Nectar or Arrow: Cases of Missense Textual Mutations in Early Kabīrian Padas

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Abstract

Widespread textual variations feature in the poems transmitted across north India in the name of Kabir, the popular Hindi saint and poet. Kabirian poems, even the early ones, incorporate a variety of traditions due to their appropriation and adaption by different communities, which have generated anthologies that favor works of particular themes or styles. This ever-expanding and transforming corpus serves as a reproducible and mutable coding system that indicates how Kabir was remembered, interpreted and transmitted. Certain types of textual mutations, although posing challenges to philologists, whose aim is to restore the original text, can help us map out how the diversified Kabirian tradition took shape. This paper is a case study on a particular type of textual mutation, known as "missense" mutation, found in the early Kabirian padas reproduced in Winand Callewaert's The Millennium Kabīr Vānī. The cases under study include word variations like rasa/sara, satari/satagura, raghurāī/ṣudāi and phrase-sentence substitution, which yield different but reasonable readings. Though possibilities of casual factors like a slip of the pen cannot be ruled out totally, the fact that these variations were appreciated, remembered and transmitted urges us to think about the motivations behind them. These could include technical reasons, like concern for prosody, and intellectual influences like bhaktification or mystification. How these external factors were responded to textually with a spectrum of variations has contributed to the multifacetedness and popularity of the Kabirian tradition from an early stage.

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Articles

Nectar or Arrow: Cases of Missense Textual Mutations in Early Kabīrian Padas

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Kabīrian Texts and Textual Variations

ONE MAJOR GOAL OF textual criticism is to restore the original text or the earliest attainable text by studying different manuscripts and accepting or rejecting textual variations, both unintentional errors and deliberate reworking. For over a century, although scholars on Kabīr (ca. 1398–1518), the legendary early modern Hindi poet weaver who left behind thousands of poems, differ in their textual sources, editing approaches, and personal preferences, they share the common aim of reconstructing an authentic corpus that can represent the historical Kabīr.[1] However, after Vaudeville's *A Weaver Named Kabir* (1993) "identified the limits of the historical study of Kabir as a persona and establishing any one authentic text of Kabir's sayings," editions of Kabīrian works have either presented the original form of manuscript(s) (rather than producing a single reconstructed original text) or synchronized the different images of Kabīr out of various texts, thus moving toward literary or cultural criticism.[2]

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1   Major editions of Kabīrian poems based on manuscripts include Śyāmasundaradās, *Kabīr Granthāvalī* (Kāśī: Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, 1928); Pārasnāth Tivārī, *Kabīr Granthāvalī* (Prayāg: Hindī Pariṣad, Prayāg Viśvavidyālay, 1961); Śukadev Siṁh, *Kabīr Bījak* (Ilāhābād: Lokabhāratī, 1972).

2   Quote from Monika Horstmann, introduction to *Images of Kabīr*, ed. Monika Horstmann (New Delhi: Manohar, 2002), 1. For examples of editions published in the new millennium

In Kabīr's case, the reason for the limited extent of textual reconstruction lies in the vast textual diversity derived from the intensive oral-textual interaction of the Kabīrian tradition, which distinguishes it from many other texts. Despite the dramatic increase in literacy in modern India (from a literacy rate of 3.25 percent in 1871 to 74.04 percent in 2011), the Kabīrian tradition has remained more oral and performative than written.[3] When Kabīrian manuscripts were compiled during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, both the recipients and the transmitters of the works were for the most part technically illiterate, though not necessarily ignorant. The compilers of manuscripts wrote down what they remembered themselves or what they had been taught by others who remembered Kabīrian poems, possibly their gurus or fellow saints.[4]

The fact that groups of early manuscripts were linguistically distinct from each other proves that the texts, even before their transcription, had already been translated orally. On the other hand, once manuscripts have been compiled, they can play active roles in cultural life, whether or not they are further reproduced. The texts are intended to be read out to either disciples of a guru or the audiences of devotional songs. Therefore, the inter-manuscript relationship is often indirect and takes place via other media, such as performance or recitation. The manuscripts are thus more a projection of a continuous and fluid Kabīrian tradition, rather than each manuscript being a direct descendant of a preceding one.

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see Winand M. Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī* (Delhi: Manohar, 2000); Jaroslav Strnad, *Morphology and Syntax of Old Hindi: Edition and Analysis of One Hundred Kabir Vani Poems from Rajasthan* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Vinay Dharwadker, *Kabir: The Weaver's Songs* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2003); and Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, *Songs of Kabir* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2011).

3   Henry Waterfield, *Memorandum on the Census of British India, 1871–72* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1875), 37; Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, *State of Literary*, http://censusindia.gov.in/2011–prov-results/data_files/india/Final_PPT_2011_chapter6.pdf (accessed 8 January 2018); Linda Hess, *Bodies of Songs: Kabir Oral Traditions and Performative Worlds in North India* (Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2015), 4.

4   See, for example, Winand Callewaert, "The Sarvangi of the Dadupanthi Gopaldas," in *Studies in South Asian Devotional Literature: Research Papers 1988–1991*, eds. Alan W. Entwistle, Francoise Mallison (New Delhi: Manohar, 1994), 449–54.

The fact that written text serves as a reproducible coding system, which both receives inputs from memory and projects outputs, makes it functionally similar to the gene in biological reproduction. Cross-disciplinary research has bridged the gap between the two seemingly distant fields of textual criticism and genetics. For instance, with the help of computational tools developed by biologists, researchers have reconstructed a phylogenetic tree showing the relationships between fifty-eight extant fifteenth-century manuscripts of "The Wife of Bath's Prologue" from *The Canterbury Tales* and used this to discover previously unknown textual relationships between different texts.[5] From this perspective, textual variation shares similar features with genetic mutation, which in the present study can be seen as a mutation of the "genetic" coding system of the memory. In genetics, according to their effects, these mutations can be further distinguished into three categories: (1) same-sense mutation, which changes the nucleotide sequence of a codon, but does not change the amino acid encoded due to the degeneracy of the genetic code; (2) nonsense mutation, which results in a truncated, incomplete, and usually nonfunctional protein product; and (3) missense mutation, which results in a codon that codes for a different amino acid. This typology is also applicable in textual criticism.

The third category, the missense mutation, the type of textual variation that gives rise to a different yet comprehensible version of the text, is particularly worth examining. Hess has argued that the Krishnait bhakti could have influenced the *Pañca-vāṇī* text by adding *ṭeka* or *bhaṇitā* with Krishna's epithets to Kabīrian poems.[6] Bangha illustrates another case of "bhaktification," in which tantric terms were replaced by devotional expressions.[7] This article argues that if these missense textual mutations are further

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5   Adrian C. Barbrook et al., "The Phylogeny of *The Canterbury Tales*," *Nature* 6696, no. 394 (1998): 839–39; Mark Olsen, Russell Horton, and Glenn Roe, "Something Borrowed: Sequence Alignment and the Identification of Similar Passages in Large Text Collections," *Digital Studies/Le champ numérique* 2, no. 1 (2011), https://www.digitalstudies.org/articles/10.16995/dscn.258/ (accessed 8 January 2018).

6   Linda Hess, "Three Kabir Collections: A Comparative Study," in *The Sants: Studies in a Devotional Tradition of India*, ed. K. Schomer and W. H. McLeod (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987), 111–41.

7   Imre Bangha, "Kabīr Reconstructed," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 63, no. 3 (2010): 249–58.

scrutinized as "repositories of narratives," then textual criticism can reveal much about how the thoughts and sayings of Kabīr have grown into a highly diversified Kabīrian tradition.[8]

Missense Textual Mutation in Early Kabīrian Padas

This article focuses mainly on the *pada*s (lyric poems) in Winand Calle-waert's *The Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī*, a collection of padas in the ten earliest extant manuscripts compiled before 1700. These consist of Mohan Pothī of 1570–72 (hereafter Manuscript M), the Fatehpur manuscript of 1582 (here-after Manuscript F), the *Ādi-granth* manuscript of 1604 (hereafter Manu-script AG), the *Pañca-vāṇī* manuscript of 1614 (hereafter Manuscript S), the *Pañca-vāṇī* manuscript of 1675 (hereafter Manuscript A), *Sarvāṅgī* by Gopāldās of 1627 (hereafter Manuscript Gop), *Sarvāṅgī* by Rajab (ca. 1620?; hereafter Manuscript Raj), the *Pañca-vāṇī* manuscript of 1658 (hereafter Manuscript V), the manuscript of 1681 (hereafter Manuscript J), and the manuscript of 1660/1669 (hereafter Manuscript C).[9] In these texts, missense textual mutations appear at the spelling, word, and sentence levels. While some textual mutations are likely to be technical errors, there are internal and external factors that influence or even determine the direction of mutations.

The first example is in a pada found in Manuscripts S, V, J, and C:

aba maiṃ pāye rājā rāma saṃnehī, jā bina duṣa pāvai merī dehī. ṭeka.
beda purāṇa kahata jākī sāṣī, tīratha vrata na achūṭai jama kī pāsī. (1)
jātaiṃ janama lahata nara āgaiṃ, papa puni dou bhraṃa lāgaiṃ. (2)
jurā pracaṃḍa maraṃna jo kāchai, ko āgaiṃ ko dina dasa pāchaiṃ. (3)
kahai kabīr koī tata jāgā, mana bhayau magana prema sara lāgā. (4)

S257[10]

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8   Eldon Jay Epp, "It's All About Variants: A Variant-Conscious Approach to New Testament Textual Criticism," *Harvard Theological Review* 100, no. 3 (2007): 275–308.

9   Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī*, VIII. In Manuscript S, recent study shows the Kabīrian section is an independent part titled *Kabīr vāṇī saṃgrah*; see Strnad, *Morphology and Syntax of Old Hindi*, 10.

10 Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī*, 437.

> *Now I've got King Rāma, the lover, without whom my body suffers from sorrows. (Refrain)*
> *Those who read Veda-Purāṇa as their testament, go on pilgrimages and observe fasts, cannot escape from Yama's snare. (1)*
> *Because of which, [one] takes birth and become human afterwards, being deluded in both virtues and sins. (2)*
> *Aging and death are nearby, leaving only ten days ahead. (3)*
> *Kabīr says, the real state is woken up. Hit by the arrow of love, the mind became immersed. (4)*[11]

Leaving aside minor same-sense mutations, for example, *kahai/kahata, koi/koī,* readings of the four different manuscripts are almost identical except for one missense mutation that occurs in the final half-line. Manuscripts S, V, and J read as "mana bhayau magana prema sara lāgā" (Hit by the arrow of love, the mind became immersed), whereas Manuscript C reads as "mana bhayau magana prema rasa lāgā" (Attached to the nectar of love, the mind became immersed).[12] Taking into consideration the resemblance between "*sara*" and "*rasa,*" the variant is very probably a purely scribal error. Both "arrow of love" and "nectar of love" appear frequently in Kabīrian poems, for example, "satagura laī kamāṃṇa kari, bāṃhaṇa lāgā tīra. eka ju bāhyā prīti sūṃ, bhītari rahyā sarīr" (The true guru took his bow in hand and he began to release his arrows; the one he shot with love remained inside of my body), "jihi ghaṭi prīti na prema rasa, phuni rasanā nahīṃ rāma. te nara isa saṃsāra meṃ, upaji ṣaye bekām" (In whose body there is no nectar of love, upon whose tongue there is no Rāma, those men in the world were born in vain).[13] This means neither of the two variants contradicts how a readership/audience might have understood Kabīr.

A similar case occurs in pada 281 in Winand's collection. This pada criticizes the orthodox practice of Islam and claims that the sacred being is in one's heart only. Given below is the second verse as read in Manuscript S, which resembles the reading in Manuscripts A, Gop, Raj, and AG.

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11 Unless specified, the translations are mine.
12 Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vānī*, 438.
13 Śyāmasundaradās, *Kabīr Granthāvalī*, 1, 6.

rojā karaiṃ nivāja gujāraiṃ, kalamaiṃ bhisti na hoī.
satari kābā ika dila hī bhītari, je kari jāṃnai koī.

S224[14]

[People] fast and read prayers, [but] there is no heaven in the confession
of faith.
There are seventy Kaabas in one heart; only few people know this.

Most early manuscripts read the third half-line as "satari kābā ika dila hī bhītari" (There are seventy Kaabas in one heart), except Manuscript V, which substitutes "*satagura*" (true guru) for "*satari*" (seventy), making the half-line "satagura kābā ika dila hī bhītari" (The true guru and Kaaba are in one heart).[15] The first reading emphasizes the significance of the internal quest over the pilgrimage to Kaaba, with the sharp contrast between the numbers seventy and one. Nevertheless, the second reading is not unacceptable, as it is also quite "Kabīrian" to claim that the true guru is in one's heart. Just like the previous case, this variant could be the result of an accidental error, but it nonetheless creates a new and meaningful expression—the sacredness of the true guru can be compared to the Kaaba for Muslims, and both are within one's heart.

The two cases share certain similarities. First, as is discussed above, both cases of mutation do not exceed the broadly understood features of Kabīrian compositions. For audiences and readers of Kabīrian poems, "nectar of love" / "arrow of love" and "seventy Kaaba" / "the true guru and Kaaba" are all acceptable and understandable. Second, in both cases, less frequent expressions are more likely to be substituted by more frequent ones. In the first case, though both "nectar" and "arrow" can be found in other Kabīrian poems, "*prema rasa*" occurs much more often than "*prema sara*" as a set phrase. Similarly, the true guru is one of the core concepts in Kabīrian poems, while Kaaba is mentioned less, with "seventy Kaaba" appearing only once in this particular pada. Such asymmetrical assimilation makes Kabīrian compositions more and more concentrated on important

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14 Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī*, 389.

15 Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī*, 390.

concepts and themes, gradually leaving less frequent concepts in vestigial form only.

Unlike spelling-level textual mutation, substituting a word with a synonym or context-dependent quasi-synonym can no longer be viewed as a purely scribal error. External contextual factors need to be taken into account along with internal textual factors as in the above examples. In one popular biographical pada included in seven different early manuscripts (S, A, V, J, C, Gop, and AG), Kabīr's mother worries about her son, who has given up their family business, dedicating himself to pious devotion:

musi musi rovai kabīra kī māī, e bārika kaise jīvahi raghurāī. [. . .]
kahata kabīra sunahu merī māī, hamārā ina kā dātā eku raghurāī.

AG524;2[16]

With sobs and whimpers, Kabīr's mother cries: "Oh, Raghurāī [i.e.,
king of the Raghu dynasty], how would the boy make a living?" [. . .]
Kabīr says, "Listen, O my mother: Raghurāī is our sole donor of these."

ṭhāṭhī rovai kabīra kī māi, ai larikāṃ kyūṃ jīvaihi ṣudāi.
kahai kabīra sunahuṃrī māī, pūraṃṇahārā tribhuvanarāī.

S22[17]

Standing, Kabīr's mother cries: "O Khuda, how would the boy make
a living?"
Kabīr says, "Listen, O Mother: Tribhuvanrāī [i.e., Lord of the three worlds]
fulfils every [wish]."

In AG, Kabīr and his mother use the same *Vaiṣaṇava* epithet for God—that is, *Raghurāī*. For the author of the first reading, the mother-son divergence is over the relationship between spiritual and worldly life: while the mother concerns herself only with worldly livelihood, Kabīr fully trusts the benevolence of God. However, in the second reading, there is another dimension of sectarian distinction. While Kabīr's mother maintains a Muslim

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16 Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vānī*, 145–46.
17 Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vānī*, 145.

identity by calling upon Khuda (*ṣudāi*) for help, Kabīr praises *Tribhuvanrāī*, a popular epithet for either Vishnu or Shiva. This second reading, endorsed by all Rajasthani manuscripts, accords with Rajasthani Kabīr biographies that more clearly confirm Kabīr's Muslim family background. For instance, in Anantadās's *Kabīr Paracai* (ca. late sixteenth century), when Kabīr starts to praise Rāma, "His own family members and his father-in-law came together and lamented: 'He has got confused. Why has he abandoned the customs of his own home, where Mecca and Medina, the Muslim creed, fasting during Ramadan, and prayers to Allah are our way of worship?'"[18]

Given the presence of Islam and Muslim populations in both Punjab and Rajasthan, it is unlikely that Persian-Islamic words like "Khuda" are known only to the Rajasthani compilers. The textual mutation thus reflects the way Kabīr fits into different narratives. For the Sikh compilers, the difference between Khuda and Raghurāī is insignificant. The issue is how much one is devoted to God, while the Rajasthani compilers like Anantadās in particular emphasize not only devotion, but also the object of devotion, which should be Hari/Rāma and the guru that properly initiates the bhakta. The hagiography answers the question that Kabīr himself asks in the beginning of the text—that is, how can a Muslim become a Vaiṣṇava bhakta?[19] Literarily speaking, the Rajasthani version further intensifies Kabīr's struggle by magnifying the obstacle he has to overcome. Socially speaking, this narrative shares the same concern of other Vaiṣṇava texts. For instance, in *Do sau bāvan vaiṣṇavan kī vārtā*, a similar story is told about Rasakhān (ca. 1548–1628), a Pushto Muslim who became a disciple of the Krishnaite teacher Viṭṭhalanāth (ca. 1515–1588).[20] Though this forms a sharp contrast to later tales about Kabīr's Brahmin birth, which have been dismissed by many, it shares the same agenda, which seeks to incorporate Kabīr into the mainstream Hindu Vaiṣṇava narrative.

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18 David N. Lorenzen, *Kabir Legends and Ananta-das's Kabir Parachai* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 94.

19 Lorenzen, *Kabir Legends,* 93.

20 Brajabhūṣaṇ Śarmā and Dvārkādās Parīkh, eds., *Do Sau Bāvan Aaiṣṇavan Kī Vārtā* (Kankaroli: Śuddhādvaita Academy, 1951–53), 299–304.

The Vaiṣṇava sentiment is also related to another example of textual mutation in pada W350 (A290, Gop109;42, F2), which Bangha takes as an example of "bhaktification."[21] In this case the last half-line, "kahā abhaya-pada dūrī" (Is the state of fearlessness far from him?), in Manuscript F (1582) became "kevala rāṃma rahau lyau lāī" (Remain engrossed in the only Rāma!) in Manuscript A (1675) and "eī havāla hūṃhige tere" (Such will be your state!) in Manuscript Gop (1627). Another similar example is a pada that appears in eight early manuscripts (S, A, V, J, C, Gop, AG, and M), including the earliest extant manuscript, M. This pada asks the audience to eliminate arrogance and rely on external help from the God/guru. The earliest manuscript, the Punjabi Manuscript M (1570–72), reads the second half-line of the last verse as "gura parasācī jīvatu more" (Thanks to the guru's grace, one attains the state of living death), whereas the later AG (1604) reads as "gura parasādī pāri utarai" (Thanks to the guru's grace, one crosses to the other side).[22] As the former agrees with all later Rajasthani manuscripts S, A, V, J, C, and Gop, apparently AG deliberately changed the elusive term "*jīvatu more*" (living death) to the more comprehensible "*pāri utarai*" (crosses to the other side). However, bhaktification/de-mystification is not as unidirectional as one may presume. *Nāth yogī*s, the mystic yoga practitioners, were not only a source of Kabīrian thoughts, as argued by many, but also among the sects that "appropriated" Kabīr.[23] Among the earliest manuscripts that Callewaert collected is Manuscript J composed by nāth yogīs.[24] In pada W172, the reading of Manuscript J refers to the Supreme Being as Supreme *Yogī*, "juga chatīsa jogī jīvana, nāṃva nīraṃjana vāke re" (the Supreme Yogī of the living beings of thirty-six worlds, his name is *Nirañjan*), while Manuscript S, and Gop, Raj, and AG with minor

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21 Bangha, "Kabīr Reconstructed," 249–58.

22 Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vānī*, 520–22.

23 See Hajārīprasād Dvivedī, *Kabīr* (Nayī Dillī: Rājakamal Prakāśan, 2011 [1941]); P. D. Barthwal, *Traditions of Indian Mysticism* (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1978). Quote from Daniel Gold and Ann Grodzins Gold, "The Fate of the Householder Nath," *History of Religions* 24, no. 2 (1984): 113–32.

24 Winand Callewaert and Mukund Lath, *The Hindī Songs of Nāmdev* (Leuven: Department Oriëntalistiek, 1989), 83.

variations read "jāmaiṃ marai na saṃkuṭi āvai, nāvaṃ nirañjana jākau" (he is not subject to the suffering of birth and death; his name is Nirañjan). Moreover, the de-bhaktification may be more straightforward and not limited to Manuscript J. The pada below is found in Manuscripts A, V, C, Gop, and Raj, but is excluded from all the prevalent modern editions:

tā mana kauṃ ṣojahu re bhāī, tana chūṭāṃ mana kahāṃ samāī. ṭeka.
sanaka sanaṃdana jaideva nāṃmāṃ, bhagati karī mana unahū na
    jāṃnā. (1)
syau biraṃci nārada muni gyāṃnī, mana kī gati unahūṃ nahīṃ
    jāṃnī. (2)
dhū prahilāda babhīṣaṇa seṣā, ghaṭa bhītari mana unahūṃ na deṣā. (3)
tā mana kā koī jāṃṇai bheva, raṃcaka līna bhaye suṣadeva. (4)
gorṣa bharatharī gopījaṃdā, vā maṃna syūṃ mili kīyā anaṃdā. (5)
akala niraṃjana sakala sarīrā, tā mana syūṃ mili rahyā kabīrā. (6)

<div align="right">S53[25]</div>

O brother! Find that mind! Having left the body, where has the mind gone?
    (Refrain)
Sanak, Sanādan, Jayadev, Nāma[dev]; [though] practicing bhakti, they
    don't know about Mind. (1)
[Though] Shiva, Virañci [and] Nārad muni are wise, they don't know the
    state of mind. (2)
Dhruv, Prahlād, Vibhiṣeṇ [and] Śeṣ haven't recognized the mind within the
    body. (3)
Having understood some secrets of the mind, Śukadev has absorbed into it
    a little bit. (4)
Having got the mind, Gorakh, Bhartṛhari [and] Gopicand took pleasure
    in it. (5)
The indivisible Nirañjan is the body of all, Kabīr remained united with
    such Mind. (6)

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25 Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vāṇī*, 187.

This is a clearly yogic pada included in six old Rajasthani manuscripts. Among the eleven names mentioned in the first three stanzas, except for Shiva and *Virañci*, all the others were normally seen as great Vaiṣṇava bhak-tas. While they are highly praised in various places in Kabīrian padas, here they are seen as inferior to those who unite with the mind—that is, the *siddha yogīs* like Gorakh, Bhartṛhari, and Gopicand. Besides, there is another pada (W194) that praises Shiva instead of Vishnu.[26] Though they are not numerous, the existence of these padas proves that there is a tendency to mystify or de-bhaktify the Kabīrian tradition alongside the stronger force that demystifies or bhaktifies.

Conclusions

Compared with one settled version of the text, missense textual mutations within a particular textual tradition make the change of intellectual trends, both internal and external, more observable. Therefore, even for a highly diversified textual tradition like the Kabīrian, textual criticism can still generate original findings related to social and intellectual history that can be further tested with external evidences.

We can see that even in its formative years, the Kabīrian tradition, both textual and intellectual, was already heterogeneous. Though there is an internal inclination to focus on major concepts, a couple of noteworthy external stimulations give rise to a number of textual mutations. The con-tradiction between mystification and bhaktification urges us to consider another question. Besides what has been called the bhakti public sphere, of which the Kabīrian tradition is an important component, the question arises as to whether there is still another contrary "Yogic Secret Circle" to which Kabīr also belongs. The Kabīr, sung, read, and transmitted among public laymen, is marked with devotional sentiments and Vaiṣṇava belief, whereas groups of specialist yogīs may have focused more on the verses that

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26 Callewaert, *The Millennium Kabīr Vānī*, 304.

teach yogic techniques and non-Vaiṣṇava beliefs. This would explain why distinct "thematic blocks" could have coexisted in Kabīrian texts for centuries. Were they meant to be read by different readers or audiences from the very beginning?[27] Even the concept of "bhaktification" needs further elaboration. In one above example (AG524; 2/S22), both readings highlight Kabīr's devotion, but their understanding of Kabīr is quite different.

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27 Strnad, *Morphology and Syntax of Old Hindi*, 489.