

Making War Come Alive:

Ḍiṅgaḷ Poetry and Padmākar's *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī*

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This paper studies the literary history of war-descriptions in north Indian vernacular literatures. It explores the interaction of the Ḍiṅgaḷ or Mārvāḍī poetic tradition - well regarded for its alliterative, onomatopoeic, and pictorial descriptions of wars - with other vernacular literary traditions such as Brajbhāṣā and Avadhī. Taking linguistic and literary elements of war-descriptions from Sanskrit and Apabhraṃśa, the Ḍiṅgaḷ poetic tradition modified them according to local song genres and its own performative need. When the Brajbhāṣā *carit-kāvya* tradition was developing under the Mughal and Rajput domain, it had the Ḍiṅgaḷ poetic tradition to look to certain genres. Taking the *kāvya* elements from the long established Sanskrit tradition, the Brajbhāṣā *kāvya* tradition inherited the style of war descriptions from Ḍiṅgaḷ. Exploring intertextual topos of Ḍiṅgaḷ into Brajbhāṣā and Avadhī literary traditions, this paper shows the interaction of these poetic traditions. By doing this I question the assumption in modern historiography of Hindi and Rajasthani literatures that these traditions are mutually disconnected.¹ Additionally, we observe that the performance of *virudāvalīs* by communities like Cāraṅs and Bhāṭs of Rajasthan – bards or record-keepers of consanguinities and singers of encomiums – from the influential sixteenth-century to the eighteenth century is the result of borrowing Ḍiṅgaḷ poetic features into the Brajbhāṣā *carit-kāvya* tradition.

The *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī*² of Padmākar Bhāṭṭ (1753-1833) is a Brajbhāṣā poetic tale of the war fought in 1792 in Bundelkhand between the Anūpgir Gosain and Arjun Singh

Pamar's armies.³ Chronologically the *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī* is the first of the eleven texts attributed to Padmākar. The poem sings the glories of Anūpgir (d. 1804), also known as Himmatbahadur, a major warlord and ascetic in the second half of the 18th century.⁴ This poem also depicted Anūpgir's disciples, nephews, and other warriors that he patronized. Padmākar describes bards, war-drums, weapons, cannons, swords, armor, elephants, and horses with great interest. In addition to these worldly elements, he includes some supernatural characters who appear on the battlefield when the war ends, including the goddess *Caṇḍī* as well as *yoginīs*, *baitālinīs* and *bhūts* who dance, eat human flesh, drink the blood of the dead, and collect skulls to make a garland for Lord Shiva.

The *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī* contains five distinct sections, each devoted to the description of a particular subject. The first section consists of the traditional *Maṅgalācaraṇ* (benediction), and panegyric verses about Anūpgir that evoke the concept of *navrasa* (the nine sentiments of poetry) and the glories of the thirty-six Kshatriya clans. Depicting Anūpgir's army advancing toward war, the second section opens with kettledrums sounding and bards singing the praises of the warriors. The third portion of the text catalogues the strength of various kinds of cannons and guns. The fourth and longest chapter of the text chronicles the major events of the war; it describes the warriors and their battle tactics, presents discourses on Rajput honor— *svāmī-dharma*, the traditional conception of martial service to an overlord— and portrays the inevitability of death. The fifth and last section details various kinds of swords and the final battle between Anūpgir and Arjun Singh. The poem concludes with Arjun's death and Anūpgir's victory.

Padmākar thus structures the *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī* as a *prabandh kāvya*, or

long-form poem, much like other Brajbhāṣā *carit-kāvya*s of the early modern period. Padmākar not only creatively uses generic features for literary and performative purposes but also fashions his Gosain patron Anūpgir as a Kshatriya king. *Virudāvalī* (*birdāvalī* in Brajbhāṣā) literally means 'string of titles'. It is a praise-poem for a king, situating him in a glorious genealogy. In most cases they are the glories of the Kshatriya clans or lineages. As the poem's title suggests, however, Padmākar sings the glories of a warrior ascetic who is not a Kshatriya but a Gosain Brahmin. Padmākar goes on to illustrate him as Indra, an incarnation of Śiva, a generous patron of poets, and even as a protector of Hindu dignity. To fashion his patron as a Rajput king, Padmākar gives the *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī* a *carit-kāvya*-like structure and incorporates most of the elements present in Hindi and Sanskrit historical poetry.⁵

Padmākar and his *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī* stand at a significant historical, literary, and linguistic juncture. The standard modern literary histories mention that, on the one hand classical Brajbhāṣā literature was reaching its apex with the writings of Padmākar; yet on the other hand the very same period saw the rise of Khaḍī Bolī literature.⁶ In this traditional understanding, Brajbhāṣā literature was beginning to be considered archaic or medieval in contrast to the self-consciously modern literature of Khaḍī Bolī Hindī. In contrast to this narrative, this paper, by exploring some linguistic, literary and performative aspects of *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī*, will show that Brajbhāṣā literary culture was as strong and as pluralistic in its linguistic registers at the turn of the nineteenth century as it was in its earlier history.

Performing the *virudāvalīs*: two early examples from Hindi literature:

In the early vernacular court poetry such as the influential *Prithvirāj Rāso*⁷ Cand Bardāi appears as both a court poet composing this magnificent Brajbhāṣā *kāvya* and also a Bhāṭ of Prithviraj Cauhan's consanguinities. On one hand the *rāso* genre contains courtly *kāvya* features from Sanskrit literature, and on the other it contains the metrical and linguistic features of Apabhraṃśa including performative aspects related to the Bhāṭ tradition. In the following example, the *virudāvalī* is performed in a war-like situation at an enemy's (Muhammad Ghauri's) court to incite the poet's patron-king Prithviraj Cauhan, who has been captured and blinded, for the final round of combat:

ghat siṃci vīr pāvakka jhar, rīs ravat tan prajjaryau
kahi bhaṭṭ birdāvālī, dūt rāj raj sambharyau⁸

Deceit watered the fire of the brave (Prithviraj),
Anger burst through the king's body.
The bard (Cand) recited the *birdāvālī*,
And the king remembered the envoy from his own soil and kingdom.

The popularity of Cand Bardāi and the *rāso* genre are little understood in scholarship. Cand Bardāi was celebrated greatly among the emerging community of Mughal and Rajput court poets.⁹ The legacy of the poet Cand inspired the creation of further *rāso kāvya*, like the influential *Hammīr Rāso* (17th century?).¹⁰ The Bhāṭ community of Rajasthan considers Cand Bardāi to be its ancestor, and as a community it has composed a great deal of historical poetry in Hindi and Ḍiṅgaḷ.¹¹

Another early Hindi source for the performance of the *virudāvalīs* is the

Rāmcaritmānas (1574 CE), in which Tulsīdās depicts Janak’s *rāj-sabhā*. He describes the Bhāṭs or *bandī-jan* as members of this *rāj-sabhā*. The *bandī-jan* here recite the *virudāvalī* of King Janak on the auspicious occasion of Sītā’s *svayaṃvar*:

taba bandījana janaka bolāye, biradāvalī kahata cali āye
kahā nripu jāi kahahu pan morā, cale bhāṭ hiyaṃ harṣu na thorā¹²

Then Janak called the bards,
They came reciting the *birdāvalī*.
The king said, “Go and tell my pledge to the kings!”
The bards left with great joy in their hearts.

When Padmākar describes Anūpgir as an ideal Kshatriya king and his army as a typical Kśatriya army, he employs *virudāvālī*-like features.¹³ He also describes the Bhāṭs or *bandī-jan* who sing the *virudāvālī* at the time of war:

bandījana viradāvalī bullahi, sunata subhaṭṭa drigakamala praphullahi¹⁴
The bards sang the *virudāvalī*,
[And] hearing it the great warriors’ lotus-eyes bloomed.

Many Hindi court poets proudly relate themselves to Cand Bardāi and his poetic legacy, which exerts great influence on Hindi historical *kāvya*, and raises a noteworthy question: How did the circulation of vernacular poetry like Ḍiṅgaḷ inspire composition and lead to interactions between it and other literary cultures like Brajbhāṣā and Avadhī? In the following pages I discuss the Ḍiṅgaḷ literary tradition of western Rajasthan, which was established around the fifteenth century. It had a clear historicizing orientation and influenced the courtly *kāvya* idiom of later Hindi poetry, including Padmākar’s *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī*.

War description in *Ḍiṅgaḷ* style: an intertextual topos in Hindi historical poetry:

Padmākar describes the historical events in the *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī* when Anūpgir sets off on his *muhim* (military campaigns) to Bundelkhand in the 1790s.¹⁵ Anūpgir's conquest of this area, especially his attacks against Arjun Singh, the pride of Bundelas, makes him a kingly figure. Padmākar writes that after his powerful campaign around Delhi, Anūpgir reaches Bundelkhand. Historically, penetrating the fort of Ajaygarh and defeating Arjun Singh was the main challenge for Anūpgir in this area. He first captures the state of Datia and then goes for combat with Arjun Singh, who rules [*amal karai*] at Ajaygarh. He sets up his camp on the river *Ken* and after consulting his *jyotiṣi* (astrologer), sets a date for the initial siege. Once Padmākar finishes this episode, he painstakingly describes the advancing of the armies with cannons, guns, and hundreds of warriors, until finally the war itself. We observe some distinctive linguistic features in these descriptions, namely single-consonantal gemination, onomatopoeia, and frequent use of retroflex sounds; both of these features are prime characteristics of Hindi war poetry. Gemination relates to intervocalic stops on a single consonant:

āna phirata cahuṃ cakkā dhāka thakkana gaṛha dhukkahiṃ
lukkahiṃ duvana diganta jāi jaham̐ tahaṃ tana mukkahiṃ¹⁶

[His] fame spreads in all directions; many forts are terrified of his notoriety.

The enemies hide themselves fleeing far away; they place their bodies wherever

[possible].

kari khagga jaggi udaggi ati ari vagga āe umari kai
gaja ghaṭani māhiṃ mahābalī ghālata hatthārani ghumaṛi kai
prithu ritti nitta suvitta dai jaga jitti kitti Anūpa kī
vara varaniye virudāvalī himmata bahādura bhūpa kī

Having flourished his blade, [he] rushed forward to face the advancing enemy.
The powerful one swirled [into the fray] and stabbed the elephants to the quick.
Like Prithu, [who] always bestowed much wealth and won the world, his fame
spread.

The *virudāvalī* of King Himmat Bahādur is described (herein).

The consonantal gemination¹⁷ (*cakka*, *khagga* and *ritti* etc.) occurs frequently when Padmākar summarizes a chapter, with a conscious use of *chappay* and *harigītikā* meters. The last two lines of the verse above are used as a refrain throughout the text. By employing this technique of sustaining two long meters at the end of each section, Padmākar gives the *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī* a performative character through which the reader can recall the previous episode and prepare for the next one. The *harigītikā* meter is used in the same fashion— to allude to what has already been said— in the *Rāmcāritmānas*.¹⁸

Padmākar frequently uses retroflex letters along with consonantal gemination. In his description of the war fought in 1792, Padmākar evoked the sounds made by cannons and guns through gemination. This description of cannons and guns is innovative because traditionally bows, arrows, swords and lances were described in war poems. The changing soundscape in the battlefield is reflected in Padmākar's novel, geminant-heavy descriptions of cannons and guns. Proving his firm grasp on *bhāṣā* (vernaculars), Padmākar uses multiple onomatopoeic verbs— each appearing only once or twice throughout the poem— to diversify the sounds of the battlefield. By rhyming internally with alliterative retroflex sounds, Padmākar encapsulates an audible effect for the audience -

tupakkai taṟakkai dhaṟakkai mahā haim, pralai cillikā sī jhaṟakkai jahām haim

khaṛakkaiṃ khaṛiṃ vairī chātī bhaṛakkai, saṛakkaiṃ gaye sindhu majjai gaṛakkaiṃ¹⁹

The crack and throb of the guns is great
Like the lightning flashes of the apocalypse.
The harsh clashing pounded the hearts of the enemy,
[Who] escape into the churning ocean.

These linguistic features in the war descriptions are not particular to

Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī, and can be seen throughout Hindi historical poetry.

Interestingly, these aural features are noticeable in the *Laṅkā-Kāṇḍ* (the chapter of Lanka) of the *Rāmcaritmānas*, when Tulsīdās depicts the war between Rām and Rāvaṇ –

jambuka nikara kaṭakkaṭa kaṭṭhiṃ, khāhi huāhiṃ aghāhiṃ dapaṭṭahiṃ
koṭinha ruṇḍa muṇḍa binu ḍollahiṃ, sīsa pare mahi jaya jaya bollahiṃ²⁰

There were jackals eating the dead,
Making noises, attacking each other.
Thousands of trunks and heads rolled about,
While others lay on the battlefield intoning their chants of victory

Among these linguistic features in war descriptions, which we have examined in the *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī* (Brajbhāṣā) and the *Rāmcaritmānas* (Avadhī), consonantal gemination was historically characteristic of Apabhraṃśa. Consonantal gemination was a common method of fudging the syllables of a poem to fit a specific meter in Apabhraṃśa literature, and was not specific to martial contexts.²¹ The question arises, however, as to why gemination became typical of *martial* poetry in Hindi? Did Brajbhāṣā and Avadhī adopt it from Apabhraṃśa, or were they transmitted through another vernacular tradition

that specialized in martial poetry? Just before Brajbhāṣā and Avadhī crystalized as separate vernaculars in the late sixteenth century, Ḍiṅgaḷ was a dialect that had perfected war poetry in courtly settings. We might expect that the association between these specific linguistic features (gemination, onomatopoeia, and retroflex sounds) and martial lore suggest that Brajbhāṣā and Avadhī adopted them from Ḍiṅgaḷ directly.

While working on the Apabhraṃśa poem *Sandēs-Rāsak* (13th century) of Abdul Rahamān, the renowned Apabhraṃśa scholar Harivallabh Bhayani writes about the gemination of consonants for the reason of prosodic alteration in Apabhraṃśa and its influence on Ḍiṅgaḷ poetry-

“It may be remarked en passant that later on the tendency of consonantal gemination for metrical reasons noted above (in case of *Sandēs-Rāsak*) becomes stronger and stronger so much that it comes to form a striking characteristic of the language of Ḍiṅgala (old Mārvaṛī poetic) literature cultivated by the bards of Rājputānā.”²²

One of the reasons that consonantal gemination became characteristic of Ḍiṅgaḷ poetry is that the Apabhraṃśa meters, mostly *dūhā* (dohā), *chappaya* and *paddharī*, were very popular among Ḍiṅgaḷ poets. Composition in *chappaya*, *paddharī*, and *dūhā* belongs to the same tradition of Apabhraṃśa poetry as these phonetic pyrotechnics. The two phenomena enter into Ḍiṅgaḷ poetry together. Ḍiṅgaḷ poets, however, regionalized them by modifying these meters according to their local song-genre called *vayaṇ sagāī*.²³ *Vayaṇ sagāī*²⁴ is distinctive to Ḍiṅgaḷ—and not found in Sanskrit, Prakrit or in Apabhraṃśa literature—and the Cāraṇs and Bhāṭs of Rajasthan, who were the leading purveyors of Ḍiṅgaḷ poetry, were expert in it.

From the 16th century onwards, Ḍiṅgaḷ poetry starts to cross the trajectories of dialects of eastern Rajasthan (such as Ḍhūṅḍhāḷī), Brajbhāṣā, and Avadhī. The circulation of Ḍiṅgaḷ poetry within and outside Rajasthan had a huge impact on the historical poetry of north India. This circulation was mediated by popular sixteenth-century Ḍiṅgaḷ poem on love and war called *Krisan Rukmaṇī Rī Velī* (the Vine of Krishna and Rukmani) by Prithviraj (Prithiraj) Rathore (d. 1600) of Bikaner.²⁵ Prithviraj was famous as a poet of his period, being praised and eulogized in multiple hagiographies, Mughal records, and Rajput chronicles.²⁶ The *Ḍiṅgaḷ* poem *Krisan Rukmaṇī Rī Velī* by Prithviraj gained great fame among Brajbhāṣā, Ḍhūṅḍhāḷī, and Sanskrit poets, as is evident from the circulation of its manuscripts and the number of on the text in these other languages. Prithviraj depicts a war among Krishna, Shishupal and Rukman in Ḍiṅgaḷ the *vayaṅ sagāī* style. He suggests that one needs to consult with Cāraṅs, Bhāṭs, and other language experts (*bhākhā-catur*), in addition to well-versed poets (*sukavi*), to understand his poem.²⁷ Here, Prithviraj not only indicates the Cāraṅs and Bhāṭs's authority in describing wars,²⁸ but also brings the localized Ḍiṅgaḷ poetic tradition of Mārvāḍ to the notice of the Brajbhāṣā poets who were being patronized by the Rajput states under Mughal domain.²⁹ These Rajput states were becoming centers of a widely circulating historical poetry in Brajbhāṣā.

From the late sixteenth century we see instances of Brajbhāṣā poets adopting the *Ḍiṅgaḷ vayaṅ sagāī* style to describe wars. In his biography of Mansingh Kachvaha of Amer (*Māncarī* c.1600), Narottam Kavi's description of the war of Haldighati is informed by this style.³⁰ The Braj poet Vrind (1643-1723)— patronized by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, his successor Muazzam (Bahadurshah) and Raj Singh of Kishangarh— wrote two historical

poems in Brajbhāṣā called the *Vacānikā* (1707?) and the *Satya-Svarūp-Rūpak* (1707), which describe wars of succession among Shahjahan and Aurangzeb's sons respectively. Both of the poems describe wars entirely in the *Ḍiṅgaḷ* style of *vayaṅ sagāī*. Observe this example from the *Satya-Svarūp-Rūpak*, in which the repeated syllables have been emphasized—

sabai sūra sāvanta rāvanta satyam
larai loha saum choha saum latapattha
dutaṅga utaṅga turaṅga dabaṭṭai
bikaṭṭa gaṭam gajja ghaṭṭam bighaṭṭai³¹

All brave warriors and kings
 Fight passionately with their weapons and bodies smeared in blood.
 Horses from both sides attacked forcefully,
 Elephants broke each other's tusks.

The *Ḍiṅgaḷ* method of describing wars was appropriated in Brajbhāṣā because the tradition concentrated mainly on martial value, a subject that lent itself to alliterative, onomatopoeic, and pictorial description or poetics.

While the tradition of Brajbhāṣā historical poetry (including *rāso* literature) hardly neglected war, it also contained other typical *kāvya* elements like the *nagar-varṇaṇ* (city description), *nava-rasa* (the nine poetic sentiments), and descriptions of the *ṣaḍ-ritu* (six-seasons). The language of the *rāso* is often described as Brajbhāṣā (or Piṅgaḷ); however, these *rāsos* also have some *Ḍiṅgaḷ* influence because they were written in Rajasthan alongside *Ḍiṅgaḷ*. From the seventeenth century we find *rāsos* written in *Ḍiṅgaḷ* as well. There was a magnificent *rāso*— *Sagat Rāso* — written by a seventeenth-century Cāraṇ poet, Girdhar Āśiyā.³² This *rāso* contains none of the elements found in the Brajbhāṣā *rāso*

tradition like *nagar-varṇaṇ*, *nava-rasa*, or *ṣaḍ-ritu*, but rather describes the wars fought by Shakti Singh, the younger brother of Rana Pratap Singh. It shows how the Ḍiṅgaḷ tradition heavily invested in war description, and modified the established Brajbhāṣā genres like *rāso*s accordingly. Some Brajbhāṣā *rāso*s, such as the *Khum māṇ Rāso*, follow the Ḍiṅgaḷ *vayaṇ sagāī* style in their descriptions of war.³³ These examples suggest that the descriptions of war in the Ḍiṅgaḷ style were considered a topos in Brajbhāṣā historical poetry. It can therefore be argued that distinctive linguistic features – such as consonantal gemination, onomatopoeia, and frequent use of retroflex sounds found in Brajbhāṣā historical poetry, especially in descriptions of combat and in meters like the *chappay*, *padhharī* and *dūhā*— were an effect of borrowing Ḍiṅgaḷ features into martial poetry traditions of Hindi. These influenced the eighteenth-century Brajbhāṣā poet Padmākar, who was also patronized by kings in Rajasthan. The following section describes the poetic techniques and creative use of bhāṣā by Padmākar in crafting the *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī*. It brings his *bhāv-mūrti-vidhān* (creating the images of emotions) into discussion for which he is well-known Hindi literature.

The *bhāv-mūrti-vidhān* of Padmākar:

While appropriating these genre features to give his poem a performative aspect and create aural effects, Padmākar also presents a didactic account of war for a Brajbhāṣā-knowing audience. For Padmākar, literary purposes and the need to tailor his poetic style to individual contexts were the main factors behind word choice and adaptation of certain styles. Whether he describes a war in progress or the sentiments of warriors, Padmākar not

only captures the specific context but also illustrates vibrant images of the situation through the creative use of language:

sara bhare tarakasa aru kamāna mahāna ghoṛe sauṃ lagī
tihilṃ samaya kī vaha āna disā disāna viṣai jagī
tahaṃ harakhi hara hara harakhi hara hara harakhi hara hara kari pilyau
vaha kahani hara hara kī sudhuni suni jigara satruna kau hilyau ³⁴

A quiver full of arrows and a great bow were strapped on to a horse.
The (clamor of their) glorious approach spread and arose in every direction.
There the sound of ‘harkhi hara hara harkhi hara hara’ rippled through the air.
The sound of the ‘hara hara’ chant startled the liver of the enemy.

Padmākar draws attention to the fact that his hero and patron Anūpgir is a Shaivite warrior, as are many of his disciples and relatives. In the above verse he captures the enthusiasm of these warriors in chanting the slogan *hara-hara* while attacking the enemy. This slogan gives Anūpgir's army a unique identity among eighteenth-century warrior clans.³⁵ In order to express both of these—the aural effect of chanting *hara-hara* and the enthusiasm of the Shaivite ascetics-- Padmākar creatively uses the verb ‘*harakhnā*.’ This verb contains both *har* (Shiva) and *harakh* (from the Sanskrit *harṣa*— joy, enthusiasm) and is skillfully integrated into the slogan to create a powerful effect.

In the following verse Caṇḍī (skillfully rhymed with *khaṇḍī*, ‘tax’ in the Bundelkhaṇḍi dialect) comes to the battlefield with *yoginīs*, *baitālinīs* and *bhūts*. Her arrival marks the triumphant end of the war, and each line gives a moving image of the goddess’ actions:

kila kilakata caṇḍī lahi nija khaṇḍi umaṛi umaṇḍi harakhati hai
saṅga lai baitālini dai dai tālani majjā jālani karakhati hai
jugganani jamātī hiya harakhatīm khada khada khātīm māsana kau
rudhirana saum̐ bhari bhari khappara dhari dhari nacatī kari kari hāsana kau³⁶

Caṇḍī screeched, she took her share, swelled, and radiated with pleasure.
She brought her demonness -gang, they clapped to the beat, cracked and chewed the
bone marrow.
The gathering of Yoginīs, [full of] grim delight, gorged themselves on the meat.
Filling the skull bowls with blood, they reveled and danced about.

Summoning Caṇḍī on the battlefield is common in Hindi historical poetry, but the way Padmākar presents it—the noise, the screams, the clapping, the cracking of bones, the chewing, the onomatopoeic alliteration *khada-khada* (the sound of eating warm flesh), the laughing and dancing— is a significant innovation in the trope. In a long description where Arjun Singh is telling his warriors about the inevitability of death and the need to adhere to Rajput codes of honor, at whatever cost, the language is idiomatic and gives a feeling of colloquial speech:

Aba rana tajai jo hūjiye ita ajara amara jahāna maiṃ
Tau choḍi hathiyārīna dharahi kahā karḍhat hai ghamasāna maiṃ
Jaba eka dina maranau mukarrara janama pāi sunījiye
Tātaiṃ galina dara galina hūṃ jasa vrithā malina na kījiye³⁷

When you depart the battlefield [in death], [then] you become immortal here in the world.
So if you renounce your weapon, what will you wield in battle?
Listen, once you gain birth into this world, it is a given that you will die.

So don't pointlessly sully your name across all the highways and byways.

Conclusion

The rise of the historical *kāvya* tradition in Brajbhāṣā took many elements from its vernacular predecessor like Ḍiṅgaḷ poetry, written and performed mostly by Cāraṅs and Bhāṭs. The Ḍiṅgaḷ tradition presents the metrical and linguistic discourse prominent in Apabhraṃśa literature and also takes elements from the Sanskrit Kāvya tradition, while modifying them according to its performative need and local song genres. Within the Sanskrit *prabandha-kāvya*-like structure for his Brajbhāṣā poem, Padmākar employs elements that are closely associated with the Ḍiṅgaḷ tradition of Rajasthan. Ḍiṅgaḷ poetry had a strong martial ethos, a clear historicizing orientation, and a special repertoire of poetic techniques. For many vernacular poets, writing on a historical or martial theme entailed using the techniques of Ḍiṅgaḷ poetry. For Padmākar in particular, these themes presented him with opportunities for innovation within the framework of a traditional genre-topos—not just another monotonous exercise in the antiquated *vīra-rasa* style. The linguistically fluid nature of Brajbhāṣā gave Padmākar an opportunity to craft his poem according to his poetic needs, which reminds us of the vibrant Brajbhāṣā literary culture at the dawn of colonialism in India. Apart from its descriptions of weapons and its accounts of historical personalities, the *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī* narrates a major recent war.

Notes

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¹ Motilal Menariya writes two separate literary histories of Ḍiṅgaḷ (Mārvāḍī) as *Rājasthānī Bhāshā Aur Sāhitya* and Brajbhāṣā (Piṅgaḷ) as *Rājasthān kā Piṅgaḷ Sāhitya*. Ramchandra Shukla does not give Ḍiṅgaḷ literature any place in his History of Hindi literature. He sates that “The literary form of the pure Rajasthani language mixed with Apabhraṃśa was called Ḍiṅgaḷ. Therefore we can only discuss the texts written in Piṅgaḷ (Brajbhāṣā) in the history of Hindi literature.” *Hīndī Sāhitya kā Itihās*, 21. We assume from Shukla’s statement that Ḍiṅgaḷ literature has no relation with Hindi literature.

² *Padmākar kṛt Himmatbahādurbirudāvalī*. All dates are in CE unless otherwise noted.

³ *Himmatbahādurbirudāvalī*, Verses-22, 23.

⁴Historians Jadunath Sarkar (1950) and William Pinch (2006) have written extensively on warrior ascetics, including Anūpgir Gosain.

⁵ Allison Busch writes about the Brajbhāṣā *carit-kāvya* in great detail; see her essay in this volume.

⁶ Shukla, Ramchandra. *Hindi Sāhitya Kā Itihās*. Shukla considers the beginning of *ādhunīk kāl* (the modern period) with the emergence of Khaṛī Bolī Hindi prose. Although the date he sets for the modern period is 1843, he writes that the era of Khaṛī Bolī Hindi prose started around 1800 with texts produced at the Fort William College in Calcutta and a few texts written before that time.

⁷ The *Prithvirāj Rāso*’s date of composition is highly debated; written records, however show the existence of some poetry about Prithvirāj Cauhān in Hindi attributed to Cand Baliddiya or Cand Bardāī as early as the 15th century. Both editors of the *Prithvirāj Rāso*, Hazari Prasad Dvivedi and Namwar Singh, establish the existence of some poetry about Prithviraj written by poet Cand Baliddiya (Cand Bardāī) on the basis of a 15th century text *Purātan Prabandh Saṅgrah* which contains two verses of Cand Baliddiya about Prithviraj. They also reject the existence of the poem *Prithvirāj Rāso* in the form in which it is found today before the period of the Mughal emperor Akbar. See *Prithvirāj Rāso*, 178.

⁸Ibid., 164

⁹ In 1585 CE while writing the biography of Mansingh Kachwaha (*Māncarīṭ*), Amrit Rai invokes Cand Baliddiya for blessings. *Māncarīṭāvalī*, edited by G.N. Bahura, 2. Also, see *Cand chand barnan kī mahimā* (A praise of Cand’s poetry) attributed to Kavi Gaṅg (Bhāt), who is believed to have lived at the courts of the

Mughal emperors Akbar and Jahangir. This poem – whose authenticity is questioned along with other poetry attributed to Gaṅg – places Cand Bardāi and his *Prithvirāj Rāso* at a place of very high prestige in Mughal court culture. See, *Kavi Gaṅg Racnāvalī*, edited by Bate Krishna. Whether this poem was written by Gaṅg or not, it shows the prominence of Cand Bardāi and the *Prithvirāj Rāso* within the Bhāt community of Rajasthan.

¹⁰ *Hammīr Rāso* of Maheś Kavi, See *doha* 19, in which Maheś Kavi invokes Cand Bardāi.

¹¹ Bhati Narayan Singh. *Prācīn Dīṅgaḷ Gīt Sāhitya*, 235. Jodhpur: Rajasthan Granthagar, 1989.

¹² Tulsīdās. *Rāmcaritmānas*, 213.

¹³ *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī*, *Hakal Chand* 2-3.

¹⁴ *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī*, 10. All translations from the *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī* in this paper are from a book in progress, provisionally entitled *Poems for a Warlord*, by Allison Busch, William Pinch and Dalpat Rajpurohit.

¹⁵ For Anūpgir’s military career during this period, see chapter three of *Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires*.

¹⁶ *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī*, 7.

¹⁷ Harivallabh Bhayani defines consonantal gemination as follows: “It relates to the intervocalic stops which otherwise are elided in middle Indo-Aryan, *paṇḍit = paṇḍitta*, *manmath = maṇmattha*.” *Sandeśa Rāsaka* of Abdala Rahmāna, 6.

¹⁸ Philip Lutgendorf writes about the similar use of *harigītikā* in the *Rāmcaritmānas*. *The Life of a Text*, 16.

¹⁹ *Himmatbahādurvirudāvalī*, 11.

²⁰ *Rāmcaritmānas*, 788.

²¹ Bhayani. *Sandeśa Rāsaka*, 3. Bhayani notes that the gemination of simple consonants is done in two ways in Apabhraṃśa: either in the seam of compounds *maṇmattha* and/or in the body of the word (confined mostly to continuants like nasal, sibilants and liquids *tammāl*). I thank Andrew Ollett for leading the Apabhraṃśa and Prakrit reading groups at Columbia University, where I got a chance to read a few Apabhraṃśa texts.

²² Bhayani. *Sandeś Rāsaka*, 3.

²³ In Dīṅgaḷ, three types of *dohā* (*baṛau* [big], *tuṃverī*, and *khōḍo dūho* [half broken]) are used in a modified *mātrā* structure of the traditional *dohā* meter (used in Braj and Avadhī) and follow a particular way of

recitation. Even *sorathā* is called a *Dūhā* in Ḍiṅgaḷ. The *chappaya* has also been modified in three ways, namely *kavitt/chappaya*, *śudhh kavitt* (pure *kavitt* used in Braj), *ḍauḍho kavitt* (one and a half *kavitt*).

Mahtab Cand Khared and Purohit Harinarayan Sharma *Vidhyābhūṣaṇ* (1999), Motilal Menariya (2006) Janet Kamphorst (2008).

²⁴ *Vayaṇ sagāī* means engagement or relation between similar sounds or letters. It is a Mārvaḍi song genre, which can be vaguely characterized as a type of *anuprās* (alliteration). There are three kinds of *vayaṇ sagāī* used in Ḍiṅgaḷ. According to the most common *vayaṇ sagāī* (called *adhik/uttam*, increased/best) the first letter of the first word in a *pāda* (half line of a stanza) should be identical with the first letter of the last word in the same *pāda*. Mahtab Cand Khared and Purohit Harinarayan Sharma *Vidhyābhūṣaṇ* (1999).

²⁵ Swami, Narottamdas. *Krisan-Rukmaṇī-rī Velī, Prithvirāj rī Kahī*, 34. According to Dr. Swami, a manuscript dated 1607 is the earliest of all manuscripts of the *Velī* found in 17th century.

²⁶ Prithviraj Rathore was the younger of Rai Singh, who was Akbar's ally. Abul Fazl (The *Akbarnāmah* of Abu-al Fazl. Translated by H. Beveridge, volume III, 518, Delhi: Ess Ess publication, 1977) and the court historian of Mārvaḍ, Muḡhatām Naiṇasī (fl. 17th century, edited by Sākariya Badarīprasād. *Muḡhatām Naiṇasī rī Khyāt*, part-1, 256, Jodhpur: RORI- 1960) mention Prithviraj serving at Akbar's court. Akbar awarded him a Jāgīr in Gagaron. Prithviraj's Ḍiṅgaḷ works such as the *Velī* are mentioned in sixteenth and seventeenth century Braj hagiographies. Nābhādās, who was a contemporary of Prithviraj, calls him a king of poets (*kavirāj*) in his *Bhaktamāl* (c. 1600, Narendra Jha. Edited *Bhaktamāl - Pāṭhānuśīlan evaṃ Vivecan*, 48, *Chappay* 133, Patna: Anupam Prakashan 1978). Later on, the Dādūpanthī poet Rāghavdās extols Prithviraj as *the* poet on the earth: “*prithī par prithīrāj kabī*” in his own *Bhaktamāl* (1660 Agarchand Nahta. Edited Rāghavdās *Kṛt Bhaktmāl*, 209, *Chappay* 452, Jodhpur: RORI 1964). There is an entire chapter (*vārtā*) on Prithviraj in the *Do Sau Bāvan Vaiṣṇavan Kī Vārtā* (Story of two hundred and fifty-two Vaiṣṇavas) ascribed to the Vallabhite Gokulnath and Harirāy (*Do Sau Bāvan Vaiṣṇavan kī Vārtā*, Vol. III 249-52).

²⁷ *Krisan-Rukmaṇī-rī Velī, Prithvirāj rī Kahī*, 62, Verse 296.

²⁸ Rāṭauḍ of Bikaner and Cāraṇs have a very strong bond with Rāṭauḍ rising as rulers in Bikaner who

patronized Cāraṇs. The figure who relates both of these is the goddess of Mārvāḍ Karnī Mātā, who is a Cāraṇ by birth and historically related with the foundation of the Bikaner kingdom. Her temple is in the town Deshnok, which is very close to the Bikaner city and is renowned as the “Rat temple.” (G.H. Ojha 1940, Rajvi Amar Singh 1992, Motilal Menariya 2006).

²⁹ Busch. *Poetry of Kings*, Chapter 5.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 89-90.

³¹ Janardan Rao Cheler. Edited *Vrind Granthāvalī*, Agra: Vinod Pustak Mandir 1971. *Satya Svarūp Rūpak* (pp. 262-303). In this poem the *Vayaṇ Sagāī* can be seen primarily in vv. 153-55, 227-33, 236-99, 305-12. In *Vacānikā* (pp. 115 to 261) the *Vayaṇ Sagāī* can be seen in vv. 49-51, 53-83, 86-89, 234-41, 268-80, 289-13, 316-20, 255-60, 409-16, 457-66, 479-508, 526-50.

³² Hukam Singh Bhati. Edited *Sagat Rāso* by Girdhar Āśiyā, Udaipur: Pratap Shodh Sansthan 1987. This magnificent Rāso describes the wars of Maharana Pratap's younger brother Shakti Singh of Mewar and his successors.

³³ Brajmohan Javaliya. Edited *Dalpativijay Krt Khummāṇ Rāso*, Volume 2, 461, Udaipur: Maharana Pratap Smarak Samiti 2001. The long war description is entirely in the *Vayaṇ Sagāī* form.

³⁴ *Himmatbahādurvirudāvlī*, 24.

³⁵ The other warrior ascetics that come to mind are the Rāmānandīs and the Dādūpanthīs, who of course would not chant this Shavaite slogan.

³⁶ *Himmatbahādurvirudāvlī*, 43.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

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