

ICEMLNI proposal  
Dalpat Rajpurohit, Columbia University

## Poetics of a *Sant*

*Dadupanthi* Sundardas and his metrical discourse

A common notion regarding *sant* poetry is that it is less concerned with poetic aesthetics than communicating its message to a larger Bhakti public. *Sant* poets are considered to be more interested in composing *Pads* and *Sakhis*—attached with performance and the oral transmission of Bhakti poetry---and less with meters like *Savayyas* and *Kabitts*— which usually attracted skilled and educated court poets. Keeping this in mind, how are we to read *Dadupanthi* Sundardas’s (c.1596-1689) discourse on meter? What compelled Sundardas to proclaim using meter necessary for composing in the *Sant-Bani* genre? In what ways was Sundardas in dialogue with the courtly *Brajhasha* poetic tradition? How influential were his texts— the *Gyan-Samudra* (written in multiple meters) and *Sundar-Vilas* (written in multiple *Savyyas*)— among the early modern *sant* community and educational institutions like the *Brajhasha Pathshala* of Bhuj (Gujrat)?