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<CT>Writing Devotion

<CST>[The](#) Dynamics of Textual Transmission in the *Kavitāvalī* of Tulsīdās¹⁰⁰⁰

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<P1>The literary culture of India in the middle of the second millennium ~~CE~~ [CE](#) was ~~not simply~~ marked [not simply](#) by vernacularization and a dramatic decline in the production of Sanskrit literature, but also by the infusion of Sanskritic learning into the vernaculars. In many fields in North India, the achievements of Sanskrit were being vernacularized. In the case of Hindi, for example, there is an extensive literature on astrology, aesthetics, [and](#) ~~erotics etc.~~ following closely its Sanskrit models. Sanskrit epics and ~~puranas~~ [puranas](#) were being widely transcreated into the literary versions of the spoken languages. Apart from transcreations of whole works, there were subtler ways in which Sanskrit learning penetrated into vernacular domains. The aesthetics of new literary works were based on those described in Sanskrit treatises. Thus not only the Hindi *rīti*-poetry trained on Sanskrit conventions but even the more spontaneous devotional works abound in *alāṅkāras*, figures of sense and meaning, or can be analyzed according to the *rasa* conventions.

One of the fields in which vernacular literatures followed Sanskrit was

¹⁰⁰⁰ [Title differs in table of contents; which is correct? — CAN YOU WRITE ME WHAT THE TITLE IS IN THE TABLE OF CONTENTS? The corrected title here looks fine.](#)

the vernacularization of manuscript production¹ that in the Hindi belt in north India for more than a millennium had been associated with Sanskrit (along with Prakrit and Apabhramsha) and since the thirteenth century with Persian and Arabic. The most influential Hindi devotional authors may have lived in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, but *bhakti* texts begin to materialize in the late sixteenth century. While Sanskrit and Perso-Arabic manuscripts appear in relatively high numbers at earlier times, today there are only a few extant Hindi manuscripts dated prior to 1600, and most of them are manuscripts of Jain works and hardly any of them contain devotional texts. Although there have been several claims that certain manuscripts date to the sixteenth century or serve as an accurate record of sixteenth-century traditions, scholars have raised doubts about most of them.² Some Devanagari manuscripts, however, date without a doubt from prior to 1600. The Jain *Pradyumna-carit*, for example, is extant in three manuscripts copied in 1548, 1577 and 1591.³ ~~1001 copied in 1548, 1577 and 1591⁴, and a further Another twenty-seven manuscripts of Jain or Rajasthani works date from between 1493-and 1594.⁵ The few non-Jain and non-Rajasthani manuscripts include a *Qutubśatak* from 1576, and the famous “Fatehpur manuscript” with the songs of Sūrdās, Kabīr, and other devotees dates from 1582.⁶ ~~and the famous “Fatehpur manuscript” with the songs of Sūrdās, Kabīr and other devotees dates from 1582.~~⁷ From the seventeenth-century through the nineteenth-~~century~~, however, ~~we have an ever-~~~~

¹⁰⁰¹ DUP allows only one note per sentence

~~increasing number~~ hundreds of thousands of ~~extant~~ Hindi manuscripts are extant totalling in the hundreds of thousands.

It is a well-known fact that the most successful early ~~bhakti~~ bhakti poets, Kabīr, Mīrā Bāī, and Sūrdās, produced oral literature, chiefly songs with a refrain, (ṭeka) set to a certain rhythm, (tāla) and with a dominant mood, (rāga). Their songs, called *padas*, were not considered ~~as~~ poetic literature (*kabitā* or *kabitt*) but ~~as~~ *bhajans*, that is, a means to express devotion. One of the poets, Kabīr, is credited with couplets that are openly inimical to books and ~~to~~ writing.⁸ Most of their poems were committed to writing after the death of the author and after an extended period of oral transmission that may not only have changed them through modifications- ~~that are~~ called *geyavikāras*,⁹ but also expanded their literary corpus of perhaps a few hundred ~~(?)~~ independent poems into thousands. Paradoxically the changes and expansion in oral tradition can ~~only~~ be documented only through manuscripts, specifically manuscripts that bear a date of transcription. For example, the critical edition of Kabīr's *padas* lists 593 songs found in manuscripts dated ~~from~~ between 1570 and 1681,¹⁰ but, according to one estimate, over two thousand different religious songs (*padas*, *śabdās*, *bhajans*, and *ramainīs*) attributed to him have so far been published.¹¹ The earliest available manuscript with the songs of Sūrdās, which is dated 1582, has only 239 different *padas*. From 1624 we have a book with 492 and from another half-century later (1676) a collection with 1,472 songs,¹² and the modern published *Sūrsāgar* has over five thousand.

The most dramatic amplification happened with Mīrā Bāī's songs. At present we have at hand only six poems of hers in seventeenth-century manuscripts,¹³ but at the end of the twentieth century Winand Callewaert found 5,197 *padas* with her poetic signature.¹⁴ From the inflated corporauses that we have at our disposal we cannot determine what the early *bhakti* poets wrote, and their personal identities tend to recede from us.

The fourth great devotional poet, Tulsīdās, differs from the previous ~~ones in the fact that~~poets because, as I will argue, he committed to writing many of his works at the moment of their birth. Although he may not have been the first devotional poet who wrote, he was the most successful in introducing *bhakti* into manuscript culture and thus appropriating a territory—right in the heartland of Sanskrit learning in north India, in Benares—that ~~so far up to then~~ had been ~~occupied~~ dominated by Sanskrit.

In the title of his excellent study on performing the *Rāmcaritmānas*, *The Life of a Text*, Philip Lutgendorf implies that a text comes to life when performed. One can, however, ~~consider~~ argue that texts have life when they are *communicated*; this includes written transmission, in which texts may not change as much as in oral transmission, yet they are still prone to amplification, purification, and ~~to~~ intentional or unconscious changes. What were the implications of infusing *bhakti* into the written world? How did written devotion work? We have only a few Hindi critical editions of *bhakti* poetry at our disposal, so we are not able to make definite statements about transmission, yet some common traits can be observed across several texts.

The observations regarding some relatively well-documented instances of early-modern editing can shed light on some major processes that may have taken place during the two-thousand-year-old production of other manuscripts as well. During transmission both the sequence of stanzas and lines can be altered, and lines, phrases, and words can acquire variant readings. There are cases when copies of the work are virtually identical, with the variation consisting of nothing more than the occasional spelling error, the insertion of paratextual material in the form of chapter or verse citations, or the appending of commentary, as is the case with the Bengali *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*. Because of the tight sectarian control in the reproduction of the text, there is decidedly little variation in the manuscripts.¹⁵ This was, however, not the case, however, with most Hindi-language material, as the few critical editions at our disposal show. Most texts have undergone underwent significant changes after the death of their author.

In his study of the transmission of Kevalrām's (b. 1617) *Rāsa māna ke pada*, Alan Entwistle examines a composite text, which resulted from an editor's copying an exemplar of which the folios were in slight disorder and comparing that exemplar intermittently with another source text. The outcome was omission or conflation as well as correction of some omissions and insertion of *padas* respectively.¹⁶ Rupert Snell in his critical edition of the eighty-four *padas* of Hit Harivaṁś (early sixteenth century) suggests that a portion of eleven stanzas in the middle of the collection (songs 39–49) may

represent an accretion to a ~~pre-pre~~existing collection of *padas* since textual phrases from this section very rarely show correspondences with the remainder of the text, while the rest frequently contains phrases that are repeated. Snell also suggests that the inclusion of these stanzas is the result of a conscious amplification because it is approximately in the same sequence that the predominance of Radha becomes established for the first time in the text, and thus this part confirms the more recently developed sectarian priorities of the ~~Rādhāvallabh-Rādhāvallabh~~ school.¹⁷ In her edition of the poetry of another sixteenth-century devotional poet, Svāmī Haridās, Lucy Rosenstein distinguishes two phases in the development of the textual transmission, one before the canonization of Haridās's poetry and one after. An early manuscript of the canonized version from 1755 suggests that the canonization took place sometime before ~~1755~~ that date. Two or three of the sixteen manuscripts inspected by Rosenstein contain traces of the period before canonization and are closer to a period of oral transmission. Furthermore she suggests that two ~~sub-sub~~recensions of the canonized version exist.¹⁸ In her edition of the *Rās-pañcādhyāyī* of Harirām Vyās (fl. 1550), Heidi Pauwels hints that the redaction of the *Vyās vāṇī* into a recension that she calls ~~the Vrindaban vulgate~~ Vrindaban vulgate took place sometime between ~~1667-68~~ and 1737. The earliest manuscript of the vulgate is from 1737. Pauwels had the good fortune to find a dated early manuscript (from ~~1667-68~~) that does not contain the vulgate version, but interestingly it shares peculiarities with the *Rās-pañcādhyāyī* today

attributed to Sūrdās. All other manuscripts discovered by Pauwels fall into the Vrindaban vulgate recension, which in turn can be divided into two scribal subrecensions.¹⁹

Another genre in which the study of transmission can yield interesting results is hagiography. ~~Winand Callewaert~~ In his examination of the *Dādū janma līlā*, a late-sixteenth-century biography of Dādū Dayāl by his disciple, Jan Gopāl, ~~Winand Callewaert~~ found that the number of verses in the four manuscripts representing the most ancient layer of the text is the smallest and that there are more in the manuscripts of the second layer (the oldest of which dates from 1654), and even more in a modern edition from 1947. The amplifications and omissions have resulted in a text with more miracles, ~~with~~ a story explaining that Dādū was not born as a cotton-carder but as a Brahman, ~~in~~ and ~~with~~ passages emphasizing ~~Dādū's~~ ~~his~~ superiority over other great men, such as Akbar. The wording has been changed to suggest Dādū's divine origin and to identify his guru as Hari and not ~~as~~ Bābā Būḍhā. Several times Jan Gopāl's incorrect rhyme is corrected in the manuscripts of the second layer.²⁰

Surveying the sources of these ~~se~~ ~~texts~~ ~~mentioned~~ ~~above~~ one can observe that, — apart from the *Rāsa māna ke pada*, where only two complete manuscripts were consulted, — only edited versions (sometimes more than one version, as the case of the *Dādū janma līlā* suggests) tended to be transmitted, and only a few ~~extra~~ ~~extra~~ vulgate handwritten books survived. This may ~~either~~ result ~~either~~ from tight sectarian control or from the relative

clarity of an edited text. Sectarian control similar to that of the *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* in the case of the three Vrindaban devotees, the *Haritraya* of Harivamś, Haridās, and Harirām Vyās, was introduced probably in the seventeenth century or early eighteenth centuries after the production of the edited vulgates. The initial lack of such uniformity may be due to the fact that Harivamś and Haridās produced songs to be transmitted orally. Clarity was reconstructed either by purging the text of its mistakes or by simplifying difficult original phrases when the editor was not able to interpret them.

These are devotional texts. Relatively little attention has, however, been paid to the transmission of secular works. The interplay of the secular and the devotional can be observed in the case of the Nimbārki renunciate Ānandghan (ca. 1700–1757), whose poetry was drastically changed in an editorial process. His quatrains can either be interpreted either as expressions of Vaishnava devotion (as is done in the collection *Sujānhit*) or as poetry in a courtly style influenced by Persian literary ideas (as in the collection *Ghan-Ānand kabitt*). The text in the early incomplete versions of the *Sujānhit*, has been altered in such a way that many occurrences of the word for the beloved, *(su)jāna*, loaded with both Hindi and Persianate meanings, have been altered into clearly religious or secular expressions, such as *(ju) syāma* (“Krishna”) or *and su pyārī* (“that [female] beloved”). This was done in order to avoid the possibility of identifying Krishna with Ānandghan’s worldly beloved, a Muslim dancer. In spite of the fact that Ānandghan’s three earliest dated manuscripts (from 1727, 1729,

and 1743) give these readings, they must be secondary since the ~~multi-~~ multilayered meanings with the ambiguity of the word *sujāna* peculiar to a much larger corpus of quatrains is lost in them and the text becomes pedestrian. No later manuscript follows this practice; ~~and~~ these early copies must represent an attempt to defend Ānandghan from sectarian accusations. It was around 1748 that a courtier and a Sanskrit and Hindi poet from Jaipur, Brajnāth Bhaṭṭ, edited another collection, known today as *Ghan-Ānand kabitt*, to emphasize the ~~non-~~ nonsectarian, all-encompassing aspect of love. Brajnāth changed the sequence of the poems of the *Sujānhit*, which had more worldly-love-oriented poems in the beginning and more devotional ones towards the end, into portions dealing with more mundane aspects of *śṛṅgāra rasa* (“the sentiment of love in poetry”) such as *saṁyoga* (“love in union”), *viraha* (“the pangs of separation”), ~~or~~ and *māna* (“wounded pride”). Brajnāth mentions at the end that in acquiring and editing these poems he has had to bear a lot of trouble-criticism and has lost his “honour and standing” ~~through it~~ thereby.²¹

In this ~~article~~ essay I ~~will~~ examine the textual transmission of another early modern corpus, one of the “minor” works of Tulsīdās (1532 ~~or~~ 1543?–1623?), the *Kavitāvalī* (“Series of ~~p~~ Poems/~~q~~ Quatrains”), probably compiled ~~around the 1610s in the second decade of the seventeenth century~~. This is a collection of some 350 loosely connected quatrains in strict meters and with a more individual approach than is found in most of the author’s other works. Tulsī’s favorite themes are collected here, and although arranged into seven

cantos (*kāṇḍas*) according to the *Rāmāyaṇa* tradition, it does not have a linear narration.

The collection has enjoyed immense popularity. Initially it was transmitted in handwritten books, and although no autograph copy survives, about seventy copied manuscripts have been traced in the past hundred years, hinting at the fact that several hundreds must have been prepared over the centuries. Since its first printed edition in 1815, the *Kavitāvalī* has been published about 120 times.

<A>The *Kabitt* Form

<P1>The force that keeps the distinct parts of the collection together is not simply that of a linear narrative but rather the poetic form: the entire *Kavitāvalī* is written in *kabitts* (quatrains), more specifically in syllabic *kavitts*¹⁰⁰² and moraic *savaiyās*, with the addition of a few *chappays*. People in modern India might interpret the title as “Series of *poems*,” taking the word *kavitā* in its modern sense. But this is somewhat misleading, and the work in most manuscripts and early editions is called *Kabitta(baddha) rāmāyaṇ* (*Rāmāyaṇa* *Composed in Quatrains*) or *Kabittabaddha rāmcāritra* (The *Deeds of Rāma* *Composed in Quatrains*).²² Excepting the designation *Tulsīdāsjīkṛt kabitt* found in one manuscript, all titles indicate that the scribes considered it a *pre-precomposed*, unified work and not a random collection of Tulsī’s *kabitts*.

¹⁰⁰² [Should be *kabitts*? — kabitt \(quatrain\) is different from the specific metre *kavitt*.](#)

The early devotional poets conveyed their message most effectively in *padas*, which normally have a loose moraic meter suitable for emotional expression through singing. The *Kavitāvalī* is a devotional work written not in *padas* but in the *kabitt* form. The importance of the form can be judged by the fact that Tulsī's various works are organized on the basis of the meter

1 [NO](#)? For a study of manuscript culture in precolonial India, see Pollock, "Literary Culture and Manuscript Culture in Precolonial India."

2 For example, a now apparently lost *Mānas* manuscript (Miśra ~~spelled Miśra in refs~~, *Rāmcaritmānas*, 460) and the hardly accessible *gurmukhi Mohan* or *Goindval pothis* (claimed to be from 1570–72; see Callewaert [et al.](#), *Millennium Kabīr Vāñī*, 10; ~~and~~ Mann, *Goindval Pothis*, 16–25). Some other editors mention now unavailable sixteenth-century manuscripts, such as one of Tulsīdās's *Jānakī-maṅgal* dating from 1575 (Chakkanlal). The manuscript serving as the main source for [the Shyamsundar Das's Kabīr granthāvalī edited by Śyāmsundar Dās](#) is also claimed to date from 1504 (*Pratham sanskaran kī bhūmikā*, p. 1, 5–6 ~~add to refs~~). The colophon with this date, however, is written by a different hand and cannot be accepted as genuine. (Vaudeville, *A Weaver Called Kabir*, 29–30; see also Callewaert [et al.](#), *Millennium Kabīr Vāñī*, 13–14).

3 One at Baddhicandjī kā Digambar Jain Mandir, one at Sindhiya Oriental Institute, Ujjain, and one at Abhaya Jain Granthhalay, Bikaner. See [Cainsukhdās Nyāytīrtha & Kastūrcand Kāslivāl, ed. 1960. Pradyumna-carit, Jaipur: Keśralāl Bakhśī pp. 9–10. Premodern Hindi manuscripts are](#)

involving a context of performance. The *Rāmlalā nahchū*, ~~the~~ *Pārvatī-maṅgal*, and *Jānakī-maṅgal* are in the *sohar* meter, used in songs sung at auspicious occasions. These works are composed in Avadhi, and their form also indicates a closer link to popular culture and to oral transmission. The *Kṛṣṇa-gītāvalī*, ~~the~~ *Gītāvalī*, and ~~the~~ *Vinay patrikā* are in Brajbhasha *padas*,

normally dated in the Vikrama Era. However, I give all dates converted into our Common Era by deducting fifty-seven years from the Vikrama year when there is no precise indication of month and day.

~~4 Premodern Hindi manuscripts are normally dated in the Vikrama Era. In this article, however, I will give all dates converted into our Common Era by automatically deducting 57 years from the Vikrama year when there is no precise indication of month and day.~~

5 Six Jain manuscripts are in the Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute in Hoshiarpur: *Mānpat kī caūpāī*,-N~~no.~~ 119,-(1493), *Draupadī-carit caūpāī*,-N~~no.~~ 2 (1527), *Jambū-svāmī-caūpāī*,-N~~no.~~ 91 (1544), *Purandar-kumār kathā*, N~~no.~~ 12,-(1551), *Purandar-caūpāī*,-N~~no.~~ 46,-(1565), and *Jambū-kumār-carit*,-N~~o.~~ 28 (1566). The Anup Sanskrit Library in Bikaner preserves four copies of Rāysinghī's vernacular commentary on Śrīpati's *Ratnamālā* from 1569, 1584, 1588, and 1590 (Rajasthani Catalogue, ~~pp.~~ 334, 330, 332, 333). There are four other works in Rajasthani on heroic or romantic themes: *Rāo Jatsī rā chand* by Vīthū Sūjā Nagarājot (Rajasthani Cat., ~~p.~~ 99), *Acaldās khacī rī vacanikā* by Gādan Sivdās (Rajasthani Cat., ~~p.~~ 99gha), *Tripurasundarī rī velī* by Jasvant (Rajasthani Cat., ~~p.~~ 272), and *Ḍholā mārū rī caupāī* by Vācak

suggesting a context of devotional singing. The *Dohāvalī* and ~~the~~ *Rāmājñā praśna* are in couplets (*dohās* and *soraṭhās*), the *Vairāgya sandīpanī*, just like the *Mānas* and other epics, in *dohās* and *caupāīs*. Similarly to the *Kavitāvalī*, some works, such as the *Barvai Rāmāyaṇ* and the *Gītāvalī*, are divided into seven cantos according to the *Rāmāyaṇa* tradition, implying that Tulsīdās

Kuśallābh (Rajasthani Cat., p. 45). ~~as well as~~ [There is also](#) a *Phuṭkar Sinhāsan* *Sinhāsan battīsī caupāī* by Vinaysamudra (Rajasthani Cat., p. 169). There are two *Viśādev-rās* manuscripts from 1576 (Anup Sanskrit Library in Bikaner, Rajasthani Cat., ~~logue~~, p. 99) and 1589 (no. 56 in the Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute, Hoshiarpur). I was able to locate further ten manuscripts of Jain and Rajasthani works in the Abhay Jain Granthalay in Bikaner. The fact that most early manuscripts are found in only three archives warns us that the distribution of extant early manuscripts may depend more on the success of preservation over the centuries than on the actual proportions of early Hindi manuscript production. If a collection has always been preserved well, ~~as like~~ [the](#) ones that are now in Hoshiarpur and Bikaner, then we can find many early manuscripts at one place. The lack of other similar collections, however, indicates that there were indeed very few Nagari Hindi manuscripts in circulation in the sixteenth century.

6 The [Qutubśatak](#) manuscript is preserved in the Anup Sanskrit Library in Bikaner and was used in M. P. Gupta's 1967 edition of the *Qutubśatak*. See Orsini, "Qutubśatak, Delhi and eEarly Hindavi." [The Fatehpur manuscript is preserved at the Sawai Mansingh II. Museum in Jaipur.](#)

produced various *Rāmāyaṇas* in various meters.

While *padas*, written in different dialects, were the main form of devotional singing, *kabitts* were products of Brajbhasha specifically. Although they were also vehicles of devotional messages, along with the couplet *dohā*, from the end of the sixteenth century they became the major meters in court

~~7 The manuscript is preserved at the Sawai Mansingh II. Museum in Jaipur.~~

~~8 E.g. For example, *kabīr paṛhibā dūri kari, pustaka dei bahāi* (19.2); “Kabīr says, get rid of learning and float away in a river your books).”-Other similar *dohās* appear in the *Kathaṇīm binā karaṇīm kau anāga* “(The Chapter on Saying without Doing).”-(Das, *Kabīr granthāvalī*, 30).-**{add to refs}**~~

9 A detailed study of *geyavikāras*, manifest in the inversion of *antarās* and lines, in adjustments to the rhythm, in the use of fillers, in varying the beat, and in the modifications of the refrain, can be found in Callewaert & Lath, *Hindi Padāvalī of Nāmdev*, 63–82.

~~10 Callewaert, *Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī*.~~

~~11 Callewaert et al., *Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī*; Lorenzen, *Praises to a Formless God*, 205.~~

12 Hawley, *Three Bhakti Voices*, 199.

~~13 Hawley, *Three Bhakti Voices*, 98–115.~~

14 Hawley, *Three Bhakti Voices*, 98–115; Callewaert et al., *Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī*, 2. For more details, see W. M. Callewaert. “The ‘Earliest’ *sSongs* of Mira (1503-1546).” *Annali (Istituto Universitario Orientale, Napoli)* 50,4 (1990): 363–378.

poetry.

The *kavitt*¹⁰⁰³ form, with its reliance on sequences of stressed and unstressed syllables, is especially suitable for conveying a sense of violence, heroism, or fear. The whole of the *Sundarakāṇḍa*, with its description of the burning of Laṅkā, and most of the *Laṅkākaṇḍa* [isare](#) written in *kavitts*.

<A>Themes and Structure

<P1>The arrangement of the first six *kāṇḍas* of the collection follows the Rama story, providing us with glimpses at some of its most enchanting points, while the *Uttarakāṇḍa* discards the narrative structure and comprises poems celebrating Rama's name, virtues, or grace, descriptions of the dark Kali age, of places of pilgrimage, of the *gopīs'* love for Krishna, or

¹⁰⁰³ [Should be kabitt? Please confirm throughout. NO!](#)

15 Pollock, "Literary Culture and Manuscript Culture in Precolonial India," 14.

16 Entwistle, *Rāsa Māna ke Pada of Kevalarāma*, 86--87.

17 Snell, *Eighty-four Hymns of Hita Harivaṁśa*, 326--332.

18 Rosenstein, *The Devotional Poetry of Svāmī Haridās*, 71.

19 Pauwels, *Kṛṣṇa's Round Dance Reconsidered*, 30--31.

20 Callewaert, *Hindī Biography of Dādū Dayāl*, 17--20.

21 Bangha, *Saneh ko mārag*, 49--58, 139--153; [and Bangha](#), "Mundane and Divine Love in Ānandghan's Poetry."

22 Other, sporadically occurring titles include *Tulsīdāsīk* [kavitt](#), [Rāmkabitāvalī](#), [Kavitāvalī](#), [and Kavitāvalī rāmāyaṇ](#). [etc.](#)

descriptions of Shiva, prayers for release from calamities such as the pestilence in Benares, and so forth. Several poems expound Rama's grace with reference to Tulsīdās himself. Even the first part of the *Kavitāvalī* is not strictly linear but ~~rather~~ like a series of miniature illustrations to an epic tale with which everyone is familiar. The poems sometimes ~~show~~ have a style full of *alaṅkāras* of which any *rīti*-poet could be proud.

The structure of the *Kavitāvalī* is unvarying in the modern editions, where it is a collection of 325 independent quatrains. ~~We can~~ refer to this as the vulgate text, within which the only variation is that the *Tulsī-granthavali* gives an extra *savaiyā* in a footnote but immediately rejects it as inauthentic. The collection is structured according to the seven *kāṇḍas* of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, but the distribution of the poems is rather uneven. There are altogether 142 quatrains in the first six *kāṇḍas*, with only one poem in the *Araṇyakāṇḍa* and one in the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa*; 183, more than half of the total, are in the *Uttarakāṇḍa*. Certain editions give the ~~44~~ forty-four *kaḍibits* of the vulgate *Hanumānbāhuk*, the ailing Tulsī's prayers to Hanumān, as an appendix to the *Kavitāvalī*.

The oldest available manuscript, dating from 1691,²³ comprises only the *Uttarakāṇḍa* together with the vulgate *Hanumānbāhuk*. Tulsī's poems related to Hanumān, however, also acquired an existence independent of the *Kavitāvalī*. From the late eighteenth century onwards several collections of *Hanumānbāhuk sarvāṅgarakṣā* ~~started to~~ proliferated under the name of

23 Manuscript no. 3-9 / 5264 at Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, Allahabad.

Tulsīdās, and probably served as charms or prayers against diseases. The most widespread version included about half of the poems from what later became the vulgate *Bāhuk*, one from the *Kavitāvalī*, and some ~~36~~thirty-six spurious ones. It was these collections that were first ~~started to~~called themselves *Hanumānbāhuk*. The earliest documented *Hanumānbāhuk* (*sarvāṅgarakṣā*) manuscript is from 1778,²⁴ ~~and~~ I have not been able to find an independent vulgate *Bāhuk* dated prior to 1860.²⁵ The emergence of the *Bāhuk* as an independent collection may be attributable to the growing cult of ~~Hanumān~~Hanuman.²⁶

<A>The Transmission

<P1>A peculiarity of manuscript transmission is that no two manuscripts present the same text, ~~and~~ ~~the~~ difference between manuscript and print cultures is well illustrated by the story ~~about of~~ two Gujarati clerks: On seeing a printed magazine the clerks sat down, one reading his version aloud and the other comparing it with the printed words in his copy. When they found that the two copies tallied word ~~by~~for word, their amazement was unlimited.²⁷ While manuscript transmission makes difficult, if not impossible,

24 Khoj 23-432u. ~~s~~See Gauṛ et al., *Hastalikhit hindī granthō kā saṁkṣipt vivaraṇ II*, 612.

25 See Śyāmbihārī Miśra, *Hastalikhit hindī granthō kī khoj kā vivaraṇ IV*, 433 (Khoj 09-323d).

26 About the growth of the cult, see Lutgendorf, *Hanumān's Tale*.

the reconstruction of what the author wrote, it can give information on the transmission and the reception of the text that may not be present in printed versions. ~~For example, V~~variations in the handwriting, ~~for example, can show and~~ changes of pen and paper ~~and also may be evidence of~~ the fluctuations in the degree of the scribe's concentration ~~and or~~ his adoption of different postures while copying.²⁸

While the old manuscripts, composed with a varying degree of textual corruption, show a complex interrelationship, almost all modern redactions and commentaries of Tulsī's minor works, including the edited Gita Press volumes as well as the huge number of critical studies, directly or indirectly rely on the texts of their exemplar, the *Tulsī-granthāvalī* published in 1923²⁹, which in turn is based on a late nineteenth-century edition of the minor works, the so-called *Dubejī* edition (1886) by Ramgulam Dvivedi and Lala Chakkanlal.³⁰

27 Divatia, Narsimhrao *Divatia, :- Smaraṇamukur.*-(Bombay: Sahitya Prakashak, ~~Company~~ 1926), :-18--19, quoted in Sitanshu Yashaschandra, :- "From Hemachandra to Hind Svaraj: Region and Power in Gujarati Literary Culture." in Pollock, *Literary Cultures in History*, 594.

28 Entwistle, *Rāsa Māna ke Pada of Kevalarāma*, 93.

29 ~~Śukla et al., *Tulsī-granthāvalī II.*~~

30 *Tulsī-granthāvalī II*; Chakkanlal and Dvivedi, *Gosvāmī Tulsīdāskṛt dvādaś granth*, is allegedly based on some very old manuscripts, including the *Jānakī maṅgal* dating from 1575 (!), the *Pārvatī maṅgal* from 1754, the *Gītāvalī*, the

-The *granthāvalī* is not a critical edition: the editors do not indicate the original source for the text of an individual composition and give variants only occasionally. Only the *Rāmcaritmānas*³¹ and the *Barvai Rāmāyaṇ*³² have critical editions based on a consistent collation of the most important manuscripts, and since the still authoritative book on Tulsīdās by Mataprasad Gupta, first published in 1942, not many scholars have touched upon the textual problems in his corpus.³³ ~~first published in 1942, not many scholars have touched upon the textual problems in his corpus.~~ No history of the transmission of the *Kavitāvalī* has so far been undertaken; ~~however,~~ the material collected for a forthcoming critical edition by the Tulsīdās Textual Study Group, a group of students and academics in Budapest, Oxford, and Miercurea Ciuc in Romania, ~~however,~~ can serve as a basis for studying its spread.³⁴ ~~With~~ Because a large number of manuscripts are lost and ~~with~~ the available material is only partially processed, the reconstruction of the history of the text is only fragmentary. For the edition I have collected copies of thirty-seven complete or fragmentary manuscripts from Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, the United Kingdom, and the United States (listed in the Appendix). References to about forty more have been found in various books, but some of them are kept locked away by their custodians

Kṛṣṇa Gītāvalī, and the *Vinay Patrikā* from 1660. I was not able to inspect this book, but as judged from the *Granthāvalī* that drew on ~~it~~ its text of the *Kavitāvalī*, it is very good, and most of its readings can be found in our old manuscripts.

and some have disappeared altogether.

Out of these thirty-seven books, twenty have dated colophons either at the end of the *Kavitāvalī* or at the end of another work written by the same hand. The twenty given dates indicate a time-frame between 1691 and 1887. Naturally, it is possible that some of the undated ~~ones~~ books fall outside this period, but I do not have the tools to determine this. However, none of the forty-odd other manuscripts referred to in books but not inspected bear a date prior to 1691 or later than 1887.

The geographical spread of seventy manuscripts ~~is indicated on the map.~~³⁵ ~~is indicated on the following map. When the m~~Manuscripts ~~that~~ bear the name of the place of copying, the *lipisthān*, ~~they are placed on the map according to it and they~~ are marked with black dots and squares, ~~and when the Manuscripts with no lipisthān is not indicated, the books (with the exception of the London and Harvard manuscripts) are were~~ assigned to the place where they are preserved today ~~(with the exception of the London and Harvard manuscripts); and they these~~ are marked with empty dots and squares (squares represent manuscripts inspected by me). Clearly, handwritten books were circulated widely in north India. That is why, for example, ~~our the~~ Dhaka manuscript is now found in Allahabad. Nevertheless, most of the manuscripts with an indicated *lipisthān* are preserved in collections near the place of copying.

<Insert Map1>

One can observe from the map that copies of the *Kavitāvalī* were

produced and circulated over most of the modern Hindi ~~B~~belt, with the exception of present-day Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh, and, as the case of the Hoshiarpur and Dhaka manuscripts indicate, even outside ~~of~~ it. The spread of the manuscripts is also indicative of a ~~pre-pre~~modern Braj-Hindi “cosmopolis,” where people living in an area stretching from Rajasthan to Bihar and speaking various dialects shared a literature written in literary Brajbhasha. According to this map, the spread of literary Brajbhasha is somewhat more limited than ~~that of~~ the then Indian lingua franca, Hindustani. Although frontiers were permeable, the limits of Brajbhasha manuscript production may have been determined by ~~religio-religio~~cultural and literary factors. Braj literary culture did not penetrate considerably into the Indo-Persian and ~~the~~Buddhist worlds of the north~~west-west~~ and ~~of the~~ north, while in the east it encountered another thriving literary culture dominated by Bengali. One knows from the history of Brajbhasha that it was more successful in penetrating into Gujarat, and the Deccan. However, it never became the dominant literary idiom in those regions, and this may account for the lack of *Kavitāvalī* manuscripts from the ~~rem~~.

~~Examining the manuscripts o~~One can also observe in the manuscripts regional variations in their script and orthography. Manuscripts from the east, for example, tend to mix *kaithī*-script characters into their *devanāgarī* and also tend to confuse the characters *sa* and *śa* very easily. The *kaithī* script was used widely in eastern Uttar Pradesh and in Bihar, and in the late ~~19th~~ nineteenth century it was even an official script in Bihar.³⁶ One major

difference between Sanskrit and Braj manuscript transmission is the lack of standard grammar and orthography in Braj, manifest in the inconsistent use of word endings and ~~of~~-conjuncts and in the different levels of Sanskritization, as opposed to an orthography that reflects pronunciation.

As far as the *Kavitāvalī* is concerned, the use of the *kabitt* form connected with the written tradition, the almost uniform sequence of poems, ~~as well as and~~ the nature and the relatively small number of the variant readings show that the extant texts stem from written versions; ~~and~~ no phase of oral transmission was involved, although oral tradition must have influenced it. (Even today many people know several of Tulsī's quatrains by heart, and the inversion of lines found in some manuscripts also hints at the influence of oral transmission.) In the words of Philip Lutgendorf, ~~the~~ "Tulsīdās oral tradition exists as a complement to a distinct and well-attested literary corpus."³⁷ The transmitted text must be very close to that of the first edition(s) prepared in all probability by the poet himself, ~~and a~~ Alongside a moderate tendency on the part of editors towards expanding his literary corpus by interpolating other material, ~~we one~~ can also observe a drive to purge his oeuvre of "weak" poems or of variations on the same theme conceived as redundancy.

<A>The Two Recensions

<P1>An examination of other minor works of Tulsīdās shows that some ~~of them had~~ existed in several forms in handwritten books before their text

became standardized in the second half of the nineteenth century. The *Barvai Rāmāyaṇ* (“Rāmāyaṇa in *barvais*),” for example, has a short recension containing ~~69~~sixty-nine *barvai* couplets and a longer recension with 405 *barvais*. The two share only ~~14~~fourteen couplets. The former shows a style full of *alaṅkāras* and may have been influenced by works of poetic virtuosity such as Rahīm’s *Barvai nāyikā-bhed* or Keśavdās’s *Rāmcandrikā*. The longer recension tells the complete Rama-story.³⁸ The shortest composition attributed to Tulsīdās is the *Rāmlalā nahchū* (“Rāma’s Nail-paring Ceremony),” an auspicious song describing Rama’s nail paring before his wedding. Its two forms contain either forty couplets (twenty *sohar* stanzas), as published in the *granthāvalī*, or twenty-six couplets (thirteen *sohars*), as found in a manuscript allegedly dating from 1608. The two versions have only twenty lines in common and, according to Danuta Stasik, the version published in the *granthāvalī* is not only more exhaustive but also renders a better image of a social occasion which involves Rama, the Hero and God, as well as his family.³⁹ It is indeed this version that was copied by later scribes, since the later manuscripts whose description I was able to consult also give this version.⁴⁰ The difference between the two versions may be accounted for by the oral transmission also suggested by the genre. As far as the dramatic difference between the two *Barvai Rāmāyaṇs* is concerned, more research is required. Maybe Tulsīdās has re-edited an earlier version late in his life, as the date 1622 inserted in one of the manuscripts of the longer tradition suggests⁴¹~~of the longer tradition suggests~~. It may also be

that a tendency similar to the case of the growth of the biographies of Tulsīdās (longer and longer biographies were “discovered” when there was need for them among the readers)⁴² worked behind the composition of a complete *Rāmāyaṇ* in the *barvai* meter sometime before the nineteenth century.

31 ~~Miśra, *Rāmcaritmānas*, is based on the collation of 24 manuscripts that date from between 1615 and 1726. (The original of one manuscript is claimed to represent a 1584 tradition.) The text in the *Mānasāṅk* of the magazine *Kalyāṇ* published by the Gita Press in 1938 was also prepared on the basis of the oldest available manuscripts (Lutgendorf, *Life of a Text*, 62) but in the lack of a proper apparatus listing the variant readings it cannot be considered a critical edition.~~

32 ~~Varmā, *Barvai Rāmāyaṇ*. This edition is the result of the collation of four manuscripts after the inspection of eleven handwritten books.~~

33 Miśra, *Rāmcaritmānas*, is based on the collation of twenty-four manuscripts that date from between 1615 and 1726. (The original of one manuscript is claimed to represent a 1584 tradition.) The text in the *Mānasāṅk* of the magazine *Kalyāṇ*, published by the Gita Press in 1938, was also prepared on the basis of the oldest available manuscripts (Lutgendorf, *Life of a Text*, 62), but given the lack of a proper apparatus listing the variant readings it cannot be considered a critical edition. Varmā’s *Barvai Rāmāyaṇ* edition is the result of the collation of four manuscripts after the inspection of eleven handwritten books. Gupta, *Tulsīdās*.

In some cases, ~~we have~~there is reasonable evidence to say that Tulsīdās edited his works several times, as Mataprasad Gupta has demonstrated in the case of the *Gītāvalī* and the *Vinay Patrikā* as well as that of the *Mānas*. The *Gītāvalī*, a retelling of the Rama story in *padas*, and the *Vinay Patrikā*, a collection of devotional songs, developed from two

34 In 2005 the Tulsīdās Textual Study Group ~~has become~~is a ~~Research~~Research Group of the Society for South Asian Studies (British Academy) under the name South Asian Language and Literature. The publication of the critical edition of the *Kavitāvalī* is expected by 2012. [For more information, see the website of the Society for South Asian Studies within the British Academy](http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/SSAS/groups/hindi.htm)[British Academy](http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/SSAS/groups/hindi.htm).

<http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/SSAS/groups/hindi.htm>

35 It was after the submission of the ~~article~~essay that I came across a *Kavitāvalī* manuscript in the Gurmukhi script, which is today preserved at the Sikh History Department, Khalsa College, Amrtisar (no. 2189). This handwritten book, along with the large amount of Gurmukhi manuscripts of Braj poetry, further testify to the extent of penetration of Braj literary culture into the Panjab.

36 King, *One Language, Two Scripts*, 65--69.

37 Lutgendorf, *Life of a Text*, 11.

38 ~~Varmā~~, *Barvai Rāmāyaṇ*, 18–29.

39 Stasik, "Text and Context," 388.

40 Wellcome Institute ms. Hindi.45, Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan ms. 3-172/5757,

collections referred to in manuscript colophons as *Padāvalī Rāmāyaṇ* and *Rāmgītāvalī*, respectively, of which Gupta saw two related manuscripts apparently written by the same hand in 1609.⁴³ The interrelationship of the two is illustrated by the fact that five songs of the *Rāmgītāvalī* related to the Rama story but not present in the *Padāvalī Rāmāyaṇ* have found their way into the *Gītāvalī*. Gupta also observes that five *padas* relating to the same theme, that is, the dialogue between Trijatā and Sītā, were in different places

Nāgarīpracāriṇī Sabhā ms. 632kh, Bihār Rāṣṭrabhāṣā Pariṣad ms. 280.

41 *Varmā, Barvai Rāmāyaṇ*, 29.

42 The oldest documented *Barvai Rāmāyaṇ* manuscript dating from 1740 contains only 41 forty-one couplets (*Varmā, Barvai Rāmāyaṇ*, 24--26). The two oldest manuscripts with 405 *barvais* consulted for the critical edition date only from 1816. The 24 twenty-four folios of a manuscript dated from 1800 and preserved in Patna at the Bihār Rāṣṭrabhāṣā Pariṣad (Nno. 287), which I have not yet been able to consult, also suggest that it contains the Longer recension. No earlier dated manuscripts are available for either of the recensions.

43The *Padāvalī Rāmāyaṇ* manuscript was incomplete, containing only thirty-five *padas* of the *Sundarakāṇḍa* and nineteen of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*. The order of *padas* is different in the beginning of each *kāṇḍa*. The *Rāmgītāvalī* manuscript was complete, though with some serious lacunae, containing 158 *padas* in an order largely different from that of the *Vinay Patrikā*. Gupta, *Tulsīdās*, 212–19.

in the *Padāvalī Rāmāyaṇ* but [were](#) grouped together in the *Gītāvalī*. From the absence of other *Padāvalī Rāmāyaṇ* and *Rāmgītāvalī* manuscripts Gupta inferred that Tulsīdās himself had edited the texts and that these edited versions became authentic and spread.

On examining the *Mānas*, Gupta found that its first version might have been the second half of the *Bālakāṇḍa* (from v. 184, that is, without the initial frame of the story) and the *Ayodhyākāṇḍa*. This section shows unity in form (eight *ardhālīs* in each *caupāī stanza*) and theme: the speaker is the poet himself and the story is linear, starting with the causes of Rama's birth. In a verse from the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, Tulsīdās claims that his work contains ~~500~~[five hundred](#) *caupāīs*. This may refer precisely to this original core of 506 *caupāī stanzas*. The second version contains *Balakāṇḍa* 36–183 (the story of Shiva and the causes of Vishnu's incarnation as Rama) and the remaining *kāṇḍas*, with Yājñavalkya, Shiva, and Bhuṣuṇḍī as speakers. In a third and last phase, Tulsīdās prepared the high-soaring introductory part (*Bālakāṇḍa* 1–35) and finished the poem.⁴⁴ ~~Charlotte Vaudeville, w~~[While](#) accepting Gupta's main propositions, [Charlotte Vaudeville](#) argues that Gupta's phases one and three were in fact one phase resulting in a proto-*Rāmcarit*, a pious account of Rāma's deeds without any pretension to becoming a 'holy book.' In its avoidance of Braj forms and ~~in~~ its rhythmic pattern, it was close to the early works of Tulsīdās, especially the *Jānakīmaṅgal*. The style of the poem, however, changes at the beginning of the *Araṇyakāṇḍa*. This, according to

44 Gupta, *Tulsīdās*, 254–65.

Vaudeville, must have coincided with a major disruption in Tulsī's life, his move from Ayodhya to Benares. The second phase of writing is marked by three major modifications in his approach. Here the poet presents the poem as a 'holy text,' a '*tantra*,' revealed by Shiva to Parvati. In this part he also gives evidence of wider reading. Embedding the Rama story into a Shiva-Parvati dialogue reminds the reader of the *Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa*, while the introductory part is influenced by the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, and the later parts of the *Mānas* are under the influence of the *Bhuṣuṇḍī-Rāmāyaṇa*. Furthermore, the poem becomes more didactic and less interested in the narration of events, and the regular occurrence of metrical forms gives way to a somewhat more variegated style.⁴⁵

A close look at Tulsī's other works shows that he not only re-edited his earlier works but also kept developing his ideas. Preoccupations of an earlier work can recur in later poems in a more refined way, as is, for example, the case with some ideas present in the *Rāmcaritmānas*, which return in the *Gītāvalī*.⁴⁶

~~The number of poems in t~~The *Kavitāvalī* manuscripts available in complete form shows a variation of about ninety poems. On the basis of this, ~~we one~~ can distribute the manuscripts into two groups of similar size. The first contains those that reach *Uttarakāṇḍa* v. 180 and normally include the

45 Vaudeville, *Étude sur les sources et la composition du Rāmāyaṇa de Tulsī-Dās*, 319-323.

46 Gupta, *Tulsīdās*, 237-41.

Hanumānbāhuk, and the second group those that reach at most *Uttarakāṇḍa* v. 161 and do not include the *Hanumānbāhuk*. We call the former the Longer Recension and the latter the Shorter Recension.

The sequence of poems in the manuscripts of the two recensions shows further peculiarities that justify their being grouped together. For example, six poems in the middle of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* (vv. 7.91–96) are missing from all representatives of the Shorter Recension but are present in all specimens of the Longer one. A calculation of all omissions and apocrypha shows that the archetype of the Shorter Recension contained 288 to 290 quatrains. Manuscripts of the Longer Recension include all *kabitts* that found their way into the modern published versions, as well as eleven or thirteen apocryphal *kabitts* missing from the vulgate text, out of which three always and another three occasionally correspond to the apocrypha of the Shorter Recension. Most manuscripts of the Longer Recension contain the *Hanumānbāhuk*. In this way, the archetype of the Longer Recension contained 382 or 380 *kabitts*.

Dividing the manuscripts into two recensions is further supported by an examination of the variant readings. Since our earliest manuscript dates to about seventy years after the poet's death, it is very likely that its text had already undergone several changes by the time it was copied. On the whole, however, the manuscripts show a relatively small number of variant readings. By far most of them arose from non-standardized orthography and scribal errors, such as confusing similar-looking characters. The

major variants, considerably fewer in number, include synonyms such as *prīti* (“love”) instead of *neha* (“affection”) or *and tapa* (“heat”) instead of *dāha* (“burning),” confusion over difficult readings, correction of metrical licenses such as omitting the word *jaga* (“world”) from the beginning of a line in a dactylic *savaiyā*, and the replacement of some compromise words. For example, in a quatrain making fun of ascetics longing for women, in the phrase *bindhi ke bāsī udāsī tapī bratadhārī mahā* (“executors of great vows, indifferent ascetics, dwelling in the Vindhya mountains”) in our Bharatpur1 (B_L) manuscript the expression *bindhi ke bāsī* (“dwellers of the Vindhya mountains”) was changed into *audha ke bāsī*, saving face for the ascetics but creating the muddled meaning “executors of great vows, indifferent inhabitants of Ayodhya.”

Manuscripts belonging to the same recension are also likely to share the same major variants. On the basis of the major variants from fifteen poems in different parts of the twenty-four substantially long manuscripts, a cluster analysis ~~on a computer~~ distributes the manuscripts into two groups with two subgroups each. On the two-dimensional distance model in Figure 1, manuscripts that share more variants are closer to each other. (The manuscripts are labeled ~~ed~~ according to the place of their copying or, when that is not known, according to the place where they were found. The eccentric Patna2 manuscript is omitted.)

<Figure 1: Euclidean distance model here>

The distribution of the manuscripts is far from random; rather, they

tend to converge into two major galaxies, which correspond to the two recensions. The group on the left represents the Longer Recension, the one on the right the Shorter Recension. There are also variants within each recension, ~~too~~, but their weight is usually less than that of the variants that define the two recensions. This shows that the authority of either recension was not questioned apart from some stray eccentric manuscripts. ~~One can,~~ ~~However, notice that~~ the manuscripts of the Shorter Recension form a more compact group than those of the ~~Longer one~~. This means that they have fewer variants within the recension in comparison with manuscripts belonging to the other recension. In the 137 quatrains already collated in places where readings are not shared by the two recensions, the Shorter Recension accepts a common reading 243 times, while the Longer Recension accepts one only 120 times. The smaller number of variant readings within the Shorter Recension suggests later editing and shorter time of transmission after editing ~~as compared to the longer one~~. One may argue that it could also be due to stricter sectarian control. However, since there were two recensions in circulation (at least from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, as the dating of the manuscripts shows), it would be illogical to control the diffusion of only one recension.

According to the quantity of manuscripts giving the same major variants, one can distribute the readings into three categories: (1) an eccentric reading given ~~only~~ by only one or two scribes, (2) a reading shared within a ~~sub-sub~~recension but not within a recension, and (3) a reading

shared within the bulk of (at least four-fifths) of a recension. A high number of variants consist of meaningful words, but many do not make sense at the level of the line. By far the highest-largest number of the meaningful variants comes from our third category, dividing the manuscripts into two recensions. This suggests a conscious intervention to the text when the archetype of the Shorter Recension was prepared.

On the basis of the 137 quatrains already collated, it can be observed that either the meaningful variants not shared in the two recensions show insignificant differences (e.g., *soca* [“concern, sorrow”] versus *soka* [“sorrow”]) or those of the Longer Recension are better but sometimes more difficult. Variants within the Shorter Recension tend to be more simplistic or nonsensical. For example, verse 89 in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* is about Rama’s name, which is more powerful than Rama himself. In the first line it is illustrated by the case of the poet Vālmīki:

<POEM>

rāma bihāya marā japate bigarī sudharī kabi-kokila hū kī;

<#>

Having abandoned Rama, simply by repeating the word *marā*, “it is dead,” even the corrupted fate of the poet-cuckoo came right.⁴⁷</POEM>

<P1>The third line refers to Draupadī’s calling on God’s name when Duryodhana tried to strip her naked;

47 Translations from the Braj, if not indicated otherwise, are mine.

<POEM>

nāma pratāpa baḍe kusamāja bajāi rahī pati pām̐ dubadhū kī;

<#>

Through the great power of the name, the honor of the Pāṇḍavas'¹⁰⁰⁴
wife was saved openly in a wicked assembly.</POEM>

<P1>This is, however, the reading only of the Longer Recension. The
sShorter-one, probably because of confusing the character *na* with the *kaithi*-
script *ra* (𑂣), reads *rāma* instead of *nāma* (name), not only producing
punarukti doṣa, the error of repeating the same word in the same sense, but
also creating a contradiction with the first line, ~~that~~ which emphasizes~~d~~ that
the god's name *was* greater than the god himself.

It is a generally accepted philological rule that a more difficult but still
meaningful reading, the *lectio difficilior*, tends to be more authentic than a
simpler one, which is normally the result of the scribe's not understanding
the complexity of the text. The more sensible nature of the more difficult
reading is illustrated by the third line in [verse](#) 100 in the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, in a
reference to Rama's taking the side of a dog against a Brahman mendicant.
Since Brahmans cannot be punished physically, Rama cleverly made him the
abbot of an extremely corrupt monastery, a position the dog had held in his
previous life.

<POEM>

sāhiba sujāna jāna svāna hū ko pakṣa kiyo

1004 [Should be Pāṇḍava's? NO, she was the wife of five Pandavas.](#)

<#>

The clever lord knowingly took even the side of the dog.</POEM>

<P1>Again, this is the reading only of the Longer Recension. The sShorter-one Recension reads *jinha* (who) instead of *jāna* (knowingly), destroying the internal rhymeing and taking away one shade of the meaning, the emphasis on Rama's cleverness.

Another case of a better *lectio difficilior* can be observed in the first line of the apocryphal quatrain that follows *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* v. 11, which is a description of Sita's languor:

<POEM>

sūkhi gaye ratanādhara mañjula kañja se locana cāru cucvai

<#>

The jewels of her lips went dry and her lovely eyes, which are like charming lotuses, are dropping tears.</POEM>

<P1>Here the Longer Recension has more difficult readings than the somewhat clumsily rhyming versions of the sShorter-one. The readings of the Shorter Recension also do not show as much variation among different manuscripts as those of the lLonger-one, where the scribes were at odds. The scribes of the Longer Recension seem to have felt uncomfortable with the word *cucvai*, a present singular third-person form of the verb *cucānā* (to drip, to ooze), slightly distorted for the sake of rhyme. The fourteen manuscripts of this recension that I have consulted have nine different variants (viz. *vitai*, *ciccai*, *cuvaĩ*, *citaicyai*, *cucavai*, *cala cvai*, *cucce*, *citai*,

cusvai) either breaking the rhyme or making further distortions. The Shorter Recension simplifies the case ~~and puts with~~ *citai* (she looks up), resulting in the flaw of repeating the same word in the same sense, since *citai* also figures in the third line. Nevertheless, nine out of eleven manuscripts give this reading. The two rhymes that follow in the same verse are similarly problematic and present several variants.

If one is looking for a pattern of change within the Shorter Recension, one can observe a drift of reverence towards Rama and towards the poet by not accepting readings that seem to contradict Rama's noble image or phrases that are grammatically imperfect. ~~Just to show a~~ few examples of consistently different variants from the first two cantos show this clearly. The editor changed the expression "that Rama" (*so rāma*) into "Lord Rama" (*śrī rāma*) in *Bālakāṇḍa* 10; spoke deferentially of Lakshmana in the plural (*bhāi bhale*) in *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* 2 instead of the singular of the Longer Recension (*bhāi bhalo*); put the relative pronoun *jo* (who) into the correct Braj plural *je* in *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* 5, thinking that the villagers were not supposed to know that Rama was a princely youth (*rājakiśora*) on his way to the forest; and corrected the word to "young man" (*kiśora*) in *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* 24, compensating for the metrical loss later in the same line. The editor also refused the idea in *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* 18 that the village women had goose bumps (*pulakī*) on seeing Rama; ~~and he~~ got rid of ~~it the word~~ and inserted a redundant word later in the line. The reading of the Longer Recension is as follows:

<POEM>

tulasī suni grāmabadhū vithakī pulakī tana au cale locana cvai;

<#>

Tulsi says, hearing this the village women were delighted, had goose bumps on their bodies and their eyes were filled (with tears).</POEM>

<P1>The Shorter Recension, however, consistently reads:

<POEM>

tulasī suni grāmabadhū vithakī tana aura cale jala locana cvai;

<#>

Tulsi says, hearing this the village women were delighted in their bodies and their eyes were filled with water.</POEM>

It is not only the textual variants shared within a recension that point to the authority of the editor. No *kabitt* of Tulsīdās is found in the other collections of his works, although the syllabic line-pattern of the *kavitt* was frequently used in the *padas* of his *Gītāvalī* and *Vinay Patrikā*. In these collections, however, there are no quatrains, and the songs with the *kavitt*-type lines have a refrain and five or more lines. ~~I was not able to find any *kabitt* claimed to be Tulsī's but not present in the *Kavitāvalī*.~~ This fact suggests that towards the end of his life Tulsīdās himself, or maybe someone else with an authority that was respected by later generations, collected all the *kabitts* not present in earlier collections and edited them into the archetypal Longer Recension.

This inference is further supported in the case of the Longer Recension

by the content of the poems themselves. The last twenty-two poems of the recension refer to astrological events and an epidemic (*mahāmārī*) in Benares, indicating a ~~mid-1610s~~ date for this section of around 1615.⁴⁸ Many of these twenty-two quatrains as well as the *Hanumānbāhuk* note that their poet is highly respected, and others refer to old age and suffering from diseases. A celebration of recovery would have been a good opportunity to show the working of God's grace, as the poet did in the case of his childhood deprivations. The lack of any reference to recovery in any work suggests that the *Kavitāvalī*, together with the *Hanumānbāhuk*, is among the poet's last works.⁴⁹ Indeed, tradition holds that the *Kavitāvalī* contains Tulsī's last poem, a quatrain (v. 7.180) about glimpsing a kite (*kṣemkarī*), an auspicious bird ~~at the time of when~~ setting out for a journey.⁵⁰ The style of these last twenty-two poems is so consistent with that of the previous quatrains that no one has ever questioned their authenticity. The most obvious explanation for the presence of the two recensions is therefore that the archetype of the Shorter Recension was a composite work edited on the basis of a somewhat corrupt text but under the influence of the structure of an earlier, shorter version of the *Kavitāvalī*, which had been compiled in all probability by the poet himself before his illness.

~~As has been mentioned,~~ Tulsīdās edited his works again and again. One can, therefore, assume that at least the structures of the two recensions of the *Kavitāvalī* are his or a close disciple's two editions. The study of transmission, however, is made more complicated by the process of

contamination, resulting in the fact that some manuscripts are not copies of one single source but rather composite versions. ~~It~~ This is clearly shown in some manuscripts, where one can observe corrections executed by a second hand on the basis of a third manuscript.

<A>“Problematic” Poems and Scribal Argumentation

<P1>As discussed above, the Longer Recension in all probability came into being by adding twenty-two more poems together with the *Hanumānbāhuk*, all written in Tulsī’s last years, to an original *Uttarakāṇḍa* that ended at [verse](#): 7.161. The authenticity of these twenty-two poems and of the *Bāhuk* cannot be questioned, and they are rightly included in modern editions.

Another twenty-two, namely the nine poems omitted from the Shorter Recension and the thirteen apocrypha omitted from the vulgate and at least ~~from~~ two manuscripts, may or may not have been written by Tulsī. These poems and various explanations for their omission have been examined elsewhere.⁵¹

A poem could become suspect for various ~~possible~~ reasons. Arguments relating to syntax, metrics, and structure figure more often than the contents of the stanza. No theological reasoning was involved in the argumentation, since the majority of the scribes did not discard the one about a *nirañjan* (attributeless god), even though in *Uttarakāṇḍa* v. 128 Tulsīdās propagated image-worship against the worship of an attributeless deity, referring to the fact that to save Prahlāda, God appeared from a stone-pillar and not from

the heart. The inclusion of these mutually contradictory poems in the same collection can be linked to the tendency towards synthesis in Tulsīdās, treated in other studies.⁵²

One can further observe that many of the suspicious poems show some kind of metrical, stylistic, or structural weakness in the eyes of the

48 The *Rudrabīsī*, or “Twenty years of Rudra” (7.170 and poem no. 240 in the *Dohāvalī*), refers either to 1566–85 (according to Kannu Pillai, *Indian Ephemerides* {[add to refs](#)}) or to 1598–1618 (according to Sudhākar Dvivedī). (For both references see Gupta, *Tulsīdās*, 183.) The *Mīn kī sanīcarī*, or “Saturn in Pisces” (7.177), took place from March 1583 (Caitra Śukla 5 VS 1640) through May–June 1585 (Jyeṣṭha VS 1642) and again from March 1612 (Caitra Śukla 2 VS 1669) through May–June 1614 (Jyeṣṭha VS 1671), according to Sudhākar Dvivedī. See Gupta, *Tulsīdās*, 186, 504–8. There were three major epidemics during Tulsī’s lifetime. The famines of 1555–56 and of 1595–98 are supposed to have been followed by pestilence, and a new disease, bubonic plague, appeared in 1616. See Smith, *Akbar the Great Mogul*, 397–98; and Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, 330, 442.

49 Tulsī’s most influential biographer, Mātāprasād Gupta, considered [believed that](#) the *Kavitāvalī*, together with the *Hanumānbāhuk*, [as dating](#) [dated](#) from the period 1610–23 (Gupta, *Tulsīdās*, 251–54). Several scholars, including the English translator F. R. Allchin, followed his ideas (introduction to *Kavitāvalī*, 63–66). Śyāmsundar Dās and Pitambardatt Barthwal, however, relying on the *Mūl gosāim-carit* (claimed to have been preserved in a

copying scribes. It is difficult to imagine how these poems found their way into a popular collection if they were not there originally, and in most of the cases [we-one](#) can presume omission rather than insertion. The concept of weakness, however, is relative, since it seems that Tulsī's instances of poetic license were regarded as flaws only by later generations. A major poetic license Tulsīdās took was the freedom to add or omit one or two syllables in the beginning of a line in a *savaiyā*. Five out of the twenty-two apocryphal poems have such unmetrical lines, which occur in several places in the vulgate as well.⁵³

Three suspect cases are due to a supposed *samasyāpūrṭi*, the widespread poetic practice of writing a new poem on a given phrase or line.

manuscript from 1791; [for a study of the different Tulsī biographies](#), see Lutgendorf, "Quest for the Legendary Tulsīdās"), argue that the *Barvai Rāmāyaṇ*, the *Hanumānbāhuk*, the *Vairāgya-sandīpanī*, and the *Rāmājñā-praśna* are Tulsī's last works (see Gupta, *Tulsīdās*, 69), while Madanlāl Śarmā and Gītārāṇī Śarmā consider the *Vinay Patrikā* to be his swan song, although they do not provide any argument for this supposition (Śarmā [and Śarmā](#), *Kavitāvalī*, 56).

50 [Allchin, Tulsīdās, Kavitāvalī, Allchin translation, \(introduction\)](#), 66.

51 Bangha, "The *Kavitāvalī* of Tulsīdās."

52 Cf. [See](#) Lutgendorf, *Life of a Text*, 10.

53 Vv. 1.20, 2.5, 2.7, 6.5, 6.13, 6.33, 7.1, 7.12, 7.34, 7.43, 7.47, 7.49, 7.51, 7.52, 7.88, 7.103, 7.106, 7.132, 7.147, 7.153, 7.154.

(In other words, if two poems contained the same line or phrase, one of them became suspicious.) ~~However, it is however,~~ not necessary to assume that another poet wrote a quatrain on the same line. It may have been the original poet himself, ~~and~~ a similar process was not questioned in several other cases within the vulgate *Kavitāvalī*.⁵⁴

Yet another argument for omission is structural looseness or obscurity. A later editor, or perhaps Tulsīdās himself, may have discarded the poems that he found aesthetically weak. The case of a *kavitt* from the *Hanumānbāhuk* strongly suggests that it was a later editor who discarded the “lame” poems. The third line of the vulgate of *Hanumānbāhuk* v. 40 is present only in the manuscripts of the L¹ subrecension (see Figure 1); an entirely different reading is given in the L² manuscripts, and the whole poem is omitted from the extremely “purist” Sitapur1. What picture does the oldest (Prayag1) manuscript present? It has only three lines, and the suspicious third line is missing. There is, however, a calculated lacuna at the end to indicate a missing line. We may suspect that incomplete poems were originally also part of the collection, especially when we take into consideration that we are dealing with Tulsī’s last poems and the dying poet

54 Vv. 1.2 and 1.6, 1.3 and 1.4, 2.1 and 2.2, 7.40 and 7.41, 7.43 and 7.44, 7.112–7.114 share the same last line. Partial similarity can be observed in the cases of 5.11 and 5.12 (only the last word is shared), 6.1 and 6.2 (parallel construction),. The last word is similar in 6.44 and 45, in 7.75 and 83, and in 7.88–7.90.

may not have been able to revise and complete them all. Later copyists, however, did not accept the fact that the poet-saint may have written unfinished quatrains and either completed *Hanumānbāhuk* v. 40 or simply omitted it.⁵⁵ Here the idea that the poet-saint must have produced only perfect poems was at work. The case of the second apocryphal quatrain following *Uttarakāṇḍa* v. 106 is similar. The second line is missing from Prayag1, and there is some empty space at the end. The quatrain is omitted from Sitapur1 and from many other manuscripts, including those of the Shorter Recension.⁵⁶

Some of the apocrypha can be weak but authentic, such as the stanza in which Rama scolds Sita for her languor as they make their way to the forest (the verse following *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* v. 11), verses with poetic license (such as in *Uttarakāṇḍa* vv. 91--96), or verses that share a phrase or a line and were suspected as *samasyāpūrti*. Some of the apocrypha can indeed be products of other poets, such as the ones at the end of the *Araṇyakāṇḍa* and *Kiskindhakāṇḍa* in the Shorter Recension to rectify the disproportion created by the small number of poems in these cantos, or maybe the one about the attributeless, *nirañjan* ("stainless") God (the verse following *Uttarakāṇḍa* v. 148), written perhaps by the *Nirañjanī* poet Tursīdās.

<A>Conclusion

<P1>In his study about performing the *Rāmcaritmānas*, Philip Lutgendorf found traces of enmity towards the *Mānas* among Tulsī's contemporaries. It

is not simply the hagiographical tradition that mentions it; ~~but~~ even as late as 1887 F. S. Growse observed that many pandits “still affect to despise his work.” Moreover, several passages at the beginning of the *Mānas* suggest a concern to anticipate criticism, while in *Vinay Patrikā* v. 8.3 the poet explicitly complains to Shiva that the god’s “servants” in Benares have been tormenting him. The sources suggest that the opposition came from local Brahmanical circles. One can also observe, continues Lutgendorf, that Tulsī’s poetry garnered an enthusiastic reception among other groups. Towards the

55 Similar uncertainty ~~towards~~ about a incomplete poem can be observed in the *Guru Granth Sahib*. See Deol, “Sūrdās.”: ~~Poet and Text in the Sikh Tradition~~

56 This is, ~~however,~~ not an overall model, however, and the cases of omission are more complex. Prayag¹ omits one or more lines in three more cases in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* (107, 111, 123), when all later manuscripts give the vulgate reading. The apocryphal *savaiyā* 7.141+ (The + sign refers to an apocryphal quatrain that follows a numbered vulgate stanza.) is missing from the handwritten books of the Shorter Recension. The fourth line is absent in the Jodhpur¹ and in Udaipur¹ manuscripts, while in Jaipur⁴ the last line of the poem is erased and a new first line is added. The same structure with the same four lines is followed in three more manuscripts (Jaipur⁷, Tijara [marginalia], Uniyara). Lines can also be omitted on purpose, as was done with the embarrassing last line of verse-2.11+ in two manuscripts (Vrindaban¹ and Patna²).

end of his life, the poet is mentioned as the Vālmīki of his age by ~~in~~ Nābhādās in Galta, almost a thousand kilometers away ~~from him~~. The use of *kaithī* script for the transmission of his texts, a writing system ~~favoured~~ in economic and political contexts, according to Lutgendorf, suggests *kāyastha* and merchant links. The fact that the Persian translation of the epic is ~~the~~ second only to the Sanskrit translation also reveals a link with Persianate circles, including not only Muslims but also Hindu *kāyasthas*.⁵⁷

The relatively small number of ~~non-~~nonorthographic variants and the more or less unquestioned structure of the collection suggest that the *Kavitāvalī* goes back to a written source. One of the most important motives for the Brahmanical opposition must have been that Tulsīdās had vindicated for *bhakti* the written culture belonging so far to Sanskrit (and to Prakrit and Apabhramsha).

On the basis of our previous observations we can attempt to reconstruct some phases of the textual history of the *Kavitāvalī*, although this may hardly be more than speculation. As has been mentioned, the Shorter Recension includes neither Tulsī's last poems nor several apocrypha, while most manuscripts of the Longer Recension contain both. This is a very

⁵⁷ Lutgendorf, *Life of a Text*, 8–10. He gives the reference to Growse as *The Rāmāyaṇa of Tulasīdāsa*. (Cawnpore: E. Samuel, 1891, reprint edition New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978), iv. It should be mentioned that the *kaithī* script does not necessarily mean *kāyastha* affiliation, as its name suggests, since it was more widely used in the eastern part of the Hindi belt.

strong indication that some time around 1610 Tulsīdās collected his previously written quatrains and— probably discarding some weaker and incomplete ones— arranged them into an anthology imitating the *kāṇḍa* structure of the *Mānas*. This must be the collection that contained poems up to *Uttarakāṇḍa* 148 (or later, up to 161); and this compilation was circulated and later served as a basis for the Shorter Recension.

After the death of Tulsīdās an associate of his probably edited the text again. The weaker and incomplete poems that found their way into this recension hint at the fact that it was a disciple who reverentially collected every *kaḍitt*, including those to Hanuman, from the —written and maybe in some cases oral —legacy of his master and prepared what I call the Longer Recension. The relative proliferation of variants in this recension suggests an early date for its compilation.

During the transmission some “suspicious” poems were incorporated into the collection but discarded later by the editor of the Shorter Recension. Making use of a probably already corrupted text and of the structure of the early version up to *Uttarakāṇḍa* 148 or 161, the editor purged the text of many poems and possibly also inserted some quatrains, such as the ones at the end of the *Araṇyakāṇḍa* and *Kiskindhakāṇḍa*, to rectify the imbalance created by the small number of poems in this canto. The scarceness of the variants in the Shorter Recension as compared to the Longer one must be due to the fact that the editing took place at a relatively late date, perhaps in the eighteenth century, since the earliest available manuscript of this

recension dates from as late as 1772. Apart from its clearer though often weaker readings it may be an awareness of the already independent existence of the *Hanumānbāhuk* that contributed to the popularity of this recension that ~~already~~ considered the two parts of this work as two independent compositions. ~~As has been mentioned,~~ I can ~~only~~ make only tentative statements about the emergence of the two recensions since there are still some questions to answer. For example, why do we have a version with poems only up to *Uttarakāṇḍa* 148?, ~~or why~~ why did the editor take a version only up to *Uttarakāṇḍa* 161?, ~~or why~~ why do all manuscripts of these two versions show similarities that indicate a later date, ~~although~~ although the lack of Tulsī's last poems suggests an earlier date of composition?

The emergence of the Shorter Recension did not suppress the Longer Recension; ~~and~~ both had their sometimes independent, sometimes intertwining histories and came to include a few other apocryphal quatrains. Naturally there was contamination between the two recensions, resulting in occasional purging of the Longer Recension, as may be the case with the Sitapur¹ and Hoshiarpur¹ manuscripts, or inclusion of omitted poems into the sShorter-one Recension, as in the Tijara manuscript.

The two recensions also determined the publication history of the work. The first published edition of the *Kavitāvalī* from Calcutta in 1815⁵⁸ was based on the Shorter Recension, the later Benares and Lucknow versions, such as the one edited by Durga Mishra in 1858, on the Longer Recension.⁵⁹ The modern vulgate text is a composite version of the two that gradually

developed during the nineteenth century and became standardized in the “Dūbeji” edition. It is this vulgate that was taken over by the [Granthāvalī](#) and the [Gita Press-Gita Press](#) in the twentieth century.

We have seen that the two standardized recensions were copied for more than two centuries. Several poems were added to them, and some others, even though in all probability written by Tulsī, were omitted. While in the case of Mīrā [orand](#) Sūrdās collections the collector tendency was overwhelming and resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of poems, in the *Kavitāvalī* the written tradition did not permit many extraneous quatrains to be included, and the purging tendency of a purist editor kept the number of poems down. Most of the poems excluded from about half of the manuscripts show poetic failings rather than ideological digression, indicating that the elimination of aesthetic or structural deficiencies was a more important editorial preoccupation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than faithfulness to the received text. In contrast to the more pedestrian purist selection, the weaknesses shown both in the earliest extant manuscript and in the suspiciously [sected](#) poems present a brighter and more

58 [Tulsīdās. Kavitta Ramāyaṇa. edited by Baburām Sārasvat. Khidirpur: Sanskrit Press, 1815.](#)

59 [Tulsīdās, Kavitta Ramāyaṇa, edited by Sārasvat; Tulsīdās, Kavitta Ramāyaṇa, edited by Durga Mishra. Benares: Divākar Chapekhānā, 1858.](#) The editor [Miśra](#) mentions that the text is based on the manuscript of

Paṇḍit Raghunathdas Gosvami.

human poet with flaws, imperfections, and humility.

<A>Appendix: The Kavitāvalī Manuscripts

<Insert Table 1 here>¹⁰⁰⁵

	Preserved in	Nr.	Date (VS)	Written in	
A _s	Alvar.	RORI	4872	1877	Alvar
Ti	Alvar.	RORI	4873	1891	Tijārā (Bahādurpur?)
Bh ₁	Bharatpur1	RORI	72	1888	
Bh ₂	Bharatpur2	RORI	404/151		
B _L	Bharatpur3	RORI	22		
Ha	Harvard	Houghton L	In1446		
H _L	Hoshiarpur1	VIRI	916	1879	Maṇḍche
H _s	Hoshiarpur2	VIRI	432		
Ja ₁	Jaipur1	RORI	2423		
Ja ₂	Jaipur2	RORI	9683		
D _L	Jaipur3	City Palace	2987(3)	(1773)	
J _L	Jaipur4	City Palace	1779	1858	Jaipur
J _s	Jaipur5	City Palace	3153	1899	
Ja ₆	Jaipur6	City Palace	1930		
Ja ₇	Jaipur7	City Palace	3437(3)		
Bi	Jodhpur	RORI	12354	1919	Bikaner
M _L	Jodhpur1	RORI	12357	1847	

¹⁰⁰⁵ This free-form table was not clear. Please look at Table 1 document.

~~Jo2 Jodhpur2 RORI 22732 (15)~~
~~Lo London Wellcome Inst. MS Hindi.361~~
~~Ps Patna1 Caitanya.Lib 1894~~
~~Pa2 Patna2 BRP 101 kha 1291 Hijri (1876/77 CE)~~
~~Pa3 Patna3 BRP 2895 1985?~~
~~tl Prayag1 HSS 3-9 / 5264 (1748-49)~~
~~ts Prayag2 HSS 3-6 / 1896-1829 Ayodhya?~~
~~Pr3 Prayag3 HSS~~
~~Dh Prayag HSS 3-7 / 2686 1944 Dhaka~~
~~Sl Prayag HSS 8003/4508 1890 Sitapur?~~
~~Ss Prayag HSS 7963/4484 1893 Sitapur?~~
~~Su Agra KMMI 411 1875 Śubhaṭṭpur Jodhpur~~
~~Ul Udaipur1 RORI 2103~~
~~Ud2 Udaipur2 RORI 4137~~
~~Un Udaipur RORI 5295 1912 Uniyārā~~
~~Vs Varanasi NPS 615 1848~~
~~Vr1 Vrindaban1 VRI 4725~~
~~Vr2 Vrindaban2 VRI 8401 1897~~
~~(KMMI=K. M. Munshi Institute, BRP=Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad,~~
~~HSS=Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, NPS= Nagaripracharini Sabha,~~
~~RORI=Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, VIRI= Vishweshvaranand-~~
~~Indological Research Institute. **{meaning of VRI?}**,)-~~

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<P1>{Items are quoted according to the latest edition mentioned. In the Hindi books where the year of publication is given in the Vikrama Era, ~~57~~ fifty-seven years have ~~automatically~~ been deducted to get the CE date.}

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