration with their Buddhist and Nāthyogic counterparts:

एक से शुण्डिनी दुइ दुइ घरे सान्धअ । चीअण ण बाकलअ बारुणी बान्धअ ॥1॥
सहजे थिर करी बारुणी बान्ध । जे अजरामर होइ दिढ कान्ध ॥2॥
दशमि दुआरत चिह्न देखिआ । आइल गराहक अपणे बहिआ ॥3॥
चउशठी घडिये देत पसारा । पइठेल गराहक नाहि निसारा ॥4॥
एक घडुली सरुइ नाल । भणन्ति बिरुआ थिर करि चाल ॥5॥ (*Caryāpada* 3)[19]

There is one female wine-seller. She enters into two houses. She ferments wine with fine barks (of trees). (1)
Fixing by the *sahaja*, ferment wine; so that the body may be free from old age and death and be strong. (2)
Seeing the sign at the tenth door, the customer came himself walking. (3)
Let her display the shop during sixty-four hours. The customer entered. There is no departure. (4)
There is one small pot. The pipe is narrow. Biruā says: 'Move it quietly.' (5)

ईकीस ब्रह्मांड भाठी चिगावै पीवत सदा मतिवालं । मनसा कलालिनि भरि भरि देवै आछा आछा मद नां प्यालं ॥0॥
अमृत दाषी भाठी भरिया ता मधैं गुड झकोल्या । मन महुवा तन धाहुवा बनासपती अठारै मोल्यां ॥1॥
भ्रमर गुफा मैं मन थिर ध्यानैं बैस्या आसण बाली । चेतनि रावल यह भरि छाक्या जुग जुग लागो ताली ॥2॥

तृकुटी संगम कृपा भरिया मद नीपज्या अपारं । कुसमल होता ते झडि पडिया रहि गया तहाँ तत सारं ॥3॥
एवहां मद श्री गोरष केवट्या बदंत मछींद्र ना पूता । जिनि कैवट्या तिनि भरि पीया अमर भया अवधूता ॥4॥
(*Gorakh Bāṇī*, pada 28)[20]

Drinking from the furnace of twenty-one *brahmāṇḍa*, [I] remain intoxicated; will the liquor dealer offer a whole cup of marvelous liquor. (Refrain)
The furnace is filled up with the nectar of grapes, within which the sugar is stirred. [Take] mind as mahua, body as yeast, together with which are eighteen plants. (1)
In the cave of the bee, the mind is fixed in meditation, and [I] sit as the *āsana*. The king's consciousness is fully intoxicated with this and remains in trance from *yuga* to *yuga*. (2)
Boundless liquor being generated, the small pot at the *trikūṭī saṅgam* got filled. Having thrown away any possible grass or dirt, what remains is the true essence. (3)
Śrī Gorakh drank such liquor, which Macchendra does not know. Those who drank have been taken across, becoming immortal Avadhūta.

Despite the indebtedness to the real mercurial *rasāyana* and mahua flower wine for intoxicating and rejuvenating properties, distillation-yogic writing and yogic knowledge illustrated in other means in Kabīrian literature supports the argument that Kabīr's rasa is a yogic elixir prepared inside the human body, to be attained via the kundalini yogic practice. However, Kabīrian literature exposes the relationship between external and internal practice. It is not difficult to notice the similarities between the descriptions of the kundalini yoga and the distillation apparatus, especially that of Figure 7.2. Both require the elevation of a certain substance passing through certain conduits. Reaching the upper part of the apparatus, this substance meets another substance and generates liquid, which eventually drips down. Moreover, the design of the alchemical furnace also corresponds to the idea of chakras and channels. According to *Mañjusrīmūlakalpa*, a furnace has three *vajra* that support the structure from inside, and clay-made lotus petals were also attached to the outskirts of the furnace.[21] The three *vajra*s resemble the channels of the subtle body, and the lotus is also a common image used to indicate

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20 The translation is based on the text in Callewaert and Op de Beeck (1991). The translation in Djurdjevic (2005) is also referred to.
21 '其炉祇阔二肘，或圆或方或半月样。周围泥饰作莲花缘，于中间安三股金刚杵。安置杵已。仍备一切护摩所用之物'' ("大方广菩萨藏文殊师利根本仪轨经' 卷11, T20, no. 1191, 874b12–14): 'The furnace is only two elbow wide. Its shape is either round, square or half-moon like. Clay made lotuses are decorated around the exterior. Inside the furnace three vajras are set up. Then, other materials are prepared for the homa.' *Dafangguang Pusazang Wenshushili Genben Yiguijing*, a partial Chinese translation of the Sanskrit text by Kashimirian Monk Tianxizai (d. 1000) in 986 CE. For more information about the text, see Delhey (2012), pp. 55–75.

the chakra. The incorporation of the actual distillation process into internal yogic practice reflects the trend of 'internalization' of alchemy or a shift from '*lohavāda*' to '*dehavāda*.' This started to reshape the spiritual life of Indians no later than the eleventh century. The *Kālacakra Tantra* claimed the 'inner alchemy' to be better than the 'exterior alchemy.' It is difficult for an outsider to judge which path is better, but the 'inner alchemy' would have advantages in the following aspects: firstly, it avoids the risks of consuming lethal mercury elixir; secondly, for ordinary practitioners and householders not funded by generous patrons, practising 'inner alchemy' is more economically feasible than conducting sophisticated alchemical experiments.

Thus, Kabīr's rasa can be traced to three interconnected fields of pre-bhakti knowledge: 1) alchemy*,* 2) mahua flower wine distillation, 3) Haṭhayoga. By studying Kabīr's description, we can see that the first two external practices share some similar technologies, and were both absorbed into the body-centric yogic narrative.

The bhaktification of rasa

Strictly speaking, alchemy, alcohol distillation, and yoga were not initiated by Kabīr, but rather by his non-Vaishnava predecessors and contemporaries. Alchemy was dominated by the Shaiva. According to the prevalent myth, mercury itself is a product of sexual copulation between Śiva and Pārvatī when they were requested by the deities to create a son, later called Skanda, to defeat Tārakāsura. *Vidyādhara*, the name given to possessors of secret knowledge, including alchemists, were mentioned in the epic *Mahābhārata* as demigods following Śiva, which demonstrates the unfamiliarity of the epic writers with them. Following the incorporation of once unorthodox beliefs and practices, *vidyādhara* became known as powerful magic practitioners by Buddhists and Hindus alike. According to a tantric ritual text dedicated towards Vajrabhairava, *Foshuo Miaojixiang Yujia Dajiao Jingang Peiluofulun Guanxiang Chengjiu Yiguijing* (*The Rituals of the Practices and Achievements of Vajrabhairava Maṇḍala*), *vidyādhara* are followers of Vajrabhairava, who conducts rituals in front of his image and knows how to make images of the deity.[22] In alchemical works, building a mandala dedicated

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22 '持明之人于金刚陪啰嚩前用人肉和酒，诵大明，日日作护摩一百八遍，满六个月' ('佛说妙吉祥瑜伽大教金刚陪啰嚩轮观想成就仪轨经' 卷1，T21, no. 1242, 206b20–22): 'The vidyādhara consumes human flesh and alcohol in front of the vajrabhairava. He recites the mahāmantra, and conducts homa 108 times a day. This continues for six months.' The text is translated into Chinese by Indian Monk Faxian (probably another name of Tianxizai) in 995 CE. Bhairava is here seen as a form of Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.

to Śiva is also taught as a part of necessary preparation work, and the mercury is personified as *rasa bhairava*.[23] Consuming alcoholic drink had been prohibited by orthodox Brahmins and Buddhists alike, but it entered the religious life as the strict *vinaya* loosened. The Chinese traveller Yijing noted the existence of alcohol in Nalanda,[24] also a centre for alchemy. Later Tibetan folklores recorded that *siddhācārya* deliberately drank alcohol to break the bondage of the rules.[25] The Bhairava worshipping *vidyādhara* are also known to have consumed alcohol. Gorakhnāth was a spiritual successor of the early *siddhācārya*. His followers, that is, the Shaiva Nāthyogī, played a vital role in promoting Haṭhayoga in medieval times and were mainly Shaiva.

The political turbulence of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries destroyed the whole system of royal patronage and the education system in North India. The once flourishing tantric religion, either Shaiva or Buddhist, had successfully incorporated religious belief, political life, intellectual work, and yogic practice. Sophisticated academic work that relied on well-established temples and intellectual communities suffered much more than the wandering yogis and their easy-to-practice yoga. The decline of North Indian tantric religion gave more room to the spread of other religions and beliefs including Islam and Vaishnavism. Kabīr's rasa is itself a typical confluence of the three intellectual streams: a Muslim saint praising Rāma rasa in a way that is similar to the yogis. The later reinterpretation of the word, however, expanded its meaning, thus merging the Kabīrian tradition with the bhakti movement.

Firstly, the Vaishnava imprints formally distinguished Kabīr's rasa from the predecessors.[26] Either Rāma or Hari were often added to rasa and praised in place of earlier Shaiva notions like *rasa bhairava* or simply neutral technological terms. According to the poet, the Rāma rasa is the best rasa, and upon obtaining it, one forgets all the other rasas (W92/S69.0). Other poems emphasize Rāma's superiority over Śiva, for example:

> बोलौ भाई राम की दुहाई । इह रसि सिव सनकादिक माते । पीवत न अजहूं अघाई ॥
> (W20/S16.0)
>
> O brother, call for Rāma! Śiva, Sanakādi are intoxicated with this rasa; they keep drinking till now but are still unsatisfied.

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23 White (2007 [1991]), pp. 175–179.

24 Yijing (2009), p. 218.

25 Baimasengge (2008), p. 232.

26 Though mostly Vaishnava, the text under study does have some unusual cases where there is a strong Shaiva sentiment, for instance: 'Abandon the Śālagrām, worship Śiva, and chop down Brahma's head!' (W194/S147.1). This internal inconsistency may indicate ideological differences within the Kabīrian tradition.

और सबै रस फीका भइया । ब्रह्म अगनि परजारी रे । ईसर गौरी पीवन लागे । रांम तणी मतिवाली रे ॥ (W18/S14.1)

All the other rasas are tasteless. The fire of Brahma was lit up. Even Īśvara and Gaurī started to drink, intoxicated in Rāma.

This Vaishnava imprint is a result of the revival of Vaishnavism in North India. *Saguṇa* Krishnaite bhakti was historically connected with similar traditions that originated in South India, whereas the origin of *nirguṇa* Rāma is still open to debate. According to the *Kabīr Paracai* composed by Ānantadās, it is Hari himself who advised Kabīr to seek initiation from Rāmānanda, before which Kabīr was already a firm Hari *bhakta*.[27] Though there has been debate around the relationship between Kabīr and Rāmānanda, Ānantadās's narrative does reflect how non-Vaishnava had been converted to Vaishnava. If we look back in history, it is in the early sixteenth century when Kriṣṇadās, a Rāmānandi saint, defeated the tantric practitioner Tārānāth and established the Rāmānandi *gaddi* in Galta, Rajasthan, to which tradition Ānantadās belonged.[28]

Adding Rāma or Hari to rasa while retaining the whole system of yogic practice and its intellectual connection with the tantric tradition is more like a superficial Vaishnava 'conversion' of the concept. More fundamental changes took place when rasa was accommodated into the typical bhakti dichotomy between reality and illusion, good and evil, devotion and lostness. Instead of one particular rasa that practitioners so keenly pursued, there are in fact two distinct types of rasa, namely the Rāma/Hari rasa and the *māyā/viṣaya rasa* (rasa of illusion or sensual desires).

The bhaktified Rāma/Hari rasa was no more a technical terminology, to understand which one needs specific knowledge, but rather a religious expression, a belief and practice in which any follower may participate. The second *sākhī* of *rasa kau aṅga* dematerializes 'Rāma *rasāyana*' and equates it with '*prema rasa*.' Kabīr's rasa is further connected to other bhakti concepts like sorrowful *virahiṇī* (W349/A289), *sumirana* (W583/AG971;9), and so forth. At a more practicable level, bhaktified Rāma rasa/*rasāyana* is equated with Rāma *nāma*, for instance:

रांम कौ नांउ अधिक रस मीठौ । बारंबारं पीवै ॥ (W362/S282.4)

The Rāma *nāma* is the very sweet rasa. Drink it again and again.

कोई पीवै रे रस रांम नांम का । जो पीवै सो जोगी रे । संतौ सेवा करौ रांम की । और न दूजा भोगी रे ॥ टेक ॥ (W18/S14.0)

O! Anybody drinks the rasa of Rāma *nāma*! Those who drink are the real yogi! O Sant, serve Rāma! Nothing else to enjoy! (Refrain)

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27 Callewaert (2000a), p. 55.
28 Hastings (2002), p. 61.

अब मैं राम सकल सिधि पाई । आंन कहौं तौ रांम दुहाई ॥ टेक ॥
इहि चिति चाषि सबै रस दीठा । राम नाम सा ओर न मीठा ॥1॥
औरैं रसि कैहै कफ बाता । हरि रस अधि अधि सुषदाता ॥2॥
दूजा बणिज नही कछू बाषर । राम नाम तत दोउ आषर ॥3॥
कहै कबीर जे हरि रस भोगी । ताकूं मिल्या निरंजन जोगी ॥4॥ (W155/S125)

Now I have obtained all the siddhis [by] Rāma. I call for Rāma, taking oath.
(Refrain)
Having experienced this heart, having seen all the rasa, nothing is as sweet
as the Rāma *nāma*. (1)
The others are called phlegm, wind; Hari rasa is the big bliss giver. (2)
There is no other business or trade [than] just two syllables [which express]
the essence of the name of Rāma. (3)
Kabīr says: 'Those who enjoyed the Hari rasa met the *nirañjana* yogi.' (4)

Besides the illustration of a religious 'Rāma/Hari rasa,' other efforts had been made
to construct the image of 'the other rasa.' In the above quotation, the other rasa was
merely mentioned as 'tasteless' or less useful than the Rāma rasa, without it being
clearly stated exactly what it is. In the pada below, one specific non- Vaishnava rasa,
the rasa of sensual pleasure, *viṣai rasa*[29] appeared as an adverse to the love rasa:

सुमिरंण रांम कौ नित कीजै । निरमल हरि जस साध संगति मिलि । प्रेम सहित रस पीजै ॥ टेक ॥
झूठी माया मोहि बिषै रस । सो मन थैं त्यागी जै । हिदा कंवल मैं निसदिन हरि हरि । एह
अलंबन जीजै ॥1॥
तन मन धन सब मनसा बाचा । राम समरपन कीजै । कहै कबीर कछू और न जाचौं । चरण
सरण दत दीजै ॥2॥ (W478/S358)

Rāma is to be remembered every day. Having obtained the pure fame of Hari
from *satsaṅga*, drink the rasa with love. (Refrain)
The deceptive illusion cheat with rasa of sensual pleasure, which the mind
should abandon. Hari–Hari should be remembered in the lotus of the heart day
and night, this is what supports life. (1)
With one's body, mind, wealth, heart, words, one should dedicate to Rāma. Kabīr
says, I shall try nothing else. One should cling to the shelter of [Rāma's] feet. (2)

Thus, the discussion is no longer about one specific rasa but a clear contrast be-
tween good and evil, reality and deception, the rasa of devotional love and that
of sensual pleasure. This dichotomy gave rise to a typical bhakti teaching, asking
people to surrender oneself to the god and not to indulge oneself in worldly plea-
sures, which is also a major topic of the *vinaya* poems of *saguṇa* poets like Sūrdās
and Tulsīdās. This writing blurs the division between *nirguṇa*/*saguṇa* bhakti.[30]

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29 As Gupta (1985) indicated in his commentary on pada 10.2, a possible word play is at
work between *viṣaya* (sensual pleasure) and *viṣa* (poisonous). See p. 368.
30 Hawley has discussed the similarities between Kabīr and Sūrdās in terms of the *vinaya*
sentiment. See Hawley (2012 [2005]), pp. 305–317.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that the Kabīrian rasa has three layers of meaning: the real liquid made from distillation and condensation; the yogic liquid; the emotional sentiment and either sacred or sensual practices related to it. Among the three, the first two were indebted to pre-bhakti intellectual heritage, and were superficially converted to Vaishnava concepts. It is noteworthy that these two imageries are scarce, if not totally absent, in the eastern Kabīrpanthī recension, that is, the *Bījak*. The third layer marked a profound transformation that can be termed as the bhaktification of pre-bhakti intellectual heritage in early modern North India. The earliest Kabīrian literature accommodated all three layers of interpretation, permitting followers to interpret the world from various perspectives: specialized yogis can still understand it as a haṭhayogic concept and endeavour to generate the inner alchemical elixir via yogic practice; ordinary followers can choose to approach the concept either as the devotional sentiment towards the god or the ritual repetition of the god's name. This multifaceted nature of Kabīrian literature may also explain its popularity among a wide range of audiences and readers. Such features of the early Kabīrian literature differs from the tradition of scholarly treatises on a specific topic composed in Sanskrit, the study of which has dominated the writing of intellectual histories of North India before the decline of the 'classic culture.' The Kabīrian literature is more like a sedimentary rock, different layers of which reflect various historical development, rather than a pure crystal with interior consistency.

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Galina Rousseva-Sokolova

8. Female Voices and Gender Construction in North Indian Sant Poetry

Abstract. In spite of a pervasive mistrust of femininity in Hindu culture, the world of bhakti is conspicuously full of men speaking, singing, and sometimes dancing as women. While the ubiquitous *gopīs* are paradigmatic figures of Kṛṣṇa devotion, the presence of feminine discourse in Sant poetry, understood both as the (imaginary) gender of the speaker and as poetic themes and images, is still puzzling. The stature of Kabīr as the paramount *nirguṇa* bhakti voice and his public image as a visionary and a mystic has somewhat silenced the substantial part of his poetic oeuvre where he takes a female alter ego as his medium of choice in order to articulate emotional states. How femininity is imagined, constructed, and articulated by men, how and why it has been ascribed the cultural meaning it carries in this particular context, and how it relates to the rare and poorly preserved authentic female voices in it are some of the questions this paper tackles.

Keywords. Gender, Kabīr, Umā, Pārvatī (poetess), Dayābāī.

Kabīr as a woman

Nārī ki jhāī pare andhā hota bhujaṅga ('the snake goes blind when a woman's shadow falls upon it') says Kabīr in one popular *upadeśa*, following a long and well-documented tradition of blaming women not for what they do, but for what they are. For they are *kāminī*, generators of *kāma*, quintessential destroyers of spiritual discipline and the enemy of the Sant. Yet, in spite this terrible warning, among his compositions, we find this one, both popular and with a well-established manuscript pedigree:

वाल्हा आव हमारै ग्रेह रे | तुम्ह बिन दुष्यया देह रे || टेक ||
सब को कहै तुम्हारी नारी | मोकू इहै अंदेह रे |
ऐकमेक है सेज न सूवै | तब लग कैसा नेह रे ||
अनं न भावै नीद न आवै | ग्रिहं बिन धरे न धीर रे |
ज्यूं कांमी नै काम पियारौ | ज्यूं प्यासे कूं नीरे रे ||

है कोई ऐंसा उपगारी | हरि स्यूं कहै सुनांइ रे |
ऐसै ह्वाल कबीर भये हैं | बिन देष्यें जीव जाइ रे || (MKV357)[1]

Hey, lover, come to my house! Without you the body is full of sorrow.
(Refrain)
Everyone keeps teasing me that I'm your woman: so unfair!
Until we share the same bed how can love be fulfilled?
Food has no taste and sleep doesn't come. I can never keep still, in the house
or in the wild.
Like the lustful following his lust, like the thirsty after water!
Is there a charitable helper out there, who could explain to Hari
that such is the state of Kabīr: without a vision of him life is waning.

Among the padas in Callewaert's collection, this attitude is far from exceptional.
In many of them, Kabīr speaks with the voice of a woman. In spite of the supposed
lack of qualities of the Absolute, when it comes to voicing emotions, he seems to
slip naturally into a female persona. Sometimes, in Kṛṣṇa *gopī* fashion, he/she
turns to a *sakhī* as a confidante and a witness to his/her wretchedness. In other
padas he/she is Hari's young bride, being brought in a carriage to his/her hus-
band's home. Still elsewhere, he/she speaks of the new household, of the relations
with her in-laws, and the emotional and symbolic value of these can be quite enig-
matic. When speaking as a woman, Kabīr brings in as props elements of a married
woman's world—objects, family members, and intimate scenes—and stages them
to build a nuanced emotional atmosphere.

मेरी अंषियां जान सुजांन भई |
देवर भरम सुसर संग तजि कैं | हरि पीव तहां गई || टेक ||
वालपनैं के करम हंमारे | मेटे जांनि दई |
वांह पकरि हरि किरपा कीन्हीं | आप समींप लई ||
पांनीं की वूंद स्यौं जिनि प्यंड रच्यौ है | ता संगि अधिक रई |
दास कबीर पल प्रेम न घटई | दिन दिन प्रीति नई || राम || (MKV380)

My eyes turned out so clever . . .
Forgetting about the in-laws, brother and father, they stuck to my beloved
Hari! (Refrain)
All the karma amassed since childhood vanished the moment I recognized
him!
Hari seized my blessed hands and drew me to himself!
He, who built the human body out of a drop of water, that One I'm so in
love with!
Kabīr [says]: 'Never for an instant does my love ever wither, each day it
blooms anew.'

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1 MKV for *The Millennium Kabīr Vānī* by Callewaert, Sharma and Tallieu (2000), also
included in the Lausanne platform for early new Indo-Aryan digitized texts ENIAT <http://
wp.unil.ch/eniat/tag/kabira/>. (Accessed 9 February 2017).

Kabīr speaks here in the voice of an adulteress, a married woman, obsessed with her illicit love. The reference to the in-laws clearly stands for the duties and conventions of this world. Like the *gopī* in Kṛṣṇa bhakti poetry, while appearances are kept, her inner world is completely swept away by the overwhelming experience of love, at once mystic and mundane. Only her eyes betray her secret, for they are out of her control and mirror directly the state of her soul.

Interestingly, Kabīr does not need any mythological support to use this kind of imagery. It seems to be part of the literary conventions of his time and its meaning would have been easily recognized and understood by the audience in the specific context of devotional poetry. Carla Petievich confirms the presence of such conventional sets of images, or attitudes, linked to a female narrator, across the Hindu–Muslim divide, in early Urdu and Punjabi lyrical traditions.[2] While exploring the different aspects of this 'masquerade,' she argues repeatedly that the assuming of a female persona by a male author is the most conspicuously Indic element in Indo-Muslim poetry. Later Muslim elites have seen in this 'effeminacy' a proof of the decline of poetry (and of Muslim culture in general) and have strived to excise the female narrator from Urdu ghazal. The tensions relative to the search for a distinctive cultural identity after the separation of India and Pakistan, combined with social constructions of gender, have resolved, according to Petievich, into a yearning for the lost purity of a genre where the *'āshiq* can and should only be male.

Unlike the situation with the paradigmatic *gopī* of Kṛṣṇa bhakti, the relation to the divine here is free from mythological constraints and does not necessarily involve illicitness. This pada has usually been interpreted as expressing mystic love through the attachment of a wife:

इब तोहि जांन न देहूं रांम प्यारे | ज्यूं भावै त्यूं होहु हंमारे || टेक ||
बहुत दिनन के बिछूरे हरि पाऐ | भाग बडे घरि बैठो आऐ ||
चरणनि लागि करौं बरियाई | प्रेम प्रीति राषौं उरझाई ||
इत मनि मंदिर रहौ नित चोषै | कहै कबीर परौ जिनि धोषैं || (MKV3)

I won't let you go, my love. Be mine however it pleases you.
Hari came to me, after so many days! So lucky: I was just sitting home and there he came!
I will apply all my all the strength of my limbs to detain him, confound him with sweet cajoling.
'Stay pure forever in the home of my mind," says Kabīr, "it's full of crooks out there.'

A significant amount of padas brings in a newly-wed bride as the narrator:

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2 Petievich (2007), pp. 4–24.

दुलहंनी गावऊ मंगलचार | हम घरि आऐ राम भतार || टेक ||
तन रत करि मैं मन रत करिहूं | पंच तत बरियाती |
रांम देव मोरे पहुंनें आयेहैं | मै जोबनि मैंमाती ||
सरीर सरोवर बेदी करिहूं | ब्रह्मा बेद उचार |
रांम देव संगि भावरि लेहूं | धनि बडभाग हंमारे ||
सूर तेतीसौं कौतिग आऐ | मुंनियर कोटि अट्ठ्यासी |
कहै कबीर हम ब्याहि चले हैं | पुरिष ऐक अबिनासी || (MKV1)

Oh bride, strike an auspicious tune! Lord Rām has come to my house!
(Refrain)
I will give myself body and soul to him! The five elements will be the wed-
ding party.
Lord Rām is present my home! My young blood is vigorously boiling.
My body is a lake, I will light a sacrificial fire on its shore and Brahma will
recite the mantras,
While I and Rām together walk around it. How blessed can I be!
Thirty-three gods will attend the celebration with eighty-four saints.
Kabīr says: 'I am getting married to an indestructible man!'

संईयां मेरे साजि दई ऐक डोली | हस्त लोक अरु मैं तैं बोली || टेक ||
ऐक झंझर सम सूत षटोला | त्रिश्रां बाव चहूं दिसि डोला ||
पंच कहार का मरंम जांनां | ऐकैं कह्या ऐक नहीं मांनां ||
भूभर घांम अवाहर छाया | नैहर जात बहुत दुष पावा ||
कहै कबीर बर बहु दुष सहियै | प्रेम प्रीति पिय कै संगि रहियै || (MKV153)

The Lord has placed me in a litter.[3] He who holds the world in his hand has
talked to me! (Refrain)
The thread of the bedstead is punctured, the wind of greed blows from all sides.
I caught the essence of the five porters. They are said to be one, though no one
understands.
The curtain shades me from sun and dust. The agony of leaving my father's
house!
Kabīr says: 'The worthy bride must endure many pains to remain lovingly with
her husband.'

This last poem (and even, up to a point, the previous one) shows a slightly dif-
ferent treatment of femininity. Within the first-person discourse of the bride-to-
be a symbolic level of meaning appears (for example, the five porters, standing
clearly for the five elements). Though the audience is still invited to imbibe
the emotion of the female narrator, a second-degree reading is made possible
through which the whole scene (the bride being taken away from her parents'
house by her husband) is decoded as a metaphor for the soul on the verge of ex-
periencing mystic union with the divine. Thus, a kind of distance is introduced
in the experience of the audience; a cognitive element interferes with the purely
emotional level.

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3 The one used to carry the bride to the home of her in-laws.

Here is another example in which 'being with the beloved' in marriage is rejected as unattained/unattainable while the ultimate experience of the sati is upheld as the one leading to eternal union:

मै सासुरि पीव गुंहुनैं आई |
सांई संगि साध नहीं पूगी | गयौ जोबंन सुपिनै की नाई || टेक ||
पंच जनां मिलि मंडप छायौ | तीनि जनां मिलि लगन गिनाई |
सषी सहेली मंगल गावै | दुष सुष माथै हलद चढाई ||
नांनां रंगै भांवरि फेरी | गांठि जोरि बाबै पतिताई |
पूरि सुहाग भयौ बिन दुलह | चौक कै रंगि धयौं सगौ भाई ||
आपनौ पुरिष मुंष कबहूं न देष्यौ | सती होत संमझी समाझाई |
कहै कबीर मै सल रचि मरिहूं | तिरूं ले कंले तूर बजाई || (MKV203)

For the sake of my beloved I moved to the house of my in-laws,
But my desire to be with him was never fulfilled. My youth has withered like a dream. (Refrain)
Five men built the wedding canopy, three others calculated the auspicious moment.
My friends sung the wedding songs and rub turmeric on my forehead, for better or worse.
We did all sorts of circumambulations. My father tied me to my husband with a knot.
But the whole ceremony went without a groom. Unsettled in the wedding square, I held my brother's hand.
I never saw my man's face. When came the time to become a sati, then everything became clear.
Kabīr says: 'I will make my funeral pyre and I'll die on it. Then, to the sound of trumpets, I will cross over with my lover.'

Merging with the (divine) beloved through fire is an abundantly attested image throughout the history of Indian poetry. Whether it would be in the shape of the moth irresistibly attracted by the flame of the lamp or Mīrābāī appealing to her yogi lover to rub her ashes on his skin, death by fire stands for the definitive annihilation of the ego, the falling of the ultimate barrier between subject and object, of the last obstacle to unbounded, eternal, absolute love. While the assuming of a female voice seems a necessity in order to speak without constraint about emotions, the last line, containing Kabīr's name, signals the end of the masquerade and gives a soteriological clue to how the content should be interpreted.[4]

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4 Carla Petievich interprets the insertion of the *takhallus* in the ghazal tradition as 'a formal unmasking,' 'the poet's resumption of a "waking self"' (Petievitch (2007), p. 15). I would argue that the appearance of Kabīr's name in the last line of padas in which he assumes a female persona resonates in much the same way. It is worth noting that the gender transformation is also reflected grammatically: in the last line, wherever grammatical gender is marked, all forms are masculine.

In other words, there seems to be two different dimensions of the kind of femininity assumed and articulated by Kabīr in this category of poems: one in which the author, following a popular poetic convention of his time, fully endorses the emotions of a female lover as an expression of his longing for the absolute; and another, a symbolic one, in which elements of a female narrator's world can be interpreted in the light of the doctrines and world view of the Sant. To put it differently: there is a persistent ambiguity here between Kabīr speaking directly as a woman, empathizing with the emotions of a *virahiṇī*, and his use of femininity as an arsenal of images or symbols in order to express a level of reality that is, by definition, ineffable. These two dimensions are never clearly separated and it is, indeed, their fusion which makes for much of the poetic impact and appeal of the songs. Indeed, the padas in this special collection could be arranged along a scale in which femininity is assessed from 'real' to 'symbolic.' Here is an example that leans towards the 'symbolic' end of the spectrum:

मन मेरौ रहंटा रसन पुवरिया | हरि कौं नाव ले ले कांति बहुरिया || टेक ||
चारि षूंटी दोइ चमरष लाई | सहजि रहटवा दीया चलाई ||
सासू कहै कांति बहू ऐसैं | बिन कांतें निस्तरिबौ कैसैं ||
कहै कबीर सूत भल काता | रहंटौ नही परंम पद दाता || (MKV256)

My soul is my spinning wheel, the tongue is my spindle. It spins the yarn of Hari's name. (Refrain)
My wheel has four pillars and two leather bearings; it turns on and on spontaneously.
My mother-in-law says: 'Keep spinning, daughter! Without spinning how shall you be saved?'
Kabīr says: 'I spun a good amount of yarn. This is not a wheel, it has given me a throne.'

The wheel and the 'spinning of the name' is a recurrent image in Sufi and folk poetry from Sind and Punjab.[5] It has notoriously inspired Shah Hussain and Bulleh Shah, and the latter has also developed in a Sufi perspective the theme of the bride-to-be, leaving her parents' home,[6] as a symbol for the soul on the verge of a fundamental transformation. It is clear then that, in this context, Kabīr's evocations are, at least to some extent, both conventional (widely familiar, liked and expected by contemporary audiences) and symbolic (referring to an ideological framework beyond their direct meaning). The drive which makes the perception of

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5 For a comparative approach to spinning and weaving in poetry, see Sharma (1970).
6 See, for instance, an insightful essay by the writer Najm Hosain Syed, regretfully lacking any bibliographical references: *Recurrent Patterns in Punjabi Poetry*, <http://www.wichaar.com/news/176/ARTICLE/3421/2008-03-11.html>. (Accessed 20 February 2017). It is apparently included in a collection bearing the same title, Lahore: Majlis Shah Hussain, 1968 (?).

this second level of interpretation 'organic' or 'natural,' which lends the poetry its suggestive power and, ultimately, its beauty, is rendered possible by the emotional adherence to a certain shared social experience of what constitutes a woman's world. The symbolic and the conventional aspects of the images do not undermine the importance of the fact that there seems to be a consensus, whenever a certain range of emotions are at stake, to express them exclusively by assuming a female identity. The nature of this female identity is, by definition, also (at least to some extent) conventional and corresponds to a predominantly male perception of what constitutes femininity.

In Kabīr the symbolic value of the elements of this world of familiar womanhood can be self-evident or more ambiguous. If the meaning of the spinning wheel or the litter and its carriers is relatively easy to grasp, the in-laws involved (mother, father, brother, sister) seem to stand for different things in different contexts. Sometimes, as in pada 380, they are the duties, worries, and conventions of this world, from which the heroine has gained an inner freedom, absorbed in the exclusivity of her new illicit love. Elsewhere they participate in the new reality where her divine bridegroom is taking her. In any case, the kind of woman Kabīr chooses to inhabit is easier to delineate. Her modes of expression, her character and emotions are informed by folk songs. She has nothing of the sophistication of a *nāyikā*, she speaks very directly of her joys and sorrows and has no use for complex metaphors, poetic images, or alliterations. In the most poignant padas, when she depicts her inner world, revolving exclusively around the presence or absence of her lover, the female alter ego of Kabīr often puts it in contrast with her immediate environment, her inadequacy at being a proper married woman, daughter-in-law, or sister-in-law. The immersion into womanhood takes the shape of a psychological regression, a leap into the world of unbridled passion, unmitigated and compact, a longing so fundamental to the subject's being that it could almost be called animal. Or, for that matter, mystical.

In *Akath kahānī prem kī*, Purushottam Agrawal calls Kabīr's adoption of a female voice conspicuous yet paradoxical.[7] He underlines the 'spontaneity' with which Kabīr takes on a woman's voice every time emotions are at stake and he asks whether he does this in search of a suitable expression of the angst of mystic love or because the pain of these emotions awakens a sort of feminine consciousness inside him. In other words, is the need for a female alter ego born out of the nature of the experience itself or is it a poetic necessity?

The question is very relevant since the world of bhakti seems full of men involved in this kind of cross-gender rhetoric, apparently unaware of any contradiction with the *upadeśa* attitude towards femininity. This situation seems to be pervasive across the *saguṇa*/*nirguṇa* divide. In Kṛṣṇa bhakti, where *upadeśa* are not a popular genre,

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7 Agrawal (2009), p. 358.

and in spite of the paradigmatic *gopī*, femininity is treated in the world of practical devotion with circumspection, if not with downright mistrust.[8] Women are prohibited from serving temple deities and many dedicated Kṛṣṇa ascetics will refuse to have any contact at all with them. Nevertheless, the emulation of female attitudes has always been a part of devotional life, both in theory and in practice. Theologians have worked hard to rationalize the integration of a female perspective by postulating different levels of reality, *laukika* and *alaukika*. Male devotees are invited to cultivate within themselves a kind of sublimated femininity, corresponding to their true nature in the metaphysical realm. Invitations to identify with female mythical characters is a distinct feature of devotional poetry, and in practical devotion, it is not uncommon to see in Braj temples, during intense celebrations, male devotees dancing like *gopī*, their faces hidden behind the ends of a sari.

Among the non-theological explanations, the influence of tantrism has often been pointed out, as a yearning towards a fundamental androgyny that would restore to human existence a dimension of completeness. In a much-quoted formulation, A.K. Ramanujan has called the Sant 'the third gender.'[9] However, other questions remain, which may throw light not only on the devotional mechanisms of bhakti, but, in more general terms, on some aspects of Hindu anthropology. The instinctive adherence to a woman's persona as soon as emotions (or at least, a certain type of emotions) are in focus is intriguing, especially regarding the unanimously low esteem in which women are more generally held. This blatant contradiction is the proverbial elephant in the room: an obvious truth no one seems to notice. P. Agrawal rightly observes that Kabīr, so vocal about his disapproval of caste and religious discrimination, never goes so far in his social critique to tackle gender inequality.

Gender and the social construction of emotions

So, is womanhood a good or a bad thing? If sublimated femininity is a necessary element of the path to salvation, access to it seems to be granted only to males. Actual belonging to the female gender is never viewed as a facilitator on the spiritual path, quite the opposite.

Thus, we have two kinds of femininity in Sant poetry. The first one, actual womanhood, is hardly elaborated upon, only referred to in unflattering metaphors or comments, reflecting the pervasive view about women's inaptitude for spiritual life and general depravity. The second one is an entirely male construction: an imaginary version of the female gender, informed by folk songs and, thus, most probably, originally inclusive of some authentic female experience, but purified,

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8 On the role of femininity in Kṛṣṇa bhakti, see Entwistle (1987), pp. 91–95.

9 Ramanujan (1976), p. 291.

sublimated, and transformed into a suitable recipient for the Sant's emotional life. What this idea of femininity includes and how it is constructed and articulated makes for an interesting subject of inquiry. How gender correlates with emotions (since capacity for emotions is what gives intrinsic value to the female gender in this context) must be a particular focus in it.

The last ten years have seen an increased number of studies in the nature and cultural anthropology of emotions. The social science interest in emotions has arisen out of a dissatisfaction with the dominant cognitive view of humans as 'mechanical' information processors.[10] Recent research has brought forward the view that emotions may be construed as ideas as much as or more than psychobiological facts. Emotions are private feelings, but they can be socially articulated; they can be treated as aspects of cultural meaning. When private, supposedly irrational emotional experience is voiced in certain contexts and cultural meaning is imposed upon it, transforming it into an interface between personal and social worlds. Emotional judgements are seen to require social validation, thereby linking emotion with power and social structure. Therefore, emotion is both socially shaped and socially shaping. The study of the social construction of emotions can prove to be no less insightful in cultural anthropology than that of gender.

In-depth studies on the relation of emotions, gender, and culture are scarce. Recent studies, based on the extensive cross-cultural database of the International Study of Emotional Antecedents and Reactions (ISEAR), have shown that the modern stereotype, according to which women are more emotional than men, is pervasive across many cultures. Emotions are seen as gender-specific—there are 'rather' male emotions (anger, contempt, pride) and 'rather' female emotions (happiness, sadness, embarrassment, fear, shame, guilt, etc.). It should be noted that these studies never treat love as one emotion among others, considering it too complex to be treated as a singular entity.[11] The theories concerning, for instance, the impact of one culture's sex-specific division of labour or the social status of sex-related roles on emotional experience have yet to be taken to consideration.[12]

A modern study across thirty-seven countries seems to confirm the widespread assumption that when it comes to emotions women are considered more competent: they are better at understanding, articulating, and expressing emotions. However, whether that element alone is sufficient to explain the preference for a female medium in the voicing of devotional feelings is altogether a different question. Perhaps the answer is hidden within a combination of factors, related to the specificity of the 'female situation' in India: under the outer control of patriarchal rules and values, their presumed boundless emotionality is imagined to create a

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10 Lutz and White (1986).
11 Fischer et al. (2004).
12 Fischer (2000), p. 71.

space for itself in their inner world. One of the common motives throughout fe-male-voiced bhakti poetry is the almost unbearable tension of the constant effort to maintain social roles and appearances while living absorbed in the immensity of a secret world of love. This specific discrepancy between inner and outer reality is, perhaps, what bhakti poets would have found particularly appropriate for the expression of the otherwise ineffable.

The experience of women Sant poets

Getting back to the Sant tradition, this is the context in which the rare, poorly doc-umented, and altogether feeble voices of women Sant poets are to be appreciated. The extent to which they have identified with the sublimated femininity imposed by their male peers or added new features to the articulation of emotion has been a guiding line throughout a research area which is far from being finished.

Most of the women Sant's poetry is still available only in manuscripts. A few compositions have been included in various printed anthologies. Some rare poets, like Dayābāī, have been honoured with their own printed booklet. A very helpful publication is that of Savitri Singh's *Madhyakālīn kavyitriyām*.[13]

As little as we know about the biographies of medieval women Sant poets, there seems to be a recurrent pattern that sets them somewhat apart from their male counterparts: not only do they typically belong to some religious community (a fact for which we should probably be grateful since it helped preserve their com-positions), they often double as sisters/daughters/cousins of the founder (one of them, Bāvalī Sāhibā, even founded her own community). Also, unlike men Sant, most seem to come from wealthy or well-established households.

Umā is the name of one such poet about whom we know practically nothing. Savitri Singh has discovered her in the research reports of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā and quotes a few compositions from a small unpublished manuscript held in the library. Their language is simple with some Rajasthani features, their style is direct and unsophisticated, close to popular tradition:

> ऐसे फाग खेले राम राय
> सूरत सुहागन सम्मुख आय
> पंच तत को बनयो है बाग
> जामें सामंत सहेली रमत फाग
> जहाँ राम झरोखे बैठे आय
> प्रेम पसारी प्यारी लगाय
> जहाँ सब जननकोबन्यो है ज्ञान-गुलाल लियो हाथ
> केसर गारोजाया (Singh (1953), p. 47)

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13 Singh (1953).

Playing Holi in such a way, King Rām
the memory of married bliss comes forth . . .
In the garden of five elements
where the noble ladies enjoy the celebration;
where Rām is sitting at the lattice window
spreading sweet love;
where all the souls are established with knowledge-*gulāl* in hands
and saffron is flowing.

On the one hand, this pada is close in style and spirit to popular Holi songs. On the other, it evokes the countless padas included in the Holi sections of *varṣotsava* type of Kṛṣṇa bhakti anthologies, where the effervescence of the celebration is often used as a background for some openly erotic plays of Kṛṣṇa with his female counterparts.[14] Here we have a subtly 'santified' version of Holi: to some of its elements a symbolic value is added (the five elements of the garden, the knowledge-*gulāl*) while a divine presence, peeking through the window, spreads colours and love in the atmosphere.

In general, though, women Sant rarely speak in the first person. They even sometimes express the same cautiousness towards the female gender evident in Kabīr's poems. As is the case in these lines by Pārvatī, possibly the follower of a Nāthpanthī guru:

धन जोबन की करे न आस
चित्त न राखे कामिनी पास (Singh (1953), p. 50)

Don't put your faith in wealth and youth
And keep your spirit away from lustful women.

The most conspicuous among the women Sant, present in all the compiled anthologies, are Dayābāī and Sahajobāī,[15] each credited with an independent work, respectively *Dayābodh* and *Sahaj prakāś*. They were disciples of Caraṇdās and, perhaps, his sisters or cousins. Dayābāī's poetry seems more personal both in terms of the quality of her voice and the God she is addressing. Here she is speaking as a *virāhiṇī*:

कहुं धरत पग परत कहुं, डगमगात सब देह
दया मग्न हरी रूप में, दिनदिनअधिक स्नेह
प्रेम मग्न गद्दद वचन, पुलकी रोम सब अंग
पुलकी रह्यो मन रूप में, दया न हवाई चित भंग (Singh (1953), p. 70)

How should I hold on, how should I move my feet,
when my whole body is shaking!

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14 Rousseva-Sokolova (2000).
15 See also McGregor (1984), p. 47.

Dayā has drowned in Hari's splendour, love grows day by day.
Drowned in love my speech is stammering,
the hair on my body stands erect in delight,
and so does my soul, frozen in his splendour.
Dayā is no more, her mind is destroyed!

And also:

बौरी ह्वै चितवत फिरूं, हरी आवे कही ओर
छिन्हि उठूं, छिन्हि गिरि परूँ, राम दुखी मन मोर (Singh (1953), p. 70)

Out of my mind, I keep roaming and wondering from which side Hari
will arrive.
One second I'm standing, the next I have fallen; O Rām, my soul is so sad!

While what we have seen here is just a sample, or very preliminary remarks, of what one may find across women Sant compositions, it seems clear that women Sant's writing does not contribute significantly to the sublimated femininity evoked by its male counterpart. Women Sant poets appear to build on the same range of conventional images. They seem to share the commonplace mistrust of women and are inclined to speak from the first person even more rarely than their male colleagues. It makes sense to think that identification with the longing heroine was to be avoided for much the same reasons that sublimated femininity had to be protected from its real-life version: the risk of contamination was probably conceived as even greater by Sant women poets than by their fellow ascetics. Either way, they appear to have fully embraced the socially constructed version of their own gender. As a whole, their compositions are more social than personal, more symbolic than authentic. In any case, women Sant poetry has not informed or inspired male compositions on the same theme.

Ultimately, their careful reliance on conventional images, their attentiveness (imposed or self-imposed) to stay within the limits of the well-established has, in general, produced less interesting artistic achievements. Paradoxically, as a woman, Kabīr is far more compelling. Although he works within the expectations of his audience with familiar images and established conventions, ultimately, he transcends them. Beyond the personal or social aspects of the expression of womanhood, his female alter ego succeeds in tapping into a transpersonal emotion, a sea of love flowing just beneath the surface of ordinary perception, which is the emotional version of ultimate reality. This is what he is best remembered for and is what the modern day oral tradition associates with him as a living testimony.

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9. The *Sabadavāṇī* and its Relation to the *Gorakhabāṇī*: Establishing Jāmbhojī as the Supreme Yogi

Abstract. This paper engages with the literature of Jāmbhojī, the founder of the Biśnoī *sampradāya*. It examines the complex depiction of Nāths and Nāthism in Jāmbhojī's *Sabadavāṇī*. The *Sabadavāṇī* harshly criticizes Nāthyogīs for their hypocritical or harmful religious practices. However, it incorporates yogic-tantric terminology and concepts, especially when referring to the state of *sahaja* (the mystical state of unity and liberation). Moreover, it includes several passages of the *Gorakhabāṇī*, which are portrayed as the original teaching of Jāmbhojī. This paper seeks to demonstrate that the critique of Nāths and the adoption and reinterpretation of yogic-tantric elements as teachings of Jāmbhojī can be viewed as a strategy of authorizing Jāmbhojī and his teaching. In this way Jāmbhojī is established as the true teacher and supreme yogi. The quest for establishing the spiritual authority of Jāmbhojī reflects early processes of forging a community of followers in the multifaceted religious landscape of early modern Rajasthan.

Keywords. Sants, Biśnoī *sampradāya*, Nāthism, Early modern literature, Rajasthan.

Introduction

This paper seeks to explore the multifaceted depiction of Nāthism in Sant literature on the example of the *vāṇī* of Sant Jāmbhojī,[1] the so-called *Sabadavāṇī*. Jāmbhojī is considered to be the founder of the Biśnoī *sampradāya*, a religious tradition that originated in the fifteenth century in Marwar.

The relationship between Sants and Nāthyogīs has invited many different interpretations from the early modern period onwards, finding expression in legends, songs, and hagiographies of both traditions. From open hostility to friendly coexistence—the spectrum of this relationship has fueled the imagination of

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1 Jāmbhojī is often considered to be one of Rajasthan's earliest proponents of Santism. See Śukla and Siṁha (1993), p. 31.

poets and bards.[2] Nāths and Sants share many key elements of their religious doctrine and practice, such as the emphasis on interior religion (*antaḥsādhanā*),[3] on reciting (*japa*) or memorizing (*smaraṇa*) religious formulas (*mantra*, the divine name),[4] or the importance given to the guru. It is usually assumed that the Sant traditions have incorporated terms and concepts originally belonging to the older, already well-established yogic-tantric sources of the Nāths into their own religious teaching. Nevertheless, the Nāths' claim to achieve liberation and even bodily immortality through yogic practices was also strongly contested by the Sants. In the Sants' conviction, liberation is only possible by obtaining God's mercy through bhakti.[5]

The Sants' compositions, too, mirror these two aspects. Their songs and verses indicate familiarity with yogic-tantric terms and concepts pertaining to Nāthism. Those terms are often even used to convey their religious experiences. Yet, the same compositions voice critiques of Nāths as well. The *Sabadavāṇī* (hereafter SV), too, employs yogic terminology and simultaneously constantly criticizes Nāthyogīs. In addition, the SV includes entire passages and padas also contained in the *Gorakhabāṇī*, ascribed to one of the foremost gurus of the Nāth tradition.

In this chapter, I deal with the complex relationship of the Biśnoī *sampradāya* and its founder Jāmbhojī towards Nāthyogīs, by examining the diatribes against Nāths in the SV. I analyze which elements of yogic-tantric traditions that are transmitted in earlier sources and were known to the author(s) of the SV have been included in the text—not as being part of Nāthyoga, but as teachings of Jāmbhojī. In the final part of the paper, I illustrate that this multifaceted representation of Nāthism forms part of a strategy of authorizing the founder of the Biśnoī *sampradāya* and his teaching in the early process of forging a community of followers.[6] Hence, not only are proponents of the Nāth *sampradāya* criticized, but moreover, yogic-tantric elements are reinterpreted as being original features of the teaching of Jāmbhojī[7] that serve to establish Jāmbhojī as the supreme yogi and teacher.

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2 The complex interplay of Nāth and Sant teachings has also sparked interest among scholars of Indian and religious studies. See Vaudeville (1974), pp. 81–97 on Kabīr and the Nāths, Thiel-Horstmann (1991), pp. 51–60 on tantric-yogic elements in Dādū's work, and Lorenzen (2012) on religious identities in Gorakhnāth and Kabīr.

3 Often defined by the rejection of certain 'outward' religious practices (*bāhyācāraṇ kī ālocanā*), such as pilgrimages. See Śukla and Siṁha (1993), p. 16.

4 See Vaudeville (1974), pp. 139–ff.

5 See Thiel-Horstmann (1991), p. 60.

6 Contentions between bhakti traditions and 'other' traditions have been studied in depth by Dalmia (2014) on the example of the Vallabha *sampradāya*, and Pauwels (2010) on the example of diatribes against *śāktas* voiced by various communities.

7 A similar claim can be made concerning the depiction of Muslims and Islamic elements in the SV. See Kempe-Weber (2015).

Jāmbhojī and the Biśnoī *sampradāya*

The Biśnoī *sampradāya* traces itself back to Jāmbhojī. According to tradition, the son of an elderly couple of Pāṁvar Rajputs, Jāmbhojī was born under special circumstances and displayed the signs of an extraordinary child early on.[8] He spent his childhood and youth as a cow- and goatherd in the region of Nagaur. Leaving his home, he settled in Samarthal, where he allegedly started to advise and assist the local people—particularly during droughts and famines. Here, he founded a community of followers in 1485, which later came to be known as the Biśnoī *sampradāya*.[9] Allegedly, Jāmbhojī spent the rest of his life spreading his teaching and travelling throughout Rajasthan and to different places in South Asia and beyond. It is believed that famous contemporaries, such as local kings and important religious figures, were among his disciples. Before his death in 1536, Jāmbhojī is said to have organized his succession by establishing different seats (*sātharī*)[10] and appointing heads (*mahant*) to each seat from among his disciples, thereby constituting different teaching lineages connected to him. Temples and resting places (*dharmaśālā*) for ascetic residents, devotees, or the poor were erected at those localities, further institutionalizing the *sampradāya*.[11] The main seat of the community is today in the village of Mukam near Nokha, where a shrine covering Jāmbhojī's body has been built.

According to various Biśnoī hagiographies (*jīvan-caritra*),[12] Jāmbhojī's advice and talks were collected and memorized by his disciples. His utterings or sayings—his *vāṇī*—were subsequently transmitted orally, passed down from teacher to teacher. Although the first compilation of the SV is attributed to the seventeenth-century poet Vīḷhojī, the earliest found manuscript has been dated to 1743 only.[13] The SV in its present form contains 123 *sabadas*: poetical songs or verses

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8 For a summary of Jāmbhojī's hagiography, see Māheśvarī (1970), pp. 219–254.

9 The *sampradāya* was allegedly founded through the water pot ritual (*kalaśa sthāpana*)—a ritual comprising the congregational partaking of sacred water (*pāhaḷa*) and the uttering of the *pāhaḷa* mantra. The ritual is strongly reminiscent of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī *ghaṭa-pāṭha*. Before the Biśnoī evolved into a caste, this ritual was also used for initiation into the *sampradāya*. For more, see Khan (2003a), pp. 53–ff.

10 In the Biśnoī tradition these seats are called *sātharī* rather than *gaddī* (throne seat) and denote places where Jāmbhojī supposedly stayed with his closest disciples, turning these locations into important places of worship for the devotees. See Māheśvarī (1970), p. 447.

11 The building of monasteries, temples, or schools constitutes one typical element in the institutionalization of *sampradāya*s and is connected to the consolidation of the different teaching lineages. For more, see Malinar (2011).

12 In recent years the term 'hagiography' has been problematized by various scholars—mainly due to its numerous negative connotations—and was partly abandoned in favour of 'sacred biography.' See, for instance, Rinehart (1999), pp. 6–ff.

13 For further details about this manuscript, see Māheśvarī (1970), p. 59. Another early, but incomplete, version of the SV can be found in a collective manuscript (*guṭkā*) from 1743

of different length, written in prose and in varying metres.[14] Apart from the SV, the Biśnoī *sampradāya* encompasses a huge corpus of literary works that were written by different poets over time, ranging from religious tenets to collections of songs to hagiographies of Jāmbhojī.[15]

Today the Biśnoī *sampradāya* is well known for its fierce protection of animals and trees, for strict vegetarianism, and for adherence to the so-called twenty-nine rules, or *untīs dharm niyam*. These rules comprise prescriptions pertaining to a range of topics: from general advice on good conduct to religious duties (such as reciting the name of Viṣṇu) to ecological rules. It is important to note that the community seeks to represent itself in the present time as belonging to a 'purely' Vedic Hinduism.[16] This rather recent Hinduization within the Biśnoī *sampradāya* stands in stark contrast to its probable Ismāʿīlī background. Both ethnographical research[17] and textual evidence indicates that the Biśnoīs have originally been a dissection of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī *daʿwa* stationed in Gujarat. This subdivision of the Sevener Shi'a branch of Islam carried out missionary activities in South Asia as well and acculturated strongly to the point of appearing identical with Sufi orders, bhakti *sampradāya*s, or yogic traditions. The teachings and songs of the Indian Nizārīs closely resemble those of other traditions.[18] They adopted, for instance, the Hindu *avatāra* concept when referring to the imamate. The acculturation was apparently used as a strategy for conversion[19] and a tool of concealing their faith in order to escape persecution. The Biśnoī *sampradāya* originated at a time when the bonds between the South Asian dioceses and the main seat of the Imam situated in Iran had already loosened, and when various Nizārī communities, such as the Imāmśāhīs, broke with the *daʿwa* in Gujarat and established their own seats,[20] as might have been the case for the Biśnoīs.

(ibid., p. 94). Further research is needed to determine whether earlier manuscripts exist and what textual core they contain.

14 When referring to the verses of the SV, I am using the Rajasthani spelling *sabada*, as it is spelled in the SV itself, instead of the Sanskrit variant *śabda*. The number and order of *sabadas* differ in the various manuscripts (ibid., pp. 267–269).

15 About 408 Biśnoī compositions are currently stored in the various seats of the community. The majority of the manuscripts originated around 1800–50 (ibid., pp. 3–142).

16 See Pārīk (2001), p. 93.

17 For ethnographic research on the Biśnoīs' likely connection to the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs, see Khan (2003a), pp. 18–208.

18 For example, the *Gināns*—the religious literature of the Khojā Ismāʿīlīs of Gujarat— resonate with themes and motifs otherwise known from bhakti literature or Sufi songs. An elaboration of the history of the Khojā Ismāʿīlīs and their literature can be found in Mallison (1991 [1989]), pp. 93–103.

19 See Khan (2003b).

20 See Khan (1996), pp. 49–ff.

Criticism of Nāthyogīs in the *Sabadavāṇī*

The critique of adherents of other religious traditions constitutes one thematic focus of the SV. The three groups that are most criticized are Brahmins, Muslims (in particular their officeholders: mullahs and qadis), and Nāthyogīs. The criticism voiced in the SV is usually connected to an emphasis on the inner dimensions of faith and the rejection of exterior religious practices. Ascetics and yogis, in particular Nāthyogīs,[21] receive the sharpest criticism in the SV. About twenty-five of the 123 *sabadas* criticize yogis and some of the verses are solely dedicated to this topic.[22]

Yogis are often directly addressed in the SV, which denounces their physical appearance, their senseless yogic practices, or any practice that involves harming living beings. Typical Nāth insignia and paraphernalia,[23] such as wooden sandals, whistle horns (*sīṅghī*), big earrings worn in ears split through the cartilage (*mudrā*), or ragged ascetic garments are depicted as worthless paraphernalia, and the practitioner as lacking 'true' knowledge of the essence of yoga. In the following *sabada*,[24] ordinary Nāthyogīs are contrasted with the true yogi. The metaphor of a pair of scales weighing stones and diamonds is used to express the comparison between the many misled and ordinary yogis, whose worth is compared to stones, and the ideal yogi, who is as rare and precious as a diamond. In this stanza of *sabada* 46, Nāthyogīs are criticized because they only outwardly display the signs of a yogi. As their religious practice involves harming living beings, it can only be called hypocrisy (*pākhaṇḍa*), and certainly not yoga:

> The weight measure that applies for a stone cannot be used for a diamond.
> A yogi is someone who is a yogi in each era;[25] he is a yogi now, too.
> You split your ears and wear ragged clothes. This is hypocrisy and not the way.
> Ascetics! You wear long matted hair and harm living beings. This hypocrisy
> is not yoga.[26]

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21 Often, the particular branch of the Nāth *sampradāya* is named, such as the Rāvalas or the Kānaphaṭas. See *sabada* 46 for mention of the Kanaphaṭas and *sabada* 48 for the Rāvalas.

22 See *sabada* 47–50.

23 For a list of the Nāth insignia, see Mallinson (2011), pp. 418–ff.

24 All translations of the SV are my own and are based on a text edition by Māheśvarī (1970), pp. 303–416, which has been compiled from seven different manuscripts—most of them stemming from the mid-nineteenth century.

25 I will illustrate later that the description of the ideal yogi as the yogi in each era is used as a title for Jāmbhojī.

26 *jiṇi tuli bhūlā pāṃhaṇa tolo tiṇi tolo na hīrūṃ/jogī so to jugi jugi jogi aba bhī jogī soī/ the kāṃṇa cirāvau ciraghaṭa paharau, pākhaṇḍa poha na koī/jaṭā vadhārau jīva siṅghārau, āyasāṃ! ihāṃ pākhaṇḍe joga na hoī/* (SV, *sabada* 46, lines 5–8).

It is, moreover, important to note that the points of critique—the Nāths' religious hypocrisy, useless asceticism, or lack of understanding of what yoga truly is—are portrayed as symptoms of the *kaliyuga*, the last and worst of the four world ages. As it is stated elsewhere in the SV, people living in the *kaliyuga* are easily led astray by corrupt teachers, or lose themselves in senseless, outward religious practices.[27] Such useless or even harmful religious practices are usually called *kaṇa viṇi kūkasa*, meaning husk, or dry, grainless straw. The agricultural imagery that is repeatedly employed in this context is the threshing of grainless, dry straw or the watering of it.[28] This imagery is not only aimed at hypocritical Nāths but to Brahmins, pandits, mullahs, qadis, or, in general, to the people living in the *kaliyuga*. Of course, the *kaliyuga* also poses unique opportunities for achieving salvation through easily accessible means, such as bhakti[29] if one finds the right teacher as the guide knowing the path towards salvation. In the SV, the right or true teacher (*sadguru*) is repeatedly identified with Jāmbhojī.

Critique and mockery of yogis are typical features of the literature of early modern Sants.[30] The SV voices a similar critique of heretical Nāthyogīs. Their meaningless religious practices, as well as their not being guided by the right teacher, form the main points of criticism. Their hypocritical religious practices and lack of insight into yoga stand in sharp contrast to the path to salvation suggested in the SV: an interior religion under the guidance of the right teacher, Jāmbhojī.

Adopting elements of Nāthism

It is well known that Sants such as Kabīr and Dādū, but also proponents of other religious traditions belonging to Hindu and Muslim folds alike,[31] are related to the Nāths and have incorporated terms and concepts pertaining to this yogic-tantric tradition into their religious teaching. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that the SV, too, abounds with yogic-tantric terminology. In the following, some terms and yogic-tantric concepts will be presented.[32]

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27 The unique challenges of the *kaliyuga* are depicted in *sabada* 24, where Jāmbhojī urges people to accept him as the teacher in this difficult time.
28 This particular imagery occurs, for example, in *sabada* 48.
29 See von Stietencron (1986), p. 145.
30 See Callewaert (2011), pp. 532–ff.
31 On the relationship between Sufis and Nāths, see Bergunder (2013).
32 At this point in research, it remains somewhat inconclusive whether the yogic-tantric terminology figuring in the SV is a genuine (re)interpretation of Nāthism—as Vaudeville (1974), p. 144 suggests it for Kabīr—, whether it refers to any actual yogic practice carried out in the *sampradāya*, or whether it is purely name-dropping.

9. The *Sabadavāṇī* and its Relation to the *Gorakhabāṇī*

To begin with, yogic terms are mostly used when referring to the state of *sahaja*, the mystical state of unity and liberation or, in more yogic terms, of transcending the double aspects of the Supreme Reality within one's body,[33] which is perceived as happening naturally or spontaneously. The SV not only refers to the state of *sahaja*, but frequently to various practices or stages of mind leading up to it or coinciding with it. For example, the highest state of mind, *unmanā* or *unmani*, is mentioned in a few passages.[34] In the *unmanā* stage, the mind is not just controlled, but overcome or 'killed.'[35] Importantly, most of the mentions of *sahaja* and the various aspects connected to it refer to Jāmbhojī. They are represented as features or accomplishments of Jāmbhojī or the perfected, accomplished yogi, denoting no one less than Jāmbhojī himself.

Another concept used in yogic-tantric sources which the SV frequently resorts to is *śabda*—the divine word or 'the sound-form of the supreme Energy'[36] as Vaudeville rendered it. *Śabda* is perceived as already existing within a person, where it has to be realized by the practitioner—typically with the help of an accomplished guru. Its realization, in turn, leads to *sahaja*, the spontaneous experience of unity with the ultimate reality. In the SV, mention is made of particularly the two sound aspects, *nāda* (resonance) and *bindu* (drop of energy),[37] and so too is the highest form of *śabda anāhada* (the unstruck, silent sound) revealing itself within the practitioner's body.[38]

On a more specific level, the necessity to gain control over the vital forces, *prāṇa*, as well as over body and mind, is expressed in the SV. One also finds references to the chakras (energy centres) in numerous verses, in particular to the topmost chakra, the *sahasrāra cakra*. In accordance with the Nāth tradition it is called *śunya-maṇḍala* (lit. 'circle of the void') or *gagana-maṇḍala* (lit. 'circle of sky'), and denominates the place where unity is believed to be achieved. Furthermore, the energy channels, the *nāḍī*s,[39] running through and alongside the spinal cord, in particular *īḍā* and *piṅgalā*, are named. They are often designated as sun and moon or the rivers Yamunā and Gaṅgā.

In verse 109, Jāmbhojī refers to the *nāḍī*s in a unique way, combining yogic-tantric terms and the symbols used to convey them (sun and moon, Gaṅgā

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33 See Vaudeville (1974), p. 124.

34 For a reference to *unmanā,* see *sabada* 108.

35 See Vaudeville (1974), pp. 132–ff.

36 Ibid., p. 128. A complex mystical and philosophical teaching underlies the concept of *śabda*, which cannot be further elaborated in this paper. For a detailed analysis of the meaning of *śabda* in the Nāth *sampradāya* and in Kabīr, see ibidem.

37 Ibid., p. 129.

38 For the term *anāhada* in the SV, see *sabada* 94.

39 For an analysis of the terms *cakra* and *nāḍī*, as well the relationship between yoga and tantra, see White (2000), pp. 14–ff.

and Yamunā) with agricultural metaphors: ploughing, sowing, harvesting. In this stanza, *īḍā* and *piṅgalā* are described as two bullocks that are yoked to the plough or as two reins keeping them to the yoke. This passage, furthermore, emphasizes the need to control one's mind—a central objective in yogic practices. However, what the last line of the *sabada* also highlights is that perfection cannot be achieved by yogic practices alone. Rather, it is the guidance of the true teacher Jāmbhojī, who knows the path to liberation, which facilitates it:

> When you handle the plough well, you care for your perfection.
> Make moon and sun your two bullocks, Gaṅgā and Yamunā their reins.
> Sow the seeds of truth and contentedness and the crop will grow sky-high.
> Cultivate the consciousness of a Rāvala yogi, and no animals will eat away your crops.
> I possess knowledge about eternal salvation, thus you shall truly attain perfection.[40]

Apart from adopted yogic-tantric terms and concepts, the SV contains passages that can also be found in the *Gorakhabāṇī*.[41] The *Gorakhabāṇī* is ascribed to one of the foremost gurus of the Nāth tradition: the semi-legendary figure Gorakhnāth (or Gorakṣanātha in Sanskrit). Both the authorship and the date of composition is subject to scholarly debate. The earliest manuscripts can be dated to the seventeenth century. In all likelihood, the compositions today called *Gorakhabāṇī* were transmitted orally before the first manuscripts were produced and have likely changed in the process of oral transmission.[42] Based on its language, most scholars doubt that the *Gorakhabāṇī* could have been composed by Gorakhnāth himself, and date the text to later centuries.[43]

When comparing the padas and *sabadīs* of the *Gorakhabāṇī* with the *sabadas* of the SV one can find several textual parallels. Usually they only concern a few lines or a stanza, but in some cases, they extend over entire *sabadas*.[44] The next

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40 *hāḷīlo bhala pāḷilo, sidha pāḷilo/kheta kharai sūnya rānūṁ/canda sūri doya baila racīlau gaṅga jamana rāsī/sata santoṣa doya bīja bījilau khetī kharī akāsī/cetana rāvaḷa paharai baiṭhā mraghā khetī na cari jāī/mheī avagate kevaḷa nyāṁnī sāca sidha pāīlo//* (SV, *sabada* 109).

41 For the *sampradāya*'s explanation of the textual overlaps between the SV and the *Gorakhabāṇī*, as well as the interrelation of Biśnoīs and Nāths, see the articles by Kṛṣṇalāl Viśnoī (1997) and Maṅgalrām Viśnoī (1997).

42 See Bāṛthvāl (1942), p. 16.

43 Lorenzen (2012), p. 21, states that the *Gorakhabāṇī* might be older than the earliest collections of Kabīr and Guru Nānak, but younger than the historical Gorakhnāth, dating it to the thirteenth century. Mallinson (2011), p. 424, in contrast, suggests that the *Gorakhabāṇī* originated in the sixteenth or seventeenth century—a time when numerous vernacular texts were produced by the Nāth *sampradāya*.

44 For example, see *sabada* 10 of the SV and *sabadī* 9 and 225 of the *Gorakhabāṇī*.

quotation is a key passage for the SV and, told from the perspective of the *sampradāya* itself,[45] illustrates the singularity and superiority of their founder Jāmbhojī, who not only encompasses all these seemingly paradox religious strands that are enumerated, but essentially surpasses them. In comparison to the *Gorakhabāṇī*, the *sabada* of the SV is more diversified and contains a few more references to other traditions. The *Gorakhabāṇī* mentions identification with three traditions: Hindu, yogi, and Muslim. The *Sabadavāṇī* additionally names the Brahmin, the dervish, and the mullah:

> I neither sat near someone nor did I ask for instruction
> I gained knowledge through *nirati* and *surati*.
> [I am] a Hindu by birth, a Yogi through endurance,
> A Brahmin through rituals, a dervish by heart,
> A mullah through neutrality, a Muslim by consciousness. (*Sabadavāṇī*)[46]

> I am a Hindu by birth, a yogi through endurance, a Muslim *pīr* through understanding.
> Recognize the path, oh mullahs and qadis, that was accepted by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva.[47]

How can these textual overlaps be explained? Monika Thiel-Horstmann has shown with the example of certain similar poems of Dādū and Mīrābāī that textual elements, topoi, and motifs were used in a formulaic way by different Sants.[48] In the examples she cites, this linking together of topoi and textual formulas has led to an almost word-by-word congruency of two poems. The shared verses of the SV and the *Gorakhabāṇī* could be explained with the same phenomena. These passages would then represent a common sphere of literary motifs, metaphors, and songs—resulting from the mobility of those carrying the tradition forth and reflecting the permeability of the different regions in which the traditions originated.

Seeing such early modern compositions less as individual works than as the result of the reception and compilation of a primarily oral tradition with which a given poet aimed to identify,[49] I would like to suggest the following perspective on the textual parallels: by adopting elements of the *Gorakhabāṇī*, Jāmbhojī is identified with Gorakhnāth, and the latter's authority is claimed for Jāmbhojī. Hence, by using these topoi and textual elements belonging to the oral tradition of the

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45 See Pārīk (2001), p. 93.

46 *mhe sarai na baiṭhā sīkha na pūchī/nirati surati sā jāṁṇī/utiputi hindū jaraṇāṁ jogī/ krīyā brāhamaṁṇa dila daravesāṁ/uṁnamaṁna mullāṁ akali misalimāṁṇī/* (SV, *sabada* 5, line 9–11).

47 *utapati hindū jaraṇāṁ jogī akali pari musalmāṁnī/te rāha cinho ho kājī mulāṁ, brahmā bisnu mahādeva māṁnī//* (*Gorakhabāṇī*, *sabadī* 14).

48 See Thiel-Horstmann (1991), pp. 27–33.

49 See ibid., p. 32.

Nāth attributed to their foremost teacher Gorakhnāth, the authority of Gorakhnāth is claimed and used to authorize Jāmbhojī. In my argument, this is precisely the strategy pursued in the SV: the authority ascribed to Gorakhnāth or other proponents of the Nāth *sampradāya* is claimed for Jāmbhojī and transferred onto him.

Establishing Jāmbhojī as the supreme yogi

I have attempted to demonstrate how Nāths and Nāthism are depicted in the SV. It is my hypothesis that the criticism as well as the adoption and reinterpretation of elements of Nāth teaching up to the word-by-word inclusion of compositions circulating among the Nāths should be understood as parts of a strategy of authorizing Jāmbhojī vis-à-vis representatives of the Nāth *sampradāya*. It seems likely that Nāths and Biśnoīs have operated in similar social strata of society, representing traditions with similar religious claims at a basic level of rejecting caste, idol worship, and *saguṇa* forms of god.[50] Anne Grodzins Gold has expounded how at the village level the teachings of Sants and Nāths are often even perceived as identical.[51] The SV's constant preoccupation with the Nāths—both in its criticism of them and its relating to their teaching in positive terms—bears testimony to this close contact and competition. A closer look at the text passages dealing with Nāths and Nāthism shall clarify how the claims of the superiority and authority of Jāmbhojī are constructed.

The representation of Nāthism follows a distinct tripartite structure. Firstly, hypocritical proponents of the Nāth tradition are rejected but not the tradition itself. Secondly, concepts pertaining to this yogic-tantric tradition are adopted and portrayed as possible paths to liberation. This has been illustrated in the previous section. In a third step, the original Nāth teachings are equated with Jāmbhojī's teachings due to his being the best or the only 'true' yogi. In this way, all passages dealing with the Nāth tradition, in one way or another, are utilized to exalt the status of Jāmbhojī as the supreme teacher and yogi. In the next quotation, the ideal yogi is described and later identified with Jāmbhojī. This yogi does not need to outwardly display the signs of a yogi since he has fully internalized them and reached the highest stages of yogic practice. He furthermore acts as a guide along the path towards liberation for his disciples. The Nāths, in contrast, cannot attain yogic accomplishments and they will certainly not conquer death without the help of the 'only' real yogi, Jāmbhojī:

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50 See Martin (2009), p. 286.

51 Gold maintains that both teachings blend together in village traditions and are more or less reduced to a few common features: worship of a formless god, the practice of *sumiran*, and the necessity of a guru's guidance. For more, see Gold (1992), pp. 43–ff.

Whose mind is the yogi's earring (*mudrā*), whose body is the ascetic's garment,
Whose body parts are kept still,
Such a yogi you should serve.
If he wants, he can make you cross over the ocean to the other side.
Those who are called Nāths, will also die.
So why are they called Nāths?
Small and big living beings are defeated and created,
Again, and again, they come back.
Only I am a Rāvaḷa, only I am a yogi,
I am the king of kings.[52]

The above-quoted stanza of the SV illustrates that once both the criticism of Nāths and the appraisal of yoga are established in the *sabadas*, the focus shifts to Jāmbhojī. He is depicted as a unique and supreme teacher, who could only be compared to the best yogi or even to Gorakhnāth[53]—his teaching measuring up with yoga or surpassing it. Hence, the spiritual authority of Jāmbhojī is constructed also in relation to other traditions, in this case to the Nāth *sampradāya*. Adherents of this tradition are strongly contested, but their religious doctrine is not rejected completely. Rather, parts of the doctrine, including passages of the *Gorakhabāṇī*, are adopted and portrayed as Jāmbhojī's yoga, which is represented as the only 'true' path to salvation.[54] What the SV seems to suggest in this context is that a person should follow Jāmbhojī, since he is the best yogi and his teaching can be compared to the yoga path anyway. One can assume that such references were vital in turning followers of the Nāth *sampradāya* into followers of Jāmbhojī. As this demonstrates, terms, concepts, and textual elements of Nāth teaching are claimed to be part of the original teaching of Jāmbhojī and they thereby contribute to authorizing Jāmbhojī and the tradition he was beginning to establish. Rejecting Nāths and adopting and reinterpreting elements of their teaching are therefore part of the same strategy of claiming spiritual authority for Jāmbhojī and serve the purpose of representing him and his tradition as singular and superior.

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52 *jiṁha jogī kai mana hī mundarā tana hī khanthā/piṇḍai agani ṭhaṁbhāyauṁ/jiṁha jogī kī sevā kījai/tūṭhau bhayaṁ jaḷa pāri laṅghāyau/nātha kahāvai mari mari jāvai/te kyoṁ nātha kahāvai/ nānhīṁ pavaṇī jīvā jūṁṇī nirajata sirajata/phiri phiri pūṭhā āvai/hamahīṁ rāvaḷa hamahīṁ jogī/hama rājā ke rāyauṁ/* (SV, *sabada* 49, line 1–10).

53 In *sabada* 93, Jāmbhojī is depicted as '[a]n eternal teacher like Gorakh[nāth]' (*gorakha garū apārā*).

54 The different strategies of dealing with other doctrines have been a recurrent topic in Indian religious history as well as of the academic discourse. For a detailed elucidation of ritual eclecticism as a defining marker of religious communities, see Granoff (2000). For an analysis of the combination of the exclusiveness of one's own tradition and the hierarchical subordination of other teachings, see Malinar (2007), pp. 134–ff.

Conclusion

Biśnoīs and Nāths shared a common religious and literary space. When Jāmbhojī founded the Biśnoī *sampradāya* in the fifteenth century, the Nāths were in all likelihood already well-established in that area and attracted people from the same social milieu. It is for this reason that the SV represents Jāmbhojī and his teaching primarily vis-à-vis the Nāth *sampradāya*. The need to attract and keep followers is reflected in the recurrent claims to Jāmbhojī's spiritual authority that finds expression in many verses of the SV. It explains why the SV voices such strong desire to distance Jāmbhojī from proponents of the Nāth *sampradāya* and render their outward show of yogic insignia and their pretence of having accomplished yoga as hypocritical, only to then portray Jāmbhojī as the true yogi. At the same time, yogic-tantric terminology and textual elements circulating in the Nāth *sampradāya* were also utilized to claim the superiority of Jāmbhojī, and to present his teachings as superior to Nāthism. In this way, Jāmbhojī is established as the supreme yogi and as the true teacher. The two terms that are used for him in this context are *juga juga jogi,* the yogi in each era, and *sadguru*, the true or supreme teacher. Both terms designate Jāmbhojī's claim to spiritual authority and superiority in a religiously diverse and multifaceted landscape in which the Biśnoī *sampradāya* sought to establish and disseminate its tradition. One last quotation should serve to illustrate this complex interrelationship between Jāmbhojī and the Nāths as it is depicted in the SV. In *sabada* 46, a real yogi is characterized as a yogi in each era (*jogī so to jugi jugi jogi* [55]). In *sabada* 97 this motive appears once more. Here, it is claimed that Jāmbhojī is precisely this yogi in each era, who has come to help the people, and that he is the true teacher (*sadguru*). Both of these titles, the yogi in each era and the true teacher, are thus used to designate the spiritual authority rightfully claimed by Jāmbhojī:

> The yogi in each era has come; the true teacher (*sadguru*) established the goal.
> He possesses knowledge about eternal salvation, knows the *brahman*, is immersed in *sahaja*.
> Your good deeds have not been wasted.[56]

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55 *Jogī so jo juga juga jogi* is also a famous *Ginān* ascribed to Pīr Hasan Kabīruddīn and contains literally the descriptions that are used for Jāmbhojī in the SV. The overlap with this *Ginān* might reflect the Biśnoīs' own Ismāʿīlī heritage and suggests a complex triangular relationship between Biśnoīs, Nāths, and Nizārīs. For a transcription and translation of this *Ginān*, see the website of the Isma'ili Heritage Society, '*Jogi so jo puga jug jogi*,' <http://ismaili.net/heritage/node/4166>. (Accessed 18 May 2015).

56 *jugāṁ jugāṁ ko jogī āyau satagura sīdha vatāī/kevaḷa nyāṁnī vraṁbha giyāṁnī sahaja sināṁnī/sukarata ahaḷyau na jāī/* (SV, *sabada* 97, line 5–8).

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10. Nāthyoga in the Dādūpanth: The *Ādibodhasiddhāntagrantha-yogaśāstra* Attributed to Mohan Mevāṛau

Abstract. The Dādūpanthī tradition was the first to transmit in its codices the collected works of Sant authors, supplementing these with material reflecting the tradition's broader religious profile. These codices formed also the first repositories of the works of the Nāth Siddhas. Dādū himself (d. 1603) had disciples of a Sant-Nāthyogī type; among these was Mohan Mevāṛau whose long poem *Śrī Svāmī Dādūjī kau Ādobodhasiddhāntagrantha* reflects this. Mohan exemplifies the case of a Nāthyogī for whom yoga has ceased being a path to liberation in its own right, but has rather become a means to the end of bhakti.

The Sant of northern India describe themselves as going beyond the established creeds by seeking the unifying *brahma*-gnosis alone. Those established creeds they summarily call the 'six systems,' a term meaning 'all religious systems.'[1] Sant claim that they do not criticize others for the religious doctrines these may hold but for flawed ethical and moral practice that violate their own religious principles. Ethical and moral righteousness, however, they see as deriving from superior insight into the unity of self and supreme. This insight, the *brahma*-gnosis, they consider their own domain. This implies an emphasis on 'interior religion,' a term used by Charlotte Vaudeville to describe Kabīr's religion and used here too as a shorthand term.[2] While Sant authors advised their followers to stay away from

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1 These six are yogis, *jaṅgama*s, *sevaṛā*s (Jains), Buddhists, *saṃnyāsi*s, and Muslims, in this sequence or with variations (Horstmann (2012), p. 97); for the administrative term Department of the Six Systems in the kingdom of Mewar, see Clémentin-Ojha and Ojha (2009), pp. 154–155.
2 Vaudeville (1964). That 'interiority' is supported by ritual practice hardly needs mentioning. For ritual practice among the Kabīrpanthī, see Lorenzen (1996), pp. 225–256; for the Dādūpanth, see Thiel-Horstmann (1985) and Horstmann (forthcoming a).

debate about doctrine, they did of course engage in such debate. This is not only illustrated by this essay but also elsewhere.[3] How profoundly they did indeed engage in debate is revealed by Sant codices compiled by monks and aggregating Sant and other material. Such codices represent aspects of the spiritual and exegetical interests of their makers, specific for time, locality, and lineage.

In the Sant tradition, such aggregate text corpora took shape first in north and north-west India in the hands of the Sikhs of Panjab, the Dādūpanthī,[4] and the Nirañjanī of Rajasthan. The Sikhs were the first and took a special course. A text collection that would be conclusively edited as the *Ādigranth* is first documented around 1572. The Sikhs opted for closing the *Ādigranth* against additions.[5] This development was sealed in 1604, notwithstanding the enduring polyphony of Sikh traditions. In the *Ādigranth*, the Sants (*bhagat*) represent conduits of the divine revelation running through Nānak and his successors. The Dādūpanthī took a different approach. At the turn of the seventeenth century, they canonized Dādū's works and presented Dādū as the apex of a pentad of Sants. One may well assume that the way in which they canonized Dādū's work was spurred by the Sikh efforts to create an authoritative scripture.[6] Dādū and the other four Sants, either as a totality or in a selection, are represented in manuscripts that unite Sant authors and additional material. The Dādūpanthī manuscript tradition is thereby in principle unsaturated, notwithstanding the fact that Dādupanthī codices share a typical range of material that makes them easily recognizable as Dādūpanthī.[7] The makers of the codices differed by the particular religious and intellectual profiles of their lineages, and these also changed in the course of time. Quite often, codices can be regarded as traditions in progress, for they may have taken a number of years to complete and thus reflect shifts in their makers' interests. Compilers might copy manuscripts they had procured from other sadhus, add new material and, perhaps, eventually leave their works to disciples, who would add material of their own preference. It is such codices that amply reveal the profound engagement of Dādū's followers with the traditions current in their lifetime and region.

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3 For another example, see Horstmann (2017).

4 The term Dādūpanthī may wrongly suggest the existence of a regular sect. At the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century the followers of Dādū formed a community that was gradually emerging as a sect. The modern Dādūpanth is a result of reforms that took place in the early eighteenth century. I am here using Dādūpanthī to refer to the followers of Dādū, regardless of the stage of organization of the Dādūpanth.

5 Mann (1996).

6 Nānak is found to figure in the earliest Dādūpanthī manuscripts so far available.

7 This is impressively documented by Hari Nārāyaṇ Śarmā's magnificent manuscript collection of Sant works (Bahurā and Dīkṣit 1961). For the range of authors represented by Dādūpanthī codices, see also Callewaert (1973–1974) and Callewaert and De Brabandere (1980).

10. Nāthyoga in the Dādūpanth

In what follows, I wish to dwell on just one aspect of the codices, namely, how Nāthyoga figures in them. My textual basis is the oldest Dādūpanthī manuscript so far available, MS 3190 in the Sañjay Śarmā Pustakālay evam Śodhsaṃsthān, Jaipur, a bound, *guṭkā*-type codex of 692 folios.[8] At least for its greater part, it was copied from earlier manuscript material. The codex was compiled between 1615 and 1621.[9] Its compiler Rāmdās was a disciple of Ghaṛsīdās, a direct disciple of Dādū. He made the codex for the purpose of his own studies, as he states in one of the colophons. Though the bulk of the text was scribed by Rāmdās, another scribe or several scribes interspersed and added material. Rāmdās identifies himself as a Jat, and according to the local tradition, his guru Ghaṛsīdās belonged to the same caste.[10] Ghaṛsīdās was a *vairāgī* hailing from Kālū (to the north-west of Pushkar).[11] As his family is mentioned as organizers of a feast for Dādū—which must have taken place around 1596—, the modern Dādūpanthī polymath Sv. Nārāyaṇdās was probably right in identifying him as a householder–*vairāgī*.[12] He became a follower of Dādū, and henceforth lived as a renouncer, taking his residence in Basī-Karail, north of Pushkar.[13] At some point in time he was also a member of the community of followers of Dādū at Fatehpur in Śekhāvāṭī, among which were prominent figures like Sundardās and Prāgdās Bihānī, both from merchant castes.[14] The place and date of Gaṛsīdās's death are unknown. This leaves open the possibility that the Dādūpanthī elites were made up from both the Jat and merchant caste milieu.

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8 The manuscript is preserved as microfilm 41 of the Callewaert Collection in the holdings of the South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg. So far, only portions of the film have been digitized and studied by Jaroslav Strnad (2013) and (2016). Thorough examination will have to wait until the whole film is digitized. Due to some serious technical flaws, its perusal is currently difficult.

9 For the colophons of the manuscript, see Strnad (2016), pp. 559–563. The sequential order of these in the manuscript is:
   (1) in a part of the manuscript that is now untraceable but was recorded by Callewaert in a handwritten note, VS 1621.
   (2) fol. 502b: *Āśvina* 8, VS 1678 (probably 30 August 1621).
   (3) fol. 512a: *Āśvina*, *tithi* 15, Tuesday, VS 1678 (the *tithi* actually corresponds to Wednesday, so either 4 or 5 September 1621).
   (4) fol. 646a: *Phālguna ś.* 5, VS 1671 (12 February 1615).
   The reverse order of the dates in the manuscript must have to do with a reshuffling of folios which is discussed by Strnad, ibid.

10 H. N. Śarmā in his introduction to Sundardās (VS 1993) (*jīvan-caritra*, 73).

11 DJL 13.10. The local tradition (see note 10) has him hail from Cāṁpāsar, to the north-west of Jodhpur. This seems to be a confusion with the locality of Ghaṛsīdās lineage after the death of Ghaṛsīdās, for which see note 15.

12 Nārāyaṇdās (VS 2035–2036), hereafter DDP, vol. 2, p. 273.

13 Rāghavdās (n. d.) (the longer recension of Rāghavdās's *Bhaktmāl*), p. 700, *manhar* 520.

14 For Fatehpur, see Horstmann (2014b), pp. 244–247; on the Muslim Rajput elite of Fatehpur at that time, see Sreenivasan (2014). Williams (2015) has elaborated on the role of merchant castes as promoters of Sant lineages.

Gharsīdās's main disciple was Nārāyaṇdās 'Dūdhādhārī,' who, like Sundardās, had been sent to study in Banaras.[15] Rāmdās compiled his codex in two places, the first part in the ashram of Dūjandās in Īḍvā in 1615, and the second in Kaṛail in 1621. Īḍvā lies 18 miles to the north-east of Meṛtā in the Nagaur district and was Rāṭhor country. According to hagiography, the local patron of the young Dādūpanthī community of Īḍvā was a high-ranking Rajput named Narbad, who renounced the world and became a bhakta in the following of Dādū.[16] Īḍvā and Pushkar form part of the ancient Dādūpanthī heartland. Dūjan was a *vairāgī* and managed the place where Dādū and his followers would gather on their peregrinations for worship and feasts from about 1596.[17] It is thereby evident that Rāmdās was related to two of the several monastic lineages that established themselves during the lifetime of Dādū. Material from these he transmitted in his codex. Dādūpanthī script culture is older than Rāmdās's codex. The earliest authenticated version of Dādū's works is reported to have been installed as an object of worship in 1604. The *Dādūvāṇī* is a complex piece of literature, both in terms of arrangement and content. Its conclusive compilation must have taken several years. Dādū's amanuensis and editor of the *Dādūvāṇī*, Mohandās Daftarī, is first mentioned by Dādū's hagiographer Jangopāl for the period shortly before Dādū settled in Kalyāṇpur in 1601, so that Mohandās may have started compiling the *Dādūvāṇī* at the latest in the last few years of the sixteenth century.[18] Moreover, not only were inspired songs and couplets written down fairly early, but so too was at least one exegetical work, the *Anabhaiprabodha* of Garībdās—the year of composition VS 1660 (1604) is given in the colophon of a manuscript.[19]

Rāmdās's codex reflects that over the six years of putting together the manuscript he appropriated a wide range of traditions besides the particular Dādūpanthī

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15 H. N. Śarmā in his introduction to Sundardās (VS 1993) (*jīvan-caritra*, 71–74). According to Sv. Nārāyaṇdās (the modern historian), Nārāyaṇdās 'Dūdhādhārī' became the guru and yoga master of King Jasvantsingh I of Marwar (b. 1626, r. 1638–1678). In the longer recension of Rāghodās's *Bhaktmāl*, King Jasvantsingh is mentioned as an admirer of Nārāyaṇdās (Rāghavdās (n. d.), p. 771, *manhar* 35). A staunch patron of literature, Jasvantsingh himself was the author of the renowned manual of poetics *Bhāṣābhūṣaṇ* as well as of Brajbhāṣā poetry (Ojhā (1999 [1928]), pp. 470–471, with reference to *Miśra Bandhu Vinod*; DDP, vol. 2, p. 278). Sv. Nārāyaṇdās himself had seen manuscripts of Jasvantsingh's works at Sv. Maṅgaldās's place in Kucāman, where this extraordinary monk-scholar's possessions are now all but dispersed. The character of Jasvantsingh's poetry is described by the Miśra brothers as vedantic (DDP, vol. 2, p. 275). Nārāyaṇdās 'Dūdhādhārī' shifted the seat of Gharsīdās's lineage to Cāṃpāsar (Jodhpur), where King Jasvantsingh had granted him land in VS 1724 (*c.* 1667 CE, see DDP, vol. 2, p. 279). Here he also died at an unknown date (DDP, vol. 2, p. 282). His poetry is unedited.

16 DJL 11.1; 14.20; DDP, vol. 2, p. 325.

17 DJL 13.19, Horstmann (2000), p. 575 (table).

18 DJL 13.25.

19 Siṃhal (2004), MS 496.

pentad and other well-known Sant poets. The codex starts with the works of Dādū, followed by the works of Kabīr, Nāmdev, Raidās, and Hardās. Interspersed among these are a few songs by other authors. Upon this follow 150 folios with songs and couplets of authors typical of the region, but also compositions of Nānak. This is the part completed in 1621 in Karail and prefixed in the codex to the part completed in 1615. In that earlier part, scribed in Īḍvā, Rāmdās focused on material containing texts on yoga. In the colophons of the individual texts these identify themselves as shastric. Starting with the *Ādibodhasiddhāntagrantha-jogasāstra* (spelling according to the manuscript; abbr. *Ādibodha*),[20] the text under review (fols. 522r–534v), Rāmdās proceeded with the treatises attributed to Gorakhnāth and roughly equivalent to the text given by P. D. Baṛthvāl (though differing in the sequence of its chapters and also containing material that remained unpublished due to Baṛthvāl's untimely death).[21] Rāmdās's is the first available manuscript of the Hindi tradition of Gorakhnāth. It must be borne in mind that the corpus of Hindi works attributed to Gorakhnāth and given by Baṛthvāl the title *Gorakhbānī* has come down to us first of all exclusively through the Dādūpanthī tradition, with the Nirañjanīs following suit considerably later.[22] In the manuscript, Gorakhnāth's works are followed by the treatises of the Nāthyogī Pṛthīnāth 'Sūtradhāra,' so that this codex may also represent the oldest now available manuscript containing Pṛthīnāth's oeuvre. The manuscript concludes with some thirty-five folios of miscellaneous works that await identification, among these fragments of folios.

The codex thus complements the words of revelation—the padas and *sākhīs*—with discourses conceived in the spirit of the Nāthyoga that had moved away from tantric Shaivism and developed its own version of Haṭhayoga, which, however, blended with the form of interior worship propagated by the Sant. In these texts, yogic emblems and regimen are constantly validated in light of this so that yogic practice itself recedes. A similar development gained momentum in the Sanskrit literature on Haṭhayoga in the period between the thirteenth and the fifteenth century.[23] A significant step in this is represented by the *Aparokṣānu-bhūti*, attributed to Śaṅkara, but probably composed sometime before the fourteenth century. This text teaches a Rājayoga in which the practice of haṭhayogic postures is reduced, though it remains, in that reduced form, considered obligatory for achieving the end of absorption in Brahman.[24] That Rājayoga ranges superior to all other kinds

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20 The headline (written with red ink) names the text *Svāṃmī Dādūjī kau ādibodhasidhāṃta-graṃtha*.

21 These texts await collation with the *Gorakhbānī* edited by Baṛthvāl.

22 The earliest Nirañjanī manuscript of the *Gorakhbānī* used by Baṛthvāl is of VS 1794 (MS ṛa).

23 According to Kiss (2012).

24 Birch (2011), p. 540.

of yoga is also expressed in the vernacular *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* (3.13), which was written by Dādū's disciple Sundardās.[25]

The presence of those discourses on yoga in Rāmdās's codex shows how important it was for the Sants to reflect on their religion before the development of the closely related yogic discourses. In fact, the yogic discourse is constitutive of the self-perception of particular Dādūpanthī lineages. The advanced Nāthyogic discourses as they are conducted by the Hindi Gorakhnāth—critical of the tantric, magical, and the many exterior practices that form part of their legacy, and therefore discouraging that false yoga and extolling *brahma*-gnosis—are akin to the Sant principles. The *Gorakhbānī*, as much as the innumerable Sant compositions with their trenchant criticism of yoga and yogis lacking *brahma*-bhakti, reflects the transition of a more ancient Nāthyogic culture to Nāthyogic bhakti.

According to the classification of this and other haṭhayogic texts by their authors, the *Ādibodha* represents the first shastra known to have been authored in the Dādūpanth that explicitly calls Dādū the master of yoga and the perfect *avadhūta*. Inherently, this challenges all other claimants to these titles. Its emphasis on Dādū's yoga of *brahma*-bhakti converges with the perception of some of Dādū's direct disciples, who extol his yogic qualities and situate him in a spiritual genealogy with Sants and Nāths.[26] The tenor of the *Ādibodha* was not unfamiliar in the early Dādūpanth. A case in point is the briefly mentioned *Anabhaiprabodhagrantha* of Garībdās, the son of Dādū, who became the leader of the sect after his father's death in 1603. Composed in VS 1660 (1604), it may be roughly contemporary with the *Ādibodha*. The title of the text means 'Enlightenment on the Experience,' that is, of the luminous blissful state of union. The work explains and illustrates by synonyms the key terms of Sant bhakti. Though arranged like a lexicon of synonyms, the purpose of the text is to provide an itinerary to union. The terms—both from the Hindu and Muslim tradition— are arranged according to the stages of ascent as they lead to the unifying experience within the tantric-yogic esoteric body. It starts with the forms, colours, and tastes of gross matter, leads on to the progressive stages of realisation of the divine, and finally, to ineffable union.[27] In the colophon of the manuscript that mentions the date of composition, it is called the *Bhakti-yoga-anabhaigrantha*.[28] The terminology of both the *Gorakhbānī* and the *Ādibodha* is amply consonant with that of the *Anabhaiprabodha*.

The authorship of the *Ādibodha* was attributed by Sv. Nārāyaṇdās to Mohan Mevāṛau. Though the text itself names Dādū as its author, in deference to him and to give the text authority, the praise showered on Svāmī Dādū as the lord of yoga

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25 Sundardās (VS 1993), p. 103.
26 Horstmann (forthcoming b).
27 This paragraph has been partly quoted from Horstmann (forthcoming a).
28 Siṃhal (2004), MS 496.

speaks strongly against Dādū's authorship.[29] That Dādū's authorship was not much doubted is not all that surprising for his own compositions abundantly show the spirit of Nāthyoga, and particularly one unusually long yogic composition of his was made the subject of an early exegetical commentary (undated; second generation after Dādū?).[30] Unfortunately, Sv. Nārāyaṇdās does not give a testimony for Mohan's authorship. In view of that monk-scholar's stupendous knowledge of the Dādūpanth's manuscripts, I find no reason to hesitate to accept this ascription for the time being. The case of the *Ādibodha* is similar to that of the alleged Hindi works of Gorakhnāth. Attributing these to him, the Nāthyoga shift into the direction of *nirguṇa* religion was validated as authoritative. I know of two manuscripts of the *Ādibodha*; the one under review and MS 496 of the Dādūpanthī collection at Naraina, an old but undated codex of 398 folios which I have not had a chance to consult. In this, the *Ādibodha* is not grouped among Dādū's works but towards the end (fols. 346–354), following the *Gorakhbānī*, a yogic treatise by Pṛthīnāth, a chapter of Jangopāl's *Dādūjanmalīlā*, and preceding the *Anabhaiprabodha* of Garībdās. It is thus part of a cluster of yogic and hagiographical treatises. This accords with the practice of scribes to plan and pen codices more often than not in such a way that songs, couplets, and shastric compositions form discrete clusters.

Mohan Mevāṛau first appears as a disciple of Dādū around 1587.[31] He was present at celebrations in Āndhī (Jaipur district) where it is mentioned that Dādū's local constituency had formed a relatively stable group from the late 1580s and enjoyed the patronage of the merchant community.[32] At a later point, another sub-lineage of Mohan's settled in Āndhī where it was affluent enough to excel in public patronage.[33] Rāghavdās describes Mohan as a yogi who reanimated a dead child using supernatural powers.[34] In praising Mohan's tantric-yogic miracle-working and the yoga of *brahma*-gnosis alike, Rāghodās's account reflects the ambivalence of yogic ideals of the period. The ideal of *brahma*-gnosis and the popular expectation that saintliness must be proved by miracles, common to both Hindus and Muslims, coexisted and their inner conflict was well perceived. Mohan resided in Bhāngaṛh,[35] where he also died. Apart from the *Ādibodha*, credited to him, he was the author of three more works, all of them on yoga. The lineage that descended from him, now expired, was also yogically oriented.[36]

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29 So also by Siṃhal (2004), corrected in Siṃhal (2010), pp. 135–136.
30 Schuhmann (2006).
31 DJL 9.26; Horstmann (2000), pp. 570–571 (chronological table).
32 DJL 9.18; 14.28. The merchant community of Āndhī still provides impressive patronage to the Dādūpanth, of which I could convince myself in 2015.
33 DDP, vol. 1, p. 666.
34 *Bhaktamāl*, *mūl chappay* 506 and *manhar* 507–510.
35 At the border of the modern districts of Jaipur and Alwar.
36 DDP, vol. 1, pp. 652–654.

The *Ādibodha* is a poem of 271 stanzas, the last seven of which (265–271) form an extended affirmation of the reward to be gained by its study (*phalśruti*). The text addresses ascetics. In the opening parts, they are admonished to shun women, wealth, meat, alcohol and drugs, and eat sparsely (vv. 1–3, 14). This is fairly common in treatises that specifically address ascetics, though it is hardly mere rhetoric. Aspirants of genuine yoga should consider the 'sky,' that is the highest stage of yogic perfection, their monastery (*maṭha*, v. 3; *nāthasthāṃna*, v. 14) which is, for example, in contrast with *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* (1.12–13), which enjoins the construction of a *maṭh* and describes its design.[37] The *Ādibodha* was written at a point when the tantric Shaiva yoga had for a long time undergone transformation into a spiritualized form of Nāthyoga, which was also espoused by the Sant. The author had before him a regular organization of Nāthyogī, though this is not to say that this was constituted in the way we find it from around the eighteenth century. The still fluent state of organization is well demonstrated by the rivalling genealogies of Siddhas and Nāth as they were discussed by H. P. Dvivedī.[38] However, all the emblems of Nāthyogī that we are used to, as well as their greeting formula '*ādeś*' (*Ādibodha*, vv. 14, 251), occur as characterizing Nāthyogī.[39]

As in numerous early modern texts, the Rāval and his female companion, the Rāvalānī, occur as Nāth prototypes. They are tropes of the mind (*man*) and the life-energy, respectively. Rāval is distracted; forgetful of his guru's instruction, he keeps gazing complacently at his Rāvalānī:[40]

> He who assembles wealth and keeps a Raulānī, does not look for a guru but dies a fool,
> Puffed-up he sits in front of the Raulānī, forgetful of the guru's words.
> (v. 19, Baṛthvāl (1979), p. 178)

The Rāval, however, also represents the exemplary yogi. Alongside the sixty-four *yoginī* he figures in the chorus of those who join Dādū at his apotheosis (v. 234).

There is some ambivalence here, for in real life, the Rāvals represent a social group. Also known as Nāgnāthīs, they form one of the twelve modern subgroups of the Nāthyogīs.[41] They seem to be related to the Lakulīśa-Pāśupata, transformed

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37 Svātmārāma (1972), hereafter cited as *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*.
38 Dvivedī (n.d.), pp. 157–179.
39 James Mallinson (2011) is of the opinion that the full set of Nāthyogic emblems, including their greeting formula, became characteristic of their identity probably not before the eighteenth century. This assumption is based on Sanskrit sources. I have argued against this on the basis of vernacular sources (Horstmann 2014a).
40 Garībdās, too, explains 'mind' (*man*) by '*mahādeva, avadhūta, deva, rāvala*' (Callewaert 1974–1977, p. 314, v. 29).
41 Dvivedī (n. d.), p. 14.

at some point into Nāths.[42] There is a list of Nāth settlements in Rajasthan which was commissioned by Maharaja Mānsingh of Marwar in the beginning of the nineteenth century.[43] Out of an all-India total of 676 Nāthyogic seats, about three quarters were counted in Rajasthan alone. Of these, seventy-one belonged to Rāval *jogī*, who were disproportionately highly represented in Mewar and Ajmer. The multifaceted image of the Rāval shows that the more ancient Siddha culture lingered on when the *Ādibodha* was composed, both in reality and imagination.

Dādū is extolled as the epitome of yogis engaged in the battle for *brahma*-gnosis. By disciplining his breath the yogi converts all that is perishable into the eternal light of *brahma.* As he attains perfection, this pours down from the *baṅkanālī* (the curved conduit) as a cool rain of fire. That fiery rain is the eternal drop (*bindu*) distilled from the vital energy through the yogic process. Henceforth and forever the perfect yogi, the *avadhūta*, tastes the rasa of imperishable life. The perfect *avadhūta*, Dādū, transmits the *brahma*-gnosis to his disciple. This teaching, then, is called the *ādibodha*. The yoga taught by the accomplished guru is based on *brahma*-bhakti. Yoga without *brahma*-bhakti, lacking the guidance of the guru and the right stance, is null and void:

(fol. 527a) . . . कोटि निगंम पढ़ै ॥ श्रब मंत्रा रढ़ै ॥ श्रब देव घरि पूजा कीजै॥
श्रब बिद्या धसी ॥ कोटि एकादसी ॥ ग्यांन गुरू बिनां आत्म छीजै ॥१०५॥
कोटि सेवा करै ॥ दलं तुलसी धरै ॥ कोटि आचार करि अं(?)ग लावै ॥
जाइ बंषंडं रहै ॥ मूंनि व्रतं गहै ॥ गुरू गोब्यंद बिनां त(fol. 527b)त न जावै ॥१०६॥
निति प्रति गीता रढ़ै ॥ कोटि सास्त्र पढ़ै ॥ गुरु सेवा बौ भांति कीजै ॥
अनेक कष्टं करै ॥ नष अग्नी धरै ॥ सत्य गुरू ब्रिनां(!) ब्रिथा छीजै ॥१०७॥
गायत्री जापं रढ़ै ॥ अनेक कव्यं पढ़ै ॥ कोटितारंज जनेउ लीजै ॥
श्रान गंगा करै ॥ कोटि संझ्या धरै ॥ ब्रह्म भगति बिनां प्यंड छीजै॥१०८॥
अनेक छापां धरै ॥ अनेक तिलकं करै ॥ मंत्रमाला लेइ ध्यांन मांडै ॥
हंस बाना गहै ॥ इसी धरा बहै ॥ ब्रह्म भगति बिनां नहीं काल छांडै ॥१०९॥

Let him recite a billion Vedas, let him recite all mantras, let him worship all the gods in their temples,
Let him penetrate all sciences, let him observe a billion *ekādaśī*, without a guru imparting gnosis to him his soul wastes away. (105)
Let him worship a billion times, let him hold tulsi leaves, let him practice and embrace billions of ways,
Let him live in the forest, let him keep the vow of silence, without Guru Govinda he does not find the truth. (106)
Let him recite the Gita regularly, let him study a billion shastras, let him serve his guru in many ways,

42 White (1996), p. 98, pp. 121–122. They have a stronghold in Afghanistan, where they are the caretakers of Hiṅglāj Devī, and from there may have spread to Mewar. Connected with Rāval Bappā, the ancestor of the royal family of Mewar, they seem to represent descendants of one of the twelve branches of Shaivas, comprising Pāśupatas, Kāpālikas, and Kālamukhas. Rāvals are more often than not Muslim Nāths.
43 Bhāṭī (2003), p. 6.

Let him go into numerous austerities, let him hold fire on his nails, in the absence of the true guru[44] he wastes away in vain. (107)
Let him recite the *gāyatrī*, let him read many a poem, let him wear a bil-lion-stranded cord,
Let him bathe in the Ganga, let him observe a billion twilight rituals, without *brahma*-bhakti his body wastes away. (108)
Let him use many printing-blocks (to print mantras), let him paint many marks on his body, let him circle the rosary in meditation,
Let him wear the garb of a *haṃsa* (ascetic), let him drift in this stream; if he has no *brahma*-bhakti, time will not let go of him.[45] (109)

Yogic practice without a gnostic quest supervised by the guru is futile, but this does not automatically invalidate yogic practice itself. However, the references to this practice in v. 118 are selective and rather meant to point to its futility in the absence of the right spiritual stance:

(fol. 528a) . . . रेचक्रं पूरक करै कुंभक त्राटिक धरै ॥ केई नाद धुनि सुनि करि चित लावै ॥
केई करंम[46] चाकी करैं ॥ अपांग ओद्रं भरै ॥ नाद अनहद बिना थोथ जावै ॥११८॥
केई सूर्ज ध्यांन धरै ॥ सुनि खिलिमिलि करै ॥ केई गडंत उडंत गोटिक साधै ॥
केई दृष्टि अग्ने धरै ॥ ध्यांन त्रिकुटी करैं ॥ ब्रह्म ध्यांन बिनां नहीं पंच बाधैं ॥११९॥
अनाद प्याला करै ॥ इष्टमंत्रं दरै ॥ नाटिक चेटक अनंत कीधा ॥
धातर सांइंण कंद मूलांइणं ॥ जोग बिनां नहीं प्यंड सीधा ॥१२०॥
बसि सीहा करै ॥ स्यंघरूप धरैं ॥ भैरव बीरमंत्रं चलावै ॥
मसांण सेवा करै ॥ कपाल आसंण धरै ॥ गुरूसब्द बिनां नहीं जोग पावै ॥१२१॥

Some perform the *recaka* and *pūraka*, *kumbhaka* and *trāṭika*,[47] some listen to the sound of the *nāda* and concentrate their minds on it,
Some make with their ankles the *kūrma* posture,[48] some fill their abdomen with breath (*apāṇa*, from the rectum), without the unstruck *nāda* they fail. (118)
Some meditate on the sun, bloom in the void, some have themselves buried, fly about, or administer pills,
Some gaze into the fire, direct their meditation to the *trikuṭī*; without *brah-ma*-gnosis they will not be able to check the five [senses]. (119)
Let them drink from the beginningless cup, let them recite the mantra of their chosen deity—there is no end to the shows that are performed!

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44 Or: 'without a guru imparting truth to him.'
45 Or: 'he will not get rid of time.'
46 This may be a corrupt spelling for *kūraṃma* < *kūrma*, tortoise (posture). I have translat-ed according to this conjecture. See also the next note.
47 *Recaka* and *pūraka* are exhalation and inhalation, *kumbhaka* is the retention of breath (on these see *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* 2 *passim*, and particularly 2.43–45). These are per-formed in the rhythm of the articulation of the first three phonemes of the syllable *oṁ*, that is, *a-u-m*. *Trāṭika/trāṭaka* purifies the eyes (*Haṭhayogapradīpikā* 2.31–32).
48 The *kūrma* posture is described in *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* 1.22 thusly: 'Press the anus firmly with the ankles in opposite directions and sit well poised.'

Let them consume a datura mixture[49] and roots; without yoga, the body can't
be perfected. (120)
Let him pose as a lion, let him assume the shape of a lion, let him recite the
Bhairavavīra-mantra,[50]
Let him worship on the cremation ground, let him hold a skull and sit in a
[particular] posture—but for the guru's word he does not attain yoga. (121)

In the yoga of *brahma*-gnosis, the significance of yogic postures recedes. Follow-
ing his guru's instructions, the disciple reaches a state thus described:

(fol. 529a) . . . मीच पांणी भरै ॥ काल रष्या करै ॥ बीजली छयांणवै कोटि आंधी ॥
मेघ अग्नी झरै[51] ॥ बूंद हीरा धरै ॥ म्रितक जागिया ॥ जुरा बांधी ॥१४६॥
डाल औहटी चलै ॥ मूल बृषा फलै ॥ जड़ पाताल जब स्वर्ग जावै ॥
अग्नि सींचत रहै ॥ बाई मंडल गहै ॥ छेकि ब्रह्मांड घन सुनि छावै ॥१४७॥
षोजि बंझ पूतं कढै ॥ तिसि बृषि जोगी चढै ॥ ते फल षाइ करि प्रांण जीवै ॥
जुगि जुगि ताली रहै ॥ गुष्टि मन स्यूं कहै ॥ अषै प्रकास तहां रस पीवै ॥१४८॥
सकल साधू जहां ॥ सिध साधिक तहां ॥ अषंड भगति धुनि सेव मांडै ॥
श्रब कां(fol. 529b)मं तजै ॥ ब्रह्म नांमं भजै ॥ भगत भगवंत समि आंन छांडै ॥१४९॥
मेरिसिषर लहैं ॥ सहस्र गंगा बहै ॥ त्रिमल नीर अंम्रित पीवै ॥
अमर आसंण रहै नाथ नाथं कहै ॥ दादू नाथं त जोग्यंद्र जीवै ॥१५०॥
इम साधू करैं ॥ बृष उलटा धरैं ॥ बिषम गढ षोजि अरु ध्यांन लावै ॥
ड्यंभ पाषंड तजै ॥ गोब्यंद नांम भजै ॥ भगति धरा जब मौज पावै ॥१५१॥
भगती साची गहै ॥ उलटि कालं दहै ॥ मन अरु पवन कौं बंध लावै ॥
पचीस साध्या रहै ॥ पंच तत्वं गहै ॥ द्वार नव भेदि दसमं जावै ॥१५२॥
गुरू मारग चलैं ॥ तहां भिष्या मिलै ॥ मंत्र धुनि भेदि ब्रह्मांड छेवै ॥
चक्र लहरी धरै ॥ श्रब छापा करै ॥ द्वादस हंस सिरि तिलक भेदै ॥१५३॥
माल उलटी बहै ॥ ताल अजपा कहै ॥ छ सै सहंस ईकीस सोधै ॥
जाप माला फिरै ॥ भगत ऐसैं तिरै ॥ रोमरोमं गुंण मंन बोधै ॥१५४॥
भगति ऐसी करै ॥ अगंम बुधी धरै ॥ अनंत साधू संगि परस पावै ॥
गुपति गुफा रहै ॥ ब्रह्म बाचा गहै ॥ जैदेव ना(?)मां तहां भगति गावै ॥१५५॥
षट चक्रौं चढै ॥ माल अजपा रढै ॥ सुनि गुफा धुनि तूर बावै ॥
ररंकार सदा रहै ॥ नाद पूरा गहै ॥ रांमानंद [X]भगत कबीर गावै ॥१५६॥

Death is cast into the water, he guards time, ninety-six billions of lightnings
and storms are there,
Fire pours down from the clouds,[52] they hold diamond drops,[53] he who was
dead is awakened, old age is checked. (146)
The branches of the tree are gone, it bears fruit at the root when the inert
netherworld goes to heaven,

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49 The translation is tentative. While *dhatara* is *dhatūra* (datura, thorn-apple), *sāmiṇa* is
unclear to me. Perhaps it is related to *sān-* (to mix, to knead).

50 A loose reference to the Kaula cult.

51 *Gorakhbānī*, *Gyāṃna tilaka*, p. 208, v. 6.

52 As it streams down as the *bindu*, the drop of transformed life energy, the fire of *brahman*
or yoga (*brahmāgni*, *yogāgni*), 'burns up the fire of time or death' (*kālāgni*) (White (1996),
p. 282).

53 Or: 'he holds diamond drops.'

Fire waters it, it occupies the sphere of the wind, dense void spreads over the whole of the universe (*brahmāṇḍa*).[54] (147)

On his search the son of the son of the barren woman[55] appears to him on a tree on which he rides; eating the fruit of this, prana lives,[56]

For all ages meditation lasts,[57] he converses with his mind (*man*); where there is the imperishable light, he drinks rasa. (148)

All sadhus are there, all siddhas and *sādhaka*s, in perpetual bhakti *dhvani*-worship is held,

He gives up all desire, he worships the *brahma*-name; because bhakta and *bhagavān* are identical, he gives up all else. (149)

He reaches the peak of Mount Meru, a thousand Gangas flow, he drinks from the pure nectar water,

His seat is immortal, he says 'Nātha, Nātha!,' and so Dādū Nāth, the lord of yoga, lives. (150)

This is how sadhus act: They hold the tree upside-down, they search for the impenetrable fort and meditate,

They give up pretence and heresy, worship the name of Govinda and are in ecstasy when the stream of bhakti flows. (151)

He grasps true bhakti, upside-down he burns time, he checks his mind and breath,

The twenty-five [elements of Sāṃkhya] become manageable, he grasps the five elements, penetrating nine doors he goes to the tenth.[58] (152)

He walks the way of the guru, on this he receives alms; piercing with the mantra that is *dhvani*, he penetrates the universe (*brahmāṇḍa*),

The chakra hold the waves,[59] he makes his imprint on everything, the *haṃ-sa* breath of twelve finger-lengths pierces the headmark.[60] (153)

The rosary circles in a reverse fashion, he articulates the *ajapā* and claps its rhythm, he understands the twenty-one thousand and six hundred,[61]

The rosary circles, in this way the bhakta is saved, he understands his mind with its myriads of qualities. (154)

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54 Compare *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* 4.56 where the state of the yogi who has achieved identity with Brahman is described as follows: 'Void within, void without, void like a pot in space (*ākāśa*). Full within, full without, full like a pot in the ocean.'

55 In Dādū's *sākhi*, a trope for *ātmabodha*, for which see DBh, s. v. *baṃjha*.

56 Compare *Gorakhbānī*, pada 18.1; in this Brahman is called, 'a plant without seed, a tree without root;/[Even] without leaves and flowers it gives fruit./[It is] a barren woman's child,/The legless and armless riding the branch on a tree.' (Trans. Sukhdev Singh and Gordan Djurdjevic in Djurdjevic (2005), p. 279).

57 'Meditation lasts': *tālī* (key) is a trope for *dhyāna* (meditation); see Callewaert (1974–1977), p. 322, v. 64.

58 The nine apertures of the body and the subtle aperture in the skull, the *brahmarandhra*.

59 Tentative translation. I take this to refer to the life energy ascending through the esoteric conduits (*nāḍī*). The chief of these is the *suṣumnā*, running along the spine and the location of the chakra.

60 The life-breath (*haṃ-sa*) is imagined as flowing also outside the yogi's nose at a distance of twelve finger-breadths or finger-lengths. Its chief support is the *suṣumṇā*. Compare *Gorakhbānī*, *sākhī* 116 and 155, along with Baṛthvāl's commentary.

61 This is the number of inhalations and exhalations per day.

> This is how he performs bhakti: He understands the inaccessible, along with innumerable sadhus he touches it,
> He stays in the secret cave,[62] he obtains *brahma*-words; where there are Jaidev and Nāmā (Nāmdev), he sings the praise of bhakti. (155)
> He ascends through the six chakras, he murmurs the *ajapā*-rosary, in the empty cave the trumpet of *dhvani* resounds,
> 'Ra-ra' drones perpetually, he grasps the perfect *nāda*, the bhakta Rāmānand and Kabīr sing eulogies. (156)[63]

The perfect yogi is a link in the chain of precursors. In the sequence of the *Ādibodha* (vv. 155–190) these are:

(1) the Sants: Jaidev, Nāmdev, Rāmānand, Kabīr, Raidās, Pīpā, Sojhā, Som, Aṅgad, Sen, and Dhanā;

(2) the mythical heroes: Nārada, Śeṣa, Sanaka and his brothers, Kapiladeva, Śukadeva (Sukhadeva), the seers 'and others';

(3) the *avadhūta*s: Datta, Gorakh, Gopīcand, Bharathari (Bhartṛhari), Machindra (Matsyendra), Lakṣmaṇ, Ṣaḍmukh,[64] Garuḍa, Haṇvant, Carpaṭ, Nāgā Arjan, Kapālī, Hartālī, Kaṇerīpāv, Ajaipāl, Śrī Bālagudāī, Cauraṅgīnāth, Mīḍakīpāv, Jālandhrī;

(4) the Jains: Arhants, the twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras, Pārasnāth and Nemīnāth,[65] and all Jain lay devotees (*sarāvaga < śrāvaka*),

(5) the Muslims, including the prophets Jesus and Moses, the shaikhs, and 'Mahelaṃma Salemāṃ' (?).[66]

Dādū, the surpreme *avadhūta* and master yogi, is the crown of all of these. He has transcended the six religious systems as they are enumerated at the end of the *Ādibodha*: bhaktas, *saṃnyāsī*s, Jains, *jaṅgama*s, *darveś*s and pandits. The text's

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62 The *bhramaraguphā*, the esoteric cave situated at, or slightly above, the forehead. The buzzing of bee therein is identified with the unstruck sound.

63 Further down in the text (v. 185), the drone of the unstruck sound is identified with the *kalima*, the Muslim confession of faith.

64 A siddha not mentioned by Dvivedī (VS 2014). Otherwise all the siddhas enumerated are documented in that publication.

65 Pārśvanāth and Nemīnāth figure as masters of alchemy in the Jain tradition and have been claimed by the Nāths as ancestors in their own tradition (White (1996), pp. 93, 119).

66 Here, one expects an enumeration. A conjectural reading could be *maulānā salemānāṃ*, and be translated as 'shaikhs, maulanas, and Solomon.'

concluding injunction (v. 264) is to strive for *brahma*-gnosis beyond the divide between Hindu and Turk.[67]

The focus on *brahma*-gnosis is well captured by the explanation of the *Ādibodha*'s title in the colophon: the *brahma-śāstra* from the *mahāpurāṇa* that follows the path of yoga composed by Dādū. Pṛthīnāth Sūtradhāra's work in the same codex is also classified in its various colophons as a *mahāpurāṇa* with shastras as subunits.

The Nāth spirit of both the *Ādibodha* and the *Gorakhbānī* is marked by the long process of transition from the Shaiva tantra to a system going beyond sectarian boundaries. In their colophons, the treatises of the *Gorakhbānī* pay allegiance to Śiva (*oṁ namo sivāī, sivāī*), and '*sivāi, sivāi*,' coterminous with the entire universe, is mentioned as the Nāth's reverential exclamation in the *Ādibodha* too (v. 14). Śiva and Śakti are the binary principles of the universe. Śiva rules supreme in Śivapurī on Mount Kailāsa, where he sits merged with Śakti. United by the yogic process, the two are *brahma,* and as such are often named Rām, Hari, or Nirañjan, the latter name also figuring in the older Kaula tantric tradition. The primordial Nāth is *brahma* (vv. 14, 62, 97, 150, 172, 175), who resides in the interior (v. 14).

Conclusion

While the *Ādibodha* is clearly a Dādūpanthī text, the *Gorakhbānī*, first transmitted by the Dādūpanth, by the same token does not become a Dādūpanthī text. Rather, it represents the testimony of the sublimation of the Nāth tradition to a quest for *brahma*-gnosis as it was also pursued by the followers of Dādū. It was the result of a process not only parallel with, but also implicating, the Sant. There can be no doubt that both texts share the Nāthpanthī tradition as it has been documented especially by Gold and Gold, A. Gold, D. Gold, and Bouillier.[68] The *Gorakhbāṇī* seems to be, however, quite detached from the context of a living Nāth sect or of any yogic lineages. It is rather a discourse beyond and above sect. It is interesting to note that the difference between the Nāth sectarian tradition and the tradition of the *Gorakhbānī* is also a contemporary phenomenon. Nāth-yogīs are usually not heard giving continuous recitals (*akhaṇḍ-pāṭh*) of the *Gorakhbānī*,[69] though the poetry that they sing at bhajan gatherings is rife with esoteric terminology, as has been documented by Gold and Gold.[70] My preliminary inquiry has produced only

67 This is similar to the last but one of the concluding stanzas of the *Anabhaiprabodha* (Callewaert (1974–1977), pp. 182–185, vv. 129–136).
68 Gold and Gold (1984), (2012); Gold D. (1996), (1999); Gold A. G. (1992); Bouillier (2008).
69 Communication with Daniel Gold, April 2015, and Véronique Bouillier, August 2015.
70 Gold and Gold (2012).

one recent instance of the continuous recital of the *Gorakhbānī* among Nāthyogī. This has over the last few years become a particular format of performance in Sawai Madhopur and draws a large audience, including a good number of Nāthyogī sadhus.[71] Its promoters are educated lay Nāthyogī, who base their *akhaṇḍ-pāṭh* on Barthvāl's edition of the *Gorakhbānī*![72]

The conflict between the tantric Shaiva model of Nāthism and its new bhakti-fied form is reflected in the compositions of the earliest Sant who participated in that process. The way in which the sublimated, trans-sectarian tradition represented by the *Gorakhbānī* and also reflected in the *Ādibodha* was further negotiated in the Nāth *sampradāya* and between the Nāth *sampradāya* and the Sant calls for examination. The absence of emphasis on the physical aspects of Haṭhayoga in the Nāth *sampradāya* has been noted.[73] Taking the discussion further, Patton Burchett followed the various positions of Vaishnava sects vis-à-vis yogic practice.[74] The Dādūpanth was naturally marginal to his topic. I think that the *Ādibodha* is in unison with Dādūpanthī exegesis of the same period (Garībdās). However, the Dādūpanthī attitude was not uniform at all, and not all Dādūpanthī lineages emphasize yoga. Accordingly, to form a clearer picture of the diverse strands in Dādūpanthī tradition, one would have to examine individual lineages. Even then, writings and artefacts cannot be related directly to actual practice.[75] Lineages were porous and traditions moved with their transmitters. This may seriously hamper conclusions. In spite of this, I believe that examining codices from particular lineages and not just using these as sources for editing individual oeuvres is a way to better understand the dynamics at work in a sect with a diverse constituency that, as the present example shows, constantly related to other forms of religion—the 'six systems'—that it tried to surpass.

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71 Véronique Bouillier mentioned to me that sadhus usually treat Nāth householders as slightly inferior and was surprised to hear of their participation in that performance (conversation with the author in October 2015).

72 I thank Sarita Yogi in Jaipur, a social activist among her Nāthyogī community, for putting me into contact with lay Nāthyogī at Sawai Madhopur, with whom I conducted a telephone interview in September 2015.

73 Bouillier (2008), pp. 218–222; Mallinson (2011) (quoted as online resource, p. 18); see Horstmann (2005) for the convergence of the modern *sahaja* yoga and bhakti at the seat of Amṛtnāth at Fatehpur.

74 Burchett (2012).

75 Does the representation of the eighty-four yogic postures in an undated illustrated manuscript of Jangopāl's *Prahlādcaritra* in the Dādūpanthī collection of Naraina reflect Dādūpanthī practice or just the execution of a yogic topos? Or the sumptuous album of all the eighty-four yogic postures from the mid-eighteenth century and originally belonging to one Jaitrām (according to the caption given the seventy-one folios in the possession of the Sañjay Śarmā Saṃgrahālay evaṃ Śodhsaṃsthān, Jaipur)? For a yogic scroll of uncertain correlation to performance, see Horstmann (2014a).

Abbreviations

Ādibodha	see Mevāṛau, Mohan
DBh	see Callewaert (2009)
DDP	see Nārāyaṇdās (VS 2035–2036)
DJL	see Callewaert (1988)
Gorakhbānī	see Baṛthvāl (1979)

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11. To Go to Vrindavan—or Not: Refashioning Sant Tradition in the Eighteenth Century

Abstract. By the eighteenth century, the religious cultures emerging around many North Indian Sants looked rather different from those that took shape around Kabīr and other fifteenth and sixteenth century Sants, who were typically low-caste and at least moderately iconoclastic. Eighteenth century Sants often themselves came from middle castes and had middle-class disciples. Even while identifying with the broad Sant tradition arising in the wake of Kabīr, moreover, many embraced aspects of the conventional religions he disparaged. The chapter suggests some sociohistorical reasons for the broad changes that occurred in Sant tradition, illustrating its diverse development through a focus on the contrasting religious personas of Sants Rāmcaraṇ of Shahpura and Carandās of Delhi.

Keywords. Sants, Caraṇdās/Charandas/, Rāmcaraṇ/Ramcharan, Eighteenth century, Shahpura.

Although Kabīr, Dādū, and other great Sants of the fifteenth and sixteenth century were largely from the humblest strata of Indian society, their teachings were directed also to people from higher classes, who sometimes paid attention to them. Devotees of all sorts were drawn to these Sants' particular style of piety—oriented towards a loving but aniconic Lord who might be reached through yogic means. A still wider range of less devoted souls were taken by the trenchant turns the great Sants' popular Hindi verse could take. Even as memories of their low-caste origins lingered, by the eighteenth century the great early Sants were seen as well-respected forebears of a broadly imagined community of North Indian devotion.

New Sants of the eighteenth century built on the heritage of their great and less great predecessors, using the early Sants' characteristic language of yoga and devotion to develop their own versions of a recognized stream of internalized piety. Called *nirguṇa* bhakti*, 'devotion to the Formless Lord,' that stream was expressed through verse that could be by turns sweet, didactic, illuminating, and confrontational. The new Sants, though—in contrast to the earlier—very often came from the middle classes (trading communities are particularly visible) and sometimes

developed styles of Sant religious culture meant largely for people of similar so-cial origins. What did these new versions of Sant tradition look like and how did they emerge? Let us begin with the stories of two eighteenth-century Sants: Rām-caraṇ (1720–1798), the first guru of the Shahpura Rāmsnehī[1]—a Sant lineage still vital in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh—and Caraṇdās of Delhi (1703–1782), with a less distinctive living lineage but more widely known as a poet.

While reading a contemporary Hindi hagiography of Rāmcaraṇ, I was struck by an account of an aborted trip the Sant had started to Vrindavan.[2] Rāmcaraṇ had found a guru in Kṛpārām, who traced a lineage through several generations to the legendary sixteenth-century Rāmānandī ascetic Kṛṣṇadās Payahārī of Galta.[3] Rāmcaraṇ had, however, grown uncomfortable with the company of the rough and argumentative yogis who also followed Kṛpārām, so he requested and received his guru's permission to go his own way. Not quite sure which direction to take, Rāmcaraṇ set out for Vrindavan—maybe the more refined styles of devotion there would suit his temperament better. On his way, though, he met a mysterious Sant who convinced him that he was making a mistake: 'Over there is *sagun* thought,' the Sant tells Rāmcaraṇ, 'and you're a *nirgun* sadhu.' Here our late twentieth-cen-tury hagiographer quotes a nineteenth-century predecessor to highlight the differ-ence between the aniconic *nirguṇa* bhakti of Sants in the Kabīrian tradition and its binary counterpart, known as *saguṇa* bhakti: devotion involving an *image* of the Lord, such as Rāma with his bow or Kṛṣṇa with his flute. Although not all devotees are exclusive in their orientation towards *nirguṇa* or *saguṇa* worship, our hagiographer's attention to the distinction indicates its importance in the Rāmsnehī tradition. The Sant appearing to Rāmcaraṇ on the road, we hear, thus advised him to keep to his own way; living in Vrindavan would just raise doubts in his mind. In-stead, the Sant suggested an alternative: 'You go to Mewar; chant Ram's name and spread it. Offer a true teaching: start a path to liberation.'[4] The mysterious Sant then disappeared, and Rāmcaraṇ concluded that he had just had the darshan of Viṣṇu. The eventual result was his starting a new *nirguṇa* Sant lineage based in Mewar.

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1 In addition to Rāmcaraṇ's lineage in Shahpura, there are three other regional Rajasthani Rāmsnehī lineages based in Rain (Ren, dist. Nagaur), Sinthal (Bikaner), and Kherapa (Jodhpur). Even though the four lineages look to some related sources, they have developed separately and see one another as distinct.

2 Vintiram Ramsnehi (1984).

3 On the Galta Rāmānandī, see Pinch (1999), Horstmann (2002), and Burchett (2012), ch. 2.

4 *vahāṃ hai sarguṇ khyāl āp ho nirguṇ sādhū*
  duvidhā māhi duraṃg upaja hai bād vivād
  tum jāo mevār rām sumiro sumirao
  karke jñān updeś mukti ka panth calāo. (Laldasji 46–47, Vintiram Ramsnehi (1984), p. 59).
Vintiram's prose work regularly gives long verse quotes from three hagiographical prede-cessors (including the just-cited Laldasji) to help his book speak with the voice of authority (see Gold 2018).

This incident led me to recall an event in the life of Caraṇdās, whom I had first come across many years earlier.[5] He also one day set out for Vrindavan, but unlike Rāmcaraṇ, Caraṇdās completed his journey and had a highly transformative dar-shan of Kṛṣṇa himself. He would then incorporate this experience into the largely *nirguṇa* teachings he had previously espoused as a guru.

Even though these two eighteenth-century Sants responded differently to the pull of Vrindavan, the two were similar in some important socio-religious ways that differentiated them from their better known early Sant predecessors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In contrast to most of those, they lived as celibate sadhus, not householders. And while most of those came famously from the lower ranks of society, Rāmcaraṇ and Caraṇdās both came from respectable mercantile communities and had large middle-class followings. Beyond these significant socio-religious commonalities, however, the two figures were in many ways dissimilar. To their middle-class and other devotees, they presented different versions of Sant piety—Rāmcaraṇ more strictly *nirguṇa*, Caraṇdās more mixed—and along with these, strikingly different images of what it meant to be a Sant.

A simple ascetic becomes a prolific poet

Rāmcaraṇ, born to a Vijayavargiya baniya family in a village near Malpura, then under Jaipur rule, renounced the world in his thirty-first year and thereafter appeared always as an ascetic living a simple life. His development as a religious teacher seems rather conventional. After finding a guru and then setting off on his own, he eventually achieved the status of a *jivanmukta*—someone 'released while alive'—in a grove outside Bhilwara, in the north-east part of Mewar. There he found his first followers among a group of young men from a trading community, who spread the word about him among their friends and relatives. When some Brahmins there complained to the rana in Udaipur about him, he moved to Shahpura, about fifty kilometres further to the north-east and controlled by an independent raja who welcomed him. He made his home in Shahpura until his death twenty-five years later, a settled sadhu surrounded by an increasing number of devotees.

Scenes of Rāmcaraṇ's early days as a wanderer—largely unwitnessed by his contemporary devotees—provide the backdrop for some dramatic miracle stories about him: he raised a young man from the dead[6] and turned a dim-witted farmer into a brilliant scholar.[7] But the stories reported about the unusual abilities he

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5 Gold (1987), pp. 67–77.
6 Vintiram Ramsnehi (1984), pp. 50–51.
7 Ibid., pp. 66–67.

demonstrated during his settled days as a guru are mostly more prosaic: they tell of his knowledge about distant events, for example, or his avoidance of imminent danger.[8] He is represented as sometimes outspoken but generally reserved, observing the proprieties of a well-behaved monk.

Although quiet in his demeanour, Rāmcaraṇ was a very energetic author of Sant verse, producing twenty-four named treatises—some rather short, others quite long. These were first published, all together, in 1925 as one large-sized tome of 1,000 pages. Copies of that book, called *Aṇbhai Vāṇī* (*Verses of Experience*) after the first long manuscript it records, are found at all Rāmsnehī institutions—big and small. Called Ramdwaras, these continue to flourish in several regions of Rajasthan and into Madhya Pradesh. In Ramdwaras, the *Aṇbhai Vāṇī* is read from daily and treated as scripture. The substance of the *Aṇbhai Vāṇī,* covering all the topics conventionally treated by the Sant, should be familiar to anyone conversant with Sant texts from Kabīr onwards.[9] Most of the verse seems straightforward and didactic, but two of Rāmcaraṇ's shorter treatises focus on internal yogic experiences.[10] The compilation stands out through its sheer bulk and its use of some popular eighteenth-century metrical forms: Rāmcaraṇ was particularly fond of composing simple *kuṇḍaliyā*s.

However one may judge the quality of its verse, the *Aṇbhai Vāṇī* serves its purpose as the scriptural basis for a particular version of Sant religious culture—one with an aniconic aesthetic, a renunciatory ethic, and an emphasis on non-violence that has often found a response within Rajasthani trading castes, Hindu as well as Jain.[11] Though less rigorous in their practice of non-violence than the most pious Jains, the Shahpura Rāmsnehīs, for example, like pious Jains, are concerned about the microorganisms living in water and advocate straining it for all personal use.[12] Their aniconic aesthetic is expressed at the extremely large Ramdwara in Shahpura,

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8 Ibid., pp. 121, 147.

9 Rāmcaraṇ's verses run the gamut of Sant genres, including prayers (*vintī*), songs of longing (*viraha*), and praises to the guru. The first edited collection of them (of 500 ordinary-sized pages) was not published until 2008 (Samarthram Ramsnehi 2008).

10 These two treatises are included in Samarthram Ramsnehi (2008), pp. 158–166 and include an unconventional description of the movement of *rāmnām* through the yogic chakras together with some of Rāmcaraṇ's experiences of the *śabda* (sound) that is frequently referred to in Sant verse.

11 On the close interrelationships between Jain and Hindu trading castes in Rajasthan, see Cottam Ellis (1991). Babb (1999) and (2002) examines Rajasthani trading caste identity and the place of non-violence in it. On the important roles these castes have played in Rajasthani Sant traditions from the seventeenth century generally, see Williams (2014), pp. 199–209. On their foundational role for the Shahpura Rāmsnehīs, see Gold (2018).

12 Straining water has since been enjoined on all good Rāmsnehīs, listed as one of eleven 'principles and rules' in a contemporary authoritative Shahpura publication (Ramdayal 2005).

which is very well kept up as the 'international centre' for members of Rāmsnehī families living abroad. There worship practices remain spare and involve no visible likenesses of the divine: the central object of reverence is a tall pillar with only the name Rāma written on it.

A playful Sant becomes a Kṛṣṇa devotee

The picture is different in Caraṇdās *galī,* the lane in central Delhi of Hauz Qazi where that Sant spent his last years. There the main monument to him is an elaborate Kṛṣṇa temple, jointly kept up by the spiritual descendants of Caraṇdās's three main disciples, who all maintain their own establishments in the neighbourhood. Although the Caraṇdāsīs eventually developed as a tradition of more or less conventional Kṛṣṇa worship, Caraṇdās himself was steeped in the *nirguṇa* Sant tradition, writing padas to the *sat guru* and *nirguṇa* Rāma[13] as well as treating secrets of the subtle yogic body.[14] Emerging as a Sant in the ups and downs of eighteenth-century Delhi, however, he appeared as an arresting character—remarkable in his own right and a striking contrast to Rāmcaraṇ.

Growing up in roughly parallel socio-religious strata—Caraṇdās was a Dhusar baniya from Haryana—the two Sants have been depicted developing as holy persons of contrasting types. Stories about Rāmcaraṇ's childhood show him as a brilliant child quickly becoming fully literate and gaining mastery of 'Hindi, Urdu, Farsi, Sanskrit, Rajasthani and other languages.'[15] Those about Caraṇdās, by contrast, show him as indifferent to worldly subjects and given to religious reveries.[16] Rāmcaraṇ's father is presented as a responsible civil servant and businessman.[17] Caraṇdās's father, we hear, liked to go meditate in the woods—and one day went off without coming back, leaving his young son to be raised by his wife's family.[18] And while Rāmcaraṇ is said to have experienced a period of responsible working adulthood before he renounced and found his guru, Caraṇdās is depicted as having had a vision of his guru as a child, meeting him in the flesh for an initiation at nineteen, and then moving seamlessly into his role as a holy man. Importantly, moreover, Caraṇdās's guru, unlike Rāmcaraṇ's, is represented as no normally embodied human being—however exalted—but the siddha Śukdev, the son of Vyāsa, perpetually embodied as a twelve-year-old boy. With a guru who was the legendary

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13 See, e. g., Charandas (1966), pp. 422–423.

14 Ibid., pp. 105–109.

15 Vintiram Ramsnehi (1984), p. 19.

16 Ghanshyam Das (2000), pp. 19–21.

17 Vintiram Ramsnehi (1984), p. 11; Pandey (1982), p. 36.

18 Ghanshyam Das (2000), pp. 12–18.

son of the divider of the Veda, Caraṇdās need have no qualms about making some radical innovations in the *nirguṇa* tradition he inherited.[19]

Presaging his turn to Kṛṣṇa, Caraṇdās was presented as a playful figure even before he went to Vrindavan. Thus we hear that when thieves had broken into his house one night and were about to leave with sacks of his valuables, he gave them a scare by blinding them temporarily so they couldn't get out and later appeared to them, at dawn. He then not only told them to keep what they had gathered—they'd worked so hard for it—but also showed them the way to the road and helped them load their sacks onto their backs.[20] In an encounter with the Iranian invader Nadir Shah, Caraṇdās is portrayed as wise and powerful, but also a tease who could get a little violent. After Nadir Shah had heard of the Sant's successful prediction of the date of his arrival, he had him arrested, but Caraṇdās disappeared from his cell and simply went home. Easily found and arrested a second time, he appeared in Nadir Shah's room and hit him on the head with a stick.[21] At this point Nadir Shah finally acknowledged the Sant's spiritual authority.

Caraṇdās, however, was often not so confrontational: if things got tedious for him, his response was sometimes just to leave the scene. Thus, after Nadir Shah went back to Persia and Caraṇdās's friend Muhammad Shah came to the throne in Delhi, nobles started visiting the Sant for all the wrong reasons; he then went incognito to Shahdara, across the Yamuna, eventually letting himself be discovered by devotees and returning to Delhi. He then left Delhi again, this time for his fateful trip to Vrindavan.[22] But even as Caraṇdās became attracted to ritual Kṛṣṇa bhakti, his Vrindavan was informed by a Sant's yogic vision. The sphere in which it *really* existed was not of this world. In a verse placed near the very beginning of his major collection, he tells us:

> Kṛṣṇa always lives in Vraj, but doesn't meet me.
> He hides from worldly vision, but will meet the one with fixed attention.
> The sphere of Mathura is nowhere manifest; if it's manifest it isn't Mathura.
> To see what's called the sphere of Mathura, you need the inner eye.[23]

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19 See Gold (1987), p. 72.
20 Ghanshyam Das (2000), p. 38.
21 Ibid., pp. 60–66.
22 Ibid., pp. 66–72.
23 *sadā kṛṣṇa vrajmeṃ rahaiṃ, mohiṃ milata haiṃ nāhiṃ . . .*
    jagata dṛṣṭi soṃ rahaiṃ alopā, milhaiṃ tāhi dhyān jina ropā
    mathurāmaṇḍal paragaṭa nāhīṃ, paragata hai so mathurā nāhīṃ
    mathurāmaṇḍala yahī kahāvai, divya dṛṣṭi bina dṛṣṭi na āvai. (Charandas (1966), p. 3).

Refashioning Sant tradition

The contrasting stories of Rāmcaraṇ and Caraṇdās illustrate the diversity that had emerged within Sant religious cultures by the eighteenth century—but the Sants had *never* constituted a tightly coherent tradition. What they had in common was a heritage of religious verse featuring characteristic themes and styles, with some commonly recurring terms that could be taken in a variety of more and less esoteric ways. The wider Sant tradition was thus approachable at different levels. The term *śabda*, for example, which means 'sound' or 'word,' can refer to the internal sounds heard in yoga, the words of a teaching, a piece of Sant poetry or a genre of verse. The term guru or *sat* (true) *guru*—the distinction is not always clear—could easily be taken to refer to a living guru or to the founder of a lineage, but it also frequently seems to be used as a name for the highest divine principle. Although in certain contexts, guru*, śabda,* and, say, *satsaṅga* (good company) had clear referents, they could also present devotees with profound ambiguities. These central but polyvalent terms of Sant texts, together with a characteristic, often opaque, language of yoga inherited from the Nāths,[24] make Sant verse clearly recognizable as a broad class of Hindi literature—but one that offers ample scope for interpretation, with the same key terms often having different primary significances in different Sant religious cultures.

Also amenable to alternative treatments is the spirit of dissent suffusing Sant verse, famously initiated by Kabīr's diatribes against the hypocritically orthoprax in both Hinduism and Islam.[25] It is easy to see how that spirit of dissent could come naturally to the low-caste early Sants, who, along with many of their devotees, might see religious authority undergirding hierarchies that they could only find oppressive.[26] As we will see, this spirit of dissent—eventually taken as characteristic of Sant verse—could also resonate with the not-so-oppressed middle-class Sants and their devotees of subsequent eras, if not in quite the same ways.

Never excluded from Sants' circles, middle-class devotees and gurus make their appearance more widely in Sant tradition by the turn of the seventeenth century, as the appearance of Nābhājī's *Bhaktamāl* marks the incorporation of the great early Sants into a widely inclusive community of North Indian devotees—*saguṇa* and *nirguṇa* alike.[27] Although this community certainly had room for householder devotees such as Kabīr and Dādū, by then many Sant institutions had developed along monastic lines.[28] In this they followed sectarian traditions in the broader

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24 Gold (1987), pp. 117–147; Gold (2015).
25 For some fine illustrations from Kabīr, see Hess (1983), pp. 46–47 and passim.
26 See Dube (1998); Wakankar (2010).
27 See Hare (2011).
28 See Thiel-Horstmann (1986).

Hindu world—in the process, perhaps, making themselves appear more refined. Thus, the Nirañjanīs and Dādūpanthīs of Rajasthan developed as monastic traditions while attracting many lay devotees from mercantile and scribal castes. They also include a number of important middle- (and higher-) caste disciple-monks. In eastern Uttar Pradesh, with the gurus of the Bauri *paramparā*, based in Bhurkura, including early householder Sants of increasingly upper-caste status.[29]

These middle- and upper-caste Sants, too, could write about the uselessness of outward ritual, but they didn't always seem particularly angry about it. Unlike the often strident Kabīr, their tone often seemed simply dismissive: they had their own secrets of yoga and devotion and didn't need any priestly mediation. Paltu Sahib of Ayodhya, an eighteenth-century figure with links to the Bauri *paramparā*, tells us just that customary forms of Brahminic ritual are not for him: 'I won't worship Brahmā, Viṣṇu, or Maheśa, or fix attention on a god of stone.' He won't go to die in Kashi or bathe in Prayag either. He tells us instead of his inward alternative: 'The object of my love resides within my body, to him alone I'll bow my head.'[30] During the eighteenth century, the inner but loving lord of the Sants could have an increasing appeal not only for devotees from the middle castes, but also for independent holy persons of similar background wanting to make their mark. Now seen as members of an established community of bhakti, but still carrying a lingering spirit of dissent, the Sants and their verse proved attractive to charismatic figures from trading and scribal communities—whose social and economic importance had grown in early modern India.[31] These could now find support in a weighty tradition that bypassed Brahminical authority and spoke to them in vernaculars they could readily understand—and, just as importantly, easily write.

As Tyler Williams thoroughly describes for Rajasthan, the seventeenth century saw the efflorescence of a Sant manuscript culture. Monks in sectarian traditions prepared valued compilations of verse from figures in their own lineages and more broadly—relying on oral and written sources as well as their own memories.[32] Householder devotees made copies of these collections while also compiling less authoritative ones using local sources such as performers' chapbooks. As the circulation of manuscripts became normal, the poetic sophistication of Sant verse increased, and gifted educated Sant poets such as the Dādūpanthī Sundardās and the Nirañjanī Tursīdās began to participate in a literary culture that transcended

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29 See Gold (1987), pp. 89–90. An important collection of songs from the Bhurkura lineage has been edited by Indradeva (2005).

30 *Brahmā, bisnu, maheś na pujihauṃ, na murat cit lehauṃ*
     jo pyārā mere ghaṭa māṃ basatu hai, vāhī ko māth navaihauṃ
     na kāsī maiṃ karvat lehauṃ . . .
     prāg jāy tirath nahīṃ karihauṃ (Paltu Sahib (1974), p. 2).

31 See Bayly (1983), pp. 163–196.

32 Williams (2014).

clear distinctions between courtly and devotional norms.[33] By the time Rāmcaraṇ and Caraṇdās encountered Sant tradition in the eighteenth century its literary culture was already well known to many trading-caste monks and lay devotees—an element taken for granted in their own separate refashionings of it.

Rāmcaraṇ, who during his early years gained substantial experience of Rajasthani Sant sectarian life as well as familiarity with its written traditions, also had a model of what a Sant lineage establishment should be. That model included a founder who had produced ample verse and—as with the Dādūpanthīs and Nirañjanīs—left a collection of that verse to serve as a primary scripture. Having abandoned his trip to Vrindavan to start a new Mewari 'path of liberation,' Rāmcaraṇ nevertheless lived in a world where educated Sants composed in literary styles. He thus faced an implicit conflict between the religious authenticity of a spiritual pioneer and the refined aesthetics now expected of him as a Sant poet. He is presented, in the manner of one of the early (presumably unlettered) Sants, as a divinely inspired seer—with his spontaneous, orally composed verses immediately copied by an amanuensis.[34] How could he then care—as did the good Dādūpanthī monk Sundardās—about crafting polished literary works? In Rāmcaraṇ's case, repeated bursts of inspiration seemed to trump ideals of aesthetic perfection, with the *Aṇbhai Vāṇī* showing a learned understanding of literary forms of the day while being itself composed very fluidly.[35] It has some nice examples of familiar Sant genres among much else and is certainly voluminous enough to be a weighty Indian scripture—but it is yet to be mined by literary scholars for any poetic gems.

Caraṇdās, by contrast—even though the source of a once-vibrant tradition—didn't seem to take himself to be a religious founder as seriously as did Rāmcaraṇ. Living playfully in Delhi, Caraṇdās too could write very fluidly, but he also seems to have had no qualms about polishing some of his verse. Having been exposed to a version of Sant tradition early in his life, he adopted its song genres and wrote many artful padas, and has been characterized by McGregor as one of the more 'poetic' and 'subtle' Sant poets.[36] Like other later Sants,[37] he took up some well-known topics from Hindu scriptural tradition as well, in his case offering a Sant's

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33 Williams's treatment of the development of Nirañjanī manuscript culture (2014), pp. 196–267, emphasizes its scholarly side, but he offers a concise treatment of the Nirañjanī poet Tursīdās (pp. 232–233). Horstmann (2014), pp. 238–239, writing about Sundardās, notes the Dādūpanthī scholar's felt need to educate bright monks in order to participate successfully in intersectarian debate. On the Hindi literary world in Mughal times, see Busch (2011).

34 Vintiram Ramsnehi (1984), pp. 86–87.

35 Pandey (1982), pp. 482–494, lists examples of twenty-nine different metres in the *Aṇbhai Vāṇī* as well as the use of fifteen classical poetic adornments (*alaṃkāra*) (pp. 451–459). Some of the latter, such as *anuprāsa*, which plays with the same sound in individual lines, require considerable verbal dexterity.

36 McGregor (1984), p. 147.

37 For example, Malukdas (2002).

unorthodox treatment of the eight-limbed yoga and the story of Naciketas from the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, which is given an extensive retelling.[38] His literary approach to Kṛṣṇa bhakti was also unconventional: instead of using Kṛṣṇa bhakti's delicate lyric genres, he composed sometimes long narrative-verse renditions of stories from the Kṛṣṇa *līlā* that might also explicitly offer a glimpse of the inward meanings he saw in them.[39] It is this broader, inclusive, aspect of Caraṇdās's literary legacy that has overshadowed his lasting sectarian heritage, giving it a very different relationship to the broader Hindu world than that of Rāmcaraṇ.

At the same time, neither Caraṇdās nor Rāmcaraṇ, as Sants of their day, had a spiritual profile neatly conforming to the generic image of the great Sants living two or three centuries earlier. Rāmcaraṇ's message, like that of the great early Sant exemplar Kabīr, could be stridently aniconic—certainly enough to get him into trouble in Bhilwara. Unlike Kabīr, however, his lay following had spread through trading caste networks and he seemed intent on building it into a coherent religious community, clearly delegating his second (and last) amanuensis as his successor.[40] Settled quietly in Shahpura for twenty-five years, his story resembles more that of a conscious sectarian founder than an early Sant such as Kabīr—whose life is generally depicted as more unsettled, with conflict driving his story along until the end.[41]

Caraṇdās, by contrast, if more averse than Kabīr to conflict, was like him unsettled—regularly moving house in Delhi, going away and returning again. And like Kabīr, he was clearly an unconventional fellow, if in a softer, more endearing way. The social range of his following, moreover, is depicted as very broad: we've seen some memorable miraculous interactions with thieves and potentates, but there were also plenty of more ordinary interactions—such as giving a barren woman a child—with devotees most often identified as middle-caste: Vaishya, *kāyastha*, *khatrī*.[42] Very broad, as well, in his religious vision, Caraṇdās eventually took the Sant's *nirguṇa* bhakti as a way back into a larger Hindu tradition that embraced *saguṇa* worship too.

This was a vision, however, that turned out to be too broad to maintain its distinctiveness over generations, especially given its apparent social inclusiveness. So even though the Caraṇdāsīs seem to have flourished as a named Vaishnava lineage for a while,[43] that lineage is now rather quiet, with hereditary devotees prac-

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38 Charandas (1966), pp. 53–109, 558–646.

39 For example, Charandas (1966), pp. 486–495.

40 This successor was Rāmjanna, whose own works are compiled in a voluminous book (Ramjanna Ramsnehi 2002). Many of the later Rāmsnehī gurus were also prolific Sant poets whose verses have been published by the main Rāmsnehī *āśrama* in Shahpura.

41 See Lorenzen (1991), pp. 93–128, a passage giving a translation of Anantadās' *Kabir Parachai*.

42 Ghanshyam Das (2000), pp. 146, 44, 48.

43 Shukla (1988).

ticing familiar traditions of Kṛṣṇa worship. The Shahpura Rāmsnehīs, by contrast, continue as a distinctive community, with a fairly homogeneous lay following grounded in trading castes and led by a mixed-caste group of monks—all following well-enunciated precepts based in a particular strictly *nirguṇa* Sant path. Although the number of young Rāmsnehī monks is dwindling, strong lay leadership is often able to keep religious life vital at established local Ramdwaras. And at the main Shahpura *āśrama*, a distinctive Rāmsnehī religious culture remains evident, with nightly congregational chanting of Ram's name in intricate choral response patterns that I have never heard before.

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PART IV

JAINA AUTHORITATIVE FIGURES

John E. Cort

12. 'No one gives like the guru': Devotion to the True Guru in Digambara Hindi Literature

Abstract. The theme of the saving power of the true guru is common in all of the religious traditions of India. This chapter explores early modern Digambara Jain literature in Hindi that describes the true guru, who for Digambaras was the naked muni. Since the naked muni tradition was all but extinct at the time, these poems adopt the theme of *viraha* (love in separation) to express the poet's unfulfilled and unfulfillable longing to meet such a true guru. With the revival of the naked muni tradition in the early twentieth century, we see new poems directed toward living naked gurus, expressed in the aesthetic flavor (*rasa*) of *śānta* (peace).

Keywords. Guru, Muni, Digambara, Jain, *viraha*.

Let me begin with a pada, a song:

> No one gives like the guru.
> The light of the sun is never destroyed,
> Only covered by darkness.
>
> Desiring nothing for himself
> he rains on everyone
> like a cloud.
> He saves those souls
> burning in hellish and animal births,
> he gives them heaven,
> he gives them liberation and happiness.
>
> No one gives like the guru.
>
> He shines like a lamp
> in the temple of the three worlds.
> It is dark in the shadows

but his light is pure
inside and out.

   No one gives like the guru.

The true guru
is a ship to cross over himself
and to take others across.
People fall
and sink in the world of family.
Dyānat says,
day and night
keep the lotus feet of the guru
in your stainless mind.

guru samāna dātā nahiṁ koī
bhānu prakāśa na nāśata jāko so andhiyārā ḍārai khoī

megha samāna sabanapai barasai kachu icchā jāke nahiṁ hoī
naraka paśūgati āgamāṁhitaiṁ suraga mukata sukha thāpai soī (1)

tīna loka mandirameṁ jānau dīpaka sama parakāśaka loī
dīpatalai andhiyāra bharyo hai antara bahira vimala hai joī (2)

tārana tarana jihāja suguru haiṁ saba kuṭumba ḍobai jagatoī
dyānata niśidina niramala manameṁ rākho gurupada paṅkaja doī (3).
(DBhS 278, p. 320; JPS *gurustuti* 18, pp. 158–159)[1]

There is nothing that immediately would inform the casual listener that this song
was composed by a Digambara Jain layman. The poet's name, Dyānat or Dyānatrāy,
is not an obviously Jain name. The reference to souls burning in hellish and ani-
mal births (*naraka* and *paśū gati*) comes directly from basic Jain cosmology, but
is not all that foreign to other South Asian cosmologies. In the song's praise of
the salvific power of the true guru as a ship to cross over the sea of suffering and
rebirth, and the need to keep the lotus feet of the guru in the devotee's mind, we
hear expressions common in many early modern songs from North India. In point
of fact, this is one of the most beloved of the padas of Dyānatrāy, a Jain layman
who lived in Agra from 1676 to 1726 CE and composed hundreds of Brajbhāṣā
padas on a wide range of themes.

One of the primary tasks of a comparative scholar of the histories of the litera-
tures of South Asia is to pay close attention to the continuities and discontinuities
in themes, genres, and other features of literary cultures as they cross the 'open
boundaries' between one community, region, or period and another. As I have ar-
gued elsewhere,[2] while the lines of influence may run more strongly in one direc-

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1 DBhS for *Dyānat Bhajan Saurabh* of Dyānatrāy and JPS for *Jain Pad Sāgar*; I have also
translated this pada in Cort (2003), pp. 290–291.
2 Cort (2002a).

tion, our task is not simply a matter of tracing patterns of borrowing or influence. We need also to see how a feature finds a home in the new setting, both by building upon older elements of the host tradition, and by introducing new elements. In this chapter, I conduct such a preliminary analysis, looking at the theme of the guru as found in some of the many vernacular padas composed by lay Digambara poets in North India in the seventeenth through early twentieth centuries.

The prominent place of the guru in both the Sant and bhakti literatures of early modern North India is so well known that it needs no extensive introduction. On the one hand, the guru is the heavy, learned human teacher, to whom the student goes for instruction in all manner of subjects. Given the authoritative knowledge that the guru embodies, the disciple should treat the hierarchically superior guru as if the guru is divine. In most Hindu traditions, the 'as if' disappears, and the guru is understood in fact to be god. What this means, of course, differs significantly from one religious tradition to another. In some cases, the guru is the full embodiment and presence of god. In others, the guru is divine in comparison to the disciple, but in turn is himself a mere devotee of the supreme god. The guru imparts divine wisdom, which the disciple should strive to follow. The guru is also the object of devotion, whose mere presence can impart transformative and even salvific blessings upon the devotee. Daniel Gold in his two classic studies has provided an excellent typological analysis of the many modalities of the guru in the North Indian Sant traditions in particular, but also South Asian yoga-oriented traditions more broadly.[3] Other scholars, such as Vasudha Dalmia for the Puṣṭimārg, and Raymond Williams and Hanna Kim for the Svāminārāyaṇ *sampradāya*, have extended our understanding to more theistically oriented bhakti traditions.[4] None of these studies, however, brings in Jain materials.

The true guru in classical Digambara thought

To the extent that we can define the Jains as the religious community that follows the example and teachings of the enlightened teachers known as the Jinas, teachings that are subsequently embodied (albeit imperfectly) in the living mendicants, we can say that Jainism has always been a guru tradition, and further that the *śramaṇa* strand of Ancient India represents the earliest examples of guru religion in South Asia. Defining (and disagreeing about) *who* the true guru is, therefore, has long been central to Jain thought and practice. A full investigation of the many ways the early Jains articulated who the true guru is would require a much fuller

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3 Gold (1987) and (1988).
4 See Williams (1985) and (2001); Dalmia (2001); Kim (2014).

study, but for the purposes of my discussion in this essay I simply point out a few of the more prominent ones.

For a millennium and a half, one of the most widespread Jain recitations, found in all the Jain traditions, has been the *pañcaparameṣṭhī namaskāra* (obeisance to the five supreme lords) or *namaskāra maṅgala* (the auspicious obeisance). Although there are slight differences in orthography, depending on whether the recitation is in Ardha-Magadhi or Sauraseni Prakrit, the obeisance is as follows:

> I bow to the *arhat*s [Jinas, enlightened teachers]
> I bow to the siddhas [liberated souls]
> I bow to the *ācārya*s [mendicant leaders]
> I bow to the *upādhyāya*s [mendicant preceptors]
> I bow to all sadhus [mendicants] in the world

> *ṇamo arihantāṇaṃ*
> *ṇamo siddhāṇaṃ*
> *ṇamo āyariyāṇaṃ*
> *ṇamo uvajjhāyāṇaṃ*
> *ṇamo loe savvasāhūṇaṃ*[5]

The *namaskāra maṅgala* does not specifically say that any of the five beings worthy of obeisance are gurus, but this understanding of them is found in other early Digambara texts. These are the two sets of liturgical recitations known as *bhakti* (Prakrit *bhatti*).[6] They exist in both Prakrit and Sanskrit forms, although the two are in no way translations of each other.

The bhakti involve obeisance to the same five authorities as does the *namaskāra maṅgala*, except that here they are called the *pañca guru* or *pañca mahāguru*—the five gurus, or five great gurus. These texts, therefore, allow us to identify an early Jain understanding of the guru. The supreme Jain guru is the Jina, who teaches the path to liberation, and also the siddha, who resides in liberation. Next in the Jain hierarchy are the three living forms of the true guru, the mendicants with whom a Jain layman might interact on a regular basis.

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5 This is the Digambara spelling.
6 *Municaryā* (hereafter MC), pp. 116-118 (Prakrit *Pañcaguru Bhatti*); MC, pp. 470–472, 506–508 (Sanskrit *Pañcamahāguru Bhakti*).

Two visions of the Jain true guru

The two understandings of the guru—as liberated Jina and as living Jain mendicant—are found in the poems of a number of Digambara Jain poets in North India from the early modern period. Dyānatrāy wrote padas that echoed the Sant language in his praise of the true guru, and also wrote padas that clearly indicated that the real true guru was the Jina.[7] A generation after Dyānatrāy was Bhūdhardās (also Bhūdhar), the last of the great Digambara poets who lived in Agra.[8] His dated texts fall between 1724 CE (1781 VS) and 1749 CE (1806 VS). He wrote a Jain Purana, a text on Jain doctrines, and translated several *stotra* from Sanskrit into Brajbhāṣā. He also was the author of a number of independent padas. He was especially fond of composing *vinatī*, of which he wrote at least one dozen.[9] These are devotional texts slightly longer than most padas, in which the poet expresses his total dependence upon the Jina or a living guru, and thus addresses a petition (*vinatī, araj* or *arz, ardās*) that the recipient of his devotion shed saving grace upon the singer.

In a number of songs, Bhūdhardās praised the Jina as the guru par excellence. He began his *Nemināth Vinatī*, addressed to the twenty-second Jina, and one toward whom he appears to have had a particularly intense devotion, as the guru of the triple world, that is, the entire cosmos:

> Guru of the triple world,
> master, sir—
> you are famous as the ocean of compassion, sir.
> Listen to my petition,
> o inner controller.
>
> *tribhuvana guru svāmī jī karuṇā nidhi nāmī jī*
> *suni antarajāmī merī vīnatī jī* (*Bhūdhar Bhajan Saurabh*, (hereafter BhūBhS) 20, pp. 22–23)

He began another *vinatī*, this time addressed to the Jina in general instead of a specific Jina, by referring to the Jina as the sole guru of the world. Whereas he addressed Nemināth as an 'ocean of compassion' (*karuṇā nidhi*), in this poem he

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7 See Cort (2013), pp. 274–275, for another pada in which Dyānatrāy calls the Jina the true guru.

8 Śāstrī (1997). While Agra was a centre of Digambara literary activity throughout the seventeenth century, and into the early decades of the eighteenth, the decline of Agra as an imperial centre combined with the founding of Jaipur, and the policy of Sawai Jai Singh of inviting merchants and professional littérateurs to his new capital, resulted in a shift of the centre of Digambara literary activity westward from Agra to Jaipur in the eighteenth century.

9 Ibid., p. 166.

used a phrase widely found in all the religious traditions of North India to refer to the Jina as one who out of compassion comforts the poor and oppressed (*dīna dayāla*), those people who, like Bhūdhar, suffer in the endless round of rebirth:

> Aho!
> You are the sole guru of the world.
> Hear my request.
> You comfort the poor.
> I am suffering
> in the round of rebirth.

> *aho jagataguru eka suniyo araja hamārī*
> *tuma ho dīnadayāla maiṁ dukhiyā saṃsārī* (BhūBhS 42, pp. 53–54)

In a third *vinatī*, also addressed to the Jina in general, he repeated the theme that the Jina is the guru of the world: he is the supreme guru (*parama guru*), who is worshipped by the whole world (*jaga pūja*). Again, he said that the Jina in his compassion uplifts the fallen (*patita udhārana*), and in a style of self-depreca-tion common to the genre, Bhūdhardās described himself as a suffering servant or slave (*dāsa dukhī*), playing upon the inclusion of the term for servant or slave (*dāsa*) in his own name:

> Hail to the one
> who is famous as the supreme guru,
> who is honoured by all the world.
> He lifts up the fallen,
> he is the inner controller.
> Your servant suffers,
> but you are so helpful.
> Hear me, Lord,
> hear my petition.

> *jai jagapūja paramaguru nāmī patita udhārana antarajāmī*
> *dāsa dukhī tuma ati upagārī suniye prabhu aradāsa hamārī* (BhūBhS 43, p. 55)

In other songs, Bhūdhardās directed his devotion and dependence to living gu-rus. As with other Digambara poets who wrote padas and other short texts on the true guru, for Bhūdhardās the image of the true guru often overlapped with, and in many ways became indistinguishable from, two other images: the Jain naked mendicant (muni, sadhu), who is also the true yogi, performing feats of renunci-ation and asceticism in the mountains, in the forests, and on the banks of remote streams.[10] In one pada, Bhūdhardās addressed a fellow Jain, here using the term

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10 Cort (2016).

sādho, that is, someone who like Bhūdhardās is engaged in the practice (*sādhanā*) of Jain asceticism. While Bhūdhardās approached the guru as a spiritual superior, before whom Bhūdhardās was still a servant or slave (*dāsa*), there is a sense that the yogi-guru in such poems also provided a model for his own ideal spiritual pursuit:

> O adept,
> he is my guru-lord.
> He keeps his thoughts,
> otherwise fluid as mercury,
> firm in the fire of yoga.

> *so gurudeva hamārā hai sādho*
> *joga agani maiṁ jo thira rākheṁ yaha citta cañcala pārā* (BhūBhS 46,
> p. 59; JPS *guru stuti* 16, p. 157)

He concluded another pada by indicating that the spiritual relationship into which one voluntarily enters with a guru is superior to all family relationships, which are insufficient to save a person from repeated rebirths:

> The guru is my mother,
> the guru is truly my father,
> the guru is my brother good friend.
> Bhūdhar says,
> In this round of rebirth
> the guru is the true shelter.

> *guru mātā guru hī pitā guru sajjana bhāī*
> *bhūdhara yā saṃsārameṁ guru śarana sahāī* (BhūBhS 47, p. 60)

Bhūdhardās also composed two *vinatī* addressed to the living guru.[11] In both of them he introduced an element lacking in the shorter padas in praise of the guru from which I have quoted. While these padas contain references to Jain metaphysics and practices, there is much in them that is the common currency of North Indian early modern guru songs. In his two *vinatī*, however, he highlighted an important feature that distinguishes a Digambara Jain true guru from any other guru: he must be naked, *digambara*. In one, he began the poem by inviting the guru, whom he likened to a ship to cross the ocean of rebirth (*bhava jaladhi jihāja*), to come reside in his own mind (*te guru mere mana baso*). In the second verse, Bhūdhardās said that the guru resides naked in the forest (*digambara vana basai*).[12]

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11   I translate both of these in full in Cort (2016).

12   BhūBhS 51, pp. 71–72.

The second guru *vinatī* is one of the most popular of Bhūdhardās's poems and is reprinted in many contemporary hymnals. It is known by its first two words as *bandau* (or *bandauṁ*) *digambara*:

> I venerate the feet
> of the naked guru.
> He is known in the world
> as saving and saviour.
> He is the great royal physician
> for those who wander the world
> in sickness.

> *bandau digambara gurucarana jaga tarana tārana jāna*
> *je bharama bhārī rogako haiṁ rājavaidya mahāna* (BhūBhS 50, pp. 68–69)

The true Digambara guru as a naked muni

From a twenty-first-century perspective, Bhūdhardās's depiction of the true Digambara Jain guru as being a naked muni is not surprising. There are several hundred naked muni in India today. Anyone who spends much time among North Indian Digambara Jains is sure to have the opportunity to meet a naked muni, to hear him preach, and perhaps even to observe the distinctive rite by which he is offered food once a day. Some of the munis have become powerful, charismatic leaders of the community. Their many books are found wherever Digambara Jain books are sold, and some of them have a growing presence on Indian cable television and the Internet. It is easy to forget just how recent this phenomenon is, and therefore to misread the sentiment expressed by Bhūdhardās when he says that he venerates the naked muni's feet. It is probable that Bhūdhardās never had the opportunity to meet such a muni. By the time of Dyānatrāy and Bhūdhardās in the eighteenth century, the institution of the naked muni had not existed in North India for many centuries. In their stead, Digambara mendicants consisted of landed, clothed *bhaṭṭārak*s. There are scattered reports of the very occasional naked muni, usually one or two from Karnataka on their way through the North Indian Digambara population centres in Rajasthan and the western Doab on pilgrimage to Sammet Shikhar in East India.[13] But they were at best rare visitors and had no real presence in the religious lives of North Indian Digambara Jains.

The naked muni, therefore, was an unseen historical ideal for the Jains of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century North India. But the preservation of this ideal of

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13 Cort (2016), pp. 203–204.

nudity in narrative, doctrinal, and devotional texts meant that there was a standard against which the more perceptive and historically sensitive Jains could measure the observable practice of the clothed *bhaṭṭārak*. As Tillo Detige shows in his essay in this volume, there was a tradition of texts and rituals in which both laity and semi-renouncers venerated and worshipped the *bhaṭṭārak* as living gurus.[14] By the seventeenth century, however, we also start to see some unease at the *bhaṭṭārak* institution.

We see this in a longer poem by a third Agra poet. Banārsīdās, who lived from 1587 to 1643, is still revered today by Digambara littérateurs as the *ādi-kavi* of the Digambara vernacular tradition. Among his many compositions is the thirty-two-verse *Sādhu Vandan*, or *Veneration of the Sādhu*. In it, he enumerated the twenty-eight virtues of a Jain sadhu. This is an orthodox list dating to early in the first millennium CE.[15]

The *bhaṭṭārak*s followed many of these virtues, in part if not in whole. However, there was one that definitionally set apart an orange-robed *bhaṭṭārak* from a true muni; the latter was completely, permanently naked. Verse 27 of Banārsīdās's poem, therefore, could only refer to a naked muni. As Nāthūrām Premī noted of this poem, 'From this it is clear that the poet had no faith toward the *bhaṭṭārak*s and *yati*s who wore clothes':[16]

> Worldly shame has melted away,
> he is without fear.
> He has no desire for sense objects,
> he needs nothing.
> Naked, sky-clad—
> he is firm in this form.
> This is the king of muni—
> he is the cause of happiness in the world.

> *loka lāja vigalita bhayahīna viṣaya vāsanā rahita adīna*
> *nagana digambara mudrādhāra so munirāja jagata sukhakāra* (Banārsīdās,
> *Sādhu Vandanā* 27 in BaV-P, p. 133; BaV-NK, p. 131)

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14 See chapter 13.
15 The list is found in Jaini (1979), pp. 133–134.
16 Premī (1957), p. 69.

When will I meet the true guru?

The contrast between the *bhaṭṭārak* and the muni came through clearly a century later in the padas by Bhūdhardās. He built upon the Jain genre of describing the ideal muni or sadhu, who was also the ideal yogi, and therefore from a Jain perspective the true guru. He also built upon several other genres that were not exclusively Jain. We have seen, for example, that Bhūdhardās was fond of the *vinatī* genre, in which the poet directly addressed an appeal to the object of his devotion.

The following pada is to be sung in the raga *malār*. Manuscripts and printed versions assign raga to many padas, and not infrequently assign different ragas to the same pada. As a result, we need to be cautious in attributing too much significance to the assignation of a specific raga to any one pada. In this case, however, I think that the indication that this pada is to be sung in *malār* is important. This raga is special to the rainy season. After the heat of the North Indian summer, the rains come as tangible, visceral relief. One's senses revive, and the land comes alive. Water reappears in dry stream beds and ponds, the landscape turns green with grass and other fresh plants, flowers burst forth. This is a season of love. For humans it is often a time of reunion. Men return home after being gone all winter in pursuit of their livelihoods as merchants, migrant labourers, or mercenary soldiers. Women who have been longing for their men are anxious about whether or not they will be able to return before the heavy rains turn the roads to impassable mud. They are either joyous at the return of their men, or despondent at their absence. While there are many songs of reunion and union in this season, the songs that are emotionally most powerful are the heart-rending ones of separation, sung by women whose lovers have been unable to return. These are the poems of separation (*viraha*) that figure so strongly in both the secular and religious poetries of North India.

Bhūdhardās played on the theme of *viraha* in the following pada, in which he described the true guru from the Digambara perspective, and then indicated that not only had he never seen such a person in his life, it was most unlikely that he ever would. In his pain of separation, he asked plaintively, in the refrain that follows each verse, 'When will I meet such an excellent muni?':

> *When will I meet such an excellent muni,*
> *So beneficent?*
>
> That sadhu is sky-clad,
> naked,
> clad in nothing.
> His only adornment
> is stopping the influx of karma.

To him gold and glass are equal
as are foes and allies.
A palace or the burning ground,
death or life,
prestige or abuse—
they are all the same. (1)

   When will I meet such an excellent muni?

Bhūdhar joins his hands
in humility,
bows his head to those feet.
That day will be wonderful
when I have such a fortunate sight. (3)

   When will I meet such an excellent muni?

ve munivara kaba mili hai upagārī
sādhu digambara nagana nirambara saṃvara bhūṣaṇadhārī

kañcana kāca barābara jinakai jyauṁ ripu tyauṁ hitakārī
mahala masāna marana aru jīvana sama garimā aru gārī (1)

jori jugala kara bhūdhara binavai tina pada ḍhoka hamārī
bhāga udaya darasana jaba pāūṁ tā dinakī balihārī (3)
(BhūBhS 45, p. 58; JPS *guru stuti* 15, pp. 156–157)

Anti-*bhaṭṭārak*

Much changed in North Indian Digambara Jain society during the early modern period. Authority in the Digambara community started to shift away from the *bhaṭṭārak*s. Laymen gathered to study and compose texts on their own, and to engage in their spiritual quests outside of the institutions controlled by the *bhaṭṭārak*s. Within two decades of the death of Banārsīdās in Agra in 1643, there were openly anti-*bhaṭṭārak* events in Sanganer in the 1660s, and the beginnings of the rise of the Terāpanth as a distinct sect among the North Indian Digambara Jains.[17] The Terāpanth rejected the authority of the *bhaṭṭārak*s, and much of the ritual culture associated with them.

By the late nineteenth century, we start to see poems that praised the naked muni and criticized the clothed *bhaṭṭārak* in a much more explicit and contentious fashion. In 1930 Pannālāl Bāklīvāl published a collection of Jain padas, *Jain Pad Sāgar*. In it he included forty poems on the guru. These included poems by Bhūdhardās and other poets that asked when the poet would meet a true guru.

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17 Cort (2002b).

He also included seven poems that strike a more strident tone, by a poet named Jineśvardās. We know very little of this poet. He was active around the beginning of the twentieth century and lived in Sujangarh. In their mammoth five-volume catalogue of manuscripts in the libraries of Rajasthan, Kastūrcand Kāslīvāl and Anūpcand Nyāytīrth recorded only two manuscripts that include texts attributed to him. The texts were composed in 1899 CE (1956 VS) and 1903 CE (1960 VS). Kāslīvāl and Nyāytīrth said that Jineśvardās was from Sujangarh. Bāklīvāl was also from Sujangarh, so it is possible that he had known Jineśvardās in his child-hood, and likely that at the very least he knew his ritual and devotional compo-sitions. Many of his poems have indications of the raga in which they are to be sung, so it is possible that Jineśvardās was a singer and ritualist in the temples of Sujangarh. He also enjoyed using genres other than the pada, such as the *rekhtā* (a type of verse associated with Urdu poetry), *khyāl* (a musical style), and *lāvanī* (another musical style, used for texts longer than most padas).

Several of Jineśvardās's guru poems fit clearly into the tradition of those by earlier poets. He described the true guru as residing in the forest, engaging in fierce asceticism, and being naked. But he also wrote poems that explicitly contrasted the true guru with the false one. In one *lāvanī*, entitled *The Innate Form of the True Guru* (*Suguru Svarūp*), he said that the true guru is clad only in his nudity, as he has renounced all clothes and ornaments (*digambara bheṣa gurūkā vastrābhūṣaṇa tyāga diyā*).[18] In another contrasting *lāvanī*, entitled *The Innate Form of the False Guru* (*Kuguru Svarūp*), he embarked on a lengthy criticism of the *bhaṭṭārak*s and other false gurus.[19] They lack correct knowledge (*samyag-jñāna vinā*), and in fact understand nothing of Jainism (*jainadharmako yathāvata jānanavālā koī nahī*). They lie instead of telling the truth (*satya jhūṇṭhakā kaho ve*). In investigating the Jain scriptures, they engage in unnecessary quarrels (*jahāṁ jināgamakī carcā tahaṁ vina kāraṇa takarāra kiyā*). They are criminals (*ṭhaga*), not gurus. While Jineśvardās did not compose a poem asking when he would see a true guru, it is likely that he longed for such an opportunity, given his lengthy descriptions of the true mendicant guru.

By the time Bāklīvāl published his anthology in 1930, however, the situation had changed dramatically, for the tradition of the naked muni was revived in the early twentieth century. The final poem Bāklīvāl included in praise of the guru represented a major innovation in contrast to the poems of the preceding cen-turies. This is an anonymous four-verse poem entitled *The Auspicious Sight of Śāntisāgar, the Excellent Ācārya, for the Elderly* (*Vṛddhoṁkeliye Ācāryavarya Śāntisāgarakā Darśana*).[20]

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18 JPS *guru stuti* 34, p. 171.
19 JPS *guru stuti* 36, pp. 174–175.
20 JPS *guru stuti* 40, pp. 181–182.

This poem was addressed to Ācārya Śāntisāgar.[21] He was born in Karnataka in 1872, and after many years as a semi-renouncer, took the vows of a naked muni in 1920. He was promoted to the post of *ācārya* in 1924. At the time, he was one of a small number of naked munis, who almost exclusively were in South India. In 1927–1928 Śāntisāgar came north, first to Bombay, then on a grand pilgrimage through Central India to Sammet Śikhar in East India, and finally to Delhi, where he spent the 1928 rainy season retreat. He was greeted with much publicity everywhere he went, and his tour of North India is celebrated by Digambaras as marking the modern revival of the muni institution. He died in 1955.

There is nothing very remarkable about the poem itself, aside from its very existence and date: Bāklīvāl published his anthology just two years after Śāntisāgar's triumphant tour of North India. As poetry it is rather mediocre. The poet played on the muni's name to indicate that his presence brings peace (*śānti*) to the world and especially to his devotees. The poet declared himself a servant (*dāsa*), who seeks the shelter (*śarana*) of the feet of Śāntisāgar. All the possible realms of rebirth are marked by suffering (*dukha*). The poet lived a full life in pursuit of pleasure (*sukha*), but now finds that in his old age he has accumulated suffering and is feeble. In a conclusion that in some ways echoes the unsatisfied yearnings of the earlier poets, our anonymous poet was able to receive the grace of a true guru, for Śāntisāgar had entered his life.

Concluding comments: the Digambara Jain guru in the religious literature of early modern North India

In this essay, I have explored the Digambara Jain participation in the pan-Indian religious and literary theme of the guru. This Digambara articulation of the guru lies at the intersection of two religious and literary streams. One is the long-standing historical Jain ritual practice of venerating the Jina and the Jain mendicants as gurus. The other is the contemporaneous emphasis on the saving power of the guru in the Vaishnava and Sant communities of early modern North India. Looking at the Digambara Jain material in light of these two streams allows us to understand better how Jains have participated in larger currents of South Asian religion and culture. It serves the methodological function of showing that incorporating Jain materials into our understanding of any given theme in South Asian religion and culture results in an expanded understanding. The Digambara Jains have a rich tradition of guru bhakti, so any consideration of the history of the guru in South Asia

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21 My discussion of the revival of the naked muni tradition is based on Flügel (2006), pp. 347–354.

is incomplete without including Jain material. At the same time, this essay shows us that this Jain participation is not a matter of simple 'borrowing' or 'influence,' but rather displays a distinctly Jain understanding of the true guru. As a result, we can come to a more nuanced understanding of how the Jains have participated in the larger history of the guru in South Asian religions.

Abbreviations

BaV-P   See Banārsīdās (1908)
BaV-NK   See Banārsīdās (1954–1987)
BhūBhS   See Bhūdhardās (1999)
DBhS   See Dyānatrāy (2003)
JPS   See Bāklīvāl (1930)
MC   See Jñānmatī (1991)

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Tillo Detige

13. '*Guṇa kahūṃ śrī guru*': *Bhaṭṭāraka Gītas* and the Early Modern Digambara Jaina *Saṅgha*

Abstract. While the contemporary Digambara Jaina renouncer tradition is best epitomized by the naked and peripatetic, male muni, in the extended early modern period it was spearheaded by supposedly clothed and sedentary *bhaṭṭārakas*. In Western and Central India, the number of *bhaṭṭāraka* seats and pupillary lineages notably proliferated from the fifteenth century CE onwards. The current scholarly and popular perception of these *bhaṭṭārakas* is that of 'clerics.' Though credited with the preservation of the Digambara tradition during the putatively adverse period of Muslim rule, as renouncers they are often seen as lax and overly ritualistic. However, little-studied vernacular songs of praise for individual *bhaṭṭārakas*, like other textual and archaeological sources, instead speak of deep devotion to them as ideal renouncers, venerable saints, and virtuous teachers. While the pupillary circles of the *bhaṭṭārakas* are assumed to have counted only celibate *brahmacārīs* and lay *paṇḍitas*, these song compositions also attest munis, *upādhyāyas*, and *ācāryas*, and one text traces the career of a *bhaṭṭāraka* rising up through these successive ascetic ranks. All this speaks of the continuity of the Digambara tradition throughout Sultanate and Mughal times, gainsaying the prevalent historiography of this period as a distinct and deficient 'Bhaṭṭāraka Era.'

Keywords. Digambara Jainism, Western India, *Bhaṭṭāraka* lineages, Songs of praise, Hagiography.

The *bhaṭṭāraka*s of Western India

While the Digambara Jaina tradition is most distinctively embodied in the figure of the naked and peripatetic male[1*] muni,[2] it has throughout its course allowed for various types of renouncers.[3] Celibate male *brahmacārī*s and female *brahmacāriṇī*s either join roaming groups of fully initiated renouncers or live separately, and though many of them continue to pursue further initiation, some choose not to. The *kṣullaka* and *ailaka* ranks more decisively constitute successive, preparatory stages for full muni initiation. Yet another type of Digambara renouncer is the clothed *bhaṭṭāraka*, who is seated at a monastic institution (*maṭha*).[4] For a period of over five centuries prior to the reappearance of naked munis in the twentieth century, lineages of *bhaṭṭāraka*s formed the backbone of the Digambara tradition. In the early modern period, more than a dozen *bhaṭṭāraka* seats (*gaddī*) were located in Western India (today's Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, Delhi, western Uttar Pradesh, northern Madhya Pradesh).[5] The majority was affiliated to the Mūlasaṅgha Balātkāragaṇa, the number of seats of which proliferated notably in the fifteenth century. Though the Mūlasaṅgha Senagaṇa never seems to have substantially extended its reach north of Maharashtra, a few Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha lineages were also operational in Western India. The *bhaṭṭāraka*s' influence is generally thought to have declined after the rise in the seventeenth century of the Digambara Terāpantha, which, next to its ritual reforms, opposed their authority.[6] Most of the Western Indian *bhaṭṭāraka* lineages did,

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1 According to Digambara soteriology, women cannot reach liberation. Though female renouncers are therefore theoretically less highly esteemed than their male counterparts, some initiated female renouncers (*āryikā*) are also particularly famous and influential.

2 As does the tradition, I here subsume under the term muni not only the 'common' munis, but also *upādhyāya*s and *ācārya*s. Theirs are hierarchically higher ranks bestowed through further ordination and usually understood as signifying respectively a teacher and a leader of an ascetic lineage.

3 Pandits, lay scholars, and ritual specialists have also had an important place in the Digambara tradition for at least several centuries.

4 Joharāpurakara (1958) remains the standard work on the *bhaṭṭāraka*s. See also Deo (1956), pp. 545–548; Kāsalīvāla (1967), (1979), (1981), (1982); Jain (1975), pp. 83–132; Sangave (1980 [1959]), pp. 269–270, pp. 317–322; (2001), pp. 133–143; Cort (2002), pp. 40–42; Flügel (2006), pp. 344–347; Jaina (2010); De Clercq (2011); De Clercq and Detige (2015). Little is known about the Digambara *yati*s. Although the term is also occasionally used to refer to early modern *bhaṭṭāraka*s and munis, in a few lineages the last *bhaṭṭāraka*s were succeeded with *brahmacārī*s with this title in a specific application.

5 Today, *bhaṭṭāraka* lineages continue to flourish only in South and Central India (Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra). Flügel (2006), p. 346, counted twelve operational seats, amongst which some were established in recent decades.

6 Cort (2002). The part of the Digambara tradition which did not follow the Terāpantha's ritual reforms and continued to support the *bhaṭṭāraka*s became known as the Bīsapantha.

however, last well into the nineteenth or even twentieth century, and were discontinued only after opposition by lay reform movements of the late colonial period.

The early modern *bhaṭṭāraka*s are best remembered for the consecration (*pratiṣṭhā*) of images (*mūrti*) and temples, and for the copying and conservation of manuscripts. Most Digambara temples of sufficient antiquity abound with images consecrated by *bhaṭṭāraka*s throughout the centuries. Many *bhaṭṭāraka*s were also prolific litterateurs themselves,[7] and a few of the former *maṭha*s still house some of the most extensive Digambara manuscript collections of Western India.[8] Digambara castes were often connected to specific *bhaṭṭāraka* lineages, and as a kind of caste gurus, the *bhaṭṭāraka*s had important functions vis-à-vis the lay communities like conducting rituals, administering vows, leading pilgrimages, and mediating on their behalf with rulers.

Venerable *bhaṭṭāraka*s

The scholarly, as well as popular, perception of the early modern *bhaṭṭāraka*s now prevalent is that of 'clerics' or 'administrator-clerics.'[9] As 'pontiffs,' the *bhaṭṭāraka*s are credited with the nominal preservation of the Digambara tradition during the supposedly entirely inauspicious period of Muslim rule. As renouncers, however, *bhaṭṭāraka*s are seen as deficient, ascetically lax or 'corrupt,' excessively ritualistic, and overly involved with tantra and mantra. As such, they compare negatively to the naked muni who have once more increased in numbers in the twentieth and twenty-first century. The extended early modern period, then, stands out as a distinct 'Bhaṭṭāraka Era,' differing in almost every sense from both the pre-Muslim and the contemporary period. This historiographical framework rules out any notion of the *bhaṭṭāraka*s as venerable ascetics.

Various little-studied textual and archaeological[10] materials from Western India, however, speak of deep devotion and ritual veneration of the *bhaṭṭāraka*s.

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7 On the literary compositions of the Western Indian *bhaṭṭāraka*s, see Śāstrī, P. (n.d.); Śāstrī, N. (1974); and the monographs of Kastūracanda Kāsalīvāla referred to below.

8 Detige (2017). The most notable collections are the *Bhaṭṭarakīya granthabhaṇḍāra* of Nagaur and the *Āmera śāstrabhaṇḍāra* in Jaipur. See Kragh (2013) for a study of the latter manuscript collection as a 'localized literary history.'

9 See Dundas (2002 [1992]), p. 124, De Clercq (2011), and Jaini (1998 [1979]), p. 307. Direct and indirect Terāpanthī influence, Orientalist anticlerical stances, and colonial Jaina reformers' perspectives seem to have interacted and mutually reinforced each other in the construction of this now dominant epistemic framework.

10 Most notably, funerary monuments (*caraṇa-pādukā*, *caraṇa-chatrī*, *niṣedhikā*) found throughout Western India of *bhaṭṭāraka*s of all known lineages: Detige (2014), De Clercq and Detige (2015), pp. 321–326, Detige (forthcoming b), (in preparation b).

These sources amply clarify that the perception and treatment of the early modern *bhaṭṭāraka*s in their own times, as ideal renouncers, venerable saints, and worthy teachers, paralleled in almost every way that of the naked muni today.[11] This chapter aims to redress prevalent perceptions of both the *bhaṭṭāraka*s and the 'Bhaṭṭāraka Era' by drawing specifically from vernacular songs eulogizing individual *bhaṭṭāraka*s.[12] Apart from lucidly voicing the now faded, former venerability of the Western Indian *bhaṭṭāraka*s, these compositions also form important source material on the constitution of early modern communities of Digambara renouncers. While it has thus far been assumed that the *bhaṭṭāraka saṅgha*s only counted *brahmacārī*s and lay pandits, we also read here of munis, *upādhyāya*s, and *ācārya*s, other sources[13] also attesting *brahmacāriṇī*s, *āryikā*s, and the so far little-known rank of the *maṇḍalācārya*. One composition relates of a specific renouncer's career as having risen to the *bhaṭṭāraka paṭṭa* (seat) along the successive ascetic ranks (*pada*) of muni, *upādhyāya*, and *ācārya*. The sheer usage of these ranks in the early modern period, as well as some elements of the songs of praise shortly touched upon below, indicate the continuity of the Digambara tradition across the so-called 'Bhaṭṭāraka Era.'

'*Karai gāvai maṅgalacāro*': Singing the praises of the *bhaṭṭāraka*s

Vernacular eulogies of *bhaṭṭāraka*s (*gīta*, *jakhaḍī*, *hamacī*, *lāvaṇī*, and so on) sing the praises of the *bhaṭṭāraka*s' virtues (*guṇa-gāna*)[14] in an often elated, devotional spirit. Such compositions are available from the fifteenth to the eigh-teenth century on *bhaṭṭāraka*s of various lineages. Typically breathing an atmosphere of joy, jubilation, and veneration,[15] the *gīta*s emphatically articulate the regard and reverence in which their contemporaries held the Western Indian *bhaṭṭāraka*s. Many passag-

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11 On the veneration of renouncers as gurus in the Digambara tradition, see Cort in this volume.

12 Further textual sources confirming the early modern *bhaṭṭāraka*s' venerability are manuscript colophons, Detige (forthcoming a), and Sanskrit *bhaṭṭāraka pūjā*, ritual texts for the eightfold veneration (*aṣṭadravya-pūjā*) of specific *bhaṭṭāraka*s, probably mostly used for rituals at their funerary monuments: Detige (2014), (2015), pp. 162–167; De Clercq and Detige (2015), pp. 326–328.

13 See Detige (forthcoming a).

14 For example, *śrī guru kā jasa gāvatāṃ* (singing the praises of the illustrious (*śrī*) guru), *Bhaṭṭāraka Devendrakīrti jakhaḍī* in Nyāyatīrtha (1985b), p. 35; *guṇa kahūṃ śrī guru mahendrakīrti* (I praise *śrī* guru Mahendrakīrti), *Bhaṭṭāraka Mahendrakīrti jakhaḍī* in Nyāyatīrtha (1985a), p. 422.

15 For example, *morai mani adhika anaṃdo* (my mind is so elated), *Sahasrakīrti gīta* MS (see footnote 24).

es, in fact, read as paradigmatic descriptions of the qualities of an ideal Digambara renouncer. Throughout, *bhaṭṭāraka*s are addressed as munis (*munivara*, *munirāja*, *munīndra*, *mahāmuni*), or *ācārya*s,[16] as ascetics (sadhu, *nirgrantha*), and as gurus. They are referred to as *mahāvratadhāra*s, observing the five *mahāvrata* vows, as well as the fully-initiated renouncer's three restraints (*gupti*) and five rules of conduct (*samiti*).[17] *Bhaṭṭāraka*s are also attributed with the twenty-eight *mūlaguṇa*s of a muni and the ten forms of righteousness (*daśalakṣaṇadharma*)[18] and eulogized as knowled-geable of all scriptures, skills, and arts.[19] They are praised for their restraint (*saṃyama*), referred to as seeking liberation (*mumukṣu*),[20] and being freed of vices like anger, delusion, passion, and greed.[21] Examples and tropes of the glorification of *bhaṭṭāraka*s from these compositions could be further multiplied, and leave little doubt as to how strongly they were perceived as ideal ascetics and incarnations of ascetic ideals.

While some songs consist solely of the recitation of the *bhaṭṭāraka*s' virtues, many also bind biographical data into their praise. Details like the renouncer's caste, place of birth, parents' names, physical beauty, and promising youth are similarly found in poetic genres extolling contemporary munis and *ācārya*s.[22] References to *bhaṭṭāraka*s' earlier life as laymen and as renouncers also occur, as well as, most commonly, to their consecration on the *bhaṭṭāraka* seat (*paṭṭābhiṣeka*), peregrinations (*vihāra*), *pratiṣṭhā*s and pilgrimages conducted, and honours received from rulers. Those *gīta*s, of which *chāpa*s or colophons reveal the names of their authors, were composed by pupils of *bhaṭṭāraka*s, either pandits or *brahmacārī*s, or by *bhaṭṭāraka*s themselves, in praise of their predecessors.

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16 The Ajmer manuscripts, for example (see footnote 24), shun the term *bhaṭṭāraka* altogether, the compositions preferring *munivara* (excellent muni) and the colophons calling them *ācārya*.

17 For example, Kāsalīvāla (1981), p. 99. The five *mahāvrata* are non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), truthfulness (*satya*), not taking anything not given (*asteya*), chastity (*brahmacarya*), and non-possession (*aparigraha*). The three *gupti*s prescribe the restraint of mind, speech, and body. The five *samiti*s involve care in walking, speaking, accepting alms, picking up and putting down things, and excretory functions.

18 The twenty-eight *mūlaguṇa*s compromise the five *mahāvrata*s, five *samiti*s, controlling of the five senses, six essential duties (*āvaśyaka*), pulling out one's hair, nudity, sleeping on the ground, not bathing, not brushing one's teeth, eating while standing, and eating only once a day. The ten virtues are forgiveness (*kṣamā*), kindness (*mārdava*), honesty (*ārjava*), purity (*śauca*), truthfulness (*satya*), restraint (*saṃyama*), asceticism (*tapas*), renunciation (*tyāga*), non-possessiveness (*ākiṃcanya*), and celibacy (*brahmacarya*).

19 Bhaṭṭāraka Vijayakīrti, for example, is extolled as being skilled in *āgama*, *veda*, *siddhānta*, *vyākaraṇa*, *nāṭaka*, *chanda*, and *pramāṇa* (*Vijayakīrtti gīta* in Kāsalīvāla (1982), p. 195).

20 *Dharmacaṃdro mumukṣuḥ* (*Stuti* MS, see footnote 32).

21 For example, Kāsalīvāla (1981), p. 84.

22 Detige (in preparation a).

I have collected a series of *gīta*s on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century *bhaṭṭāraka*s of the Balātkāragaṇa Nāgauraśākhā[23] from *guṭakā*s preserved at the Baṛā Ḍaṛāji Mandira, the former Bhaṭṭāraka Maṭha in Ajmer.[24] Throughout his oeuvre, Kastūracanda Kāsalīvāla documents a large number of *gīta*s from the *bhaṭṭāraka* lineages of Gujarat and the Vāgaḍa region. He edits a composition on Vijayakīrti, an early sixteenth-century *bhaṭṭāraka* of the Balātkāragaṇa Īḍaraśākhā, penned by his successor Śubhacandra,[25] and discusses a composition by Brahmacārī Jayarāja on the late sixteenth-century Bhaṭṭāraka Guṇakīrti of the same lineage.[26] Kāsalīvāla reports particularly large numbers of praise compositions on late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century *bhaṭṭāraka*s of a sub-lineage of the Balātkāragaṇa Sūrataśākhā,[27] editing seven compositions (see references below). Sufficient indication of the prevalence of these *bhaṭṭāraka* song-eulogies in at least this lineage and at this time, Kāsalīvāla[28] maintains that there are dozens of them on Bhaṭṭāraka Abhayacandra, estimates about a dozen compositions on

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23 I here adopt the names for the Balātkāragaṇa branches devised by Joharāpurakara (1958). It is important to note that these appellations often reflect the location of the seat of their last nineteenth- or twentieth-century incumbents and are not necessarily representative for the lineages' earlier history.

24 In sum, the *guṭakā*s contain compositions on the *bhaṭṭāraka* Bhuvanakīrti (*paṭṭa* s. 1586) [cat. no. 72: 31B–33A], Dharmakīrti (*paṭṭa* s. 1590) [two compositions: cat. no. 72: pp. 30B–31B = (with slight variations) cat. no. 148: pp. 43B–45A; and cat. no. 148: pp. 45A–45B], Viśālakīrti (*paṭṭa* s. 1601) [two compositions: cat. no. 72: pp. 37A–39A; and cat. no. 148: pp. 43A–43B], Sahasrakīrti (*paṭṭa* s. 1631) [two compositions: cat. no. 72: pp. 41B–42B = (with slight variations) cat. no. 148: pp. 52B–55B; and cat. no. 148: pp. 55B–57B], Nemicandra (*paṭṭa* s. 1650) [cat. no. 72: pp. 33A–34B], and Yaśakīrti (*paṭṭa* s. 1672) [cat. no. 72: pp. 51B–52B]. All dates refer to the *bhaṭṭāraka*s' consecration to the seat as given by Joharāpurakara (1958), pp. 114–116.

25 *Vijayakīrtti chanda* in Kāsalīvāla (1967), pp. 262–266.

26 Kāsalīvāla (1967), pp. 190–191; (1969), pp. 453–454; (1981), pp. 234–235. Kāsalīvāla (1979), pp. 106–107, also edits a *Bhuvanakīrti gīta* by Brahmacārī Vūcarāja (first half of the sixteenth century), understanding this to be a eulogy of the mid-fifteenth-century Īḍaraśākhā *bhaṭṭāraka* of this name. Yet, being the same text as the *Bhuvanakīrti gīta* found in the Ajmer *guṭakā* (see footnote 25) it is more likely a composition on the sixteenth-century Nāgauraśākhā *bhaṭṭāraka* of that name, of whom Vūcarāja is indeed known to have been a pupil.

27 Kāsalīvāla (1981). Apart from yet another bifurcation which he calls the Jerahaṭaśākhā, Joharāpurakara (1958), pp. 197–199, discusses two sub-branches of the Sūrataśākhā, arising from two pupils of the early sixteenth-century *bhaṭṭāraka* Lakṣmīcandra, Vīracandra and Abhayacandra. I refer to the latter's lineage as the Bāraḍolīśākhā below. Joharāpurakara (1958), p. 201, includes references to Abhayacandra's first two successors, Abhayanandi and Ratnakīrti (*paṭṭa* s. 1630), but not to the further *bhaṭṭāraka* of the lineage also discussed here, Kumudacandra (*paṭṭa* s. 1656), Abhayacandra (*paṭṭa* s. 1685), Śubhacandra (*paṭṭa* s. 1721), and Ratnacandra (*paṭṭa* s. 1748). (All *paṭṭābhiṣeka* dates according to Kāsalīvāla 1981).

28 Kāsalīvāla (1981), p. 77.

Bhaṭṭāraka Ratnakīrti by Kavivara Gaṇeśa,[29] and lists[30] again as many authored by Paṇḍita Śrīpāla on the successive *bhaṭṭāraka*s Ratnakīrti, Kumudacandra, Abhayacandra, Śubhacandra, and Ratnacandra. Nyāyatīrtha[31] edits and discusses two compositions in Ḍhūṇḍhāḍī, termed *jakhaḍī* in the manuscript colophons, on successive Balātkāragaṇa Dillī–Jayapuraśākhā *bhaṭṭāraka*s from the first half of the eighteenth century (see below). I also found compositions related to sixteenth-century renouncers of this lineage in *guṭakā*s found in its manuscript collection, the Āmera *śāstrabhaṇḍāra*.[32]

Joharāpurakara included song-like eulogies on *bhaṭṭāraka*s from northern Maharashtra in his seminal work,[33] and is the only source for such compositions on Senagaṇa *bhaṭṭāraka*s. One of these, a composition on Bhaṭṭāraka Lakṣmīsena of the first half of the fifteenth century, is also the earliest known example.[34]

Kāsalīvāla[35] understands yet another composition edited by him, a *Vijayakīrtti Gīta* penned by Brahmacārī Yaśodhara (references from the 1520s), as pertaining to the early sixteenth-century Balātkāragaṇa Īḍaraśākhā Bhaṭṭāraka Vijayakīrti mentioned above.[36] Given the composition's references to the Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha and to Vijayakīrti's consecration by Viśvasena, however, the poem rather seems to eulogize the sixteenth-century Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha Nandītaṭagaccha Bhaṭṭāraka Vijayakīrti, who was indeed preceded by one Viśvasena. Joharāpurakara[37] also edits a fragment of a composition on this latter Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha *bhaṭṭāraka* (see more below on the latter two texts).

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29 Ibid., p. 99.

30 Ibid., pp. 89–90, 80–82.

31 Nyāyatīrtha (1985a) and (1985b).

32 One composition focuses on Bhaṭṭāraka Prabhācandra (*paṭṭa* s. 1571/72–1580) [*Gītu (kamalavadana kāminī kahe)*, *guṭakā* no. 5, *veṣṭana saṅkhyā* 203, comp. *ga) ga)*, 230B–231B]. The second, eulogizing one Dharmacandra, possibly deals with Prabhācandra's successor of that name [*Stuti*, *guṭakā* no. 4, *veṣṭana saṅkhyā* 202, comp. *dha) dha)*, 196B–197A]. Joharāpurakara (1958), p. 112, does not include Bhaṭṭāraka/Maṇḍalācārya Dharmacandra (*paṭṭa* s. 1581–1603), nor his successor Lalitakīrti (*paṭṭa* s. 1603–1621), as successors to Prabhācandra and predecessors to Candrakīrti (*paṭṭa* s. 1622), listing the latter as direct successor to Prabhācandra. Yet see, for example, Nyāyatīrtha (1985a), p. 421; Detige (forthcoming a).

33 See Joharāpurakara (1958). Joharāpurakara edits two compositions in full—of a Mūlasaṅgha Senagaṇa *bhaṭṭāraka* of the second half of the seventeenth century, (Joharāpurakara (1958), p. 16, *lekha* 50) and a Balātkāragaṇa Kārañjāśākhā *bhaṭṭāraka* of the first half of the eighteenth century (ibid., pp. 69–70, *lekha* 190, *lāvaṇī*)—and gives a number of excerpts of what he (ibid., pp. 32–33) refers to as *stuti* and *praśaṃsā* (ibid., p. 12, *lekha* 31; p. 19, *lekha* 62–63; p. 25, *lekha* 83–84).

34 Ibid., p. 12, *lekha* 31.

35 Kāsalīvāla (1982), pp. 164, 171–172.

36 Ibid., pp. 194–195.

37 Joharāpurakara (1958), p. 270, *lekha* 672; see also ibid., p. 294.

In sum, there remains a large corpus of *bhaṭṭāraka* songs of praise, composed over several centuries and related to many of the lineages known to have been active in Western India.[38] The sheer quantity of compositions, and of compositions by single writers or on single *bhaṭṭāraka*s, shows they came to constitute a specific genre of devotional literature. From a number of indications, we can surmise they were not only commonly composed but also performed. Some manuscripts give the familiar indication of the raga in which the poem was meant to be sung at the onset of the text.[39] Some compositions contain allusions to their being sung by lay women[40] with the accompaniment of rhythm instruments,[41] while others refer to the singing of songs to welcome visiting *bhaṭṭāraka*s. One text, for example, describes the Balātkāragaṇa Bāraḍolīśākhā Bhaṭṭāraka Abhayacandra's visit to Surat in VS 1706:

> *Āja āṇa[ṃ]da mana ati ghaṇo e, kāṃī varatayo jaya jaya kāra/*
> *Abhayacandra muni āvayaë kāṃī sūrata nagara majhāra re//*
> *Ghare ghare uchava ati ghaṇāe kāṃī mānanī maṅgala gāya re/*
> *Aṅga pūjā ne avāraṇāë, kāī kuṅkuma chaḍhāde baḍāya re//*

> So highly elated, the mind, today, some call out 'Jay jay,
> Muni Abhayacandra entered the city of Surat!'
> Cheerful celebration in every house, some ladies sing auspicious songs,
> some perform *aṅga pūjā*, some offer *kuṅkuma* and praise.
> (Kāsalīvāla (1981), p. 77)

A few *bhaṭṭāraka āratī*s (lamp-offering) are also available,[42] and some compositions, not explicitly named as such by their editors, too contain references to *āratī*.[43] Today, Bīsapanthī laypeople perform *āratī*[44] of living renouncers (typically

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38 The work done on the Rajasthan–Gujarat region by scholars like Kastūracanda Kāsalīvāla and Anūpacanda Nyāyatīrtha is unequaled elsewhere. The abundance of similar compositions here suggests they may also be expected to be found in the manuscript collections of yet other lineages.
39 For example, raga *malhāra* in Kāsalīvāla (1981), p. 116; raga *gauḍī* in Nyāyatīrtha (1985b), p. 35; raga *dhanyāsī* in Kāsalīvāla (1981), p. 116.
40 For example, *kautūhala kāmiṇi karai gāvai maṃgalacāro* ('Enchanted ladies sing an auspicious song') (*Sahasrakīrti gīta* MS); *gāvahi e kāmaṇi madhura sare ati madhura sari gāvati kāmaṇi* ('Sing with a honeyed voice, o, damsel; with a sweet-sounding voice the lady sings'), *Bhuvanakīrti gīta* in Kāsalīvāla (1979), p. 107.
41 *nīsāṇa-ḍhola-mṛdaṅgamau*; *nīsāṇa* [= *nagāḍā*], *ḍhola*, and *mṛdaṅga* drums (*Sahasrakīrti gīta* MS).
42 Joharāpurakara (1958), p. 19, *lekha* 61; p. 23, *lekha* 78, gives excerpts from what he calls *āratī*s on two Kārañjā Senagaṇa *bhaṭṭāraka* from, respectively, the late seventeenth century and between the second half of eighteenth century and the early nineteenth.
43 For example, *karūṃ āratī* (I perform *āratī*) (*Vijayakīrtti gīta* in Kāsalīvāla (1982), p. 194).
44 Terāpanthī generally do not perform *āratī*.

*ācārya*s) on special occasions, or in the case of some renouncers, every evening.[45] The practice of performing *bhaṭṭāraka*s' *āratī*, then, might have been a specific incentive for the writing of some of the praise compositions, distinct from other songs' function to welcome *maṅgalācaraṇa*. According to Kāsalīvāla, some of these compositions were also written to be performed at the time of the *bhaṭṭāraka*s' *vihāra*, or on the occasion of group pilgrimages led by them.[46]

'*Dūri desa syauṃ ābīyā jī saṅgha caturavidhi sāra*': The early modern Digambara saṅgha

Thus, while the compositions and manuscript colophons do not necessarily make such explicit distinctions, various genres or functions of *bhaṭṭāraka* eulogies can be identified. A considerable number of texts show sufficient consistency to be regarded as yet another, distinctive subgenre. I refer to these as *paṭṭa-sthāpanā gīta*s. While these songs, much like the others, feature the eulogy of *bhaṭṭāraka*s as ideal munis, their devotees' elation at their conduct, virtues and skills, and biographical data of the *bhaṭṭāraka*s praised, they revolve more specifically around their subjects' consecration (*dīkṣā*) on the *bhaṭṭāraka* seat (*paṭṭa-sthāpanā*, *paṭṭābhiṣeka*). In their jubilation, these compositions typically situate the *dīkṣā* in place and time, describe in varying detail the rituals and celebrations that took place, and name the main people present at and involved with the event, renouncers as well as laity.

Below, I discuss compositions on the consecration of one sixteenth-century Īḍarasākhā *bhaṭṭāraka* and two eighteenth-century Dillī–Jayapuraśākhā *bhaṭṭāraka*s. Mallidāsa's composition on Prabhācandra of the latter lineage also reports on his *dīkṣā* in VS 1572, in Campāvatī (Cāṭasū, Chaksu).[47] From the Ajmer *guṭakā*s discussed above, the first *gīta* on Bhaṭṭāraka Sahasrakīrti revolves around his consecration in VS 1634. The compositions on consecutive Bāraḍolīśākhā *bhaṭṭāraka*s edited by Kāsalīvāla (1981) referred to above are also representative examples of this genre. A composition by Sumatisāgara commemorates the anointment of Bhaṭṭāraka Ratnakīrti in Jālaṇapura, 'in the Southern country' (probably Jālanā, Maharashtra) in VS 1630.[48] No less than three compositions remain on Bhaṭṭāraka Kumudacandra's consecration in Bāraḍolī in VS 1656: two by 'Kavivara' (Brahmacārī?) Gaṇeśa,[49] and one anonymous.[50] Kumudacandra's succession

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45 Detige (in preparation a).

46 Kāsalīvāla (1981), p. 99.

47 *Gītu* (*kamalavadana kāminī kahe*), MS (see footnote 24).

48 Kāsalīvāla (1981), p. 104.

49 Ibid., pp. 101–102; *Kumudacandranī hamacī*, ibid., pp. 233–234.

50 *Guru-gīta*, ibid., pp. 204–205.

by Bhaṭṭāraka Abhayacandra in VS 1685, again in Bāraḍolī, is commemorated and celebrated by both Brahmacārī Meghasāgara and Paṇḍita Dāmodara.[51] The proceedings of the lineage's next *paṭṭābhiṣeka*, taking place in SV 1721 in Poravandara (Porbandar),[52] are detailed by Paṇḍita Śrīpāla in his *Śubhacandra hamacī*.[53] Mahatisāgara's *lāvaṇī* (Marathi song), a miniature *vita* of his guru, the late eighteenth-century Balātkāragaṇa Kārañjāśākhā Devendrakīrti, touches upon similar elements as the Western Indian *paṭṭa-sthāpanā gīta*s in its verses on Devendrakīrti's consecration.[54] In the sixteenth-century Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha Nandītaṭagaccha compositions referred to above we read respectively of Bhaṭṭāraka Viśvasena's *dīkṣā digaṃbara* in Ḍūṅgarapura, being consecrated at the hands of his guru Viśālakīrti,[55] and of Viśvasena, in turn, consecrating his own successor Vijayakīrti.[56]

The genre of the *paṭṭa-sthāpanā gīta*, like *bhaṭṭāraka* eulogies more generally, thus also seems to have been well established across the various lineages. It is possible that these formed a more purely textual, commemorative literary genre, less explicitly meant to be performed than other types of *gīta*s. Apart from the historical details of place and time, some of these compositions include longish lists of names of the people attending and participating. Of particular interest to us are some of these texts' references to the attendance of not just *brahmacārī*s, pandits, and lay sponsors, but also munis and *ācārya*s. The presence of munis and *ācārya*s in the early modern Digambara *saṅgha* is thus far poorly known. While also demonstrable from textual[57] and epigraphic[58] attestations compiled more laboriously, a few *paṭṭa-sthāpanā gīta*s offer instant peeps into the breadth and variety of early modern Digambara asceticism under the Western Indian *bhaṭṭāraka*s and the prevalence of munis and *ācārya*s in the period. A Ḍhūṇḍhāḍī *jakhaḍī* composed by Paṇḍita Akairāma and edited by Nyāyatīrtha lists the renouncers who came to the consecration of the Balātkāragaṇa Dillī–Jayapuraśākhā Bhaṭṭāraka Mahendrakīrti in Delhi in VS 1792, and venerated the freshly minted *bhaṭṭāraka* after the completion of his *paṭṭābhiṣeka*:

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51 *Guru-gīta–rāga malhāra*, ibid., pp. 116–117; *rāga dhanyāsī*, ibid., pp. 105–106.

52 Kāsalīvāla (1981), p. 80.

53 Ibid., pp. 226–228.

54 Joharāpurakara (1958), pp. 69–70, *lekha* 190.

55 Ibid., p. 270, *lekha* 672.

56 Kāsalīvāla (1982), pp. 194–195.

57 Substantial numbers of references to early modern munis can be found in scribal colophons (*puṣpikā*) and authorial *praśasti*, and some of their own compositions have also been preserved (Detige forthcoming a).

58 Funerary memorials of early modern munis and *ācārya*s are found at several sites in Rajasthan (Detige in preparation b).

dūri desa syauṃ ābīyā jī saṅgha caturavidhi sāra/
guru pūjana baṃdana karai jī aṅgi uchāha apāra//5//
uchāha aṅgi apāra jina kai ācārija ara arijikā/
brahmacāra paṇḍita śrāvikā gurucaraṇa pūja viśeṣikā//
jahāṃ kṣetra kīrati haraṣa kīrati padama kīrati pāmiye/
muni acala kīrati sakala kīrati vimala kīrati bakhāṇiye//
ima rāja śrī ara kamala śrī ye arajikā doya āniye/
brahma ṭekacaṃda ju keśavadāsa kapūracandajī jāniye//6//
(Nyāyatīrtha (1985a), p. 423)

From faraway lands, the whole fourfold *saṅgha* came.
They venerate and praise the guru, in their limbs a joy unsurpassed. (5)
A joy that cannot be contained, in the limbs of *ācārya*s, *āryikā*s,
*brahmacārī*s, pandits and laywomen, performing *pūjā* of the guru's feet.
Where Kṣetrakīrti,[59] Harṣakīrti, and Padmakīrti arrived [?],
Muni Acalakīrti, Sakalakīrti and Vimalakīrti, so be it known.
So also Rājaśrī and Kamalaśrī, these two *āryikā*s came.
Brahmacārī Tekacandajī, Keśavadāsa [and] Kapūracanda, know these too. (6)

A similar composition by one Nemacanda is available commemorating the *paṭṭābhiṣeka* of Mahendrakīrti's predecessor, Devendrakīrti, who succeeded his guru Jagatkīrti in Ambāvatī (Amer) in VS 1770. It similarly gives an account of the renouncers present at the event:

caṃda kīrati jī jasa līyo saba bātāṃ paravīṇojī/
śrī jagatakīrati kai pāṭa thāpiyo deva indrakīrati sukhalīṇojī/ṭeka //
sukha līna ati hī viśāla kīrati jñāna kīrati subhācaṃdajī/
nemacaṃda nemānaṃdi meru kīrati brahma nāthū ṭekaca[ṃ]dajī/
lālacaṃda likhamīdāsa paṇḍita giridhara lakhamaṇa rasa līyo/
devaïndra kīrati pāṭi thāpitāṃ svāmī caṃdakīratijī jasa līyo//3//

Candrakīrti gained glory [as] well-versed in all matters,
delighted, he established Devendrakīrti on Śrī Jagatkīrti's seat.[60]
Overjoyed [as well, were] Viśālakīrti, Jñānakīrti, Subhacandajī,
Nemacanda,[61] Nemānandi [and] Merukīrti; Brahmacārī Nāthu, Ṭekacandajī,

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59 Possibly a scribal or editorial error for the more common name, Kṣemakīrti.
60 Probably the Bhaṭṭāraka Candrakīrti who at this time was the incumbent of the neighbouring Balātkāragaṇa seat in Nagaur. If so, the fact that Candrakīrti came over to consecrate Devendrakīrti probably means that Jagatkīrti had died before anointing his successor. From elsewhere, too, we find references to Balātkāragaṇa *bhaṭṭāraka* establishing new incumbents of other seats. For two more examples, see Kāsalīvāla (1981), pp. 81, 227–228; and Detige (2015), pp. 152–153.
61 Though not an uncommon name, this could be the composition's very author, who doesn't specify his rank in the *chāpa* either. Contemporary munis and other renouncers too are prolific authors of various devotional genres and *pūjā*s in praise of their gurus.

Lālacanda [and] Lakṣmīdāsa; Paṇḍita[62] Giridhara [and] Lakṣmaṇa were thrilled. Placing Devendrakīrti on the seat, Swami Candrakīrti gained much glory. (Nyāyatīrtha (1985b), p. 36)

Here, the rank of the six renouncers from Viśālakīrti to Merukīrti is not indicated. However, judging from their names,[63] and their being listed before attendees explicitly called *brahmacārī*, it seems likely they were munis (*upādhyāya*s, *ācārya*s).[64] While other *paṭṭa-sthāpanā gīta*s do not explicitly name the renouncers present, they do commonly refer to the meeting of the *caturvidha saṅgha*, the fourfold Jaina community consisting of male (*sadhu*) and female (*sādhvī*) renouncers, and male (*śrāvaka*) and female (*śrāvikā*) laypeople. Given the general prevalence of munis, as confirmed by other sources, the concept of the *caturvidha saṅgha*, as used in those cases too, potentially had actual referents, rather than merely being used as an idiomatic trope. Conversely, the usage of the term can also be read as confirming the former perception of these renouncers as genuine and undisputed venerable renouncers.

A *paṭṭa-sthāpanā* composition by Brahmacārī Jayarāja provides valuable insight into the career of Bhaṭṭāraka Guṇakīrti, who in VS 1632 was consecrated as the incumbent of the Īḍarasākhā, one of the two Balātkāragaṇa seats of the Vāgaḍa region.[65] The narrative of this early modern renouncer's life, first as a lay boy and then as a renouncer, reads remarkably similar to contemporary Jaina hagiographies. Studious, bright, and good-looking, the young Gaṇapati experienced detachment (*vairāgya*) early in life and took to the feet of Bhaṭṭāraka Sumatikīrti.[66] Impressed by his merits, Sumatikīrti accepted Gaṇapati as his main pupil, giving him his new name, Guṇakīrti. The fledgling renouncer then joined the *bhaṭṭāraka*

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62 Naming but a few of them, Nemacanda and Akairāma both continue with the claim that fifty-one pandits were present at the respective *bhaṭṭāraka dīkṣā* they commemorate. Perhaps this is a type of stock phrase or an auspicious number.

63 In the early modern period, names ending in *–kīrti*, *–nanda/nandi/nandī*, and *–bhūṣaṇa*, as well as *–candra*, were characteristic for munis, *upādhyāya*s, *ācārya*s, and *bhaṭṭāraka*s. *Brahmacārī*s typically have names with suffixes *–dāsa*, *–sāgara*, or *–candra*, or carry their lay names.

64 If so, and if the Nemacandra listed here is the author of the *jakhaḍī*, this is the only known example of a *bhaṭṭāraka* song of praise composed by a muni.

65 Kāsalīvāla (1969), pp. 453–454; Kāsalīvāla (1981), pp. 234–235, gives a seemingly comprehensive outline of the contents of the composition. Kāsalīvāla (1967), pp. 190–191, provides a few of its verses, then refers to it as *Guru chanda*. He locates his manuscript at the Mahāvīra bhavana, Jaipur (= Āmera śāstrabhaṇḍāra; 'register no. 5, p. 145, ibid., p. 190). I could not retrieve the manuscript, and hence did not have access to the full text. I base my discussion on Kāsalīvāla's paraphrase.

66 Many *bhaṭṭāraka gīta*s indicate that their subjects renounced in childhood, and thus were child celibates (*bālabrahmacārī*), a status still highly esteemed for contemporary renouncers.

on his *vihāra*, probably initially as a *brahmacārī*. Cheered by a crowd, he took the five *mahāvrata*s at a function in Ḍūṅgarapura, becoming a muni. Once he was well-versed in scriptures and logic, and had become a skilled and captivating orator, he received the *upādhyāya* pada and started teaching the *Gommaṭasāra* and other texts. Sometime later he was again promoted, becoming an *ācārya*, a leader of the *saṅgha*. Sumatikīrti then declared Guṇakīrti his successor, and a propitious date was determined for his consecration to the *bhaṭṭāraka* seat, which took place again in Ḍūṅgarapura.

Before ultimately becoming a *bhaṭṭāraka*, Guṇakīrti was initiated over time into the successive Digambara padas, much as would be customary for an *ācārya* today.[67] This was, however, apparently not always an absolute requirement, as elsewhere we find accounts of *brahmacārī*s consecrated directly as *ācārya* or *baṭṭāraka*, skipping the muni (and *upādhyāya*) ranks.[68] It must be noted, furthermore, that the conferment of these ranks probably does not necessarily entail that these were naked renouncers. If we presume that the Western Indian *bhaṭṭāraka*s were generally clothed,[69] this in fact seems rather improbable, given that even in its practical absence, throughout the early modern period nudity remained the highest Digambara ideal of renunciation,[70] and naked munis could thus hardly be subordinate to clothed *bhaṭṭāraka*s. Yet, the very usage of the muni and *ācārya* padas, the venerability of *bhaṭṭāraka*s and the specific forms of their veneration (*pūjā*, *āratī*, *gīta*), their *dīkṣā* rituals[71] and adoption of the *mahāvrata*s and other rules of conduct, all speak of a continuity of Digambara renunciation across—and crossing out—the ‘Bhaṭṭāraka Era.’ What I have not attended to here is more precisely situating the prevalence, and eventual disappearance, of early modern munis and *ācārya*s in time and place. Preliminary results show that the muni rank became almost entirely obsolete after the seventeenth century, while the *ācārya* pada disappeared only after the eighteenth.[72] These are findings which differ starkly from the common assumption that the rise of the Sultanates, and hence the commencement of Muslim rule, abruptly and simultaneously caused the stage entry of the *bhaṭṭāraka*s and the exit of the munis.

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67 Apart then from the phases as *kṣullaka* and *ailaka,* ranks which are rarely attested from the early modern period (see Detige forthcoming b). Presuming that early modern munis typically were clothed, it can be understood that these preparatory stages to becoming a naked renouncer were perhaps deemed superfluous.

68 For example, Joharāpurakara (1958), p. 69, *lekha* 190; Kāsalīvāla (1981), p. 47.

69 References to *bhaṭṭāraka*s’ nudity do occur, possibly as temporary practices. See Detige (forthcoming b).

70 See Cort in this volume.

71 For want of space, I am forced to omit an examination of the *paṭṭa-sthāpanā gīta*s’ occasionally quite rich accounts of the ritual procedure of the *bhaṭṭāraka dīkṣā*.

72 See Detige (forthcoming a, b; in preparation b). *Ācārya*s are, in fact, attested particularly numerously *after* the disappearance of munis.

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PART V

QUESTIONS OF METRICS
AND LOCAL LITERATURES

Hiroko Nagasaki

14. The Metrical Style of Tulsīdās

Abstract. Tulsīdās, the sixteenth-century author of *Rāmacaritamānasa*, is a towering figure in the history of the Hindi literature. His works demonstrate a great diversity of metrical styles derived from other regions, dialects, and religious traditions—not only contemporary Hindu bhaktas and Sant poets of Brajbhāṣā, but Muslim poets too. His prosodic versatility is evident from his proficient use of syllabic metre derived from Sanskrit, mora metres derived from Prakrit, Apabhraṃśa, and Hindi, and the musical *tāla* metre from local folk songs. Besides that, his verse was easy to recite, due to his tendency to limit metrical irregularity and employ his favourite metrical rhythms (that is the 3/3/2 or the 4/4 mora groupings). This paper investigates the rhythmic function of metres in Tulsīdās's works, attempting to elucidate their key characteristics and discussing how the poet used them to establish his unique style.

Keywords. Tulsīdās, *Rāmacaritamānasa*, Hindi metre, Phonological rhythm, Abdurrahīm 'Khānkhānā.

Tulsīdās (Tulasīdāsa, sixteenth to seventeenth century), the author of the *Rāmacaritamānasa* (*Rāmcaritmānas*), is a towering figure in the millennium-long history of Hindi literature of North India. His contributions are traditionally not limited to literature. Rather, they include the establishment of the devotion to Rāma as an incarnation of Viṣṇu and the popularization of the worship of Hanumān, two practices that continue to exist to this day. Given the vast range of academic study on Tulsīdās's works, it is surprising that his literary style, especially his metre, has not drawn much attention.[1] Even though metrical analysis involves technical matters, which may appear trivial to understanding Tulsīdās's works, this paper claims that metrical diversity is in fact one of their characteristic features.

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1 In this respect, the detailed analysis of the *baravai chanda* of Tulsīdās and Rahīm conducted by Rupert Snell (1994), pp. 373–405 is an exception. Gaurīśaṅkara Miśra 'Dvijendra''s list (2016 [1975]), pp. 244–292, of every name of metre Tulsīdās used provides detailed information.

Hiroko Nagasaki

Metre in the works of Tulsīdās

Mātāprasāda Gupta, an authority on Tulsīdās in the twentieth century, admired his six major works as the jewels of Hindi literature: the *Rāmacaritamānasa*, *Dohāvalī*, *Kavitāvalī*, *Gītāvalī*, *Kṛṣṇa Gītāvalī*, and *Vinaya Patrikā*.[2] Besides, there are six minor works including the *Baravai Rāmāyaṇa*, *Pārvatī Maṅgala*, *Jānakī Maṅgala*, *Rāmalalā Nahachū*, *Rāmājñā Praśna*, and *Vairāgya Sandīpanī*. Most scholars recognize these twelve works as authentic compositions of Tulsīdās.[3] In addition to these authoritative compositions, a few works such as the popular *Hanumān Cālīsā*, used for daily recitation, are also generally attributed to Tulsīdās.[4] It is difficult to determine the authenticity of Tulsīdās's works, as is frequently the case in bhakti literature, but nevertheless it is not our main concern here. The metrical analysis presented in this chapter uses the Kāśīrāja edition of the *Rāmacarita-mānasa*[5] and the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā edition[6] of the other eleven works. Tables 14.1 and 14.2 present the moraic forms used by Tulsīdās in his works.

These tables indicate that Tulsīdās used many forms not only of *mātrā chanda*, which is a purely moraic metre with end rhymes, but also *varṇa chanda*, a rigid syllable-counting metre with a fixed order of feet, and *tāla chanda*, which is a musical metre.[7] While other poets of bhakti literature tend to prefer certain metres, Tulsīdās is unique in his use of an unusually rich variety of metrical forms appropriate to the theme of the work.[8]

Accordingly, the following questions are posed: Why did he use so many metres? Which metre was most characteristic of his work? I will return to these questions later.

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2 Gupta (1967), p. 9.

3 Lutgendorf (2007), p. 93, called this a broad consensus on the extent of the corpus, one at which modern scholarship has likewise arrived. However, the canonization of these twelve works may have been influenced by the commentaries and *kathā* tradition of the renowned Rāmāyaṇī in the late nineteenth century (Lutgendorf (1991), pp. 137–157).

4 The popularity of *Hanumān Cālīsā* is immense and Tulsīdās is revered as its author these days. Lutgendorf (2007) has examined the boom of Hanumān-related literature, including the *Hanumān Cālīsā*, in detail.

5 Miśra (1962).

6 Śukla (1923).

7 Keśavdās (Keśavadāsa), poet of Orchha and contemporary of Tulsīdās, also used many metrical forms but did so to create a work illustrating various metres.

8 Poets such as Sūrdās used many kinds of metrical forms belonging to the category pada. The pada is not the name of single metre but of long stanzas in which there are various metrical forms. And if we consider each of them as an independent metre, their works also show considerable variety. Tulsīdās, however, used a still yet wider variety of metres depending on the theme of the work, in addition to the pada in which he composed three works. Even if we treat the entire pada as one metrical style, Tulsīdās' works show an unparalleled repertoire of metres.

TABLE 14.1 Metrical forms of major works (* = 'syllabic metre'; †= 'musical metre'; [no mark] = 'moraic metre'; E. R. = 'end rhyme'; m = 'mora' (*mātrā*)).

Rāmacaritamānasa	Regular stanza	4 *caupāī* (16m. quatrain) + 1 *dohā* (13m. + 11m. couplet)	
	Specially used moraic forms	Chap. 1	*harigītikā* (16 + 12 = 28m. quatrain. E. R. ◡-), *tribhaṅgī* (10 + 8 + 8 + 6 = 32m. quatrain. E. R. -), *durmilā* (10 + 8 + 14 = 32m. quatrain. E. R. --), *daṇḍakalā* (10 + 8 + 14 = 32m. quatrain. E. R. ◡◡-), *cavapaiyā* (10 + 8 + 12 = 30m. quatrain. E. R. -)
		Chap. 2	*harigītikā*
		Chap. 3	**pramāṇikā* (◡-◡ -◡- ◡- quatrain), *harigītikā* *tomara* (12m. quatrain. E. R. -◡)
		Chap. 4	*harigītikā*
		Chap. 5	*harigītikā*
		Chap. 6	*harigītikā* *tomara* **toṭaka* (◡◡- ◡◡- ◡◡- ◡◡- quatrain)
		Chap. 7	*harigītikā* **bhujaṅgaprayāta* (◡-- ◡-- ◡-- ◡-- quatrain), **toṭaka*
Dohāvalī	573 *dohā* (or *soraṭhā*)		
Kavitāvalī	325 stanzas (**savaiyā*ᵃ ((◡◡- or -◡◡) × ca. 8), **kabitta/ ghanākṣarī* (16 + 15 = 31 syllables. E. R. -), *chappaya* (*rolā* (11 + 13 = 24m. quatrain) + *ullālā* (26 or 28 m. couplet)), *jhūlanā* (10 + 10 + 10 + 7m. quatrain)		
Gītāvalī	328 †padas		
Kṛṣṇa Gītāvalī	61 †padas		
Vinaya Patrikā	279 †padas		

ᵃ There are some variations of the *savaiyā* and *mattagayanda* ((- ◡◡) + - -), especially noted in some printed texts. *Savaiyā* as well as *kavitta* are syllabic metre, but they are not traditional Sanskrit metrical forms. See details in Nagasaki (2012), p. 122.

Source: Author.

TABLE 14.2 Metrical forms of minor works.

Baravai Rāmāyaṇa	69 *baravai* (11m. + 7m. couplet)
Pārvatī Maṅgala	16 stanzas (4–8 *haṃsagati* (12m. + 9m.) + 1 *harigītikā*)
Jānakī Maṅgala	24 stanzas (4 *haṃsagati* + 1 *harigītikā*)
Rāmalalā Nahachū	20 *sohara*ᵃ (8m. + 8m. + 6m. quatrain)
Rāmājñā Praśna	343 *dohā* (7 stanzas in 7 *sarga*: every stanza is called *dohā*, contains 7 *dohā*)
Vairāgya Sandīpanī	62 verses (*dohā*, *soraṭhā*, *caupāī*)
ᵃ The quatrain *sohara* is called *rāsa* by Hindi prosodist J. P. Bhānu in his *Kāvya Prabhā-kara*.	

Source: Author.

His works can be grouped into two categories based on the number of metrical forms; the first includes works composed in mixed metrical forms and the second in single metrical form. For example, while the *Rāmacaritamānasa* mostly consists of stanzas of four *caupāī*s plus one *dohā*, it also contains stanzas in various other metres and so belongs to the first category. On the other hand, the *Dohāvalī* and *Rāmājñā Praśna* are collections of *dohā*s only, and belong to the second category.

Eight works belong to the first category: the *Rāmacaritamānasa*, *Kavitāvalī*, *Gītāvalī*, *Kṛṣṇa Gītāvalī*, *Vinaya Patrikā*, *Pārvatī Maṅgala*, *Jānakī Maṅgala*, and *Vairāgya Sandīpanī*. The *Rāmacaritamānasa* and *Vairāgya Sandīpanī* are in the *caupāī–dohā* style; *Pārvatī Maṅgala* and *Jānakī Maṅgala* are in the *haṃsagati–harigītikā* style; *Gītāvalī*, *Kṛṣṇa Gītāvalī*, and *Vinaya Patrikā* are collections of pada songs;[9] and *Kavitāvalī* is a *Rāmāyaṇa* in *kavitta* (*ghānakṣarī*)–*savaiyā* and some other metres. The other four works fall under the second category: the *Dohāvalī* and *Rāmājñā Praśna* are collections of *dohā*s; the *Baravai Rāmāyaṇa* consists of *baravai*s; and the *Rāmalalā Nahachū* contains only *sohara*s.

The *Rāmacaritamānasa* is the longest work by Tulsīdās and indicates remarkable variation in the number of metres, whereas his other works in mixed metrical forms are composed of a limited number of metres.

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9 Miśra (2016 [1975]), pp. 256–258, claimed that there are forty-one different metrical forms occurring in the pada of the *Vinaya Patrikā*, *Kavitāvalī*, and *Kṛṣṇa Kavitāvalī*, although his classification distinguishes too small a level of detail. Miśra (2016 [1975]), pp. 287–289, attributed Tulsīdās's hypermetrical or hypometrical pada to *saṅgīta*, but a further analysis of their metrical structure based on the music might be necessary. Cf. Snell's study of the padas of Hita Harivaṃśa.

Metrical style of the *Rāmacaritamānasa*

The *Rāmacaritamānasa*, which is composed of about 1,073 stanzas,[10] comprises seven chapters. The standard stanza is composed of four *caupāī*s plus one *dohā* or *soraṭhā*.[11] Four-quatrain *caupāī* of sixteen moras each serve for the narrative while a *dohā* couplet of twenty-four moras each concludes the stanza. Each chapter begins with a Sanskrit *śloka* dedicated to the gods, and chapter seven, the last chapter, ends with verses in language and metre that are canonical Sanskrit. The word *śloka* is especially noted before the Sanskrit verses in some printed editions; it means Sanskrit metre in general, unlike Sanskrit *śloka*, which refers to a strophe of four pada 'feet' with eight syllables in each stanza. Individual metres that fall under the category of *śloka* are presented in Table 14.4.

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10 The number of stanzas varies depending on the edition: 1,073 stanzas in the Kāśīrāja edition; 1,068 stanzas in the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā edition by Śukla; 1,074 stanzas in the Gita Press and Mātāprasāda Gupta editions.

11 Some scholars distinguish hypermetrical or hypometrical metres from the standard forms and give independent names, but this author regards them as variation of the standard forms. Focusing on the deviation from standard stanzas, the following irregularities were found:

TABLE 14.3 Irregular stanzas in each chapter based on the Kāśīrāja edition

1st (36/361)	7 lines: 5, 9 lines: 6, 10 lines 6, 11 lines: 4, 12 lines: 5, 13 lines: 5, 14 lines: 3, 15 lines: 1
2nd (7/325)	7 lines: 4, 9 lines: 2, 16 lines: 1
3rd (19/46)	9 lines: 2, 10 lines: 4, 11 lines: 1, 12 lines: 3, 13 lines: 1, 16 lines: 1, 17 lines: 1, 18 lines: 2, 20 lines: 1, 24 lines: 1, 26 lines: 1, 27 lines: 1
4th (14/30)	9 lines: 2, 10 lines: 5, 11 lines: 1, 12 lines: 2, 13 lines: 2, 14 lines: 1, 29 lines: 1
5th (23/60)	9 lines: 14, 10 lines 6, 11 lines: 1, 12 lines 2
6th (41/121)	9 lines: 7, 10 lines: 19, 11 lines: 3, 12 lines: 3, 13 lines: 3, 14 lines: 3, 16 lines, 2
7th (38/130)	7 lines: 1, 9 lines: 10, 10 lines: 14, 16 lines 10, 19 lines: 2, 37 lines: 1

Source: Author.

According to this list, the ratio of the irregular stanzas is about 17 per cent. In other words, 83 per cent of the stanzas in the *Rāmacaritamānasa* consist of four *caupāī*s plus one *dohā* or *soraṭhā*.

TABLE 14.4 Metrical forms under the category of *śloka* in the *Rāmacaritamānasa* (s = 'syllable').

anuṣṭubh	8s. × 4	8 syllables × 4
śārdūlavikrīḍita	19s. × 4	--- ᴗᴗ- ᴗ-ᴗ ᴗᴗ- --ᴗ --ᴗ -
vasaṃtatilakā	14s. × 4	--ᴗ -ᴗᴗ ᴗ-ᴗ ᴗ-ᴗ --
indravajrā	11s. × 4	--ᴗ --ᴗ ᴗ-ᴗ --
mālinī	15s. × 4	ᴗᴗᴗ ᴗᴗᴗ --- ᴗ-- ᴗ--
sragdharā	21s. × 4	--- -ᴗ- -ᴗᴗ ᴗᴗᴗ ᴗ-- ᴗ-- ᴗ--
rathoddhatā	11s. × 4	-ᴗ- ᴗᴗᴗ -ᴗ- ᴗ-
pañcacāmara	16s. × 4	ᴗ-ᴗ -ᴗ- ᴗ-ᴗ -ᴗ- ᴗ-ᴗ -

Source: Author.

These Sanskrit *śloka* are composed in syllabic metre. Syllabic metre, called *varṇa chanda*, derives from Sanskrit literature. On the other hand, moraic metre, or *mātrā chanda*, derives from Prakrit and Apabhraṃśa literature. These two are the major categories in Hindi poetics, but moraic metre is much more common in Hindi literature. This tendency is observed in the *Rāmacaritamānasa* as well. The effect of solemnity, one of the characteristics of syllabic metres, might be the main reason why Tulsīdās adopted the *śloka* at the beginning of each chapter of the *Rāmacaritamānasa*. He prayed for a successful start in those *śloka*s, along with the concluding *śloka* of chapter seven with which he declared the holiness of the *Rāmacaritamānasa*.[12]

Special metrical forms provide variation in the monotonous repetition of the *caupāī–dohā* rhythm (Table 14.1). Some editions give them the name *chanda* (metre), but this term covers verses other than *caupāī*, *dohā*, *soraṭhā*, and *śloka*. Among these special metrical forms, *harigītikā*, *cavapaiyā*, *daṇḍakalā*, and *durmilā* are defined as moraic metres. On the other hand, *tomara*, which is defined as a moraic metre in Hindi prosody, is explained as a syllabic metre in the *Prākṛtapaiṅgalam*.[13] Of the *chanda* metres, three forms, *toṭaka*, *pramāṇikā*, and *bhujaṅgaprayāta*, are based on Sanskrit syllable counting.

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12 Besides the *śloka*s at the beginning of each chapter, the syllabic metre is adopted mainly for the devotional songs within the chapters. For example, in chapter seven there are *śloka*s placed in stanza 108 dedicated to the god Śiva and in stanza 122 requesting readers to recite the name of the god Rāma.

13 The definitions of *tomara* verse: twelve moras and end rhyme -ᴗ in the Hindi poetics; ᴗᴗ _ ᴗ _ ᴗᴗ _ ᴗ in the *Prākṛtapaiṅgalam*.

The question is whether the *caupāī–dohā* style of Tulsīdās is original. Some scholars, such as Rāmacandra Śukla, have noted a similarity in style between the *Rāmacaritamānasa* and the Sufi romances, for example the *Padmavāt* by Malik Muhammad Jāysī.[14] The remarkable resemblance between them may be due to the fact that Tulsīdās and Sufi poets lived in the same region, Avadh, and shared the language and literary form of the Avadhi epic.[15] However, another possibility is worth noting. The stanza *kaḍavaka* of the Jain *Rāmāyaṇa* in Apabhraṃśa literature, which shows four verse forms (*paddhaḍikā*) with sixteen moras in each foot followed by a *ghattā*, *gāthā*, or *ullālā*, seems to be taken over by the four *caupāī* plus one *dohā* in the *Rāmacaritamānasa*.[16] This possibility suggests that Tulsīdās borrowed the *caupāī–dohā* style directly from that of Jain *Rāmāyaṇa* of the eighth century. We cannot claim with certainty that Tulsīdās was familiar with the Sufi or Jain literature, but it is possible that the characteristic style of his magnum opus, the *Rāmacaritamānasa*, was borrowed from Jain or Sufi literature, despite the fact that Tulsīdās was skilled at using many other metrical styles.

In addition to the *caupāī–dohā* style, other works by Tulsīdās also show a remarkable similarity in metrical style with works by other bhakti poets. It is a view commonly held by Indian readers that 'Tulsidas is a professional poet who shared a lot of cultural habitus with others in the same field including the Sufi poets,'[17] and the legend about the interactions between Tulsīdās and his contemporary poets, which cannot be proven on historical grounds, might reflect that view. In this regard, we quote that the description in the *Mūla Gosāīṃ Carita*, the hagiography of Tulsīdās, emphasizes the communication and correspondences between the Krishnaite bhaktas and Tulsīdās. For example, Sūrdās (Sūradāsa) taught Tulsīdās the pada (*dohā* 29–30); Tulsīdās and Mīrābāī sent *kavitta–savaiyā* to each other (*dohā* 31–32); and Tulsīdās and Abdurrahīm 'K̲h̲ānk̲h̲ānā' (1556–1626), commonly known as Rahīm, sent *baravai* (*dohā* 93). Even though these legends lack credibility for contemporary historiography, they reflect the fact that the pada style of the *Gītāvalī*, *Kṛṣṇa Gītāvalī*, and *Vinaya Patrikā*, and the *kavitta–savaiyā* style of the *Kavitāvalī*, may be related to the Western tradition of Krishnaite poetry

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14 Śukla (1990 [1929]), pp. 40–41, claimed that Sufi poets also adopted the *caupāī–dohā* style from the *Satyavatīkathā* composed by Īśvardās (Īśvaradāsa, sixteenth century). He wanted to attribute the origin of the literary style of Sufi poets to a previous Hindu tradition. However, it is not confirmed that Sufi poets followed the style of only one composition, such as the *Satyavatīkathā*.

15 De Bruijn (2010) describes several intertextual overlaps between the *Padmavāt* and the *Rāmacaritamānasa* and remarks Tulsī's choice of the format of the Avadhi epics as the genre historically developed by the Sufi poets.

16 See details in Nagasaki (2012), p. 115.

17 De Bruijn (2010), p. 133.

in Brajbhāṣā.[18] Similarly, the *baravai* metre in the *Baravai Rāmāyaṇa* might be related to Brajbhāṣā literature patronized by the Mughal court. One exception to these shared styles is the *haṃsagati–harigītikā* style of the *Pārvatī Maṅgala* and *Jānakī Maṅgala*. The *haṃsagati* is an original Hindi moraic metre first mentioned in *Chandohṛdaya Prakāśa*, a seventeenth-century work of poetics by Bhūṣaṇa, and the *harigītikā* is referred to in the *Prākrita-Paiṅgalam* (fourteenth century); however, the stanza of *haṃsagati-harigītikā* is not common in Hindi bhakti literature. Thus it is possible that this is a special style of Tulsīdās's or that other works in this metre have not survived.

If Tulsīdās borrowed metrical styles from the works of other poets, it raises a further question: what then is the characteristic of Tulsīdās's own metre? To answer this question, we must analyze the metrical rhythms that Tulsīdās particularly preferred. Let us first look at the second category, namely works in single metrical form.

The favoured metrical form and rhythm of Tulsīdās

The popular *Dohāvalī* and *Rāmājñā Praśna* are collections of *dohā*s, and the *Baravai Rāmāyaṇa* is a collection of *baravai*s. Both *dohā*s and *baravai*s are couplets in moraic metre. Each features rhymes in the last two syllables but whereas each line of a *dohā* comprises 13 + 11 moras, each line of a *baravai* comprises 12 + 7 moras. The *dohā* is derived from Apabhraṃśa moraic metre and is popular among Hindi poets. On the other hand, the *baravai*, a moraic metre of presumably Hindi origin,[19] has not been much used by Hindi poets except Rahīm and Tulsīdās.[20] (The

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18 Dvivedī (1994 [1952]), p. 150, states that *savaiyā–kavitta* style first appeared in Braj literature. Bangha (2004), pp. 33–34, points out the use of *kavitta*, *savaiyā*, and *chappaya* styles among court poets such as Gang (Gaṅga) and Kalyan (Kalyāṇa).
19 The *baravai*, a variation of *dohā*, is a couplet, each line comprises 12 + 7 moras and ends in the rhythm ◡-◡. Since it is not mentioned in Sanskrit, Prakrit, or Apabhraṃśa metrics, the *baravai* is considered to be the creation of Hindi poets, and allegedly Rahīm was the first to use it. The *baravai* may be a new-born metrical form composed of an odd pada of the *upadohā* (or *dohārā*) + the *dhruva*. This pada is composed of twelve moras, and the *dhruva*, an old metre of Prakrit, is composed of seven. According to Śivanandana Prasāda (1964), p. 399, this explanation of the origin of the *baravai* is supported by the fact that some Hindi metricians, for example Bhikhārīdās, called it not *baravai* but *dhruva*. According to Snell (1994), pp. 374–375, the name *barvā* applied to a raga in *kāfī ṭhāṭ*, and the connection between *barvā* and the ragas, *darpaṇ* and *ṭhumrī*, are referred to in musicological texts—but the exact relationship between *barvā* and *baravai* metre is unclear.
20 Among the unique poets who used *baravai*, Dvivedi (1994), p. 143, categorized Nūr Muhammad. His style appears to be similar to the *caupāī–dohā* style, but interestingly, he used not *dohā* but *baravai* following *caupāī*s in his stanza.

baravai metre used by the two poets is discussed below). The reason for the lack of popularity of the *baravai* may be its impracticality; that is, the *baravai* is a couplet with only thirty-eight moras, the smallest in Hindi metre, and thus it may be too short for poets to express their thoughts. The *dohā* is also short, but forty-eight moras is sufficient length for a complete, self-standing couplet. We could, with Schomer, call it an ideal metrical form; she stated, 'the *dohā* is concise as well as easy to remember.'[21] Despite the difference in the number of moras, the *baravai* is categorized as a variety of the *dohā*. While Tulsīdās used many types of metrical forms in his works, he composed three collections of poems, the *Dohāvalī*, *Rāmā-jñā Praśna*, and *Baravai Rāmāyaṇa* only in the *dohā* and its variety *baravai*. This suggests that the *dohā* may be Tulsīdās's preferred favorite moraic metre.

But what are the unique characteristics of Tulsīdās's *dohā*? The *dohā* is traditionally classified as a *muktaka* (independent verse), meaning it is in itself complete. Many Sant poets of bhakti literature preferred to use the *dohā* as a *muktaka* for their sermons. In contrast, the *dohā* of Tulsīdās has two functions, for example as *muktaka* and as the summarization of the stanza. The latter function is found in the *dohā*s in the *Dohāvalī*, many of which are gathered from the *Rāmacaritamānasa*. The former function is closely associated with the sermons of the Sant poets, whereas the latter may be associated with the Jain *Rāmāyaṇa* of the Apabhraṃśa literature or the Sufi romance. The traditional moraic pattern of the *dohā*, as defined in the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam*, is 6+4+3, with 6+4+1 moras in each line. Many Hindi prosodists follow this definition. However, the syllabic arrangement of Tulsīdās's *dohā*s is unique, differing from the *dohā*s in the traditional grouping of moras. The following is a *dohā* quoted from the *Dohāvalī*:

> *bādʰaka saba saba ke bʰae, sādʰaka bʰae na koi*
> ‒◡◡ ◡◡ ◡◡ ‒ ◡‒ , ‒◡◡ ◡‒ ◡‒◡
> *tulasī rāma kṛpālu tẽ bʰalo hoi so hoi*
> ◡◡‒ ‒ ◡ ◡ ‒◡ ‒ ◡‒ ‒◡ ‒ ‒◡

> Rough paths of life are full of pits, support indeed is hard to find,
> Tulsi, welfare one gets on earth when Gracious Rama is so inclined.
> (*Dohāvalī* 100, trans. Bahadur (1997), p. 13)

The following scansion indicates how the traditional mora grouping of the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam* (6+4+3, 6+4+1) applies to the first hemistich of the *dohā* but does not to the second because a long syllable stretches over the 6th and 7th *mātrā* 'mora' positions (Table 14.5).

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21 Schomer (1987), p. 63.

TABLE 14.5 The *dohā* by Tulsīdās according to the traditional mora grouping.

Odd pada			Even pada		
bādʰaka saba	*saba ke*	*bʰae*	*sādʰaka bʰae na koi*		
‒˘˘ ˘˘	˘˘ ‒	˘‒	‒˘ ˘ ˘‒ ˘ ‒˘		
6	4	3	4 1<u>2</u> 1 21		

tulasī rā	*ma kṛpā*	*lu tẽ*	*bʰalo hoi*	*so ho*	*i*
˘˘‒ ‒	˘˘‒	˘ ‒	˘‒ ‒˘	‒ ‒	˘
6	4	3	6	4	1

Source: Author.

To solve this problem, we need to assume a mora grouping such as the following:

> *bādʰaka/ saba saba/ ke bʰa/ e,/ sādʰaka/ bʰae na/ koi*
>   4   / 4 /   3 / 2,/   4 /   4 / 3
> *tulasī/ rāma kṛ/ pālu/ tẽ/ bʰalo/ hoi/ so/ hoi*
>   4/   4 /   3 /2/ 3   / 3 / 2 / 3

While the traditional mora grouping is 6/4/3, 6/4/1, I analyze this mora grouping as 3/3/2 or 4/4 plus 3 followed by two more moras in the odd pada. Here we should recall the 3/3/2 versus 4/4 theory of Kenneth Bryant. Bryant clearly indicated how this theory can be applied to the pada of Sūrdās.[22] While, according to Bryant, this mora grouping can be applied even in the middle of lines of Sūrdās's verses, it always occurs in the beginning of each pada in Tulsīdās's *dohā*s. However, surprisingly, the Hindi prosodist Jagannātha Prasāda 'Bhānu' already gave the 3/3/2 versus 4/4 mora interpretation in his definition of the *dohā* a century ago. In his definition, there are two mora groupings at the beginning of a pada, that is 3/3/2 and 4/4 (Table 14.6).

TABLE 14.6 The mora grouping of *dohā* by 'Bhānu'.

odd pada	13m. =	3(˘_ or _˘ or ˘˘˘)+3+2+3+2
	13m. =	4(˘˘_ or _ _ or ˘˘˘˘)+4+3+2
even pada	11m. =	3+3+2+3(_˘)
	11m. =	4+4+3(_˘)

Source: Author.

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22 Bryant (1992).

Perhaps, the most interesting point is his emphasis on the principle that three moras should be followed by three moras, and four moras by four moras. In this manner, the mora grouping based on Bhānu's definition or Bryant's '4/4 vs. 3/3/2 theory' both perfectly solves the problem of the second pada of the first line and agrees with the word boundary of the second line.

As is the case with the *dohā*, this mora grouping can be applied to the *baravai* composed by Tulsīdās. Bhānu did not describe any rule on the moraic makeup of the *baravai*, but we can find a regularity that is similar to that of the *dohā*. The following is a *baravai* composed by Tulsīdās.

> kesa/ mukuta/ sakʰi/ marakata/, manimaya/ hota.
> ‒ ◡/ ◡ ◡ ◡/ ◡ ◡/ ◡ ◡ ◡ ◡/ , ◡ ◡ ◡ ◡/ ‒ ◡
> 3/ 3 / 2 / 4 /,   4 / 3
> hātʰa/ leta/ puni/ mukutā/, karata/ udota.
> ‒ ◡ / ‒ ◡/ ◡ ◡/ ◡ ◡ ‒/ , ◡ ◡ ◡ ◡/ ‒ ◡
> 3 / 3 / 2 / 4 /, 4   / 3

> The pearls in her hair, friend, are like emerald gems;
> when she takes them in her hand they glow again. (*Baravai Rāmāyaṇa* 1,
> trans. Snell (1994), p. 398)

Remarkably, the repetition of 3/3 moras is found in the beginning of the lines in this example, as in the case of the *dohā*. If we assume that Bhānu's principle of the *dohā* applies to the *baravai* as well, the moraic arrangement of the *baravai* would be 8 (3+3+2 or 4+4)+4, 4+3. This hypothesis supports the theory mentioned above that the *baravai* is a variation of the *dohā*.

However, this mora grouping may not necessarily be applied to the *baravai* of Rahīm, the allegedly first Hindi poet to use the *baravai* in composition.[23] Let us now look at a *baravai* by Rahīm:

> aucaka āi jobanavāṃ, mohi dukha dīna
> ‒◡◡ ‒◡ ◡◡◡‒, ◡ ◡ ◡ ◡ ‒ ◡
> chuṭigo saṅga goiavāṃ nahi bhala kīna. (*Nāyikā Bheda* 10, *Rahīma granthāvalī*)
> ◡ ◡ ‒ ‒ ◡ ◡ ◡◡‒, ◡◡ ◡◡ ‒ ◡

> A youth suddenly came and made me sad.
> He interrupted my company with girlfriends; he did not do any good.

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23 The *Mūla Gosāīṃ Carita* describes Rahīm sending some *baravai* couplets to Tulsīdās; then Tulsīdās supposedly imitated them and began composing the *Baravai Rāmāyaṇa*.

In this *baravai*, both lines start with four syllables, but there is no clear group of four syllables following them. Particularly in the second line, it is even less clear, because the *go* of *chuṭigo* ‿‿- is a long syllable while that of *saṅga go* -‿ ‿ is short. For Rahīm, a Persian poet, the phenomenon that *o* could be both scanned as short and long might be natural since Persian-Arabic prosody applied to Dakkhanī Urdu metre and Brajbhāṣā allows such scansion. In addition, according to the word boundary, the rhythmic pattern of this *baravai* of Rahīm is |-‿‿| -‿| ‿‿‿-| ‿ ‿ ‿ ‿| - ‿| (4 + 3 + 5, 4 + 3). However, if we do not consider word boundaries, the rhythmic unit of this *baravai* can also be considered to be based on the group of four moras, that is, the beginning of the first line (-‿‿| -‿‿|‿‿-) versus that of the second (‿‿-| -‿‿|‿‿-). In the *baravai* of Tulsīdās, the word boundary coincides with 4/4 vs. 3/3/2 syllables, whereas that of Rahīm does not. Even if Rahīm intentionally made the word boundary straddle the syllables, the *baravai*s of Tulsīdās are simpler in rhythm and easier to recite.

Furthermore, a similar rhythm can be found in the *sohara* as well. I indicate the *sohara* used in Tulsīdās's *Rāmalalā Nahachū*.[24] This is the only work composed in a single metre, not *dohā*, but *sohara*. The *sohara* is widely known as the flexible metre of folk songs sung upon the birth of a son. The following is an example of *sohara* in the *Rāmalalā Nahachū:*

> *koṭīha bājana bājahĩ dasaratha ke gṛha ho.*
> -‿‿   -‿‿/ - ‿‿ ‿‿‿ /- ‿‿-
> 4   4 / 4   4   / 6
> *devaloka saba dekhahĩ ānãda ati hiya ho.*
> -‿-‿   ‿‿/ -‿‿   -‿‿ / ‿‿ ‿‿-
> 3 3   2 / 4   4   / 6
> *nagara sŏhāvana lāgata barani na jātai ho.*
> ‿‿‿ ‿ - ‿‿ / -‿‿ ‿‿‿ ‿ /- ‿‿-
> 3   3 2 / 4‿‿   4   / 6
> *kausalyā ke haraṣa na hṛdaya samātai ho.* (*Rāmalalā Nahachū* 2)
> - - - -/ ‿‿‿ ‿ ‿‿‿ ‿/-‿‿ -
> 4   4 / 4   4   / 6

Millions of instrumentals are being played in the palace of king Daśaratha.
Having seen it, all gods are rejoiced in their hearts.
It cannot be described how delighted the town has become.
The delight of Queen Kausalyā cannot be held in her heart.

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24 Stasik (1999) considers that a new critical edition of Tulsīdās's *Rām-lalā-nahachū* is necessary because there are two versions of the text: the popular printed version containing twenty *sohara* stanzas and an old manuscript found by Mātāprasāda Gupta consisting of twenty-six *sohara* stanzas. I use the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā edition based on the popular version. I believe the difference will not affect our argument.

Moraic scansion indicates that this *sohara* contains twenty-two moras in each line. Many types of *sohara gīta*s collected by Rāmanareśa Tripāṭhī in his *Grāma Sāhitya*[25] indicate a wide range of variations, but Tulsīdās composed the *Rāmalalā Nahachū* in a quite rigid *sohara*; that is, every *sohara* contains four lines, each line comprising 8 + 8 + 6 moras and rhyming ◡◡- at the end. Bhānu gives this type of *sohara* a special name, *rāsa.* Although the *sohara* has no relation to a *dohā*, we can find two ways of dividing an eight-mora passage even in this case, that is, into a 3/3/2 or a 4/4 grouping. Tripāṭhī says that the *sohara*s of Tulsīdās are strict in terms of the number of moras as well as end rhyme, which is not required in *sohara*s sung by ladies in local festivals.[26] We can conclude that the 3/3/2 or the 4/4 mora grouping is the favourite rhythm of Tulsīdās.

Conclusion

Based on this evidence, we are now well placed to answer why Tulsīdās used so many metrical forms. Rāmacandra Śukla, the Hindi scholar of Tulsīdās, indicated that five types of metrical styles are found in Tulsīdās's compositions: (1) *Chappaya* of the Rāsau literature, (2) *Gīta* of Vidyāpati and Sūrdās, (3) *Kavitta–Savaiyā* of Gaṅg (Gaṅga), (4) *Dohā* of Kabīr (Kabīra), and (5) *Caupāī-dohā* of Īśvardās (Īśvaradāsa).[27] We may add to this list the Sanskrit verses in the *Rāmacaritamānasa* and folk song of the *sohara* already discussed. Among these, the *chappaya* of the Rāsau style is less used. But it is remarkable that almost all the metrical styles that existed in Tulsīdās's day he used. Śukla extolled the versatility shown in his works and this recognition is shared by both the public and the academic community. The advantage of his works is their flexibility or the lack in them of unique metrical components. I cannot identify the specific features of the metrical style of Tulsīdās—yet his rhythmical sense is remarkable. Even though sometimes longer by one syllable than that found in the work of others, the two rhythms 4/4 and 3/3/2 at the beginning and the end rhyme, make his verses easy to recite and remember. Besides the ease of recitation, we can indicate another subtle characteristic; although many types of metrical irregularity exist, such as hypermetrical or hypometrical verses, they are limited in number. In other words, they break the monotony in the rhythm unexpectedly but pleasantly. Grace, neatness, and moderate flexibility could be named as characteristics of Tulsīdās's metre and this view, reached by an analysis of his metre, does confirm the general perception of his works.

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25 Tripāṭhī (1951), pp. 78–223.
26 Ibid., pp. 78–79.
27 Śukla (1990), pp. 73–75.

Future research must consider why he adopted so many metrical styles from other regions, dialects, and religious traditions. One possibility is that the diversity in metrical styles we attribute to him is not what he intended; these may have just represented rhythmic variations for him. We can also consider that this goes deeper: it may reflect his desire to be recognized among the Brahminical literary circle. He quickly gained popular fame through the *Rāmacaritamānasa*, but legends state that pandits in Banaras frowned upon his use of modern language, and Tulsīdās himself admits his language to be *grāmya* (uncultivated).[28] However, he also composed Sanskrit hymns in the *Rāmacaritamānasa* and used many other metres of the *varṇa chanda*, *mātrā chanda*, and *tāla chanda* of Brajbhāṣā, Avadhi, and Sanskrit origins, thereby demonstrating his dexterity. We may interpret that he considered himself to be one of the most skilled poets, as he states in his *Dohāvalī*: 'Even in Sanskrit, the language of god, or in *bhākhā*, that of the people, skilled poets can describe the fame of Śiva and Viṣṇu [equally well].'[29]

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28 *Rāmacaritamānasa* I.10. d.2.

29 *hari hara jasa sura nara girahũ baranahiṃ sukabi samāja.* (*Dohāvalī* 197)

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15. Punjabi in the (Late) Vernacular Millennium

Abstract. This exploratory essay considers in preliminary terms some of the registers of vernacular literary production in Punjab, and to suggest what the writing of a history of Punjabi language literary production might look like with a broader view to both vernacular and cosmopolitan literary production in the region. Punjabi's emergence must be understood in dynamic relation to the presence of Sadhukarrī, Braj, and emergent Hindustani in the region, as well as the formative presence of Persian. The multiplicity of its articulation points largely outside of the conventional centres associated with vernacular literary production—the court and the formal religious institution—provide Punjabi with a distinctive location, although it simultaneously maintained enduring and important ties to such centres. It is suggested that this may account for some of the particular valences of Punjabi language use; more work is required, however, to fully characterize this, and to explicate fully the interconnection between Punjabi cultural production and that in other languages.

Keywords. Punjabi, Vernacular, Cosmopolitan, Punjab, Braj.

Punjabi cultural production in the early modern period sits uneasily within the understanding of the 'vernacular millennium,' described so well by Sheldon Pollock, where new language choices emerged in relation to newly defined cultural zones linked to the emergence of 'vernacular polities' in contradistinction to, but reliant upon, a prior cosmopolitan idiom that was supralocal.[*1] The goal of this

exploratory essay is to consider in preliminary terms some of the registers of ver-nacular literary production in Punjab in relation to these ideas, and to suggest what the writing of a history of Punjabi language literary production might look like in such terms. The paper is thus broadly conceptual, laying out an approach and a trajectory that shapes ongoing research, in keeping with the spirit of this volume, and is meant as a beginning point, rather than a conclusion.

Sheldon Pollock's characterization of the emergence of the vernacular features attributes that make it less useful for understanding Punjabi cultural production in the early modern period (although I will return to and affirm some of his key insights at the close of this essay). This is true for North India in broad terms, as Francesca Orsini has noted,[2] where we must define 'multilingual history' with respect to a range of both cosmopolitan and vernacular languages and texts in a period when languages often 'ran into each other.'[3] Shantanu Phukan's ground-breaking work leads the way here; as he has argued: 'To do justice to . . . [the] complex and adamantly heteroglot literary community [of Mughal India] one must . . . redirect one's gaze at the blurred peripheries of literary canons, for it is there that we glimpse the intricate inter-dependencies and rivalries—in a word the ecol-ogy—of literary communities.'[4] The same is true specifically for Punjabi literary production. If we seek a 'superordinate, usually cosmopolitan, literary culture'[5] to influence Punjabi, we must resort to not one, but two languages: Braj (the means through which connection to Sanskritic cultural production was maintained, a 'cosmopolitan surrogate,' in Pollock's terms)[6] and Persian, which had a powerful

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1 Vernacularization is, as Pollock describes it, 'the historical process of choosing to create a written language, along with its complement, a political discourse, in local languages according to models supplied by a superordinate, usually cosmopolitan, literary culture' (Pollock (2006), p. 23). Vernacularization should not be subsumed within political devel-opments; in this (as I argue below) I am in full agreement (see Pollock (1998), p. 32 and related discussion in Pollock (2006), pp. 27–34). On the vernacular polity, see Pollock (2006), pp. 28, 413–ff.

2 Orsini (2012), p. 238; Orsini and Shaikh (2014), pp. 13–ff.

3 Orsini and Shaikh (2014), p. 2; see discussion pp. 6–ff. This entails a 'comparative per-spective that takes in both cosmopolitan and vernacular languages, both written archives and oral performances, and texts and genres that circulated in the same place and at the same time although they were transmitted in separate traditions.' Orsini (2012), p. 227. For Pollock's view on possible reasons that northern languages operate differently from those in the South with respect to vernacularization, see Pollock (2006), pp. 391–393.

4 Phukan (2000a), p. 7. See also Phukan (2001), p. 37. Phukan's observations concern texts that are internally multiglossic, but can be extended also to a more broadly heteroglossic environment as expressed in multiple texts; in his broader work, he also discusses 'thematic hybridity' (Phukan (2000b), ch. 4–5). Multilingual texts are taken up in Orsini and Shaikh (2014), pp. 403–436.

5 Pollock (2006), p. 23.

6 Ibid., p. 400.

influence on cultural production in Punjab through the late medieval and early modern periods. This reflects the 'multiple diglossias' Orsini describes as characteristic of North India, or what we may also call 'multiglossia' or 'heteroglossia.'[7] We know something about all of this in Punjab, but there is much more to learn. Christopher Shackle has done foundational work (as cited throughout this essay) on the literary and linguistic expression of Punjab; Louis Fenech has explored the influence of Persianate idioms of power in the Sikh context in detail.[8] Braj emerges in deep conversation with the Sanskrit cosmopolis, as Allison Busch has detailed, but operates in Punjab as a superordinate, cosmopolitan force, reflecting its own 'cosmopolitization' process.[9]

We can see this as a second vernacular revolution, but my suggestion along these lines differs slightly from that suggested by Pollock. To review his position: in order to account for the problem of the North in his comprehensive account, Pollock argues that for 'some parts of India,' there were '*two* vernacular revolutions: one that was cosmopolitan in its register and divorced from religion, and another that might best be termed regional, both for its anti-Sanskritic, *desī* idiom and for its close linkages with religious communities that developed distinctively regionalized characters. The second revolution is unthinkable without the first, and might well be seen as a kind of counterrevolution.'[10] This allows for the setting aside of religious forces in vernacularization as secondary and parochial, and maintains the centrality of the court such that 'the greater portion of the literature . . . created was produced not at the monastery but at the court.'[11] This is why religion was, according to Pollock, 'irrelevant' to the primary vernacular revolution 'because vernacularization was a courtly project, and the court itself, as a functioning political institution, was largely unconcerned with religious differences.'[12] He calls the 'new vernacularism,' in contrast, 'noncosmopolitan, regional, *desī* in outlook' and it is perhaps in its limited nature that he understands its religiousness, as a form of a narrower regionalization.[13] Christian Novetzke's recent contribution to this debate argues for a close relationship between the emergence of the vernacular (construing the vernacular, however, in broad extralinguistic terms) and the religious, reiterating an earlier representation of bhakti as a demotic and inclusive social force and therefore directly linked to linguistic vernacularization, a position which Pollock counters, and linking the vernacularization process with the effort

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7 Orsini (2012), pp. 229, 231.
8 Pollock (2006), p. 23; Fenech (2008). See also Persianization as discussed by Phukan (2000b), pp. 169–ff.
9 Busch (2011), p. 196; see discussion overall pp. 193–ff.
10 Pollock (2006), p. 432.
11 Ibid., p. 29.
12 Ibid., p. 430.
13 Ibid., p. 436.

to reach diverse audiences.[14] Pollock's characterization of this second vernacular revolution, however, can still apply to Novetzke's formulation of Marathi's emergence as deeply local, non-cosmopolitan, and religious.[15]

Pollock's account of religious vernacularization, however, goes against current understandings of the rise of Vaishnava bhakti in the early modern period as part of a broader adoption of a supralocal and less tantric/yogic form of religious life and a Vaishnava–Mughal cosmopolitan synthesis, as described in a wide range of recent work, where Vaishnavism was, as Kumkum Chatterjee describes it early in the discussion, a 'trans-regional phenomenon that developed, matured and grew stronger during the period of the later Delhi sultanate as well as the Mughal empire.'[16] This did not rely only on centralizing imperial formations; as Heidi Pauwels has asserted, the rise of Vaishnava bhakti (as well as discourses around Kshatriya identity) in the Braj region was tied to the interests of local warlords and 'military power brokers,' such as the Bundelās, who may have seen it as a 'socially and politically upward' option.[17] A religiously marked position, expressed in a vernacular idiom, thus acted as a supralocal force at the same time that it was locally articulated, towards the production of a particular kind of religious ecumene that was tied, but not identical to, a courtly one. Recognition of this suggests the need for further exploration of the interface between religious modes of expression and the rise of vernacular literary forms. The second vernacular revolution I imagine in Punjab however reflects not so much a content difference (more regional, more religious), as Pollock suggests, but represents a difference in what it is formed *in relation to*, in relation to the cosmopolitan nature of the 'vernacular' Braj, which both did and (it seems to me) did not make much room for Punjabi. (In this way the case is quite different from that which Novetzke explores, where we do see early courtly use of the vernacular and where Sanskrit is the main language of interaction that shapes the development of the vernacular, along lines sketched out by Pollock.) As we know from Pollock's formulation, the cosmopolitan and vernacular exist only in dynamic relation, and Punjabi particularly in Sikh contexts emerges in relation to Braj in just this kind of contrary embrace. Such an understanding can help us also to bring a new analytical purchase on Vaishnava elements visible in texts associat-

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14 Novetzke (2016), pp. 213, 219, and overall. Novetzke's account provides some recognition of the limitations of this demotic force and construes the debate that ensues as a form of public sphere, invoking modern formulations of the same.

15 Pollock (2006), pp. 381–382, discusses the Marathi case.

16 Chatterjee (2009), p. 151; Chatterjee finds that 'the cosmopolitanisms actively sought out by the Malla kings' that interest her 'resulted from the use of Vaishnava elements certainly, but Vaishnava elements which were conjoined to Mughal and Rajput elements as well.' See also Pinch (2006); Pauwels (2009a); Horstmann (2011); Burchett (2012), pp. 40, 318; Hawley (2015), pp. 75, 225.

17 Pauwels (2009a), pp. 199, 209, 211 for latter quote, 190 for former.

ed with the Sikh tradition in the eighteenth century, particularly within the *Dasam Graṅth*.[18] Julie Vig's emerging doctoral work on Braj cultural production in the Sikh *Gurbilās* literature follows this line of investigation; to explore the multiple resonances of Vaishnava imagery and themes within Sikh contexts.[19]

Punjabi literature vs. literature in Punjab

Many are perhaps familiar with the conventional representation of the broad sweep of Punjabi literary history: its early formations in the work of Baba Farīd and then of later Sufi poets. Generally, the compositions of the Gurus are central to this narrative (a point to which we will return). If we do look to Baba Farīd (said to have been active in the first half of the thirteenth century) as a founding voice for Punjabi literature, it is for the most part to the *Gurū Graṅth Sāhib* or *Ādi Graṅth* (AG) that we turn, since it is indeed one of the earliest reliable textual sources available for his work, although a small selection of his Punjabi verses were preserved in the *malfūzāt* of Zain ud Din Shirazi (d. 1371), showing that vernacular verses of Farīd were in circulation within a century of his death.[20] And of course, Amir Khusrao spoke of 'Lahouri' in 1317–1318, attesting to a clear consciousness of a linguistically distinctive language at Punjab's cultural centre.[21] The work of other Sufi poets was not collected and published until the nineteenth century, however; the distinctively Punjabi linguistic flavour of their compositions therefore may result from the later date of their being recorded; Punjabi forms could have been introduced and/or enhanced at a later transcription time.[22] The Farīd material in the *Gurū Graṅth Sāhib*, Shackle argues, is distinctive amongst the so-called *Bhagat Bānī* or compositions of the devotees because of the strong imprint of Punjabi forms (specifically Multani or in more current usage Siraiki),

18 See Rinehart (2011), pp. 4–ff, 165–ff on issues that emerge in relation to the *Dasam Graṅth*. Rinehart argues for a 'new Sikh conception of the role of the leader with both spiritual and worldly responsibilities' (ibid., p. 10) in this period, but this is not new and not unique to Sikh tradition; it reflects a broad range of religious formations in the period; see Murphy (2015).

19 Vig (2016).

20 We know of Farīd earlier through the memoir of a follower of Farīd's leading disciple, Nizam ud Din Auliya, whose circle also included Amir Khusrau (d. 1325) (Shackle (2015), see p. xii). See discussion of the *malfūzāt* in Singh, P. (2003), p. 47 and Shackle (2008). See also discussion in Ernst (1992), pp. 167–ff and Shackle (1993), pp. 269–ff.

21 Faruqi (2003), p. 819. In the same passage, he wrote (translated by Faruqi): 'Since I am an Indian, it's better/To draw breath/From one's station. In this land /In every territory, there is /A language specific, and not so/By chance either.' Ibid., p. 820. The earliest example of Khusrao's Hindavi works is 1636. (Bangha (2010), pp. 24, 33)

22 Shackle (2015), p. x. On varying interpretations of Bulhe Shah, see Rinehart (1999).

rather than the more generic 'Sant bhāṣā' as it is so often called, which comprised the linguistic flavour of the remainder of the Bhagat's contributions to the *Gurū Graṅth Sāhib*.[23] As Shackle notes well, when Punjabi does emerge, it does so in two different 'flavours': 'a central language based on the Lahore area, and a south-western based on the Multan area, also cultivated to the south in Sind under the name Siraiki, in parallel with Sindhi'[24]—but of course, as is discussed further below, distinctions among languages were generally not highlighted, so searching for a clear distinction is an anachronistic task. We can see Punjabi's emergence in other manuscript evidence, with one colophon in the British Library's Punjabi manuscript collection claiming a surprisingly early date equivalent to 1592 CE.[25] There is, as shown in Purnima Dhavan's emerging research on that collection and beyond, evidence for the emergence of Punjabi in seventeenth century *fiqh* 'legal' and other texts, and its emergence overall is deeply tied to the emergence of other languages, particularly Braj and Urdu—again, not a surprise, given the lack of named differentiation among them, but useful for our now retrospective attempt to recognize Punjabi in linguistic terms.[26]

In the textual production associated with the Sikh tradition in particular Braj's influence was powerful; this is where the conventional Punjabi literary historiographical narrative becomes quite problematic, since the linguistic 'Punjabiness' of many of the compositions in the *Gurū Graṅth Sāhib* is unclear. While Guru Nānak and the early Gurus composed in what Shackle called early on 'The Sacred Language of the Sikhs,' with some Punjabi and other flavouring (what Shackle calls 'stylistic variety,' particularly in works by Gurus Nānak and Arjan, and in *bhagat* or other saints such as Farīd), by the time of Guru Arjan the influence of Braj was strong and increased over time, replacing the influence of Sant *bhāṣā* as a defining feature of the compositions.[27] Shackle has described in detail the relationship of the 'peripheral' linguistic features of the *Ādi Graṅth* or *Gurū Graṅth*

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23 Shackle (2008), p. 3.

24 Shackle (1979), p. 193. This article provides a useful in-depth discussion of the differences between Siraiki and Punjabi.

25 Shackle (1977a), p. 42.

26 Dhavan (2017).

27 Shackle (1977b). On 'stylistic variety,' see Shackle (1978a), p. 82. In addressing Arjan's continuation of stylistic varieties that feature in Nānak and the Bhagats, Shackle notes particularly Arjan's 'function to have isolated and pursued further . . . a particular line of development, out of the many radiating in such extraordinary profusion from the dense nucleus of possibilities with which early Sikhism was gifted by its founder' (Shackle (1978b), p. 312). I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for discussion of the parallel between Braj and Sant *bhāṣā* as perhaps competing cosmopolitan idioms for compositions represented in the *Gurū Graṅth Sāhib*.

Sāhib[28] in relation to its core features as a pattern that features 'classicizing' elements (the pull, that is, towards Persian and 'Sahaskriti' or archaic 'colouring') and regionalizing elements such as the south-western features he has described for Farīd, in particular.[29] Guru Arjan demonstrated his self-consciousness of linguistic form in his designation of some compositions with the term *dakkhanī*, what Shackle calls an 'artificial style' designed perhaps to extend the linguistic reach of the Gurus farther south into Sind.[30]

The *Janamsākhī*, or narrative representations of the life of Guru Nānak, provide an important early source not just on the formations of the Sikh tradition and as an early example of hagiography, as explored in important new work by Simran Jeet Singh, but also on vernacular language production, literarization, and the production of new genres.[31] Building on the earlier work of Ratan Singh Jaggi, Simran Jeet Singh argues for an early date for the *Purātan Janamsākhī* (and for its relative prominence within the Sikh community, countering early claims by W. H. McLeod that asserted that the *Janamsākhī* lacked influence until the modern period).[32] The early date of 1588 CE, however, is attributed to a manuscript that is no longer available to us; a transcription exists, but does not feature a colophon; the other older tradition, known as the Colebrooke *Janam-sākhī* (which is available in the British Library) is also undated.[33] Either way, however, the text is important as an early example of prose, which appears alongside the poetic compositions of the Guru (and is therefore distinct from the other possibly early Punjabi text discussed in brief here; the work of Bhai Gurdas, which is wholly poetic in form).[34] Although space limitations do not allow for evaluation of the language of the *Janamsākhī* tradition in this essay—the effort here is to set out the parameters of the problem, not examine all the evidence—R. S. Jaggi's assessment of the language of the text provides an entry point. He describes the language of the text, overall, as '*sādh bhāshā-numā*

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28 I generally utilize *Gurū Granth Sāhib* to indicate the final version of the canon in 1708, rather than the earlier version, from 1604, for which the term *Ādi Granth* is used. I do this in deference to conventions cited by members of the Sikh community, and for the sake of distinguishing between the two versions in chronological sequence. The general scholarly convention, however, is to use the term *Ādi Granth*.

29 See Shackle (1978b), p. 313, for a valuable diagram of linguistic features; on 'colouring,' see ibid., p. 307.

30 Shackle (1993), p. 278.

31 Singh S. (2016). While the term for this genre is a modern one, as Singh points out, we can use it as he does, with awareness of its limitations in historical terms. Ibid., p. 34.

32 Singh S. (2016), p. 112. For Ratan Singh Jaggi's assessment of the date of the text, see Jaggi, R. (2010), ch. 3, pp. 31–39; see p. 38 for final assessment.

33 Singh S. (2016), pp. 113–114; see following for extensive discussion of the history of the dating of these manuscripts.

34 As noted by S. Singh, not all of the poetic compositions cited in the text, however, are included in the *Gurū Granth Sāhib* as Guru Nānak's; some do not appear in the canonical text at all (Singh S. (2016), p. 152).

Pañjābī' or Punjabi influenced by/appearing as or like 'Sādh Bhāshā' or Sadhuk-karī (he also notes the influence of Khaṛī Bolī and Urdu).[35] Imre Bangha calls the language of the text a form of 'Gurmukhi Rekhta,' which he defines as a language that 'consciously mixes the vernacular Hindavi . . . and the cosmopolitan Persian,' with a loose Khaṛī Bolī core; he distinguishes this from Sadhukkarī, defined as 'the *spontaneously* mixed literary language of the Sants that blends elements from various north Indian dialects and languages.'[36] He rightly notes, however, that Persian vocabulary is not prominent in what he calls Gurmukhi Rekhta; the language of the text is thus more of a combination of vernacular forms, the mix that Jaggi notes, although perhaps less definitively Punjabi than Jaggi suggests.[37] The language of the text does exhibit western Punjabi features (particularly verbal forms and characteristic post-positions); these, in Jaggi's view, reflect specifically the Avāṇakārī dialect of western Punjabi.[38] Does this mimic the western Punjabi features present in the compositions of Nānak and Farīd, as seen in the work of Guru Arjan, which Shackle suggests was an intentional stylistic decision on Guru Arjan's part?[39] It is possible. Either way, here we have elements of Punjabi emerging, although undeniably later than those that emerge in the compositions attributed to Nānak and Farīd (recognizing that Farīd's much earlier works are attested in the *Gurū Granth Sāhib* significantly after the period of their purported composition). We see resonances of the same linguistic features in the *Hukamnāme*, letters to the *panth*'s dispersed communities that were extant from the time of the sixth Guru, Hargobind, in the first half of the seventeenth century, where Punjabi forms are utilized alongside more broadly familiar Sadhukkarī or Sant *bhāṣā* forms.[40] It is striking that Punjabi's initial emergence is seen here among what might be called more 'pragmatic,' non-devotional works, contrary to the conventional formulation of Punjabi literature's emergence among Sufis and the Sikh Gurus.

The *Vār* literature represents another Punjabi genre. One early example of this generally oral tradition in the work of Bhai Gurdas, an associate of the Gurus. As the work of Rahuldeep Singh shows, Bhai Gurdas is said to have written, interestingly, in both Punjabi (for his *vār*) and Brajbhāṣā (for a large number of *kavitt*).[41] This is of particular importance, because if the Punjabi nature of the *Vār* is authentic—Gill argues for a dating of Gurdas' work to the early part of the seventeenth century, after the execution of the fifth Guru, but others argue that some compositions pre-date it—this would certainly be an early sustained example of Punjabi,

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35 Jaggi, R. (2010), p. 101. On Khaṛī Bolī and Urdu, see ibid., pp. 99, 106.
36 Bangha (2010), p. 26.
37 Ibid., p. 60.
38 Ibid., pp. 95–96, 102–103.
39 See above, footnote 30.
40 Singh G. (1990).
41 Gill (2014).

or a Punjabi-influenced Rekhta or mixed language alongside the *Janamsākhī*.[42] The general lack of verified and strictly dated early manuscript evidence, however, means we cannot be sure of the Punjabi linguistic nature of the compositions in their original form; the compositions attributed to Gurdas may have been Punjabi-fied over time before being written down.[43] The acceptance of the language of the *Vār* as clearly Punjabi is also something we can debate, given the predominance of Brajbhāṣā verb forms and vocabulary alongside Punjabi features, with occasional preferences for Persian vocabulary, exhibiting some of the elements Bangha utilizes to describe Gurmukhi Rekhta. We can see these features in *Vār* 4:[44]

> *māṇasa deha su kheha tisu vici jībhai laī nakībī*
>
> The body of human birth is [mere] dust, but the tongue within it acts as a herald
>
> *akhī dekhani rūpa raṅga rāga nāda kaṅna karani rakībī*
>
> Seeing with the eyes the colour and form, and hearing the music of the raga, as a rival
>
> *naki suvāsu nivāsu hai paṅje dūta burī taratībī*
>
> The nose is the home of the breath; the five messengers are in a terrible order
>
> *sabha dūṅ nīvai caraṇa hoi āpu gavāi nasību nasībī*
>
> The feet are below all, and losing oneself [before them] proves one's good fortune
>
> *haumai rogu miṭāidā satiguru pūrā karai tabībī*
>
> The True Guru obliterates the illness of ego, the Unani doctor does the job in full
>
> *pairī pai riharāsa kari gura sikha gurasikha manībī*
>
> At the feet the Guru's Sikhs recite Rahiras and become Gursikh
>
> *murdā hoi murīdu garībī*
>
> Having become like the dead, the disciple is humbled.
> (*Vār* 4, *Pauri* 3, Jaggi, G. (2010), p. 60)[45]

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42 Bhalla (2017).

43 Gill notes that neither of the two manuscripts he relies on for Gurdas Bhalla's compositions feature colophons; orthographic evidence supports his designation of them as 'early,' but no date is suggested. (Bhalla (2017), p. 14).

44 According to the currently traditional numbering system, which is attested in the manuscripts in the first position. Ibid., p. 150.

45 This and all translations are mine.

There is typical Punjabi vocabulary here, but also parallels in verb form with Braj, as well as, in this example, a striking use of Persian words in the rhyme scheme that are generally overlooked in conventional translations.[46] Shackle has argued that the use of Persian loanwords in the *Gurū Graṅth Sāhib* is strongly associated with governance (both in terms of administration and in describing royal authority) and trade as 'a mirror reflecting the impression made by Islamic political dominance on at least one section of non-Muslim society in sixteenth-century Panjab'; R. S. Jaggi has argued that it is used in the *Purātan Janamsākhī* to provide a kind of contextual flavour: speakers who are Muslim are represented as speaking with a more Persianized vocabulary.[47] In the example above, Persian vocabulary provides a striking rhyme, demonstrating that the influence of rhyme and other literary considerations thus must be accounted for alongside semantic ones, as Shackle suggests.[48] As Shackle argued early on, the presence of such flavouring in texts associated with the Sikh tradition does not support a general idea of 'syncretism' in defining Sikh religiosity: 'the actual patterns of influence which are suggested by the analysis of the Persian loans in the AG are so very much more interesting,' reflecting complex inflections of meaning and citations of alternative regional and religious moorings.[49] More intensive examination of such markings, beyond the *Gurū Graṅth Sāhib*, will enhance our understanding of how such citations/'varieties'/'flavours' work; so will further work on the *Vār* tradition in broader terms, as Ali Usman Qasmi of Lahore University for Management Sciences is undertaking at the time of the composition of this essay.

Outside of these early examples, with the exception of the Rahit literature of the eighteenth century, Braj dominates. The description of Hawley and Mann for the *Pothi Prem Ambodh* (dated by them to 1693 CE) is instructive; that text features 'a version of western Hindi or Brajbhasha that shows a familiarity with Punjabi idioms—[fitting] . . . comfortably within the range laid out by other early texts in the Sikh tradition.'[50] In addition to a rich range of non-canonical writings in Braj by figures like Harji, a competitor of accepted Guru-lineage and explored recently in an important monograph by Hardip Singh Syan, we have the *Dasam Graṅth*, explored in recent work by Robin Rinehart, an overwhelmingly Braj text, as will be visible in a moment.[51] It is into this world that we can also place the

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46 Except for the use of *nasīb*. For an exemplary translation, see <https://searchgurbani.com/bhai_gurdas_vaaran/vaar/4/pauri/3>. (Accessed 4 June 2015). See also a modern Punjabi translation that takes more account of the Persian words: Jaggi, G. (2010), p. 61.

47 Shackle (1978a), pp. 85–86. Jaggi, R. (2010), pp. 107–108.

48 Shackle (1978a), p. 86.

49 Ibid., p. 94.

50 Hawley and Mann (2014).

51 See Syan (2013) and Rinehart (2011), p. 24, on the language of compositions in the *Dasam Graṅth*.

Gurbilās literature, a historiographical literature that also is written in Braj (although often claimed as a mixture of Punjabi and Braj, such works actually strongly reflect Braj, not Punjabi). In this material, here from Sainapati (complete *c*. 1708), we can see a relatively simple form of Braj, without elaborate Persianisms and Sanskritisms:

> *anika bhāṅti līlā taha karī/phate shāh suni lai mani dhari/*
> *bahuta kopa mana māhi basāyo/pha'uja banāi judha ka'u āyo//*
> (Sainapati (1988 [1967]), ch. 2. 9, p. 69)
>
> He performed *līlā* in various ways/Fateh Shah heard of this and held it in his mind.
> A great anger took hold in his heart/So he amassed an army and came for battle.[52]

Stylistically this material reveals something perhaps akin to the '*tadbhava* simplicity' Busch identifies with Rahīm and Raslīn; there is more work to be done along these lines of analysis in the Punjabi case as well.[53] The use of *līlā* here is of interest, as it seems clearly to function outside of its conventional Vaishnava sensibilities, functioning as a description of 'actions' or 'deeds' and, indeed, a form of *tarīkh* or history; we can see a parallel in the use of the term *vilāsa* or 'play' for narrative descriptions of the history of the Gurus in the Sikh tradition in the genre known as *Gurbilās*. Vocabulary choices are more complex but still heavily Braj in Kuir Singh's *Gurbilās* of the mid to late eighteenth century, as Julie Vig's emerging doctoral work shows.[54] As a result it seems many of the designations of this genre as a mix of Punjabi and Braj are aspirational at best: Braj is the main linguistic form in use. The exception to this is the Rahit literature, which does not feature a 'high' Braj form and features a stronger Punjabi articulation; Peder Gedda's emerging assessment of the dating of texts in this genre will inform our understanding of Punjabi's emergence within it, however, so judgment on this point is premature.

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52 Sainapati (2014), p. 21. This translation is mine. On this dating of *Gur Sobhā*, see Dhavan (2011a), p. 182, n. 5 and 6; Mann (2008), p. 252, suggests 1701 for the initiation of the text. On the text in general, see Hans (1988), pp. 245–ff.; Grewal (2004a); and Murphy (2007).

53 Busch (2010), pp. 114, 116. Busch's insights into how and why Sanskritization is engaged in the premodern can be applied fruitfully in the material under consideration here (ibid., p. 119).

54 Vig (2016). The nature of this *interaction*, in short, is where an important part of the story of Punjabi lies, reminiscent perhaps of Jesse Knutson's exploration of Jayadeva's *Gītagovinda* as 'a consolidation of two distinct literary registers' where the cosmopolitan and vernacular 'strategically coincide' (Knutson (2014), p. 74).

Punjab-located vernacular cultural production, then, is very much a part of the larger story of a cosmopolitan Braj literary world (both courtly and religious), operating within a broader Persian cosmopolis that was expressed in local terms in the *Dasam Grath* (in the *Zafarnāmāh*) as well as the court of Ranjit Singh and other courtly contexts, such as the emerging courts of other Sikh chiefs, who generally sought to narrate their own historical emergence in Persian, as Purnima Dhavan has discussed.[55] Recent work by Pasha Khan provides a valuable portrait of the patronage that supported (limited) Punjabi language textual production in that period; as Khan notes, however, Brajbhāṣā was 'very much part of this story as well.'[56] And, of course, mainstream Sufi literature in Punjab, like courtly litera-ture, was overwhelmingly in Persian (although this does not mean that vernacular production was absent, as Orsini notes).[57] Persian also strongly informed the lin-guistic flavour of the *qissā* or narrative story literature in Punjabi, part of a larger genre across North India and, in the case of Hīr–Ranjha, with at times striking narrative commonalities with the older genre of the Avadhi/Hindavi *premākhyān* of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries.[58] We are, however, generally constrained in our ability to speak in definitive terms about specifically Punjabi linguistic production in this domain by the relatively late manuscript evidence available to us; lexical choices in the *qisse* are strongly Persianate, mixed with some Punjabi grammatical forms (as we'll see in a mid-eighteenth-century example below).[59]

As Pollock points out, 'vernacularity is not a natural state of being but a willed act of becoming'; Busch suggests that 'courtly context and cultural orientation' are ways of beginning to understand that will.[60] She notes that one figure's virtuosity reveals in part his cosmopolitanism, but also 'a kind of revelling in the poetic power of Braj Bhasha.'[61] This can perhaps help us to understand the state of play between Punjabi and Braj as well. Indeed, there is significant crossover between

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55 Dhavan (2011b).
56 Khan (2013), p. 159 for quote; see discussion and citations of limited Punjabi language textual production in the period in ibid., pp. 159–ff.
57 Orsini (2014), p. 404.
58 Sufi commitments and the lover-to-yogi transformation motif visible in Hīr–Ranjha in particular finds a strong parallel with the earlier *premākhyān* tradition. On the relationship between the *qissā* narrative genre and the earlier *premākhyān*, see Behl and Doniger (2012), p. 336; on that genre overall, see Behl and Doniger (2012); De Bruijn (2012); and Shantanu Phukan's beautiful dissertation, which is 'only partially a thesis about *Padmavat*,' the most famous of the Avadhi *premākhyān*, but is a valuable contribution on the genre (and more) (Phukan (2000b), p. 6). On the *qissā* genre in broad terms, see the early foundational work in English, Pritchett (1985), and the important new work of Orsini (2009) and Khan (2013).
59 According to Jeevan Deol the manuscript evidence is late for Waris' *Heer* (1821 for the earliest MSS) and there is clear evidence of the expansion of the text at the hands of various editors and poets. Deol (2002), pp. 151–152.
60 Pollock (2006), p. 24; Busch (2010), p. 111.
61 Busch (2010), p. 112.

Braj and early Punjabi, so drawing a clear line between these two is difficult. Busch has described the broader difficulties of defining the boundaries of Braj, so this is not an issue that is exclusive to Braj's relationship with Punjabi; in her words, Braj 'often appears to be congenitally impure, that is to say, hybrid and multiregistered';[62] as she has also noted, the designation of difference is almost always politicized.[63] Indeed, as Heidi Pauwels has noted so well, 'rather than regarding these as watertight categories' among New Indo-Aryan languages in the period of their emergence and literarization (to borrow again from Pollock), 'we could here too speak of a North Indian continuum of literary expression' where 'linguistic boundaries between these various idioms were often fluid.'[64] Sources of the period that Francesca Orsini examines, for instance, do not distinguish between Avadhi, Braj, and other forms of what we call Hindavi; the term *bhāṣā* or *bhākhā* is used for all, although the notion of a separate idiom associated with the region of Lahore was contemporary to its use, as has been noted, so it is not that distinctive linguistic forms were not recognized; it is crucial to note therefore that this does *not mean* that all forms of 'Hindavi' are in fact 'Hindi'; there is some slippage, at times, between Hindavi and 'early Hindi,' when these must be two different things. Only a history of Khari Boli, as Bangha rightly notes, can truly be said to excavate the contours of 'early Hindi.'[65]

Multilinguality, Orsini thus argues, is 'a set of historically located practices tied to material conditions of speech and writing, rather than as a kind of natural heterogeneity' or, further, a sense of absolute difference.[66] Varying lexical features can be identified in emergent Punjabi literary expression: strongly Persian vocabulary choices in the *qisse*, and ties to Braj and, given the larger resonances of Braj's literary domain, Vaishnava vocabulary and imagery in Sikh contexts. As Shackle notes in an important exploration of the historical evolution of modern standard Punjabi, the language 'is quite as close to the Khari dialect, which underlies both Urdu and Hindi, as Surdas's Braj, and is indeed far closer to it than the eastern Avadhi of the *Ramcharitmanas*.'[67] We are faced with a sense of illusiveness, therefore, for a history of Punjabi, unless instead we replace such a quest with the ability to see Punjabi and Braj (as well as Punjabi and Persian, and Punjabi and

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62 For quote ibid., p. 116; on the difficulty of drawing its boundaries, see pp. 85–86. As Busch notes, 'during the seventeenth century it became a language that travelled vast distances, and along the journey it encountered a range of courtly contexts and regional linguistic practices, to which the poets adapted' (ibid., p. 106).

63 Busch (2010), pp. 88–89. On parallel discussion of the issue of Hindi vs. Urdu, see Phukan (2000a), pp. 18–19.

64 Pauwels (2009b). See also Orsini and Shaikh (2014), p. 15.

65 Bangha (2010), pp. 22–23.

66 Orsini (2012), p. 228.

67 Shackle (1988), p. 105.

other early modern linguistic formations) as a kind of *interface*, not a competition, while still recognizing the distinctions among them (and not subsuming all things written in Gurmukhi as automatically 'Punjabi,' willfully forgetting Punjabi's rich life in the Perso-Arabic script and Gurmukhi's appearance in multiple linguistic forms, and also not assuming all things written in Devanagari to be 'Hindi,' as has been for too long the temptation).[68]

Region

But are there other ways to tell the story of the vernacular that is Punjabi, in this terrain? The vernacularization process is accompanied by, as Pollock describes it, 'new conceptions of communities and places,'[69] although language choice does not simply map to the political and religious. Punjab is no exception, as Julie Vig's research on the late eighteenth-century *Gurbilās* literature shows. The *idea* and experience of region thus can emerge in multiple languages, and at points of interaction among them, as Kumkum Chatterjee's work on Bengal confirms. We know that Punjab as a place was imagined in powerful ways by its residents— Sikh, Muslim, Hindu, and others—in the time since Khusrao called attention to it in linguistic and cultural terms. While some have argued for Punjabi regional consciousness as a modern invention, there is a wealth of evidence to counter such a claim.[70] As I have argued elsewhere, the representation of the past was a particular concern for the Sikh community in the eighteenth century: the imagination of the physical landscape of the community formed a part of such representations, although they were never strictly coterminous with Punjab and the landscape of the Gurus was far larger.[71]

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68 See discussion of these issues, and script difference, in Murphy (2018a).

69 Pollock (2006), p. 6. As Pollock puts it: 'To participate in Sanskrit literary culture was to participate in a vast world; to produce a regional alternative to it was to effect a profound break—one the agents themselves understood to be a break—in cultural communication and self-understanding.' Ibid., p. 21.

70 Harjot Oberoi argued in 1987 that 'it was only in the 1940s, when the demand for Pakistan was articulated by the Muslim League, and when the cold truth dawned that the Punjab might after all be divided that the Sikhs with a tragic desperation began to visualize the Punjab as their homeland.' As such, he argued, the 'affective attachment with the Punjab among the Sikhs is fairly recent, and it does not date back to the early annals of the Sikh community' (Oberoi (1987), p. 27). It is undeniable that the notion of Punjab in *national territorial* terms is entirely new; the idea of the nation state itself is entirely modern. But there is a long history to the affective attachment to Punjab among Sikhs, as well as other Punjabis. See Murphy (2012).

71 Murphy (2012).

We see an emergent notion of the region in the Braj seventeenth-century text, the *Bachitar Nāṭak*, attributed to the tenth Guru and contained within the *Dasam Graṅth*, where '*madara desh*' seems to refer directly to Punjab, and it is linked to the founding of the Sodhi and Bedi clans, the lineages associated with the Gurus:

> *paṭhe kāgadaṁ madra rājā sudhāraṁ, āpo āpa mo baira bhāvaṁ bisāraṁ/*
> *nripaṁ mukaliyaṁ dūta so kāsī āyaṁ, sabai bediyaṁ bheda bhākhe su-*
> *nayaṁ/*
> *sabai beda pāṭhī cale madra desaṁ, praṇāmaṁ kīyo ān kai kai naresaṁ//*
> (*Bachitar Naṭak*, ch. 4)

> The Sodhi king of Madara sent letters to them, entreating them to forget past
> enmities/
> The messengers sent by the king came to Kashi and gave the message to all
> the Bedis/
> All the reciters of the Vedas came to Madra Desha and made obeisance to
> the King.

Here we do seem to see a sense of new kinds of culture boundaries' (in Pollock's words) that may or may not rely upon the formal designation of the Lahore province in the Mughal administration to describe the region of the Indus and its tributaries mentioned in earlier literature, but these boundaries also seem to exceed it; they do not here map to the emergence of a regional polity at that time.[72] We also see the region's emergence in Waris Shah's mid-eighteenth-century rendition of the story of the star-crossed lovers, Heer and Ranjha, perhaps the most quintessentially (ethnically?) Punjabi text one might identify (the text that the revolutionary Udham Singh, alias Muhammad Singh Azād, wanted to take his oath on when at trial); it is central, as Jeevan Deol has noted, to the 'Punjabi episteme.'[73] Waris Shah opens his classic version of the story, *Heer*, in praise of the Lord, and the Prophet, and the Sufi saints who were so important to the cultural landscape of Punjab, creating Punjab as an Islamic landscape (with variations between the Shahmukhi or Perso-Arabic and Gurmukhi printed versions of the text):

> *ma'udūda dā lāḍalā pīra cishatī shakkara gaṅja māsa'ūda bharapūra hai jī*
> *bāīāṅ kutabāṅ de vicca hai pīra kāmala jaiṅdī ājazī zuhada manazūra hai jī*
> *khānadāna vicca cishata de kāmalīata shahira fakkara dā paṭaṇa*
> *mashahūra/ ma'mūra jī*

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72 Pollock (2006), pp. 382–383. 'Punjab' as a term was in use in the period of Akbar, and it was in his reign that the province of Lahore was reorganized to encompass the five doabs. The first history of 'the Punjab' was written by Ganesh Das at the beginning of the colonial period, the *Char Bagh-i-Punjab*. Grewal (2004b), p. 9.

73 On Udham Singh and the text, see *Rabba Hun Kee Kariye* (*Thus Departed Our Neighbours*) by Ajay Bhardwaj. On the 'Punjabi episteme' and Waris Shah's *Heer*, see Deol (2002), p. 142.

shakkara gaṅja ne āṇi makāna/mukām kītā dukkh darada paṅjāba dā dūra hai jī[74] (Shah (1986), pp. 2–3; Padam (1998 [1977]), p. 61)

The beloved of Moinuddin (of Ajmer), the Chishti Pir, he is full as a treasury of pure sweetness,
He is the perfect saint among the 22 poles (*kutabāṅ*) [that guide the world], whose renunciation and humility is accepted by all,
He is the perfection of the Chisht lineage, whose city has become civilized (*ma'mūr*)/famous (*mashhūr*) as a town of mendicants.
Shakar-Ganj has come and made this his home (*makāna/mukām*), dispelling the sadness and pain of Punjab.

In Waris Shah, the territory or *vilāyat* of the saint is described, locating Punjab as a distinctive region and simultaneously making it a part of a far broader Islamic imaginary.[75] Farina Mir has highlighted how regional imaginaries prevailed within the *qissā* or story of Heer and Ranjha in the colonial period to define a territoriality that 'emphasizes the affective attachments people established with the local, and particularly their natal places,' where Punjab 'emerges . . . as an imagined ensemble of natal places within a particular topography (rivers, riverbanks, forests and mountains) and religious geography (Sufi shrines and Hindu monasteries).'[76] This is a mapping of Punjab: Jhang, Takhat Hazara, Tilla Jogian, Rangpur; the places that are enlivened by the always repeated story of Heer–Ranjha, fixed in time and place in this region, alongside the histories and stories associated with the Sikh Gurus and other figures with diverse religious affiliations. We can see in Waris Shah's version of the text that this mapping pre-dates the British arrival. We thus see that Punjab as a place and a cultural sensibility mattered, percolating through texts that were diverse in their linguistic and religious formations—and occasionally reflective of a Punjabi vernacular linguistic form.

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74 The second and third lines are transposed in the Shahmukhi text; I give the order of the Gurmukhi version here. These published versions are well regarded, but there are substantial variants in published editions; compare with Ghumman (2007), p. 1. Waris Shah's text has not been formed into a critical edition; Mohan Singh published a manuscript-based form of the text in 1947 that radically shortened the text based on manuscript evidence (and was widely rejected as a result). See Deol (2002), p. 152.
75 There are many similar articulations of the region in Shah's text; see also verses 56, 141, 311, 364 et al. in Shah (1986).
76 Mir (2010), p. 123 for first quote, p. 134 for second.

Concluding reflections

Christopher Shackle has argued that the beginnings of Punjabi literature are found in 'two genres of religious poetry' in 'two distinct traditions.'[77] But we also must face that Punjabi itself as a language is illusive at best even within this formulation,[78] and that the narrative of Sikh and Sufi origins must be complicated. At the same time, and in diverse textual contexts, religious communitarian formations, organized in both local and supralocal forms, did somehow matter in the construction of a Punjabi literary imaginary, strongest in Sufi contexts (as we have seen, with strong Punjabi flavouring in Farīd and Waris Shah) but perhaps strongest in extra-canonical works associated with religious contexts. Early Punjabi instances are found within texts associated with the Sikh tradition particularly in Farīd, the *Janamsākhī*, and Gurdas (with questions of dating complicating our understanding); otherwise, Sadhukkarī, at first, and Braj, later, dominate. In the Sikh context it is *loyalty to Gurmukhi* as a script that stands out over the Punjabi language, which is why Braj and Persian are both so easily integrated into Gurmukhi eighteenth-century collections associated with the *Dasam Graṅth* (although there is significant variation in the texts included in that compilation in its early versions); the lack of recognition of the difference between Punjabi as a language and Gurmukhi as a script has effaced this important distinction.[79] Of a region, however, we do see something emerge, but must be careful not to assume a strictly linguistic association with it.

Francesca Orsini has argued for an understanding of North India as a 'multilingual and multi-locational literary culture,'[80] defined by maps that are multiple and sometimes overlapping. Punjab emerges in multiple linguistic registers and with a particularly complex relationship with Braj, marked by religious valences that *do not* map to the centralizing Braj vernacular forces (both courtly and religious) that we see at work elsewhere in the early modern period.[81] A broader history of Punjabi literary production must address political changes in Punjab that brought

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77 Shackle (2015), p. x.

78 The ways that *languages* function in this context, I would argue, mirrors the way religious domains also function: overlapping, and yet defined in particular contexts and for particular purposes.

79 On the *Dasam Graṅth* and its contents, with an overview of printed editions and research on manuscript traditions, see Rinehart (2011), ch. 1, and Deol (2001). On script and the Persian language text, the *Zafarnāmah*, see Fenech (2013), p. 23.

80 Orsini (2012), p. 238. This is a vision that 'mirrors the balance of social forces that were active and vocal in the polities of the regional Sultans and local Rajput chiefdoms and in the religious marketplace . . . of the time: rulers and chieftains, merchants and artisans, religious leaders and groups of various kinds.' (ibid., p. 239).

81 I address some aspects of the distinctive vision of Punjabi texts in Braj in Murphy (2018b).

late localized political control that, when it did arrive, translated into peripheral courtly commitment to Punjabi language, such as during the rule of Ranjit Singh. Neither was there sustained institutionalized religious commitment to the language for writing, since the *dominant* literatures in both Sufi and Sikh contexts were in either Persian or Braj. Punjabi emerges at the periphery. We can see this in the court records of Ranjit Singh's kingdom, which are in Persian (regardless of whether or not Punjabi was used as a spoken language). Very rarely, Gurmukhi Punjabi marginalia occur alongside the core text and marginalia/comments, all in Persian, usually as an attestation of the authenticity of the document in question.[82] The court therefore was not the major agent of linguistic innovation for Punjabi, and religious interventions also appeared outside of institutional centres. This is in keeping with Orsini's findings that 'rather than a model of literary culture centred around either religious sites or around royal courts,' we must look to 'the interrelated efforts of singers, poets, patrons and audiences at courtly darbars and sabhas, in the open spaces of chaupals in towns and villages, in temples and khanqahs.'[83] This is where we therefore must locate Punjabi: *as an alternative to* institutional powers (articulated in cosmopolitan languages like Persian and Braj),[84] connected to a generalized sense of regionality expressed not only in that language, important perhaps particularly *because* it did not map to state or religious institution. Instead, it was linked to a kind of aesthetic practice, as Pollock has argued, embodying an affective domain available within and across religious boundaries.[85] It is that *affective* domain and *aesthetic* practice at the periphery that we must attend to in the effort to make space for Punjabi and its illusive multilingual (and multireligious) history (with striking parallels with the current situation).[86] This might explain, for instance, why when Ranjit Singh consolidated his reign at the end of the eighteenth century, he engaged a Punjabi-influenced *Persian* to do so.[87] Was the

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82 See, for example, in the Khalsa Darbar Records, Dharamarth Section, Bundle 5, X Pt. 2, 429 and 471. Punjabi State Archives Collection, Chandigarh.

83 Orsini (2012), p. 243. Hawley concurs in his recent work (Hawley (2015), p. 311), citing an unpublished paper by Christian Novetzke. Shackle (1993), p. 288, conversely, argues that Siraiki emerges as a distinct literary language precisely because of court patronage.

84 This has continued to a degree into the modern period, perhaps in keeping with Tariq Rahman's description of Punjabi's association 'with pleasure [that] is connected with a certain kind of Punjabi identity' (Rahman (2002), p. 395). See Murphy (2018a) for discussion.

85 Pollock (2006), p. 18. These non-state formations interacted with the court, to be sure, but were not limited to polity. As we know, Sufi shrines, Nāthyogī centres, and the Sikh Gurus too made their claims on the political sphere, and the issue of 'sovereignty' was not equivalent to that imagined in the formulation of the modern nation state. I cannot address this broader issue here, but discuss the problem of reading 'sovereignty' in Sikh contexts in Murphy (2015).

86 Murphy (2018a).

87 Based on reading of the *dharamarth* records of the Lahore state (see Murphy (2012), pp. 165–ff) For similar observations on 'easy' Persian and the influence of the vernacular, see Orsini (2014), pp. 406–407.

vernacular already, perhaps, marked by a non-statist imaginary, as Ishwar Gaur's recent study of Waris Shah's *Heer* suggests, in a context where a vernacular *polity* had had no space to emerge and Braj and Persian functioned as institutionalized idioms of power, both religious and courtly?[88] This puts it on par with the ethical dimensions of Marathi as a vernacular that Christian Novetzke's work engages with, and his discussion of non-state locations for Marathi literary emergence, although the Punjabi case is in fact far more clear in terms of its extra-institutional moorings and individualistic orientation.[89] It is also in keeping with Shantanu Phukan's and Allison Busch's respective insights into the emergence of early Hindavi in relation to Persian and Sanskrit, where we see the emergence of Hindavi alongside Persian as allowing for a particular kind of emotional expression that, in Phukan's words, acted 'not as an instrument of conversion, nor yet as a concession to the simple sensibilities of rural folk, but as an effective vehicle for the expression of such emotional states and modalities of knowledge as can better be captured by it'; it was also as such particularly associated with the feminine voice.[90] Busch has shown that courtly *rītī* literature in Braj 'developed an extraordinary capacity to speak across cultural barriers to a wide variety of people in a way that neither Persian or Sanskrit could ever do.'[91] All of these resonances were of course radically reconfigured with the new politics of language in the nineteenth century, but in the early modern period, we can see Punjabi enacting its own set of affective connotations within a larger diverse linguistic landscape otherwise dominated by Persian and Braj.

The emergence of Punjabi similarly meant something particular in the complex linguistic and literary expressive worlds of early modern Punjab. The role I suggest here can be said to prefigure the position of Punjabi that Farina Mir describes in the colonial period, positioning Punjabi as simultaneously 'outside' (of state and other forms of power) and yet vividly present and resilient perhaps *because*

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88 Gaur (2009).

89 The state was certainly an agent of vernacular literalization in the inscriptional evidence for Marathi Novetzke discusses; he admits that 'vernacularization occurred at the intersection of state and public culture,' acknowledging a state role (Novetzke (2016), pp. 168, 194.) His observation of the Yadava neglect of Marathi as an opening to literary innovation bears striking similarity to the earlier argument of Farina Mir regarding the florescence of Punjabi in the colonial period, outside of colonial influence (Novetzke (2016), p. 75; Mir 2010). See Murphy (forthcoming 2019?) on expressions of individualization in early modern Punjabi cultural forms.

90 Phukan (2000b), p. 87 (for quote); see overall discussion pp. 72–ff; see also Phukan (2000a), pp. 15–ff. As Phukan well notes, such an interplay of languages does not just allow for the expression of different semantic registers but *extends* the range of each language so utilized (Phukan (2000a), p. 15).

91 Busch (2011), p. 100. This is an argument also visible in Bangha (2010), p. 83.

of such a position.[92] This, of course, also explains why it is so difficult to find. Overall, we need an explanatory mechanism for the dynamics of vernacularization in Punjab that embraces the range of material before us, religious and not, courtly and not, both when distinctive features of Punjabi as a language do emerge (to differentiate it from other forms or 'flavours' of Hindavi) and when they do not.[93] This essay represents preliminary thinking along such lines.

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92 Mir (2010).

93 Pollock indeed noted in passing that 'the cultures of Place (or *deśa*) were intended to at once replicate and replace the global order of Sanskrit (although this was not true in all cases; Sufi poets, for example, had other agendas)' (Pollock (2006), p. 397).

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She is the author of numerous articles and works with Molly Aitken on an inter-disciplinary project called "Aesthetic Worlds of the Indian Heroine".

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This book presents recent scholarly research on one of the most important literary and historical periods of the Early Modern era from a wide range of approaches and perspectives. It contains a selection of contributions presented at the 12th International Conference on Early Modern Literatures of North India which provide new material as well as innovative methods to approach it. The organizing principle of the volume lies in its exploration of the links between a multiplicity of languages (Indian vernaculars, Persian, Sanskrit), media (texts, paintings, images) and traditions (Hindu, Jain, Sikh, Muslim). The role of the Persian language and the importance of translations from Sanskrit into Persian are discussed in light of the translational turn. The relations between various yogic traditions, especially of Nath origin, from Kabir and other sampradayas, are also reconsidered.