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The Competing Canons of Ānandghan
Eighteenth-century Brajbhasha Poetry in Manuscript Circulation[1]

Abstract

The study of Ā n a n d g h a n's transmission presents a case to examine how early modern manuscript circulation in north India was effected when a radically new idea appeared on the literary scene. The Vaishnava renunciate Ā n a n d g h a n (c. 1700–1757) in his quatrains wrote about love towards a person whom he called Sujān, a word having both Persianate and Indian undertones. By the use of this word, he emphasised continuity between mundane and divine love. Although this approach was rejected by his religious community and later even by Ā n a n d g h a n himself, his poetry became widely appreciated in north India and many of the most innovative Hindi poets in the coming centuries are indebted to him. The four extant early collections of his poetry were prepared under the influence of the Ā n a n d g h a n debate in Ā n a n d g h a n's lifetime or shortly after. Taking two other, now lost, anthologies into account the article examines the development of the corpus of Ā n a n d g h a n's quatrains into six collections, manipulated to present either a more religious or a more secular Ā n a n d g h a n.

Introduction

While in many other parts of the world the emergence of print culture was one of the most conspicuous corollaries of early modern culture, it was not so in South Asia, which maintained its long and rich tradition of oral and manuscript transmission. In spite

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of the lack of print culture eighteenth century north India presented a lively literary scene with fast circulation of ideas in oral or handwritten form.

Hindi literary culture in the eighteenth-century century in its themes, genres, contexts and transmission represented continuity with the previous three or four centuries. There was, however, a marked increase in readership of Brajbhasha literature as can be perceived from the dramatic upsurge of Hindi manuscripts. While Sanskrit and Perso-Arabic manuscripts appear in a relatively high number at earlier times, today there are only one or two dozen extant Hindi manuscripts dated prior to 1600.[2] There are a few hundred catalogued manuscripts from the seventeenth century but from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, we have an ever-increasing number of them totalling to hundreds of thousands. How is manuscript circulation effected when a radically new idea appears on the literary scene? – The study of Ā n a n d g h a n's transmission presents a good case to examine this question.

Amongst the most popular forms of early Hindi literature are the 'independent poems', *muktaka*s, a genre inherited from Sanskrit. The most popular *muktaka*s were sententious couplets, *dohā*s, or more courtly quatrains, *kavitta*s and *savaiyā*s, which in most of the cases were probably presented orally in a court for aesthetic enjoyment. Along with oral transmission, they were also circulated in handwritten albums of random poems and in manuscript anthologies organised by subject or by author. Structured anthologies were one of the most widely copied genres of early Hindi poetry. Some of them had limited circulation while others acquired the status of being standard or canonical collections on a certain subject or by a certain author.

In his study of the making of some European collections Krzysztof P o m i a n observed[3] that collections were not random groups of artefacts but collectors selected, ordered, preserved and exhibited objects according to certain criteria. This also holds true to collections of poems in South Asian manuscript culture although preservation in our context must be perceived as copying, and exhibition means circulation. The criteria along which these activities are structured reflect the aesthetic and social milieu of our collector, the creative scribe, who generate meaning by restructuring the received material. The structuring forces include an attempt at completeness from the point of view of certain criteria, such as the traditionally perceived size of an oeuvre (*bahattarī*, *śatak*, etc.), the aesthetic value of the collected pieces, or simply the poetic form used.

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*Muktaka*s were anthologised in many possible ways. On the one end there were poets who prepared their own compilations and on the other there were those whose

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[2]   For a list of early Hindi manuscripts see Imre B a n g h a, *Writing Devotion: Dynamics of Textual Transmission in the* Kavitāvalī *of Tulsīdās*, in: Sheldon P o l l o c k (ed), *Forms of knowledge in Early Modern South Asia*, Duke University Press, Durham 2011, p. 258, note 4.

[3]   Krzysztof P o m i a n, *Collectors and curiosities: Paris and Venice 1500–1800*, Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, Cambridge, U.K. and Basil Blackwell, Cambridge, Mass., USA 1990.

*muktaka*s have never been collected into standard anthologies during the pre-modern era. The best-known representatives of the first group are the authors of *rīti*-books, the *rītigranthakāra*s, K e ś a v d ā s, B h i k h ā r ī d ā s, D e v etc. The latter of them, for example, has produced several often overlapping compilations of his poems for his various patrons. Their *rītigrantha*s were normally dedicated to a patron but it would need more research to see to what extent did poets produce their *muktaka*s with the structure of a later book in mind. Since these collections had a fixed structure and, perhaps more importantly, the authority of their poets stood behind them they have been transmitted with relatively few structural changes.

It was not necessary that a canon was formed out of the *muktaka*-poetry of an author. The oeuvre of Ṭ h ā k u r (fl. 1800), a late Brajbhasha court poet from Bundelkhand was never collected into a widely copied Ṭ h ā k u r-anthology before the twentieth century. Interestingly enough, since his oeuvre was never obscured by the creation of an early modern canon this poet's work can be quoted as an example of the most archaic type of 'pre-canon' transmission. Ṭ h ā k u r never seems to have bothered to assemble or even to write down his poems. (In the process of preparing a critical edition, I was able to collect 320 quatrains in his distinctive style and normally bearing his pen-name.) His quatrains were included into handwritten anthologies such as the massive *Sudhāsar*, and into a very high number of lythographed *kabitt*-collections of the nineteenth century. He was particularly popular in anthologies of various poets rather than in collections straightforwardly under his name.[4] For the critical edition I have so far consulted 41 handwritten sources and only four of them are exclusively devoted to Ṭ h ā k u r. None of them contain more than about one hundred poems – much less than included into the *Sudhāsar* (136). None is the copy of the other, yet one can observe a tendency towards canon formation in these manuscripts since two of them[5] present a collection of some one hundred poems. It is probably not a coincidence that the first published Ṭ h ā k u r anthology was also a *Ṭhākur śatak*[6]. In the second half of the nineteenth century there seems to have been a consciousness about a *śatak* of Ṭ h ā k u r's poems and various scribes tried to gather the hundred poems attributed to this popular poet – apparently from anthologies and from oral lore. The advent of the print-culture and the publication of the *Ṭhākur śatak* in 1904 put an end to the canon-forming attempts in handwritten

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4   Manuscript at Bābū Jagannāth Prasād (Chatarpur) as described in Ś y ā m s u n d a r d ā s (ed.) *Hasatalikhit hindī granthõ kī khoj kā vivaraṇ san 1905 (Annual report for the search for Hindi manuscripts for the year 1905)*. (Allahabad: United Provinces Government Press, 1908; reprint: Benares: Nāgarīpracāriṇī Sabhā 1995 [VS 2052]) p. 92; Vrindaban Research Institute, Vrindaban, Nr. 9678 16ff; Khāsmohar Sangrah, Pothikhānā, Sawai Mansingh II Museum, Jaipur, Nr. 7683. 7ff; *Ṭhākur-satsaī* at Panjab University, Patiala, Nr. 115412 (366). There are two more collections that give Ṭ h ā k u r's quatrains grouped together in one place under a distinct heading although they contain pomes by several other poets: Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Udaipur, Nr. 4288 ff. 126r-7r and Ras Bhāratī Sansthān, Vrindaban, Nr. 548 ff. 68v-71v.

5   One is the manuscript at Bābū Jagannāth Prasād (Chatarpur) as described in Śyāmsundardās 1908, the other is Vrindaban Research Institute, Vrindaban, Nr. 9678.

6   K ā ś ī p r a s ā d (ed.), *Ṭhākur śatak*, Bhāratjīvan Press, Benares 1904.

books. Although Ṭhākur can be an emblematic figure at the end of early modern canon-formation in a way his case is the most archaic of all.

If we look at canons formed not by the author but by scribes, who are often scholars themselves, the scenery becomes variegated. Anthologies of *muktaka*s have been forming throughout the early modern period. We have only a few critical editions of early modern Hindi works at our disposal. It is, however, clear that most Hindi literary texts have undergone redaction after the death of their author.[7] From these examples one can see how canonised versions superseded earlier manuscripts and often we can only find traces of their existence. With one exception all the forty-odd manuscripts examined in these editions are post-canon versions.

Only a few of the existing critical editions are able to present the development of the text in a socio-cultural context. Traces of a conscious theological intervention can be found in the case of two sixteenth-century devotees from Vrindaban. Collections of Hariram Vyās's works were constructed in the light of eighteenth-century debates about Vyās's sectarian affiliation although it is clear from Vyās's songs that he did not conceive sectarian affiliation as an important issue.[8] Similarly, theological motivations shaped the canon of Hit Harivaṁś. Rupert Snell in his edition of the eighty-four *pada*s of Hit Harivaṁś suggests that a portion of eleven songs in the middle of the collection (songs 39-49) may represent an accretion to a pre-existing collection of *pada*s and goes on saying that the inclusion of these stanzas is the result of a conscious amplification in view of the fact that it is approximately the same sequence that the predominance of Radha becomes established for the first time in the text, and thus this part confirms the

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[7] Alain Entwistle in his study of the transmission of Kevalrām's (b. 1617) *Rās mān ke pad* found that the text available in manuscripts today is a composite text. This text was the result of copying an original exemplar – the folios of which were in slight disorder – and comparing the exemplar intermittently with another source text. The outcome was omission or conflation as well as correction of some omissions and insertion of *pada*s respectively (Alan W. Entwistle, *The Rāsa māna ke pada of Kevalarāma: a medieval Hindi text of the Eighth Gaddī of the Vallabha sect*, Egbert Forsten, Groningen 1993, pp. 86–87.) Rosenstein in her edition of the poetry of another sixteenth-century devotee, Svāmī Haridās, distinguishes two phases in the development of the textual transmission, one before the canonisation of Haridās's poetry and one after. An early manuscript of the canonised version from 1755 suggests that the canonisation took place sometime before 1755. Two or three of the sixteen manuscripts inspected by Rosenstein contain traces of the period before canonisation and are closer to a period of oral transmission. (Lucy L. Rosenstein, *The Devotional Poetry of Svāmī Haridās: A Study of early Brajbhāṣā Verse*, Egbert Forsten, Groningen 1997, p. 71.) In her edition of the *Rās-pañcādhyāyī* of Harirām Vyās (fl. 1550) Heidi Pauwels proposes that the redaction of the *Vyās vāṇī* into a recension that she calls *Vrindaban vulgate* took place sometime between 1667/8 and 1737. The earliest manuscript of the vulgate is from 1737. Pauwels had the good luck of finding a dated early manuscript (from 1667/8) that does not contain the redacted version but interestingly enough shares peculiarities with the *Rās-pañcādhyāyī* today attributed to Sūrdās. All other manuscripts discovered by Pauwels fall into the Vrindaban vulgate recension (Heidi Pauwels, *Kṛṣṇa's round dance reconsidered: Harirām Vyās's Hindi Rās-pañcādhyāyī*, Curzon, Richmond 1996: 30–31.)

[8] Heidi Pauwels, *In Praise of holy Men: Hagiographic Poems by and About Harirām Vyās*, Egbert Forsten, Groningen 2002, pp. 24–33 and 128–140. Even in the oldest *Vyās-vāṇī* manuscript examined by Pauwels scribal corrections represent an attempt to distance the manuscript from Rādhāvallabhī sectarian vocabulary (Pauwels 2002, pp. 133).

developed sectarian priorities of the *Rādhāvallabh* school.[9] In both of these examples the texts associated with some important early religious figures underwent changes when the early forms of Krishna-devotion in Vrindaban amalgamated around more formally organised sects with written canons and guru-disciple lineages. John Stratton H a w l e y examined the growth of the *Sūrsāgar* tradition, which grew enormously in size with later additions generally muting the scandals, surprises and conflicts of the early layers and playing the rationalizing role of the commentator. He also found that during the centuries of transmission various structuring forms shaped the *Sūrsāgar* collections. In the earliest layers some prominent phrase or idea, or alphabetical order seems to have suggested that one poem follows another. H a w l e y suspects that such collections were amassed from memory. Later manuscripts were organized by raga or by some theological or aesthetic concepts, while in a third phase of transmission the *Sūrsāgar* was organised according to the twelve *skandha*s of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* in accordance with the concept that Sūrdās translated this *Purāṇa* into Brajbhasha. This represents an effort to draw the poet into a closer, simpler relation with the high tradition than in fact he stood.[10]

The Vaishnava renunciate Ā n a n d g h a n (c. 1700–1757), seems to have spent a part of his early life in the Nimbārkī Math in Salemabad near the princely centres of Rupnagar and Kishangarh and later settled in Vrindaban, where he was eventually killed. He introduced new individualism, the description of his personal love, though in terms of Krishna-poetry, into Brajbhasha poetry dominated by devotional and courtly Krishna-themes. His influence on subsequent Braj poetry was enormous and even the modern Hindi poetry of the *Chāyāvād* echoed the intensity of the torment of love expressed in his poetry. Readers and listeners associated certain Islamicate romanticism with his quatrains even when they apparently dealt with themes of Krishna-bhakti, while his *pada*s, devotional songs, and other works were perceived as expressions of genuine Vaishnava devotion. It was the blurring of the boundaries of the secular and the devotional in his quatrains that allowed the creation of several anthologies each reflecting the peculiar approach of their scribes.

In his quatrains[11] Ā n a n d g h a n wrote about love towards a person whom he called Sujān. In some poems *sujān* "one with good knowledge, connoisseur", a word having

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[9]   Rupert S n e l l, *The eighty-four hymns of Hita Harivamsa: an edition of the Caurāsī pada*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, London 1991, pp. 326–332.

[10]   John Stratton H a w l e y, *The Early Sūrsāgar and the growth of the Sur tradition*, in: John Stratton H a w l e y, *Three Bhakti Voices: Mirabai, Surdas and Kabir in Their Times and Ours*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi 2005, pp. 194–207.

[11]   Together with more than three thousand other verses, some seven hundred *kavitt-savaiyā*s are published in the *Ghan Ānand [granthāvalī]* (Vāṇī-vitān, Benares 1952) that represents Ā n a n d g h a n's complete poetic oeuvre. If not indicated otherwise, references to Ā n a n d g h a n's work are made on the basis of this publication. On Ā n a n d g h a n's life see Imre B a n g h a, *Saneh ko mārag: Ānandghan kā jīvanvṛtt*, Vāṇī Prakāśan, New Delhi 1999, on the Ā n a n d g h a n debate Imre B a n g h a, *Lover and Saint: The Early Development of Ānandghan's Reputation*, "Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society" XI/2 (July 2001), pp. 175–190, on his contacts with Rupnagar and Salemabad Imre B a n g h a, *Courtly and Religious Communities as Centres of Literary Activity in Eighteen-*

both Persianate (*jān* "beloved") and Indian undertones, is an epithet of Krishna or Radha and in some others the word seems to refer to an earthly beloved, who already by his contemporaries was perceived as a courtesan with Muslim background. This "romancing" of the Radha theme was not without parallels at that time. A person living not far from Ā n a n d g h a n's *math* in Salemabad and acquainted with the poet has already done something similar: Nāgrīdās expressed his love for the slave girl Banī-Ṭhanī with the vocabulary of devotion towards Radha.[12] While Nāgrīdās did this in the framework of *bhakti*, Ā n a n d g h a n's poetry gained intensity by the description of internal torments and contradictory feelings that develop in love and in his best poetry the Krishna theme is present only as a loose framework. The direct expression of emotions was considered inappropriate in traditional Indian aesthetics that preferred the description of the outside effects of emotion, called *anubhāva* by Sanskrit theoreticians. Direct expression was associated rather with Persianate poetry but in Ā n a n d g h a n's quatrains this was balanced by the extensive use of traditional Indian *alaṅkāras*, figures of sound and sense. The poem below is one of his most famous quatrains. Although there is no explicit mention of Krishna mythology, the address to a masculine beloved *(pyāre sujāna)* and the word translated as "my dear child" *(lalā)*, used traditionally as an address to Krishna by the cowherd girls, suggest the setting of the Krishna poetry. This stanza is heavily loaded with traditional Indian figures of sense, the most conspicuous of which are the puns *(śleṣa)*: the word for number *(āṅka)* also means lap and embrace and, therefore, affection. The end of the last line can also be translated as "you take my mind *(mana)* but do not give a flirting side-glance *(chaṭāṅka)"* or "you fathom my mind *(mana lehu)* though do not caste a glance on me."

> ati sūdhau saneha kau māraga hai jahã neku sayānapa bāṅka nahī̃;
> tahã sā̃ce calaī taji āpunapau, jhajhakaī kapaṭī je nisāṅka nahī̃;
> ghana ānāda pyāre sujāna, sunau, ita eka taī dūsarau āṅka nahī̃;
> tuma kaūna dhaũ pāṭi paḍhe hau, lalā, mana lehu pai dehu chaṭāṅka nahī̃.
>
> (*Sujānhit* 267)[13]

The way of love is very straightforward, without the least cleverness or crookedness on it.
The truthful ones walk on it abandoning their selfhood but the designing ones, those with fear, are at loss.

Century India, in: D e z s ő Csaba (ed.): *Indian Languages and Texts through the Ages*, Manohar, New Delhi 2007, pp. 307–353 and on the early twentieth-century reception history of Ā n a n d g h a n and the *rītimukt* poets see Imre B a n g h a, *Romantic Poetry in the Era of Convention? The Emergence of the Idea of Rītimukt Trend within Hindi Mannerist Literature*, "South Asia Research" XXV/1 (May 2005), pp. 13–30.

[12] See Heidi P a u w e l s, *Romancing Rādhā: Nāgaridās' Royal Appropriation of* Bhakti *Themes*, "South Asia Research" XXV/1 (May 2005), pp. 55–78.

[13] If not indicated otherwise poems are translated on the basis of the text of V.P. M i ś r a's *GhanĀnand [granthāvalī]* (Vāṇī-vitān, Benares 1952).

*Listen, my dear Sujān, cloud of bliss, one number cannot be changed
into another on it.
But what slate have you studied from, my dear child? You take a maund
and do not even give a gram!*

Ā n a n d g h a n's poetry, as often happens with innovations, was not equivocally welcomed in the established framework of Braj poetry in his times and was the subject of bitter debates. In some of my earlier writings I tried to unearth some fragments of these debates from the writings of Ā n a n d g h a n's contemporaries. However, chief witness to the debate is the transmission history of Ā n a n d g h a n, in which the diverse efforts of accommodating his voice in the Brajbhasha poetic universe can be observed. These efforts can be seen today in the various collections of his quatrains.

The controversy

Before examining the transmission history of Ā n a n d g h a n's quatrains I will briefly present the atmosphere of controversy in which his new anthologies were prepared. Scribes both moved and puzzled by Ā n a n d g h a n's quatrains either interpreted them as expressions of Vaishnava devotion, as is done in the collection *Sujānhit*, or as poetry in a courtly style influenced by Persian literary ideas, which expresses an individual's feelings in love, whether mundane or divine, as in the collection *Ghan-Ānand kabitt* or simply *Kabitt*. These two ways of appreciation take on new significance in the light of a third approach, the voice of Ā n a n d g h a n's opponents that may have been the most vociferous in their time as we can glimpse it from some mocking verses, the *bhaṛuā chand*[14],

The kāyastha Ānandghan was a great rogue. Although he died in the massacre of Braj, his bad reputation remains. This is his description:

*That slave of a prostitute abuses his guru; very
shameless and dirty; eats paneer and naan.
Steals the words, takes their theme, composes
base poems and sings in a particularly lewd tune.
Feeds his body, drier of liquor-vessels, only with meat; harasser
of Brahmins and cows, he is pride itself incarnate.
Abode of sin, he visits forbidden women; this is
how the world knows the shaven Ānandghan.*

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[14] First published in M i s h r a 1952: '*Vāṅmukh*' 66-67. According to Dr. Manoharlal G a u r (personal communication, Oct. 1995) these poems are preserved in a handwritten book called *Yaś kabitt* in the Yājñik Collection of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, Varanasi. In March 1996, however, I was not able to find the book there.

> *He beats the tambourine, sings like a Ḍom or a Ḍhāṛhī, pleases*
> *a Muslim and then gets false fame;*
> *He is the servant of the prostitute Muslim Sujān,*
> *leaves the name of Rām and worships her abode of desire.*

These poems attest to the fact that some people questioned Ā n a n d g h a n's religiosity in spite of his being a renunciate ("shaven Ānandghan"). A large part of the blame poured on Ā n a n d g h a n expressed condemnation from an orthodox Vaishnava point of view emphasising outward signs of religious affiliation. To mock the hidden Persian influence on Ā n a n d g h a n's quatrains, the *bhaṛuā chand* are full of Persian words (although Ā n a n a d g h a n hardly used any). Similarly his association with a courtesan – no matter if there was any evidence for it or if it was inferred from his poetry – was condemned. The influence of the views of this group explains why Ā n a n d g h a n wrote a work on divine grace as opposed to the outside manifestations of religion, the *Kṛpākaṇḍ nibandh*, and why in his later life he himself stopped writing quatrains and repudiated his earlier works,

> **rasanā gupāla ke guna urajhī;**
> **bahuta bhāti chala chanda banda bakavāda phanda te surajhī;**
> <div align="right">(Padāvalī: 687)[15]</div>

> *My tongue is entangled in Gopāl's virtues;*
> *and disentangled from the various bonds of false poems and traps of*
> *twaddle.*

The overwhelming majority of Ā n a n d g h a n's apparently later poetry (more than three thousand stanzas) are devotional couplets or *pada*s.

Brajnāth, a court poet and friend of Mahārājā Savāī J a i s i ṃ h of Jaipur (r. 1697–1743), took up the task of "restoring" the original poetry by creating a new anthology probably around 1748, when he visited Rupnagar, a centre of the controversy. He composed eight *kabitt*s in praise of Ā n a n d g h a n's quatrains[16] celebrating the value of personal experience both in Ānandghan and in those who expound and read his poems.

> **samujhai kabitā ghana ānãda kī hiya ā̃khina neha kī pīra takī; (2)**

> *The one whose heart's eyes have seen the pain of love will understand*
> *Ānandghan's poetry.*

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[15] Ā n a n d g h a n's *Padāvalī* is published in M i s h r a, *Ghan Ānand (granthāvalī)*.

[16] Published in M i s h r a (ed.), *Ghan Ānand-kabitt*, pp. 1 and 233–234 and M i s h r a, *Ghan Ānand (granthāvalī)*, pp. 3–4.

Aware of the novelty of this poetry Brajnāth warns its future readers,

kabitā ghana ānãda kī na sunau pahacāna nahī̃ uhi kheta sõ jū;
ju paṛhe bina kyaũ hū̃ rahyau na parai tau paṛhau cita maĩ kari ceta sõ jū; (7)

Do not listen to the poetry of Ānandghan if you are not acquainted with that field;
If you cannot keep still at all without reading it, then read it with cautious mind.

He also has strong views on those who in his opinion misused these poems,

pū̃cha biṣāna binā pasu jo su kahā ghana ānãda bānī bakhānai. (6)

Why does a tailless, hornless beast expound Ānandghan's words?

The degree of repugnance towards Ā n a n d g h a n's *kabitt*s can be seen in the fact that Brajnāth claims to have lost his honour, prestige and "character" by copying them. A peculiarity of manuscript transmission was the strict control over circulation facilitated by the limited number of available copies. It was difficult to get the books even for a man of honour and prestige. He had to write them down secretly:

maĩ ati kaṣṭa sõ līne kabitta ye lāja baṛāī subhāya kõ khoya kai;
so dukha mero na jānai koū lai likhāiyai mohū kõ goya kai;
kaisī karaũ aba jāhū̃ kitai maĩ bitāe haĩ raini dinā saba bhoya kai;
prema kī coṭa lagī jina ā̃khina soī lahai kahā paṇḍita hoya kai. (8)

I have taken these kavitts with a lot of trouble losing my honour, prestige and character.
Nobody knows my suffering; "Take" they say "and write them down secretly for me, too".
What shall I do, where shall I go now? I have spent my days and nights immersed in it.
What is the use of being a scholar for one whose eyes have been wounded by love?

The lasting power of the views of the group of opponents may account for the scant explicit appreciation of Ā n a n d g h a n's poetry recorded before the 1870s in the works of other poets. It was not until the 1940s and early 1950s that Ā n a n d g h a n's two most popular collections, the *Sujānhit* and the *Kabitt* were published in their entirety by the outstanding scholar Vishvanath Prasad M i s h r a. The *Kabitt* (GK) was published

independently under the title *Ghan Ānand-kabitt*[17], the shorter form of the *Sujānhit* in the *GhanĀnand aur Ānandghan (Granthāvalī)* and its longer version in the *GhanĀnand (Granthāvalī)*.

Today the *Kabitt* is the most popular collection of Ānandghan's poetry, and usually the first one hundred poems of it form part of university curricula in India. The printed form of the collection contains 505 stanzas: 500 quatrains and 5 couplets (*dohā*s and *soraṭhā*s). In the manuscripts the *dohā*s and *soraṭhā*s are not always counted independently, and thus the number of poems comes to 500. The *Sujānhit* (SH) as published in the *GhanĀnand (Granthāvalī)* contains 507 poems (497 *kabitt*s as well as 10 *dohā*s and *soraṭhā*s). It also has a smaller version of 456 poems attested in manuscript and published in the *GhanĀnand aur Ānandghan (Granthāvalī)*. It can be observed that in the *Sujānhit* the quatrains relating to Vaishnava devotion tend to be more frequent towards the end of the collection. The relationship of the two collections kept intrigued Ānandghan-scholars since the appearance of the editions. Mishra thought that the *Kabitt* was the original compilation and the *Sujānhit* was published on the basis of a disordered *Kabitt*. Kishorilal Gupta published a concordance of the two and came to the conclusion that no systematic connection can be detected between the two. In an earlier publication I demonstrated that the poems of the *Kabitt* are selected from the *Sujānhit* and from some other smaller collections and are arranged in a different order to emphasise the all-encompassing aspect of love.[18] After gaining access to some more unpublished anthologies I am now revisiting this question.

Ānandghan in his six eighteenth-century collections

These published collections are only three out of the several ones that were compiled and copied during the past centuries. There were other collections with restricted circulation that present further attitudes towards the poet, always within the matrix of the individualism and Persian influence debate. These attitudes vary along the same secular and devotional lines and take into consideration the aesthetics of early modern Indian poetry.

1. The Rupnagar Collection

As is the case with most early modern Brajbhasha poets, no autograph manuscript of Ā n a n d g h a n is available today. We have, however three extant manuscripts dated from his lifetime (1727, 1729, 1743)[19], two of them were copied in Rupnagar and the

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[17] V.P. M i s h r a (ed.), *GhanĀnand-kabitt [GhanĀnand kī kavitā kā sab se prācīn sṅgrah]* (Vāṇī-vitān, Benares 1943). The title was given by M i s h r a. In manuscripts this compilation is usually called *Ānandghankr̥t kabitt*. (This name, however, is used for other collections, too.)

[18] B a n g h a 1999: 147–153 and B a n g h a 2005: 23.

[19] City Palace, Jaipur 2437 (4) with 218/9 *kabitt*s; its apograph at the Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Jodhpur 9431(2) with 218/9 *kabitt*s, Alwar RORI 4789(4) with 208 *kabitt*s.

one from 1729 in Shahjahanabad (Delhi). The two Rupnagar manuscripts were copied by the same person, a certain Śvetāmbar Hemrāj.

The two earliest ones with 219 quatrains are virtually the same collection. The third one omits their initial 11 poems and thus has only 208 stanzas. I will refer to these manuscript as the Rupnagar Collection. The three manuscript copies also include twenty other works in total, such as five various poems by the Rupnagar-Kishangarh crown-prince Sāvant Singh "Nāgrīdās". Three of them bearing a date of composition indicate that these works were composed not long before the time of the preparation of their respective manuscript.[20] They contain mostly devotional compilations with the notable exceptions of Bihārī's celebrated *Satsaī* in the *Śāhjahānābād* manuscript and Surati M i ś r a's *Alaṅkār-mālā* a work on rhetorics in the book copied in 1743. Both of them are relatively earlier works. The fact that Ā n a n d g h a n's poems are surrounded chiefly by devotional works suggests that their scribes intended them to be read along the lines of religious literature (and exploiting the ubiquitous religious element in the two more secular works they tried to drag the *Satsaī* and the *Alankār-mālā* into the devotional universe).

No later or undated copies exist of the Rupnagar Collection. Its circulation stopped after the coming into being of the more complete and less extreme compilations, the *Sujānhit* and the *Sujān Vilās*.

In spite of its closeness to the poet both in time and space the Rupnagar Collection does not represent the text that was written originally by the Ā n a n d g h a n. Its quatrains have been drastically altered. Many occurrences of the word for the beloved, *(su)jāna*, have been changed into clearly religious or secular expressions such as *(ju) syāma* 'Krishna' or *su pyārī* 'that beloved (woman)'. This was done in order to avoid the possibility of identifying Krishna with Ā n a n d g h a n's worldly beloved. These readings, however, are secondary since the multi-layered connotations of the word *sujāna*, peculiar to the same poems in all other collections and to the much larger corpus of all other quatrains, is lost in them and the text becomes pedestrian. No later manuscript followed this practice and these early copies must represent an attempt to defend Ā n a n d g h a n from sectarian accusations. Moreover, the beginning seems to be a selection from poems that were included in less emphatic parts of the archetype. This can be inferred by the fact that the scribe of the 1727 manuscript presents small inconsistencies of selection. All collections include scribal sequence numbers after each poem. The third poem with an explicit reference to Krishna, figures later as 188 (SH 197)[21] again suggesting that in the archetype it stood only at this position and by the time the copyist reached it he forgot that it was already included at the beginning, and copied it again mechanically.

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[20] The *Manorath-manjarī* was composed in 1723 and copied into our first manuscript in 1726, the *Rasik-ratnāvalī* was composed in 1725 and copied into our second manuscript in 1729 and the *Bhortā-līlā* was composed in 1742 and copied into our third manuscript in 1743. Their author is referred to in the colophons by the deferential *(mahārājādhirāj) mahārājkuṁvar śrī sāvant singhjī*.

[21] Numbers preceded by SH are sequence numbers from the published *Sujānhit* and numbers preceded by GK are sequence numbers from the published *GhanĀnand-kabitt*.

The change in the order also caused inconsistency in the numbering sequence.[22] The translation of the poem in question reads as,

ḍagamagī ḍagani-dharani chabi hī ke bhāra,
ḍharani chabīle ura āchī banamāla kī;
sundara badana para korika madana bāraũ
cita cubhī citavani locana bisāla kī;
kālhi ihi galī alī nikase aucaka āya,
kahā kahaũ aṭaka bhaṭaka tihi kāla kī;
bhijaī haũ roma roma ānāda ke ghana chāya
basī merī ā̃khina maĩ āvani gupāla kī.

He made his steps swaying under the weight of his good looks
with a nice garland running down on his attractive chest.
I sacrifice millions of love-gods for his beautiful face;
the glance of his big eyes penetrated into my mind.
It was yesterday, o my friend, that he suddenly appeared in this lane;
how can I tell you my confusion at that time?
I was drenched as the cloud of bliss spread in my every pore
and the coming of Krishna settled in my eyes.

2. The proto-collection

The above-mentioned discrepancies indicate that the archetype of the Rupnagar Collection was a slightly different collection, which I will call *proto-collection*. This apparently more secular collection was prepared probably by the poet himself and included more or less the same poems as the rather devotional Rupnagar Collection. Going back to the spirit of this lost proto-collection, which emphasised the all-encompassing nature of love rather than sectarian devotion, will be the chief motivation of some later scribes.

The proto-collection contained most poems from the first half of what later became the *Sujānhit*, more exactly poems from upto SH240. Considering the early date of the two Rupnagar Collection manuscripts one can conjecture that they contain the earliest works of Ānandghan[23], as did their basis, the proto-collection.

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[22] In this earliest manuscript number 43 is given to two consecutive poems suggesting that the sequential numbering of the archetype was not the same as that of the Rupnagar Collection. Although the copyist tried to present his own sequential numbering at this point he mechanically switched back to that of its archetype. The copyist of the 1729 manuscript corrected the numbering mistake in this place but produced the same a few poems later since in this manuscript the sequential number 46 is given to two different poems.

[23] This hypothesis is corroborated by other evidence. The 1729 manuscript also has a collection of quatrains written by various authors containing twenty stray poems of Ā n a n d g h a n. Out of them eighteen are also present in the Rupnagar Collection indicating that they were in all probability taken from various places in the proto-collection. One of the remaining two is number 243 in the *Sujānhit* and one is not included into any later collection. This suggests that poems that are now found after *Sujānhit* 243 were not yet in circulation in 1729.

The four initial poems of the *Sujānhit* are different from those of the Rupnagar Collection. The Rupnagar Collection has a sequence of four poems that emphasise bhakti. We can, however, surmise that the first four poems in the *Sujānhit* present a more archaic order than those in the Rupnagar Collection.[24] In all probability, the *Sujānhit* reproduced the sequence of the *proto-Sujānhit* (see below), which was based on the proto-collection. The first three poems in this sequence describe the effect of seeing Sujān, and the fourth one expresses the torments of love saying that they are worse than the torments of a fish out of water. These stanzas set the tone of the whole collection expressing the more courtly convention of starting a compendium on love with *pūrvānurāga*, love at first sight without yet being able to communicate it to the beloved. Out of these four, however, three were discarded by the compiler of the Rupnagar Collection and only SH3 is present as *Rupnagar 5*.

One can easily imagine that in compiling an appropriate beginning to a collection scribes may have relied on their memory. Although we cannot exclude the possibility of oral transmission playing a role in written transmission of *kabitta*s, the fact that the scribe of the Rupnagar Collection did not remember that the same poem had already been included into his collection reminds us that we should not overestimate its importance. After these initial sequences of four (and five) quatrains the order of the Rupnagar Collection loosely follows that of the *Sujānhit*.[25]

3. The proto-Sujānhit

The addition of more and more recent poems to the end of the proto-collection[26] lead to the creation of a now lost *proto-Sujānhit* (pSH) with some 435 poems. This served as a basis both to the (shorter) *Sujānhit* and the *Sujān Vilās*. Unfortunately we do not possess any manuscript of the *proto-Sujānhit* and its second half can only be imagined to be similar to – but possibly presenting minor differences from – the equivalent part of the *Sujānhit* (SH220-456).

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[24] The initial poem of this sequence does not figure in the *Sujānhit* and the following three can be found at later positions in it (SH82, 197, 130). One can observe that SH197 figures twice in the Rupnagar Collection under numbers 3 and 188. The fact that 188 in the Rupnagar Collection and 197 in the *Sujānhit* are surrounded by the same poems in the same sequence indicates that this later position has the original sequence in which the compiler of the Rupnagar Collection found the poem, and it was him who also inserted it at the beginning.

[25] The few differences, however, are informative, too. Since a later important collection, the *Sujān Vilās*, based on the proto-*Sujānhit*, and ultimately on the proto-collection, follows the order of the Rupnagar Collection and not of the *Sujānhit* in the case of a difference between the two, it can be assumed that the sequence of the proto-collection and of the first half of the proto-*Sujānhit* is reflected in the sequence of the Rupnagar Collection. Since the Rupnagar Collection discards three initial poems from the proto-collection and introduces four other quatrains the sequence Rupnagar 6-217 can be hypothetically accepted as proto-collection 5-216. The difference in sequential numbering explains the scribal slip at poems 43 and 46 in the 1727 and 1929 manuscripts respectively.

[26] Following the equation of Rupnagar Collection 6-217 with proto-collection 5-216 and by extension with proto-*Sujānhit* 5-216, hypothetical sequence numbers referring to proto-*Sujānhit* stanzas are arrived at by deducting 1 from the available Rupnagar Collection sequence numbers.

4. The Sujānhit

Although the beginning of the *Sujānhit*, based on the sequence of the proto-collection, preserves a more courtly attitude than the Rupnagar Collection, the rest does not attest to this tendency and every now and then explicitly devotional poems pop up in spite of the fact that they were hardly present in the Rupnagar Collection (and, we can infer, in the *proto-Sujānhit*).[27] (see Table 1.)

The compiler's principal strategy was to smuggle in more and more bhakti poems into the sequence of the *proto-Sujānhit*. In one case he has also introduced a spectacular change into the structure of the philosophically most explicit *kavitt*. The text of the other poems included into compilations other than the extreme Rupnagar Collection is usually untouched and has only a few minor variants. In the *kabitt* below a more characteristic difference can be observed: besides different readings of some words, the order of the lines is changed:

> **prema ko mahodadhi apāra heri kai bicāra**
> **bāpuro hahari vāra hī te phiri āyau hai;**
> **tāhi ekarasa hvai bibasa avagāhaĩ doū**
> **nehī hari rādhā, jinhaĩ dekhe sarasāyau hai;**
> **tākī koū tarala taraṅga saṅga chūṭyau kana**
> **pūri loka lokana umagi uphanāyau hai;**
> **soī ghana ānãda sujāna lāgi heta hota**
> **aise mathi mana pai sarūpa ṭhaharāyau hai.**
>
> (Rupnagar 109, GK310)[28]

> *Observing that the ocean of love was boundless, poor*
> *Reflection was baffled and turned back from this very side.*
> *Seeing that two lovers of one essence, Hari and Radha,*
> *plunge into it powerless the ocean was overwhelmed.*
> *A particle escaped from one of its billowing waves*
> *welled up and inundated all the worlds.*
> *That particle – stuck to the cloud-of-bliss Sujān – is love;*
> *having thus pondered I have established the image in my mind.*

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[27] After taking four poems from the proto-*Sujānhit* (pSH5-8=SH5-8), the compiler in SH9-15 added four quatrains about devotion with a shared phrase in their last lines and framed them by two others from another part of the proto-*Sujānhit* (pSH60, 63). From this point on the sequence of the *Sujānhit* agrees with that of the Rupnagar Collection (or rather with that of the proto-*Sujānhit*) with the occasional addition of some bhakti poems as mentioned above.

[28] This poem is quoted here as published in the *GhanĀnand-kabitt* (Mishra 1943). The readings of other non-*Sujānhit* manuscripts present only orthographic variants.

The text in the *Sujānhit* (SH 116) presents the second line about Hari and Radha as the final line. By the change the philosophy is also changed: in the *Sujānhit* the importance of the ocean of love is lessened by the importance of Krishna and Radha. This version is in accordance with the legend that Ā n a n d g h a n's love for Sujān turned into love for Radha and Krishna and it is also in accordance with the structure of the *Sujānhit*, which emphasises first mundane and then divine love. However, this version seems to be more awkward because Krishna and Radha would plunge into the image and not into the ocean of love. The thought expressed in it does not give importance to Sujān, though the poet's love for Sujān – let Sujān be a woman or a form of the Absolute – is the most important theme of Ā n a n d g h a n's quatrains.

Later, with the addition of fifty-one stanzas on bhakti at the end of the smaller *Sujānhit* someone prepared the longer *Sujānhit*, which with its clear emphasis on devotion became one of Ā n a n d g h a n's most popular collections. Although moved away from the extreme textual changes of the Rupnagar Collection this *Sujānhit* presented a more devotional poet in a more complete collection than it had been done in the now lost proto-collection and in the *proto-Sujānhit*.

5. The *Sujān Vilās*

Around 1748 the courtier pandit Brajnāth Bhaṭṭ, the *vidyāguru* of some of the female members of the royal household, visited Rupnagar. He found that Ā n a n d g h a n's quatrains were withdrawn from circulation. With his courtly taste Brajnāth may have felt that the compositions that brought new, more individual flavour into Braj poetry were misinterpreted both by the opponents of the poet and by those who tried to reinterpret them as explicit devotion in the Rupnagar Collection. He, therefore, redacted another collection in which he emphasised the non-sectarian, all-encompassing aspect of love. This unpublished compilation can today be found in three later handwritten books preserved in Datiya, Allahabad and Bayana.[29] In the first two manuscripts this collection is called *Ānandghanjī ke kabitt* and in the one from Bayana *Sujān Vilās*, a title I will retain in order to distinguish it from other collections that normally call themselves *Ānandghan(jī) ke kabitt*. The *Sujān Vilās* (SV) originally was not a single compilation but rather five shorter collections selected thematically from the *proto-Sujānhit*[30] and from some other works that contained quatrains. In the Datiya manuscript, which is apparently the oldest extant form of the *Sujān Vilās*, this collection is made up of five sections with independent numbering and with independent colophons in three cases. Poems in these independent sections have different origins. In the Allahabad manuscript, actually also prepared in Datiya, the numbering is continuous but the colophons are still kept, while in the Bayana

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[29] (1.) Manuscript originally in the Datiya royal collection, today at Datiya Museum, (2.) manuscript at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad nr. 4305(4) (copied in Datiya, after 1835) and (3.) manuscript in the private collection of Nemichand Sharma, Bayānā (copied in 1853).

[30] The fact that the proto-*Sujānhit* was already called *Sujānhit* is reflected by the fact that Brajnāth calls his source by this name.

manuscript even the colophons are lost, thus the indication towards the composite nature of the *Sujān Vilās* is obscured. Let us have a look at the structure of the Datiya manuscript (I am giving in brackets the numbering of the Allahabad manuscript, which is slightly different from the Datiya one),

1-8 *Kabittāṣṭak* (8 quatrains by Brajnāth) (=SV_0 1-8)
1-98 *Kabitt Ānandghan jī ke* (=SV_1 9-109)
1-293 *Sujānhit* (=SV_2 110-400)
1-108 (no colophon) (=SV_3 401-[509][31])
1-37 (no colophon) (=SV_4 [509]-[546])

The eight *kabitt*s in Praise of Ā n a n d g h a n in the introductory section were written by Brajnāth as the poetic signature in two of them indicates. They do not talk about Krishna devotion but rather praise the poet's love and poetic skills and warn the reader that this poetry is different from the "poetry of the world". They also speak of the difficulties of gaining access to these poems and tell about their secret popularity.

Let us skip the first section of Ā n a n d g h a n's poems (SV_1) for a moment and examine the second one (SV_2). In this section (see Table 2) with the exception of the sequence of the first twelve stanzas that present a selection of the first fourteen poems of the *Sujānhit* with three additional poems from another part of it, the order of the selected poems reflect the sequence of the *proto-Sujānhit*. Brajnāth, the compiler, read through the *proto-Sujānhit* and copied the poems that he wanted to include into this section, while leaving out others.[32] This section (SV_2) is the longest of all five and is introduced as *Sujānhit*. It is a selection from the *proto-Sujānhit* with quatrains on the nature of love[33] first and then on love in separation.[34] The next section (SV_3) – now without independent colophon – is another selection from the *proto-Sujānhit* containing poems on love in union[35], wounded pride[36], descriptions of the beauty of the beloved and of festivities.[37]

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[31] Since the Allahabad manuscript is incomplete at the end (its last poem is numbered as 499), numbers in square brackets are hypothetical numbers deducted from the structure of the Datiya manuscipt supposing that just as in the earlier parts the two manuscripts present the same poems in the same sequence later. Since there are some minor differences in the earlier parts, there might also be some in the later, missing parts.

[32] If we have a look at the beginning of the two *Sujānhit* selections starting with SV_2 110 and SV_3 401, we can observe that from SV_2 122 onwards the two sections rather follow the sequence of the proto-*Sujānhit* (pSH) than of the *Sujānhit* leaving out a few poems and sorting the others into the first or the second section. SV_2 125-126 follows pSH8-9 rather than SH8, 16; SV_2 132-3 follows pSH 23-24 and SV_3 406-407 follows pSH 20-21.

[33] SV_2 110-209 selected from SH1-165.

[34] SV_2 210-400 selected from SH169-439.

[35] SV_3 401-465 selected from SH17-253.

[36] SV_3 466-486 selected from SH66-150.

[37] SV_3 487-[509] selected from SH116-446.

There is a set of eighteen poems that are present in the *Sujānhit* but not in the *Sujān Vilās*.[38] All contain transcendental message but they are not phrased in the imagery of love, and apart from one quatrain, SH363 about Radha's name, none of them expresses Vaishnava devotion. They grieve over the worthlessness of life without *bhakti* and real knowledge, warn to turn towards the Absolute and praise the value of the *guru*. They are poems that repeat ideas expressed in a different devotional trend, that of the *Sant* poets who sing about devotion to an unqualified god. This *Sant* trend was already present in the songs attributed to the most prominent Krishna-poet, S u r d ā s.[39] Before Vr̥ndāvandevācārya, Ā n a n d g h a n's guru, the Nimbārka sect's poetry was also similar to this *Sant* poetry.[40] Without further evidence we cannot decide whether they were included into the *proto-Sujānhit* and omitted by the copyist of the *Sujān Vilās* or, alternatively, they were not present in the *proto-Sujānhit* and were amplifications in the *Sujānhit*.

Interestingly, poems on explicit bhakti are mostly left out both from this and the following section, so these two sections put an emphasis on love rather than on sectarian *bhakti*. The poems that were left out made their way into what later became the first section of the *Sujān Vilās* (SV_1 9-109).

There is another group of twenty-one poems that B r a j n ā t h rejected from the *proto-Sujānhit*.[41] These *kabitt*s express Vaishnava *bhakti* explicitly. Eight of them speak of *bhakti* towards Radha. Six present devotion towards Radha and Krishna jointly or towards the child Krishna. There are also four poems related to some other aspects of Krishna-*bhakti*.[42] Two of the remaining poems might have been excluded because they are poetically awkward[43] and one *savaiyā* (SH447) might simply have escaped B r a j n ā t h's attention.

The last section in the *Sujān Vilās* with 37 quatrains seems to rely not on the *Sujānhit* but on what are now the first 47 stanzas of a work on divine grace, the *Kr̥pākaṇḍ nibandh* with an omission of a block of five quatrains (28-32) and not counting the couplets.[44]

Let us return to the first section now, which with 98 poems is a loose collection of Ā n a n d g h a n's other quatrains. This section has poems about Krishna's beauty, the

[38] In the published *Sujānhit* they are numbered as 363, 379, 380, 394, 396, 399, 400, 401, 408, 417, 429, 435, 436, 440, 442, 448, 455, 456.

[39] About the *Sant* poems of Surdās see John Stratton H a w l e y, *Sur Das. Poet, Singer, Saint*, *Oxford* University Press, Delhi 1984 pp. 121-160.

[40] A beautiful example of this type of poetry is the *Paraśurām-sāgar* of Paraśurāmdevācārya. Excerpts from the writings of the early acharyas can be read in the *Nimbārk mādhurī*.

[41] In the published *Sujānhit* they are numbered as *28*, 30, 32, 40, 82, 130, 144, 197, 208, 254, 305, 306, 330, 356, 364, 387, 388, 389, 390, 407, 420.

[42] In the published *Sujānhit* they are numbered as 32, 82, 130, 208, 254, 306, 363, 390; 364, 387, 388; 305, 330, 356 and 40, 389, 407, 420 respectively.

[43] SH30 about Sujān's nose and SH144 with loosely connected lines.

[44] Due to restricted access to the manuscript I was not able to inspect this section, so any statement about it is deducted from the study of the structure of the *GhanĀnand kabitt* that in other parts gives clear indications about the sequence of poems in the *Sujān Vilās*.

merits of living in Braj, festivals, Krishna's flute etc.[45] This can perhaps be a section where Brajnāth included all other quatrains that he had access to. It is not clear why this miscellaneous section precedes the following two although it is secondary to them. Was this swapping just an accident in arranging the various sections? Or was it the work of somebody with a more devotional orientation? Or was it that Brajnāth was under pressure to introduce it?

6. The *Kabitt*

Although we can today locate three *Sujān Vilās* manuscripts this compilation of some 546 poems did not gain wide circulation. It rather served as a basis of another collection, the *Kabitt* (GK) mentioned earlier, which already circulated in 1789 as the date of its earliest available manuscript shows.[46] The *Kabitt* was composed as a selection from *Sujān Vilās*. B r a j n ā t h's first two introductory poems of praise were put at the beginning and the other six at the end. Its compiler had similar views as B r a j n ā t h but reduced the number of the poems and introduced a clearer structure.[47]

The order of poems in the two compilations shows some parallelism. In order to illustrate this, the concordances[48] are given in Table 3.[49]

The compiler changed the sequence of the poems of the *Sujān Vilās* by leaving out most poems from the miscellaneous first section during the initial copying session. The point of view of its compiler was very similar to that of B r a j n ā t h, who selected poems

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[45] A section in the *Prempatrikā* (PP70-93), the entire *Dānghaṭā*, quatrains from an unknown source and the above-mentioned Vaishnava *bhakti* poems of the proto-*Sujānhit* left out from the other sections are introduced here. If the *Sant* poems were not present in the proto-*Sujānhit* then all the quatrains that had been left out from the third and fourth sections of the *Sujān Vilās* are included here.

[46] On a cursory search I have gathered references to five manuscripts: (1) the incomplete archetype of *Sujān Sāgar* edited by J a g a n n ā t h d ā s 'Ratnākar' (Vārāṇasī: Jagannāthdās, 1897) (2) the manuscript that served as a basis for Miśra's edition in 1943 and was in the private collection of Navanit Caturvedī, Mathurā, (3) City Palace, Jaipur 3513, (4) City Palace, Jaipur 3645, (5) Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Jodhpur 5374, (6) private collection of Maharaja Prakāś Singh, Mallāpur as described in the manuscript search report of 1926-12a. Since the first editions were based exclusively on the *GhanĀnand*-kabitt manuscripts it can be assumed that many more were in circulation at that time.

[47] During his selection process he rushed through the beginning of the *Sujān vilās*. He picked up only 22 poems from between SV_1 17 and SV_2 208 but he has taken 337 stanzas from between SV_2 210 and SV_4 [546]. Having prepared a collection of 360 quatrains and couplets the compiler went back to the beginning of the *Sujān Vilās* and took 141 further poems from between SV_1 19 and SV_2 209. Later three bhakti poems were added at the end probably by someone else to result in a compilation of 505 stanzas.

[48] For a complete concordance of the *Kabitt* and the *Sujānhit* see Kishorilal G u p t a (ed.): *Sujān Śatak: Ghanānand ke kavittõ kā pratham prakāśit saṅgrah – saṅkalayitā Bhāratendu Bābū Hariścandra – saṃvat 1927 vi.* Madhu Prakāśan, Allahabad 1977, pp. 'Bhūmikā' 22-28.
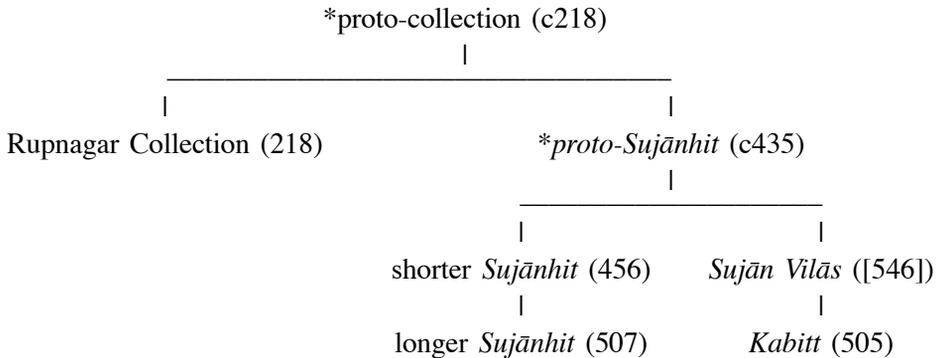
[49] On the basis of this list, one can observe that the poems between GK1 and GK20 are in due order also between SV_1 17 and SV_2 299 but many have been left out from GK. The poems between GK23 and GK360 are also in due order between SV_2 210 and SV[456] with most of the poems included into the *Kabitt*. Furthermore the poems between GK361 and GK502 are also in due order between SV_1 19 and SV_2 209 with most of the poems included into the *Kabitt*.

into the second and third sections of the *Sujān Vilās* omitting almost all bhakti poems. Only two of the twenty one poems absent from the two "*Sujānhit*" sections (SV$_2$ and SV$_3$) but included in the first, miscellanea part of the *Sujān Vilās* (SH 28, 197) were finally selected into the *Kabitt*. One may even suspect that it was B r a j n ā t h who at a later time reworked his earlier compilation into a more structured one.

The *Kabitt* seems to be an attempt to rectify the misplacement of the second section of the *Sujān Vilās* and tidying up its structure by putting its general section about love towards the end.

It can be concluded that the Rupnagar Collection and the *Sujānhit* tried to depict Ā n a n d g h a n rather as a devotional poet, while B r a j n ā t h and the compiler of the *Kabitt* made an effort to present him as a poet having ideas similar to the Persian and Urdu poets, who give importance both to mundane and divine love. The *Sujānhit*, a collection close to the original chronological order of the quatrains and in all probability reflecting the old Ā n a n d g h a n's devotionality, and the *Kabitt* that presented the best thematic structure of the poems were perceived as the collections that have the highest aesthetic value and circulated the most in manuscripts and eventually in print while the other collections were subject to limited circulation or were lost to later readerships.

On the basis of the above discussion the following stemma can be established (numbers in brackets indicate the number of poems in each collection),

<pre>
                        *proto-collection (c218)
                                  |
        _____
        | |
Rupnagar Collection (218)   *proto-Sujānhit (c435)
                                                  |
                                    _____
                                    | |
                         shorter Sujānhit (456)   Sujān Vilās ([546])
                                    | |
                         longer Sujānhit (507)   Kabitt (505)
</pre>

All the collections came to being in a relatively short time in manuscript transmission. The first extant manuscript of the Rupnagar collection is from 1727, B r a j n ā t h must have compiled the *Sujān Vilās* around 1748, the first extant *Sujānhit* is from 1776 and the first extant *Kabitt* manuscript from 1789. There are some other collections based on the *Kabitt*[50] but their manuscripts never attained wide circulation.

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[50] (1) Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Udaipur 4288 ff. 1-36 (written probably before 1831), after a random selection poems numbered as 100-396 are taken from GK 1-366; (2) Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Bikaner 9007 (written in 1823 in Kapurtala), which contains GK147-332 in a different order.

The compilation processes of the four extant collections examined show some similarities. Although the compiler always had a form of the archetype in front of him in a few cases – especially at the beginning of a collection – he might have written down poems from memory. The initial sequences are the results of a strong selecting process since they set the tone for the whole collection. Later copying became more mechanical but even then the scribe was not compelled to follow the archetype strictly. At one time he copied only those poems that he thought to be relevant to a specific theme. He could skip poems or sequences of poems in the archetype or he could interpolate poems into the new collection.

The transmission history in its context

As far as the more specific literary context of Ā n a n d g h a n's individualism is concerned, it is more difficult to make clear statements. A large part of Hindi poetry ostensibly following the Sanskrit model preferred to present itself as timeless and avoided direct references to the socio-historical milieu it was produced in. Literary histories are, therefore, at loss in providing a detailed historical context to many works, especially if their author, as is the case with Ā n a n d g h a n, was not from the ruling elite, whose life can be reconstructed from other documents. Even if what follows remains to a large extent hypothetical it is tempting to speculate on the basis of the extant Ā n a n d g h a n-material that his early activities took place under the aegis of the sectarian and secular centres of Salemabad, Rupnagar and perhaps Jaipur and Delhi.

It is clear from a survey of Ā n a n d g h a n's *kabitt*-collections that all the manuscripts we have at our disposal are already manipulated manuscripts and that we can only make hypothetical assumptions about the two collections that were in all probability prepared by the young Ā n a n d g h a n. From the nature of manipulation in the available manuscripts we may construe that there existed a proto-collection that served as a basis to the Rupnagar Collection and was a collection of the quatrains of the young Ānandghan. The proto-collection contained poems about love with or without the paraphernalia of Vaishnava *bhakti*. One can assume that by 1727, the time of the first extant manuscript of the Rupnagar Collection, Ā n a n d g h a n was an ascetic, otherwise there would not have been an urge to present his quatrains as explicitly religious ones. In all probability Ā n a n d g h a n produced his quatrains as an ascetic belonging to the Salemabad branch of the Nimbarka sampradaya, an affiliation attested in some of his later works, such as the *Paramahaṁsa vaṁśāvalī* and a pad called *Bhojanādi dhun*.[51] The fact that Ā n a n d g h a n as a monk expressed love towards a worldly beloved may have been acceptable in some religious circles since many of the ascetics of that time were known to keep women. We know for example that in 1727 Savāī J a i s i n g h of Jaipur induced a group of them to marry and live the life of a householder and established a colony for them in Mathura

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[51] Both published in M i s h r a 1952, pp. 607–611 and "Vāṅmukh" p. 76.

called Vairāgyapur, "Town of Asceticism".[52] One is even tempted to speculate that the Rupnagar collection was prepared under the panick of these measures and a copy was sent over to Jaipur, where it is now preserved.

The proto-collection grew into the *proto-Sujānhit* by adding Ā n a n d g h a n's later poems as they were produced. Since by this time Ā n a n a d g h a n had to defend himself from sectarian accusations, he produced many explicitly Vaishnava poems although most of the quatrains were written in the same vein as the earlier ones. Since he continued to write in the same spirit after the compilation of the devotional Rupnagar collection it can be inferred that the Rupnagar Collection reflected not Ā n a n d g h a n's ideas but those of some other group that somehow felt that Ānandghan belonged to them but were embarrassed by his poetry. This group can be either a branch of the Nimbārkīs in Salemābād or the court in Rūpnagar. Ā n a n d g h a n went on writing love poetry after 1727, and thus the 218 or so quatrains of the proto-collection grew into the some 435 verses of the *proto-Sujānhit*. It is, therefore, unlikely that his home monastery was the ultimate source of this manipulation. Since the three earliest manuscripts were prepared in places linked to the Kishangarh-Rupnagar royal family it is probable that for some reason it was the Rupnagar court that felt embarrasment for these poems.

We know from the colophons of the Rupnagar Collection that its 1727 and 1743 manuscripts were written in Rupnagar, the then capital town of the Kishangarh state, by a certain Śvetāmbar Hemrāj, who is also known as the copyist of other manuscripts in Rupnagar.[53] The 1729 manuscript, an apograph of the 1727 one, was written in Delhi, which was frequently visited by members of the Kishangarh royal family including Nāgrīdās. All the three manuscripts contain other works along with Ā n a n d g h a n's *kabitt*. All of them have one or two works by N ā g r ī d ā s. These manuscripts were clearly written under the influence of N ā g r ī d ā s's court. Although one can find hardly any instance of intertextuality in the works of Ā n a n d g h a n and N ā g r ī d ā s it is clear that the two were acquainted with each other especially in their early careers and later lives as devotes in Braj.[54]

In the second quarter of the seventeenth century the Kishangarh court under the patronage of Sāvant S i n g h "Nāgrīdās" produced some of the most innovative miniature paintings of its time and was an active centre of experimentation with poetry. Under Sāvant Singh's patronage one can observe a distinct turn towards art in an explicitly religious framework. The overwhelming majority of N ā g r ī d ā s's poetic output is also framed within the themes of Krishna-bhakti. Although under the growing influence of

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[52] E n t w i s t l e 1987: 191.

[53] A manuscript copied by Hemrāj is in the private collection of Dr. Usha Goyal, Jaipur. The now extinct Jain presence is corroborated by a manuscript of Kīrtivardhan-śiṣya Dayāratna's *Nemīnáth jī ro stavan* copied in Rupnagar in 1750. Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Jodhpur 12205 (19) 4.

[54] There is an old drawing showing the two together in front of Vrindavandevācārya (see B a n g h a 1999, pp. 61–65). N ā g r ī d ā s' first biographer, R ā d h ā k ṛ ṣ ṇ a d ā s also mentioned that N ā g r ī d ā s and Ā n a n d g h a n undertook a journey from Braj towards Kishangarh in 1757 but eventually the two of them split company. See Ś y ā m s u n d a r d ā s (ed.): *Rādhākṛṣṇadās-granthāvalī*, Indian Press, Allahabad 1937, p. 173.

Rekhtā (Urdu) poetry in Delhi N ā g r ī d ā s also produced a work called *Iśk-caman* in this idiom, he was careful not to allow Persianate influence into his poetry on a philosophical level. It may be the case that Ā n a n d g h a n, also acquainted with Persianate poetry either because he was a munshi in Muhammad Shah's court before becoming an ascetic as a later legend tells us or, more likely, through his guru's courtly connections.

Vr̥ndāvandevācārya, the superior of Salemabad and Ā n a n d g h a n's guru, was one of the most influential religious personalities of his times. He lived a lifestyle similar to that of the contemporary rulers and had excellent contacts with various royal families in Rajasthan. He was surrounded by several servants and had his horses, elephants and arms since he also controlled some groups of ascetic warriors. When he was staying in Jaipur he conducted a lavish life with great feasts.[55] The copy of a now lost drawing presents him as teaching N ā g r ī d ā s, Ā n a n d g h a n and a third devote called B r a j ā n a n d together. Although, as can be expected, he produced mostly bhakti poetry, one can observe traits of secularisation in his writings. Taken out of the context of his bhakti composition, the *Gītāmr̥t-gangā*[56], some of his poems can be read as secular poetry. This secular tone, however, disappears from the writings of the later Nimbarki acharyas.[57]

On the basis of the above it seems to be likely that a pressure for an unequivocally religious voice came first surprisingly not from a sectarian centre but rather from the court of Rupnagar. Rupnagar's assertion of religiosity was parallel with and may also have been influenced by the developments in the neighbouring state of Jaipur, where Savāī J a i s i n g h was keen on regulating the conduct of the ascetics and to recognise only worship that is based on scriptural authority.[58] Jaisingh's search to establish the purity of religion reminds one to that of his contemporary, Niẓām al-Mulk in Hyderabad, who not without admiration for the austere Aurangzeb, endeavoured to establish puritanical Islam in his newly-founded state especially by disapproving un-Koranic arts and illicit parties during Muḥarram.[59] It may be that pressure on Ā n a n d g h a n and on the Nimbārkīs to produce explicitly religious poetry grew to an extent that gradually Ā n a n d g h a n gave in: first he composed more and more explicit bhakti poetry in his favourite quatrain forms. This resulted in the *proto-Sujānhit*'s growing into the shorter and longer *Sujānhit*s, the inclusion of *bhakti*-quatrains into other explicitly devotional works and in the composition of the *Kr̥pākaṇḍ nibandh*, a work still in quatrains but instead of love it deals with the superiority of divine grace over the outward signs of religiosity. But by this time even this was not enough and eventually Ā n a n d g h a n had to reject the entire *Sujānhit*.

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[55] Catherine C l é m e n t i n - O j h a, *Trident sur le palais* 1999, p. 88.

[56] The *Gītāmr̥t Gangā* is published in the 1952/3 issue of the literary magazine *Śrīsarveśvar*.

[57] Examples of the work of the two subsequent acharyas can be found in Brahmacārī B i h ā r ī ś a r a ṇ (ed.), *Nimbārka mādhurī*, Brahmacārī Bihārīśaraṇ, Vrindaban 1930, pp. 166–191.

[58] Alan E n t w i s t l e: Braj, *Centre of Krishna pilgrimage*, Groningen: Egber Forsten 1987: 191.

[59] The *Risala-i darbar-i Asif*, translated in M.A. N a y e e m, *Mughal administration of Deccan under Nizamul Mulk Asaf Jah, 1720–48 A.D.*, Jaico Publishing House, Bombay 1985, pp. 85–94. Contains Niẓām al-Mulk's regulations in 74 points accompanied with some anecdotes. This includes his restrictions on dance parties (p. 87) and an indication of his puritanic attitudes by saying that he "rode his carriage without much pomp".

That is why no copy of this work is included into the earliest manuscript versions of his collected works, prepared apparently under Nimbārkī sectarian control. The disrepute may also be the cause why Ā n a n d g h a n gave up living in or near Salemabad and settled down in Vrindaban, where he went on producing thousands of devotional verses and eventually met his death in 1757.

The extent to which Ā n a n d g h a n discarded his early compositions can be guessed from the story of his meeting with Savāī Mādho Singh in early 1757. When the maharaja of Jaipur praised his poems, evidently his quatrains about S u j ā n, the poet-ascetic became angry and left Jaipur.[60] The dismissal of his earlier poetry, however, gained Ā n a n d g h a n an old friend, N ā g r ī d ā s, who after the loss of his throne in 1748 also retired in Vrindaban. The above mentioned visit to Jaipur, for example, took place in the company of Sāvant S i n g h.

By this time, however, the circulation of Ā n a n d g h a n's quatrains slipped out of sectarian control and the poems acquired an independent life. The learned Jaipur courtier B r a j n ā t h managed to get access to them and redacted a new collection. Although we do not have any explicit indication for the time and place of the reduction of the *Sujān Vilās*, it is likely that it took place sometime around 1748 when he visited Rupnagar. He perceived that the proto-*Sujānhit*, to which he had access, was the most important collection of Ā n a n d g h a n's complex quatrains. The multi-layered quatrains, however, were interpolated with poems on explicit devotion. Brajnāth perceived rightly that this was done under pressure and prepared a collection in which he rejected the explicit bhakti poems. He even examined other collections of quatrains by Ā n a n d g h a n and included poems from them as well into his new selection. After some trouble he gained access to the more secular *proto-Sujānhit* and to some other minor works with quatrains. Leaving out poems relating to explicit bhakti, written in imitation of the then already two-hundred-year-old Vaishnava lyrics, and two quatrains weak in structure or imagery he prepared two selections from the *proto-Sujānhit* (sections 2 and 3 in the *Sujān Vilās*). He must have held the view that both aesthetic weakness and sectarian interpretation limit the poems' universal appeal. Brajnāth also selected poems from the *Kṛpākaṇḍ nibandh* and for some reason he prepared a devotional miscellanea of all other available quatrains. He also inserted his eight poems at the beginning of the compilation to give guidance on how to read this highly controversial poet.

The *Sujān Vilās* is arranged according to traditional categories of courtly love-poetry, such as separation (*viyog*), union (*saṁyog*), wounded pride (*mān*) etc. But its main peculiarity is that B r a j n ā t h was interested in individual feelings rather than in *bhakti*. In fact this is the field where Ā n a n d g h a n brought new colour into the Hindi literature. During his work, however, B r a j n ā t h was compelled to insert all the refused poems into the most emphatic place of his compilation, at its beginning. In this way the *Sujān Vilās*, just like the *Sujānhit*, was also the result of a compromise but

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[60] S h y a m s u n d a r d a s (ed.) *Rādhākṛṣṇadās granthāvalī* (1937), p. 173.

in contrast with the *Sujānhit*, it lacked the authority of the original poet and acquired only limited circulation.

At a later point of time someone prepared yet another compilation in the original spirit of B r a j n ā t h (even framing it with B r a j n ā t h's praise). Discarding most of the explicit devotional poems and restructuring it more in way with the *rīti*-collections according to loose categories of *nāyikā-bheda*. This more compact collection, the *Kabitt*, fitting into the framework of the poetic conventions of its time acquired large circulation. Moreover, even if the *Sujānhit* was withdrawn from sectarian circulation it started to be copied probably much earlier than 1776, the year of its first dated copy. In this way from the second half of the eighteenth century two competing canons circulated emphasising to a higher or lower degree the importance of personal emotion and individual love.

Conclusion

Manuscript transmission did not simply mean copying but it also presented an opportunity to reinterpret the writings by selection and rearrangement of its components. The fact that compositions by all poets mentioned in the introduction underwent some editing process shows that scribes frequently manipulated subsequent circulation. In this way manuscript transmission differs from printed transmission, where later manipulation had much smaller scope due to the wider availability of earlier editions against which the text could be checked.

A peculiarity of early modern manuscript transmission as compared to the medieval stems from the relative abundance of handwritten books. Unlike during most of the time of Sanskrit literary production, we can more easily access manuscripts from the lifetime or near the lifetime of the authors. This can provide us with a close-up of transmission strategies, which is rarely available for Sanskritists and philologists working on earlier material.

A study of the transmission history of Ā n a n d g h a n shows that controversy about his poetry had its repercussion in the subsequent circulation of his quatrains resulting in the creation of newer and newer collections. Their scribes disagreed in what can be perceived as emblematic poems and in what can be the criteria of the arrangement of the quatrains. It is important to note that attempts at changing the text of the poems were not very effective and the changed text was normally restored in later collections. Indeed, one can feel an urge in the later scribes, that is in B r a j n ā t h and in the compiler of the *Kabitt*, to go back to an "original" secular Ā n a n d g h a n. The relatively short time-period, not more than half century, in which the creation of six different collections took place gives us a glimpse of how fast the dynamics of textual transmission work.

The fact that so different viewpoints about literature can be perceived simply by the comparison of various *muktaka* collections shows how fervently early modern literary ideas were debated in handwritten books, a medium that otherwise would be relegated to the status of an anachronistic remainder of medieval circulation in South Asia.

Tables

Table 1. Initial concordance of the Sujānhit and the hypothetical proto-Sujānhit (The sequence of the proto-Sujānhit has been conjectured as follows: pSH1-4 = SH1-4, pSH5-216 = Rupnagar 6-217)

SH	pSH		SH	pSH		SH	pSH		SH	pSH
(1)	(1)		9	60		17	10		25	18
(2)	(2)		10			18	11		26	
(3)	(3)		11			19	12		27	19
(4)	(4)		12			20	13		28	
5	5		13			21	14		29	20
6	6		14			22	15		30	
7	7		15	63		23	16		31	21
8	8		16	9		24	17			

Table 2. Concordance of the second section of the Sujān-Vilās, the Sujānhit and the proto-Sujānhit

SV	SH	pSH		SV	SH	pSH		SV	SH	pSH
110	2	2		122	5	5		129	24	17
111	3	3		123	6	6		130	25	18
112	4	4		124	7	7		131	27	19
113	10	—		125	8	8		66	28	—
114	12	—		126	16	9		406	29	20
115	13	—		401	17	10		93	30	—
116	14	—		402	18	11		407	31	21
117	11	—		403	19	12		14	32	22
118	26	—		404	20	13		132	33	23
119	125	117		127	21	14		163	34	64
120	60	—		128	22	15		133	35	24
121	1	1		405	23	16				

Table 3. Concordance of the Kabitt and the Sujān-Vilās

GK	–	SV
1		17
2		18
3		23
4		24
5		25
6		33
7		35
8		112
9		124
10		125
11		127
12		129
13		134
14		136
15		137
16		157
17		168
18		174
19		208
20		299
21		(dohā)
22		(dohā)
23		210
24		211
25		212
26		(dohā)
27		213
28		214
etc.		etc.

GK	–	SV
317		499
318		[500]
etc.		etc.
327		[509]
328		[510]
etc.		etc.
360		[546]
361		19
362		20
363		27
364		29
365		30
366		31
367		32
368		36
369		37
370		38
371		39
372		40
373		43
374		44
etc.		etc.
500		206
501		207
502		209
(503		SH476
504		SH480
505		SH481)