

Jaroslav & Linda – Introduction

We will present selected poems from the Kabir section of the Dadupanthi manuscript that we are preparing together as a complete critical edition and translation. These selections are from the first 90 *pads* in the Kabir collection. In addition to this introduction, we provide: poems with textual notes for each of four reading sessions (4 documents); and a set of *ṭīkās* garnered from two sources (4 more documents). We thought that separating them by session would make it more convenient for you. The total is 8 docs, but there are 16 as we are providing both Word and pdf versions—the former in case you want to type notes or otherwise arrange them to work for you; the latter in case there’s any problem with fonts.

From Linda: I have done draft translations of all these poems, but it kind of takes the fun out of it if I provide translations with the texts. Also, they are drafts and have plenty of mistakes and/or controversial choices. I would love to discuss the translations and how to improve them with any and all folks who may be interested. I will have copies of each set available to discuss after we have done our workshop session.

From Jaroslav, a description of the whole manuscript:

The manuscript is a huge codex of 692 loosely bound folios, square-shaped leaves (approx. 15 by 16 cm) with texts in various dialects of Old Hindi and Sanskrit, attributed to great number of authors, written in mostly easily legible Devanagari script. Inspection of the texts reveals several scribal hands that were at work in different stages of compilation of the textual corpus.

The codex (marked with serial call number 3190) is part of huge private collection that is gradually being transformed into a large research library, the Śrī Sanjay Sharma Museum and Research Institute (Śrī Sañjaya Śarmā Pustakālaya evaṃ Śodha Samsthāna) built up in Jaipur. The present owner of the manuscript, Śrī Rām Kṛpālu Śarmā, founder and chairman of the said Institute, has identified on the basis of *puṣpikā* (colophon) as the main compiler of this book a scribe named Rāmdās Dādūpanthī, the place of the origin of the manuscript (*lipisthāna*) the localities of Īḍavāgrāma (with the exact location “*dūjaṇadāsa āśrama mē*”) and Kaḍelāgrāma; the date of origin of the compilation has been fixed by the *saṃvat* years 1671 to 1678 (i.e. 1614 to 1621 CE). The present editor has been able to confirm this piece of information by locating three *puṣpikās* in three different sections of the codex that give the years 1615 and 1621 CE as the dates of compilation of these parts.¹ These dates establish the present compilation as one of the oldest extant specimens of Dādūpanthī literary and collecting activity and probably the second oldest manuscript containing a Rājasthānī version of *pads* attributed to the Old Hindī *sant* Kabīr (the oldest being the so called Fatehpur manuscript dated to 1582 CE, but containing only 15 *pads* with his *bhañitā* – signature or attribution).

The codex is a highly interesting subject of study in its own right – not only for its 370 *pads*, 816 *sākhīs* and 21 longer poems (*ramainīs*) attributed to Kabīr, but also for its other content which, among other things, represents the immediate context of its Kabīrian repertory. The list of authors

¹ A more detailed report on the structure of the codex, its genesis and dates, is included in: Strnad, J.: A Note on the Analysis of Two Early Rājasthānī Dādūpanthī Manuscripts. *Asiatische Studien / Études Asiatiques* 2016; 70(2): 545–569.

in the collection testifies to broad range of interest of the compiler(s) who belonged to the recently founded sect of *Dādūpanth*. Compilations prepared by members of this *panth* usually include a *vāñī-saṃgraha* (collection of voices or sayings) of the founder *sant* Dādū Dayāl (1544-1603) followed by collections attributed to four other *sants* who enjoyed exceptional popularity and authority in the *Dādūpanth*: Kabīr, Nāmdev, Raidās (Ravidās) and Hardās. However, in the codex under study, the texts of this so called *pañc-vāñī* (“five voices”) are followed by works of still other poets in a large section entitled by the owner as *vividh vāñī-saṃgrah* (various collections) that contains verses attributed to more than seventy other authors. These *vāñī* sections are in turn followed by works of other *bhakti* authors, and also by *nāthayogī* texts (the *Gorakh-bāñī* found in this veritable treasure-house of old Hindi literary and religious texts is, to the knowledge of the present author, the earliest extant version of this important work). The manuscript part with *vāñī* attributed to Kabīr contains three distinct sections. The first is entitled *Kabīra jī kā pada* and consists of 52 pages. The page numbers were written by a scribe in the upper right corner of the right page of the book; before the ink was dry the book was closed so that the mirror image of the page number appeared in the upper left corner of the opposite left page. As far as pagination is concerned, opposite pages form a unit; the edition would respect this usage and identify the pages by their original number followed by a letter *a* (left) and *b* (right page). Text of Kabīr’s corpus runs from the page 189b to the page 291a. Closer inspection of page numbers has shown that large parts of the codex, including those containing the verses of Kabīr, were shifted in such a way as to assemble his *pads*, *sākhīs* and *ramainīs*, originally located at different places in the manuscript, into one block and to include this block into a larger group together with the other four Dādūpanthī classics: we can see the later standard Dādūpanthī collection of *pañc-vāñī* (“five voices”) emerging for the first time in the present manuscript.