

# Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam

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## bron

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TO  
THE PEOPLE OF SURINAM  
IN RETURN FOR THEIR LOVE  
AND UNSTINTED HOSPITALITY

surīnāma-sarit-tīre gāyañ jana-janārdana  
gītīr etās tava śrutvā tubhyam eva samarpaye

## **Acknowledgments**

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to all who have helped me in preparing this publication, especially, the hundreds of people of both sexes and all ages in Surinam who came to sing from long distances at the shortest notice and contributed generously of their lore; to the Taalbureau of Surinam and many other friends who lent me their tape recorders; to Dr. J.K. Sukul of Paramaribo who placed at my disposal all his own tape recordings for comparison and Mr. Girûasingh of Nickerie whose advice and help was of great value; to the leaders and members of the Arya Samaj movement in Surinam, too numerous to name, who, in spite of their doctrinal unfamiliarity with the subject matter helped me in all possible ways, in the first place by making my visits to Surinam possible and then through their generous hospitality, financial support, transportation facilities and contacts with the singers.

For scholarly guidance my sincerest thanks go to Professor J. Gonda who not only arranged for me to study and work at the Instituut voor Oosterse Talen of the University of Utrecht under his auspices but also helped me to surmount all scholarly as well as practical difficulties; to Dr. P. Gaeffke, who guided and supervised my work at every step and without whose help this book could not have been completed.

All the illustrations have been drawn by Lalita, my wife, with the assistance of Mr. David Singh of Georgetown, Guyana, to whom I remain specially indebted.

## Chapter one

### Introduction

The Indians came to Surinam mainly from the districts of Gorakhpur, Basti, Gonda, Fyzabad, Jaunpur, Azamgarh, Gazipur and Ballia in Eastern U.P. and from Saran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Shahabad, Patna and Gaya districts in the Bihar state. Some people also came from the western districts of U.P. locally referred to as 'the West' (*pachāh*). A total of 34,304 Indians arrived in Surinam between 1873 and 1916. They spoke mainly Avadhī and Bhojpurī dialects and some influence of the Magahī form of Bihārī is also perceptible in their present-day speech. Maithilī and other eastern as well as western U.P. dialects such as the Brajbhāṣā were spoken by some people coming from the areas of these dialects.

The people were of two religions, Hinduism and Islam. The religion with which the present study is concerned is specifically Hinduism, with an occasional reference to Islam.<sup>1</sup>

The social system of the Hindus who migrated to Surinam was based on caste divisions in which a family and a member thereof belonged to a sub-group of one of the four social classes, *varṇas*, viz., *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya* and *Śūdra*. Of the four shiploads of immigrants studied by de Klerk ('53: 103) 17 3/4% were from the higher caste groups, 33 1/4% from the middle caste groups, 31% from the low castes, 17 1/2% Muslim and 1/2% unspecified.

As to the economic conditions of the immigrants suffice it to say here that they came attracted by the promise of a better economic life, as indentured labourers on contract to work on sugar and coffee estates, and, after termination of their contracts, settled down to cultivate their own lands. Their economic ambition has been fairly well fulfilled.

They have complete freedom to lead their own religious and social life with the result that many cultural forms of India, one of which is song, survive among them. Song is with them almost a

1 For the religious and social background of the community this thesis leans on the work done by de Klerk and Speckmann.

way of life, closely associated with their ritual, religion, and social custom. De Klerk and Speckmann have referred to this in passing (de Klerk '51: 99, 138-140, 149, 151, 180, 181, 204, 205, 206, 214, 217, 219, 220, 221; Speckmann '65: 30, 138, 139, who refers only to the beating of a drum where singing should have been included: 142, 147). There is a failure to establish the relationship of song with the ritual and social life with this exception that de Klerk has given a fair treatment to certain, though not all, categories of song sung at the *phagwā* festival (219-221). In some cases he comes close to recognising the song as part of the ritual without, however, making this relation very clear. A few examples may be cited: ('51: 99) he describes the singing of *sohar* songs in the middle of the details of the ritual on the sixth day after childbirth, but without showing the connection between the song and the ritual. He knows that song is used in the *maṭkor* procession ('51: 149) but again no connection is established between the song and the ceremony. In *imlī ghṛṭāī* ('51: 149) he describes a conversation between the bridegroom's mother and her brother as part of the ritual without recognising this as part of a song (No. 29). Speckmann dismisses the songs as 'impudent, even improper' ('65: 138) without having studied them carefully. Both authors generally fail to mention the important role played by song in various stages of the ceremonial.

The songs in our collection were brought by the immigrants as part of an oral tradition from India although some local composition and adaptation to Surinam conditions has since then taken place. Grierson, also author of an official report on the migration (1883), collected some songs in the original homeland of the migrants and published them in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society and the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (see bibliography). Being illiterate, the immigrants could not have known of these journals. The migration was stopped after 1917. The first pioneering collection of these folksongs was by Tripāṭhī in 1929, and there have been a number of scholarly publications from 1943 onwards. None of these is known in Surinam.

Many songs similar to those in our study are found in the above collections. Out of a total of a hundred songs printed in this thesis, eight are found in Avadhī variants, twenty in a mixture of Avadhī and Bhojpurī - even though the authors on Bhojpurī folksongs

do not acknowledge their Avadhī mixture - and sixteen have their variants in more than two dialects including Brajbhāṣā, Kanāujī etc. There are negligibly few which are handed down only in a single one of these, latter, dialects. Some individual lines or groups of lines from our songs, as well as many phrases are also found in different versions in other contexts. Reference to these is made in the notes to the texts of our songs.

The standard of literacy being somewhat higher among men than among women, some of the men's songs are now more and more often sung from books: this is the case with the songs sung at the *phagwā* festival, for which *Cautāl Phāg Saṁgraha* (see bibliography) is used. Most songs of the *phagwā* festival in our collection, however, are not found in this book.

Some songs, originally brought from India, have undergone changes locally. For example song No. 31 line VII was first heard as 'the bridegroom's maternal grandfather is so well adorned as the king of Delhi' but perhaps to some Surinam singers Delhi was too remote so the line was changed to 'the king of Russia' and another line to 'the king of America'. Many such versions exist side by side, as is the case with folksongs everywhere. Though many of these variants have been recorded, only a single version of each song is printed here with the exception of song No. 79.

Many types of songs known in India have been lost in Surinam because of a difference of conditions, for example the *bārahmāsā* songs, which describe the weather and attitudes towards the twelve months of the year, have not been heard in Surinam because the weather in Surinam is not divided into seasons. Gradually some of the ritual is being lost with the consequence that the songs of *Janēu*, for instance, are now known to few. For some inexplicable reason only two lines of a song to *Ṣaṣṭhī* (see p. 15) were heard. The general change in social, caste and family conditions has also contributed to reduce the popularity of several types of songs, for example there are now very few songs dealing with the woes of an infertile woman, *bājh*. As the professions of water-carriers, *kaḥārs*, or clay-potters, *kumhārs*, are dying out, their songs also are slowly becoming extinct. The introduction of ready-milled flour and modern agricultural machines has caused the women's *titillā* songs to become less known than before.

Other causes of loss are the influence of modern education whereby the younger people are taught to disregard non-European forms of culture as backward and primitive, the introduction of modern Hindi through literature, films, the modern reform movements such as Ārya-samāj, and religious missionaries and cultural workers from India. This has generated a feeling of inferiority and often an apologetic attitude among those who speak or sing in the dialect forms.

The author of the present study collected the songs and observed the related customs during numerous visits to Surinam, totalling a stay of more than a year. The groups of singers as well as individual singers were invited to sing to a tape-recorder in their homes and temples. Some songs were written down on paper without being recorded on tape. The repertoire of the singers is by no means exhausted by this collection and only a small part of the author's collection is presented in this publication, which is an attempt to list various categories of songs and to give representative examples. The taped copies have been stored at the Instituut voor Oosterse Talen of the University of Utrecht.

### **Delivery of the Songs**

Although solo singing of religious songs is popular, most of the ceremonial singing is by groups. There are some organised groups of men devoted to singing who come together at particular social and religious occasions either for a fee or for the simple enjoyment of the singing. Women's groups function separately from those of men and are of two types. In the villages there are older women whose repertoire is relied upon by the younger women. The singing is spontaneous, with not much musical ornamentation. Then there are also organised societies either independent or in some way connected with various religious organisations, for example the *Lakṣmī Samāj* in Paramaribo connected with the central body of Hinduism, the Sanātana Dharma Sabhā of Surinam. The singing by such organised groups often helps to collect funds at social and religious occasions. The members of these organised groups have better training in singing picked up from senior members and their singing is more ornate. In all group singing usually a senior lady leads and others repeat after her.

Sometimes the singers add words like *gūiyā* or *sakhi*<sup>1</sup>, *bahin* or *bahinī* (sister), *bhaiyā* or *bhayavā* (brother), *joṛā* or *sangharī* (companion) as mutual vocatives to create a feeling of camaraderie and enthusiasm in the company while singing. Similar expressions of enthusiasm, exclamation or address to fellow singers, dismissed by Grierson as 'unmeaning phrases' (J.R.A.S. 1884: 199) perhaps because they cannot be exactly translated even though they convey an intensity of shared feeling among the singers, are *e*, *ye*, *o*, *ho*, *re*, *rī* (feminine), *are*, *bhalā*, *bhale*, *hā*, *aba*, *to*, *na*, *aur* etc. The same purpose is served, but in a devotional way, by adding the name of a God-Incarnate, almost as an exclamation, seeking, as it were, His blessing upon the song or on the sentiment expressed. Some of these expressions are *rām*, *rāmā*, *rāmjī*, *rāmjū*, *he rām*, *ho rām*, *siyārām*, *śyām*, *hare* etc. Entire strophes, whose meaning is not directly connected with the content of the song, are also found as *stobhas* (*vide* p. 31).

## Tunes

Each category of song is sung in a particular tune and style, and to a certain drumbeat. Even in the tape-recordings from the most untrained village groups the musically trained friends of the author have been able to detect the elements of various melodies, the *rāgas*, and beats, the *tālas*.<sup>2</sup>

## Prosody and Rhyme

The songs do not as a rule follow any definite system of metrical arrangement<sup>3</sup>. The singers rely mainly upon the beats of the drum to maintain the rhythm.

The lines in different types of songs are of varying length, for example the *sohar* has longer lines than the *ulārā*, but the exact length cannot be determined, the number of morae in one line of the same song not being identical with others.

To maintain the rhythm according to the drumbeat the singers employ various phonetic devices. Short vowels are lengthened;

1 As there is no English word to express the 'woman friend of a woman', the word *sakhi* is retained untranslated throughout.

2 Some discussion on the topic may be found in D.P. Sirmha ('44: 3, 15 ff.), K. Gandharva (S.P. '51: 311 ff.), K. Upādhyāya ('60: 341, 375-376), V. Prasād ('62: 51-53 intr.).

3 But see V.P. Vatuk ('66, 155-166).



long vowels are shortened. Two short vowels may share a single mora to keep up with the *druta* beat. Even the traditionally long phonemes like *e*, *ai*, *o*, *au* are often pronounced as *ĕ*, *ăi*, *ō*, *ău*. Vowels are elided and sometimes a stop substituted with almost an inaudible remnant of the elided vowel, e.g., *jamunā* > *jam.nā*. The interconsonantal or final *a* may or may not be discounted, e.g., *ḍūba maratī* = *ḍub martī*. The short vowels before joint consonants which are treated as *guru* in ordinary Hindi may here be treated as *laghu*. An intervocalic *h* may be inarticulate, the vowels may be assimilated and, if long, shortened, e.g., *nahī* + *hai* = *nahīya*. Other forms of euphony or assimilation may be resorted to, e.g., *bhayo* + *ādhān* > *bhayavādhān* > *bhayvādhān*.

In some places extra syllables are inserted, without consideration of the meaning, to make the beat identical with another line, for example, *na* in *jin ke pūj na lihini angarej* (Song No. 85, line VI).

Here and there, however, some prosodial regularity begins to appear, both in a moraic (*mātrika*) and syllabic (*vārṇika*) form of Hindi metre, especially if the above phonetic devices are taken into account. Sometimes only the first quarter (*carāṇa*) of the stanza may be metrically identical with the third, sometimes the second with the fourth, for example in *sohar* No. 1 (lines IV, VI): *sasura rājā dasaratha ho = devara bābū lachamana ho*.

This type of metrical regularity is often found in the songs in which the same phraseology may be repeated from stanza to stanza; (*vide*, e.g., song No. 8). There are also songs in which a line or a part thereof, perhaps a quarter (*carāṇa*), may be identical with the refrain (*vide*, e.g., song No. 6) either moraicly or syllabically.

Rhyming is often irregular. Usually an exclamation or a *stobha* serves as a rhyme. In shorter songs of a lyrical nature such as *ulārās*, *caṭnīs* and *bhajans* as well as in some longer songs a full use of rhyming is made.

## Language

The speakers of various dialects (*vide* p. 1) in India were mostly separate, each in their own region. Even though they often mixed in market places and perhaps at sacred baths and on pilgrimages, their coming together to live in a single community, as happened on their arrival in Surinam, was unprecedented. In Surinam there was an inevitable exchange of dialects. It must also be borne in

mind that all these dialects are inter-related and a large number of forms are identical in many; furthermore, the same dialect may have many forms. The people of the *pachāh* were soon absorbed into the eastern group which was the majority. Now, slowly, there is developing what has been termed the *Sarnāmī* dialect of Hindi (Adhin 1964), through an intermingling of dialects, Hindi and the local Surinam influences.

Having been the language of *Rāmacaritamānasa*, which was *the* religious and literary book of the immigrants, Avadhī is predominant in these songs with some influence of Hindi and Bihārī forms.

The mixture of dialects shows itself in the songs in several ways, the degree of each dialect represented differing from song to song. For example, in song No. 78 *karo, calo* etc. are Hindi forms, *karau, besāhau* etc. are Avadhī forms, *bhāilī, nikarala* etc. are Bihārī forms, and *bhari bhari* etc. are forms common to Avadhī and Bihārī.

Where the song is sung by a group, the members of the group do not always follow the group leader but introduce each her own dialect form, e.g. *purave* (Avadhī) and *puravelā* (Bihārī) in song No. 1.

Quite often the same song is sung in various dialect forms by different singers who have not yet borrowed from other dialects, perhaps because of being only first generation Indians in Surinam. Several versions of song No. 1 have been recorded in this way. Song No. 52 is a good example of Brajbhāṣā, No. 29 of Bihārī and No. 26 of Avadhī.

There is also a tendency to use those forms of the dialects more frequently which are common to more than one of them, for example in some songs, *jāī* is used more often than *jāb* or *jābai*. Many forms of Bihārī such as *bḡ, bi* or *bḡ* are hard to find, instead of which there occurs *be* as ending for the first person future tense.

In modern compositions the use of non-Indian words in an Indianised pronunciation and form is also a common feature, e.g., *talavā*, Avadhī form of the Dutch *taal*, 'language' (in a song not included in the text here), or *yākles* < *jaagtlust* (song No. 99 C).<sup>1</sup>

In general, the language of the songs should be studied in comparison with the spoken language;<sup>2</sup> some tape-recordings of which have been deposited at the Instituut voor Oosterse Talen.

1 See also Dr. J.H. Adhin: 1964.

2 Vide Speckmann: Nieuwe West-Indische Gids, 1966.

## The Musical Instruments

The main musical instruments are as follows:

### The Drums

*Ḍholak*: a barrel-shaped drum, about two feet six inches long and about ten inches in diameter beaten on both sides, accompanying almost all group singing and which may substitute for any other form of drum. The singers find it almost impossible to sing without it. (fig. 1)

*Hurkā*: approximately the same size as a *Ḍholak*, with a very slim middle held in the hand, both ends of the drum strung together with strings; it may be beaten on either but not both sides at the same time. It may be used for religious songs in general but accompanies the *kaharavā* in particular. (fig. 2).

*Ḍhaplā* or *Ḍhap*: a disc-shaped large drum, more than two feet in diameter, open on one side, beaten on the other. The wooden disc or the rim is about four to six inches in width. The left hand in which the drum is held against the shoulder and the chest also holds a little broom reed which beats against the drum while the fingers of the right hand keep the actual beat. It is played at the *phagwā* festival, especially with the *dhamār* songs. (fig. 3).

*Khajrī*: a kind of tambourine, narrower in diameter, wider in the rim than its western counterpart; there are holes in the rim with some brass discs attached. It is used for religious songs in particular. (fig. 4).

*Ḍamrū*: a drum about five inches long and about four inches in diameter, held and shaken in one hand so that a small wooden marble tied to the drum with a string beats on both ends alternately. It is now rarely used, chiefly for religious songs (fig. 5).

*Tāssā*: The closed and curved side is held against the chest and the leather side is beaten with a stick. It comes in various sizes. Mainly used by the Muslims at the *muharram* festival, it is also beaten by women in the *maṭkor* procession because it is easier to carry. (fig. 6).

*Ḍhol*: (not to be confused with *Ḍholak*), looks like the western bass drum, beaten on both sides with sticks, was used in processions and with *pacrā* songs but it is now rarely seen.

*Nagārā*: this deserves to be mentioned in greater detail than

Plate I

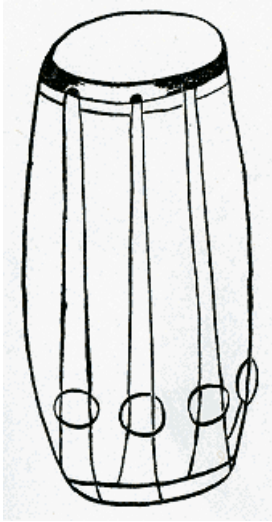


Fig. 1 Dholak



Fig. 2 Hurkā

**Plate II**

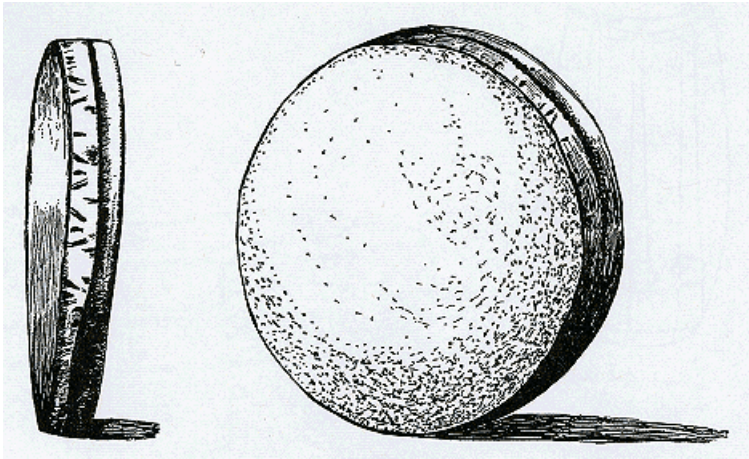


Fig. 3 Dhap

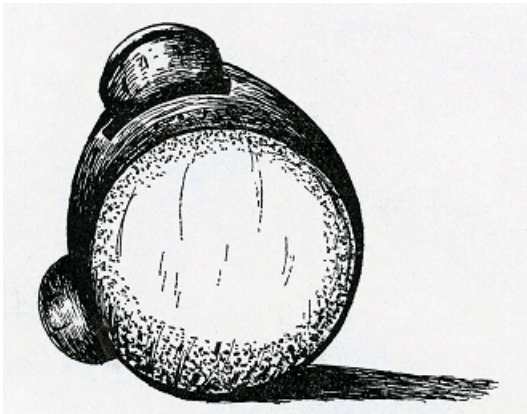


Fig. 4 Khajrī

**Plate III**

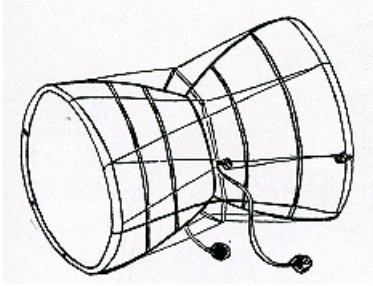


Fig. 5 Damru

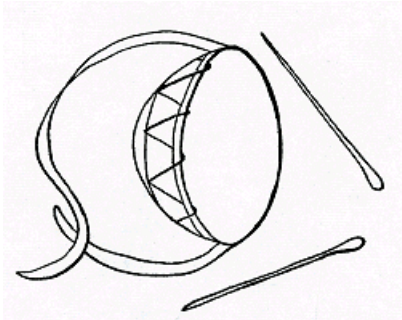


Fig. 6 Tassā

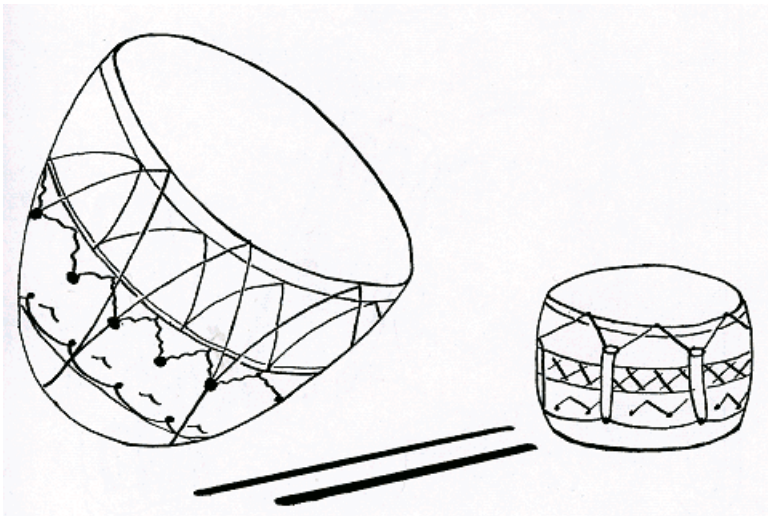


Fig. 7 Nagārā



**Plate IV**

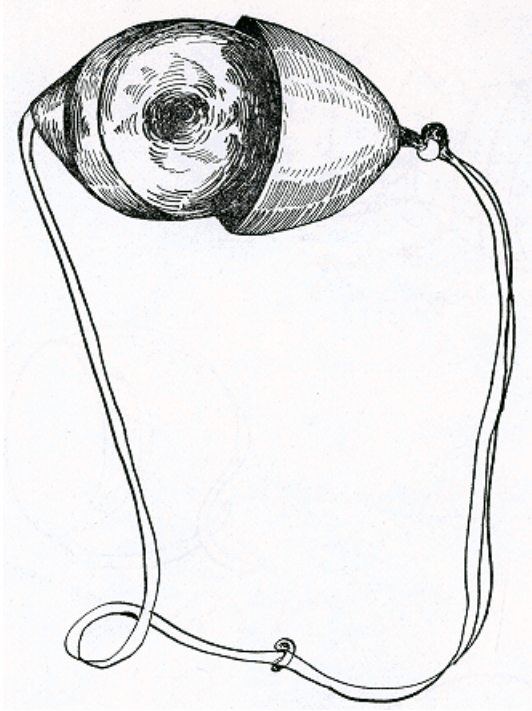


Fig. 8 Majirā

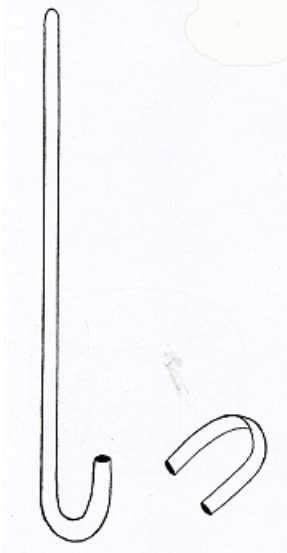


Fig. 9 Daṇḍ-tāl

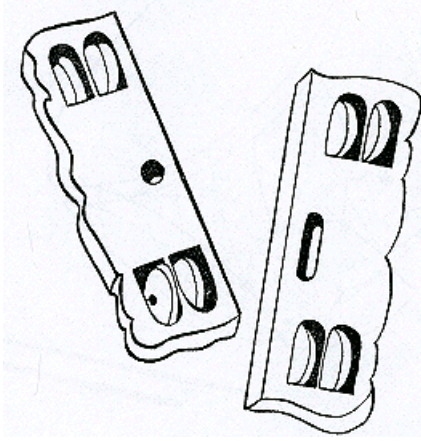


Fig. 10 Kartāl



**Plate V**

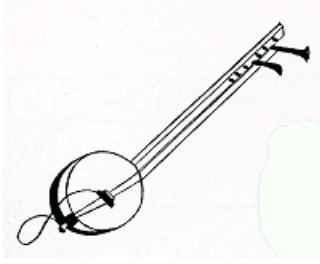


Fig. 11 Tānpūrā

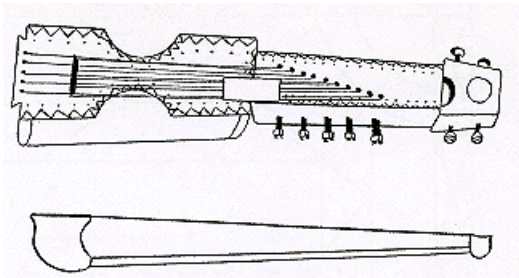


Fig. 12 Sārangi

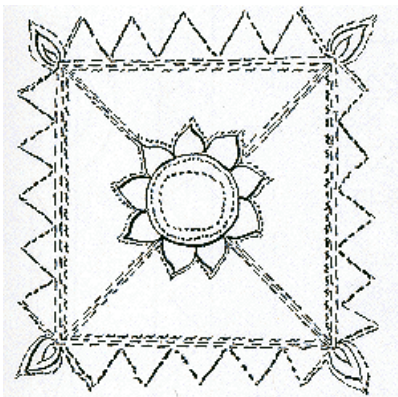


Fig. 13 The cauk of Śaṣṭhī and silpohanā

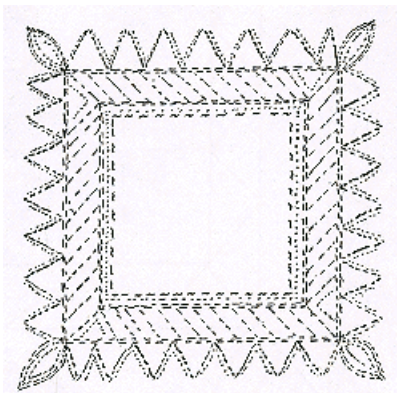


Fig. 14 The cauk of maṭkor, also known as Sītājī kā cauk or Gangājī kā cauk

Plate VI

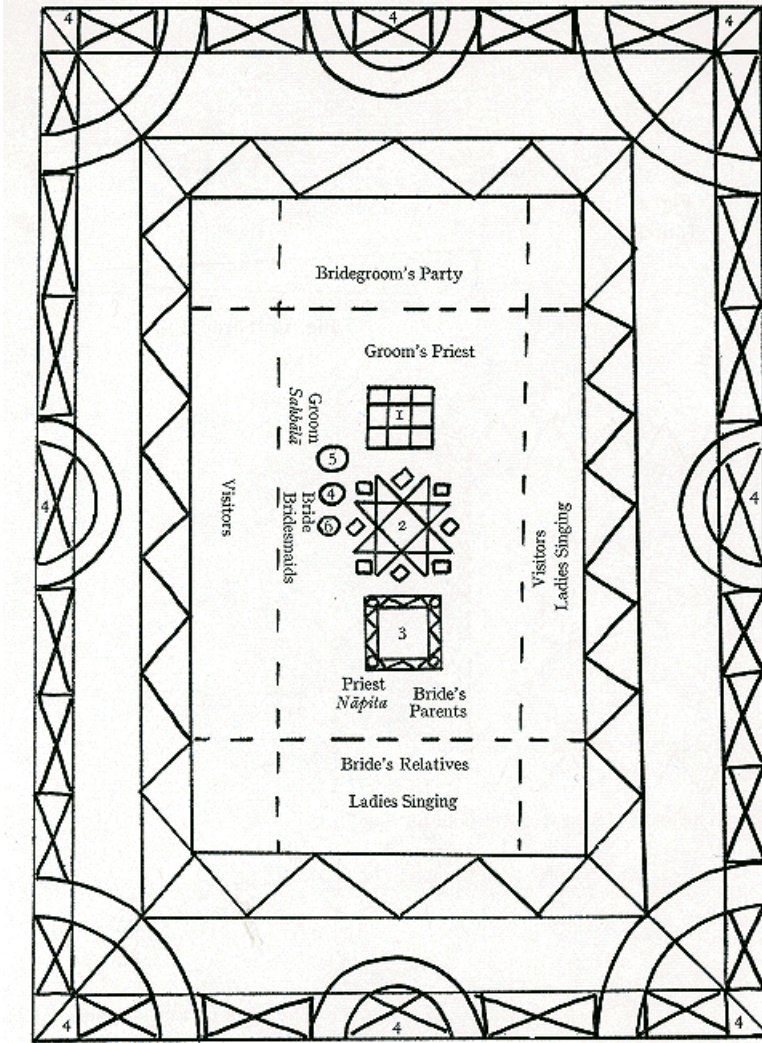


Fig. 15 Māro kā Cauk

Plate VII

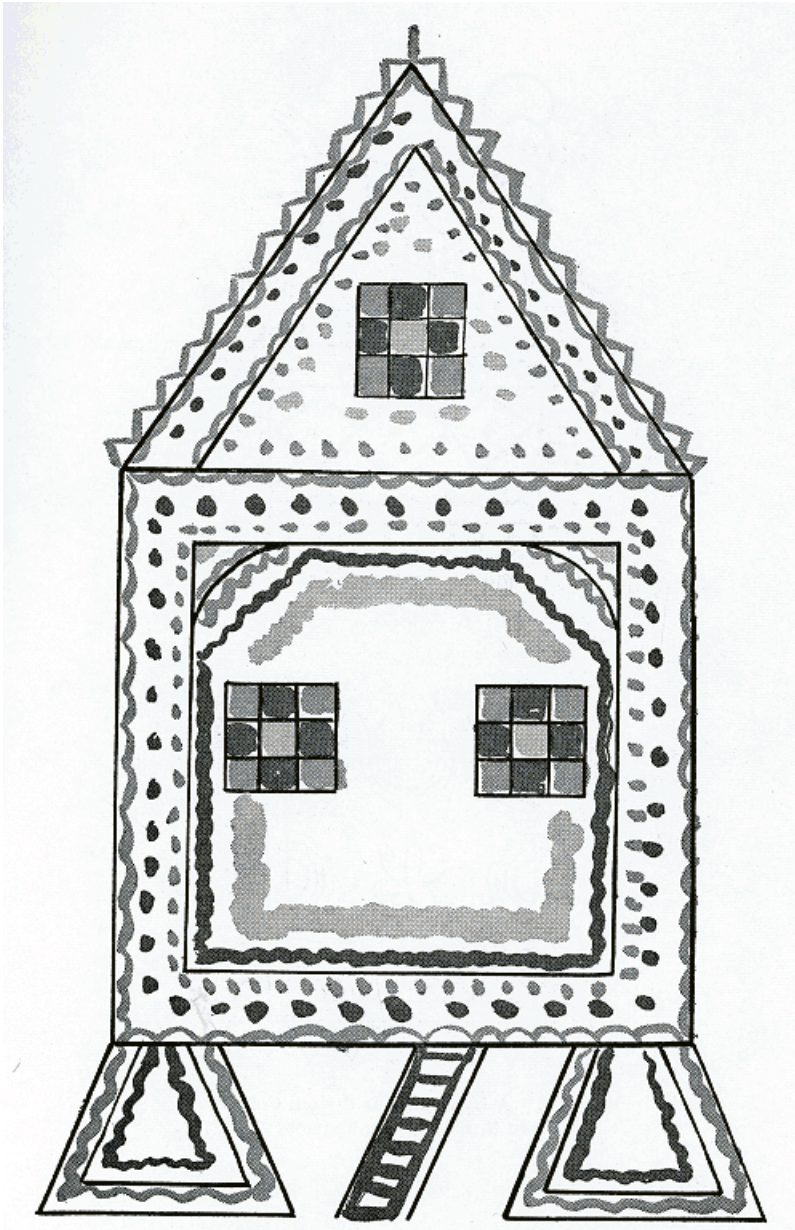


Fig. 16 A basic kohbar design. The lines are drawn in various colours



Plate VIII

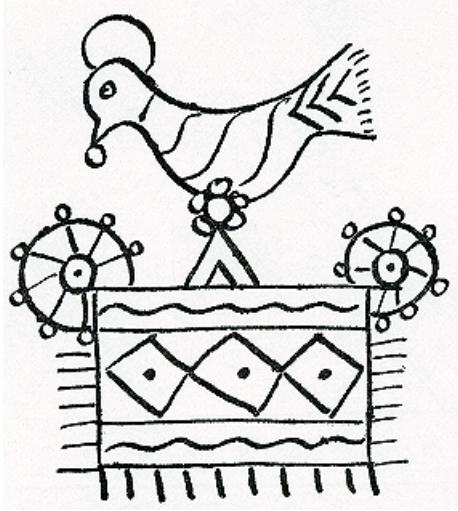


Fig. 17 Sitājī kī rasoi

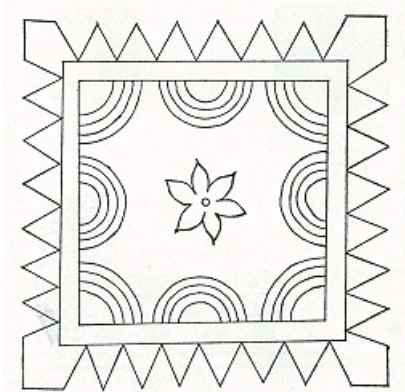


Fig. 18 A basic kohbar design. Colours are to fill the blank spaces

the other instruments. This is a pair of drums, one small and one large; the large one is placed on its side, the small one facing up. These are beaten with two sticks, the longer stick is called *ḍankā*, and the shorter one *cob*. All *nagārā* playing, analogous to *birahā* singing (see p. 29), has three movements: it starts with *caltā*, analogous to *sumiran* or the remembrance of the deity, then comes *ṭhekā*, the main subject matter analogous to *alcārī*, and then *chapkā*, the finale analogous to *jācanī* or *bisarjan*. These movements are called the hands, *hāth*, of the *nagārā*. The playing may go on for hours or all night on festive occasions such as weddings. It is the special instrument of *Ahīrs* and their related clans, the *Kurmīs*. Long epics as well as short *birahās* and other songs may be sung to the accompaniment of the *nagārā*. The beat is very powerful and heard at great distances as befitting an ancient battle drum (S. *dundubhi*). It is played by professional players who also have a small troupe, sometimes even of one man, of dancing partners called *joṛā* (companion). These companions sing and punctuate the singing with the *Ahīr* dances such as *pharavā*. There is now only one *nagārā* player in the Nickerie province but neither he nor his *joṛā* is an *Ahīr*, both having learnt the art from *Ahīr* masters who have died. There is an excellent party of genuine *nagārā* players and singers led by a proficient *Ahīr* at Meerzorg near Paramaribo, always much in demand. Some other groups try to imitate. (fig. 7).

### **Brass and Bronze (Accompaniments to the Drums)**

*Jhājh*: two brass discs, like the western cymbals, are beaten against each other to keep the beat. Mostly they are three to six inches in diameter but larger sizes are also known.

*Majīrā*: two small brass cups whose edges are beaten against each other. (fig. 8).

*Daṇḍ-tāl* or *Ḍaṇṭāl*: a forty inches long bronze stick held in one hand, curved at the bottom to rest on the ground, beaten with another small curved stick. (fig. 9).

*Kartāl*: two pairs of rectangular wooden pieces, ten and a half inches long and two and a half inches wide, with brass discs fixed inside two holes, together with a separate hole for the thumb in one piece of the pair and a larger hole for the four fingers in the

other piece; thus one pair is held in one hand and the second pair in the other hand. The two pieces of each pair are struck together so that the brass discs make the sound. (fig. 10).

*Ghughrū*: strictly not a musical instrument but a belt of anklet bells worn for dances; it is sometimes folded and held in the hand to keep the beat.

## String Instruments (Now Rare)

*Tānpūrā*: theoretically a one-stringed instrument, it sometimes has up to four strings. Its musical range is very limited, rather providing a background hum for any tune. (fig. 11).

*Sāraṅgī*: a very complicated type of violin played with a bow; there are light and heavy types. (fig. 12).

In a group various other objects may be improvised to keep the beat: two spoons, wooden ladles or such other household articles may be used.

Among the more modern groups, harmonium is the universal instrument. Various western drums (see Speckmann, fig. 9, opp. p. 144) and the maracas (*chac chac*) have also become popular.

## The Songs and their Function

The songs of the Surinam Hindus can be divided into the following categories.

### A. Songs inherited from India

1. The ritual songs and folksongs without a written text. These are the main subject of the present study.
2. The traditional songs from printed books:
  - i) songs of a religious character by authors such as Tulasīdāsa, Sūradāsa, Kabīr and other saint-poets (not included here),
  - ii) songs of a less religious nature, the epics and ballads of Gopīcand, Ālhā etc.; of these The Ālhā is almost as popular as Tulasīdāsa's work is in the religious context (n. incl.).
3. Relatively modern songs of devotion, such as various collections of *bhajans* published in India (n. incl.).

4. The songs of the Ārya-samāj movement, used by the followers of the same among whom they replace all other categories of song almost completely<sup>1</sup> (n. incl.).

*B. Local Surinam compositions, inspired by the folksongs and other types of songs mentioned above; a few examples of these are given.*

## The Ritual and the Song

The reason why authors like de Klerk have failed to take full cognisance of the ritual songs is that they have not differentiated between various levels of the ritual. Even though de Klerk does make a passing reference to the growth of a body of folklore which has become interwoven with the ritual ('51: 126), in his record of the various stages of the ritual he nowhere makes a distinction between the following levels: (1) (a) The Vedic and classical ritual in which the brahmin priest officiates and chants the ritual formulae in Sanskrit without any accompanied singing by women, and (b) where there is such singing by women in colloquial languages while the brahmin priest is at the same time chanting the Sanskrit formulae.<sup>2</sup> (2) The ritual where only women and śūdras officiate and sing appropriate songs as ritual formulae in their own language.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 These are mostly from books published in India with the exception that some Ārya-samāj songs have been locally composed in the traditional folk tunes such as *birahā* and *cautāl*. In fact the only authentic *Ahīr nagārā* player (vide p. 9) of Surinam is a member of the Ārya-samāj movement and his group sometimes sings these Ārya-samāj *birahās* and *cautāls*. As the members of this movement observe only the Vedic ritual, the ritual song in vernacular languages associated with the folk ritual has been totally rejected.
- 2 The Sanskrit formulae for (1) (a) and (b) have been adequately recorded and translated by de Klerk. The ceremonials under (b) are chiefly these: (i) some of the stages of the *janēū* ceremony (d.Kl. '51: 101-119); (ii) in the wedding, *silpohanā* (see p. 108) *kanyā-dāna* (d.Kl. '51: 163), *lājā-homa* and *parikrama* also called *bhāvar* (Ibid: 169) and perhaps *sindūra-dāna* (Ibid: 177) which does not always include a Sanskrit *mantra*.
- 3 Few instances of this type of ritual are described in the earliest Sanskrit works on domestic ritual, the *grhyasūtras*, for example, in taking the bride, after the main wedding ceremony, to a private chamber, '*anuguptāgāre*' (PGS. 1.8.10) now known as *kohbar* (vide de Klerk '51: 140 etc.).

Most of the folk ritual seems to have been developed by women and *śūdras* themselves, perhaps out of non-Aryan sources, as the study of the Vedas was forbidden to them. This form was allowed to exist side by side with the Vedic ritual. PGS. (1.8.11, 12) enjoins that in marriages and funerary rites the instruction of the village folk should be followed. According to AGS. (1.7.1) 'there are various customs from village to village and from country to country; one should observe these in the wedding'. ApGS. (1.2.15) directs that marriages should be performed according to women's instructions. Several *sūtras* repeat, 'at this point they (those who are performing the ceremony) do as women direct' (AgGS. 3.5.4; BPS. 1.3, 5, 7, 12, 13, 16; HkPS. 1.8). What were the directions given by women is now not known. The later Sanskrit works of ritual, the *paddhatīs*, composed after the 14th century A.D., assimilated much of the folk ritual into the main body of the classical ritual.

Most ritual accompanies some set formula expressing the thoughts, wishes or devotion of the performer of the ritual; this is especially so in the case of the *gṛhya*, the Hindu classical domestic ritual. Is it then possible that the numerous stages of the folk ritual [(2) above] recorded by de Klerk without any set formulae are observed silently? According to our observation they are invariably performed with songs which are thus placed almost in the same category as the Sanskrit formulae of the classical ritual.

These songs, like any other sacred formulae, serve to enhance the meaning of the ritual in several ways. Where they are sung while the priest is chanting the Sanskrit formulae [(1) (b) above] they are expressive of the thoughts and feelings of the women singers which are not the same as those of the officiating priest. For example, in the *janēū* ceremony, it must be a moment of a particular sentiment for a mother to see her son for the first time begging for alms (de Klerk '51: 114), of which song No. 13 is an adequate expression and for which no appropriate Sanskrit formula exists. Similarly the Sanskrit formulae for giving away the bride (de Klerk '51: 164 ff.) are statements of the sacred intention and the declaration of giving, but song No. 37 describes the heartfelt emotion of the father at that occasion, the trembling of hands, and the final reconciliation of the mind to a duty to which he is bound by the rules of *dharma*. Even more striking is the occasion of *bhāvar* (de Klerk '51: 169); song No. 38 expresses the thoughts of a bride while she is going around the fire - which every singing woman must remember from the day of her own marriage - her affection for her own relatives and the old relationships finally sundered as she declares in the song with the seventh round, 'now I belong to another'. It is thus clear that without the songs, important thoughts of a large segment of the participants in a ceremony would remain mute; the singing by women and chanting by the priest together complete the ritual. The songs cannot be



dismissed as ritual formulae on the grounds that they express human emotions instead of a religious sentiment: much of the wedding ritual in Sanskrit also expresses human emotions, for example the touching of the heart (de Klerk '51: 176) of the bride; for these occasions there has been no need to develop women's song formulae in the vernacular.

The songs sung with much of the non-Sanskrit ritual performed by women alone are even more serious in character, with less appeal to human emotions and a more evidently religious sentiment. The *sohars*, for example, though expressive of the emotion of joy at the occasion of childbirth, are more of a thanksgiving to the deities than a mere celebration. The *maṭkor* (song Nos 19-22) songs are formulae for the worship of the Mother goddess embodied as Earth and in other forms. The song at *silpohanā* (song No. 25) invites ancestral and other spirits to accept offerings and to participate in the wedding. If all these songs were excluded, the meaning of the ritual would be obscured, if not totally lost.

The Sanskrit authors as well as the singers are aware of the ritualistic power of these songs as they refer to them as *maṅgala* (*Vīramitrodaya*, *Saṃskāra-prakāśa*: 828) (song No. 1), auspicious, which means that the songs are capable of bringing well-being, spiritual and material, to the singers, sacrificers and participants of the ceremonial, by the power inherent in the word as is the case with any other ritual formula such as, for instance, the comparable Sanskrit *maṅgala-śloka* to be sung by women at the *sindūra-dāna* according to *Saṃskāra-gaṇapati* (: 287).

Outside the domestic ritual, the songs such as *pacrā* (Nos. 61-64) are the only form of dedication to little godlings and village deities such as *Ḍīh*, to whom no invocations and *stotras* are addressed in Sanskrit. The *pacrās* sung to Durgā or Kālī also are justifiable as ritual formulae in the vernacular on the ground that to feel the full hypnotic effect leading to a trance (*Vide* p. 26) the singers must sing in their own language even if Sanskrit *stotras*, inaccessible to these people, are known elsewhere. Nor do these *stotras* always embody or emphasize certain aspects which are very meaningful to the folk mind. For instance, there are no *stotras* to the terrible aspect of Gaṅgā comparable to our song No. 57.

That to the folk mind many of these songs in the spoken languages are indeed equivalent to *mantras*, as stated above, is not

debatable. Some of the magical ceremonial such as *jādū ṭonā* (Song No. 65) is also known as *jantar-mantar* (S. *yantra*, a ritualistic design; *mantra*, a sacred formula). To cure a malady by the application of such formulae is called *chū-mantar karnā*, from the exclamation *chū* (a syllable similar to the tantric *bījas* without a lexicographical meaning) at the end of the incantation;<sup>1</sup> although we translate it there as 'touch!', it is not always applicable.

## The Cauk

The ritualistic nature of the songs becomes still more evident when we consider them with reference to the *cauk* designs.

The symbolic design (S. *yantra* or *maṇḍala*) has been studied in detail by authors like Avalon, Tucci, Pott etc. but only in the context of yoga and tantra tradition. That the *grhya* ritual has its own designs seems to have escaped their attention.

The *cauk* (song Nos. 23, 24; cf. de Klerk '51: 35, 214) is referred to in the *sūtras* as *caturasra sthaṇḍila*, a square raised spot which must be smeared or plastered with cowdung - *gomayena ... upalipya* (JGS. 2.8; AgGS. 1. 7.1; PGS. 1.1.2) - from which the Surinam Hindu term *aipan* (S. *upalepana*) must have originated. Sketching of marks or signs is referred to: *ullikhya* (PGS. 1.1.2), *lakṣaṇam ullikhya* (AgGS. 1.7.1.) and these marks are called *maṇḍala*;<sup>2</sup> in AgGS. 2.6.7 it also appears that square, triangular and circular designs were known.

Since the ceremonial under examination is not identical with that of the *sūtras* it is difficult to state whether the *cauk* designs related to our songs are descended from these *grhyasūtra* traditions or from the *Śakti* cults of Mother worship. It is, nevertheless, certain that like any other *maṇḍala* they are graphic representations of a deity, supposed to generate a mystic force drawing the deity to accept the singers' invitation to come, accept worship, and

1 Other authors are aware of this *mantra* nature of similar songs elsewhere, for example T.L. Śāstrī ('62: 68-71) gives '*mantras*' in Maithilī for curing snake bite and exorcising ghosts etc.

2 In popular terminology they are not called *maṇḍala* but only *cauk*. The closest we come to the term *maṇḍala* is in *māro* (song Nos. 24, 26, 40; cf. de Klerk '51: 140, 146 etc.). The connection seems obvious: *maṇḍapa*, the temporary canopy for a ritual (also the hall of a temple), [*mandira* (temple)], *maṇḍala*, a sanctifying and decorative design such as the ground plan of a *māro*, *maṇi*, a jewel, that which decorates. Song No. 26 says that the *māro* has been inlaid with the designs made in jewels.

abide with the worshippers until given a *visarjana*, bidden leave. They also sanctify the ground, converting it into a sacred place for the duration of the ceremony.

- i) Some designs are drawn while the singing is in progress. These are:
  - a) *Chaṭṭhī kā cauk* (the design of *Ṣaṣṭhī*)<sup>1</sup> (see fig. 13), for the ritual of which see de Klerk ('51: 98-99) and p. 20 on *sohar*.
  - b) The *cauk* drawn at *maṭkor* which may be square (fig. 14) or merely a circular spot plastered with cowdung. It is called *Sītājī kā cauk* or sometimes *Gangājī kā cauk*. See also pp. 27, 36 and de Klerk ('51: 138, 139).

The clay lamp, seven *ṭīkās* and offerings as described by de Klerk for both (a) and (b) are placed *in* the designs.

- ii) The *silpohanā* song is sung after the design (fig. 13)<sup>2</sup> has been drawn. The offerings for the spirits are placed in the design.
- iii) The designs not drawn with a song but mentioned in the songs and sanctifying the areas where much of the ceremonial and singing takes place:
  - a) The design of the *māro*, i.e., the ground plan of the wedding tent (fig. 15) (song Nos. 24, 26, 40).
  - b) The designs drawn on the wall in the *kohbar*, the private chamber (de Klerk: '51: 140). There are two types of *kohbar* designs (figures 16 and 17): one has a triangle on a square and the other is a square with decorative triangular patterns all around it. Inside these basic designs various pictographs are drawn, such as *navagrahas*, a couple, various household objects, flowers, trees, even the name of the local village shop, and a *hāsuṭī*, a kind of necklace, symbolising the bond of loyalty between the couple. These signs of happiness and prosperity are, so to say, drawn to the home of the newly wedded pair by the sheer force of the design which probably also represents the home, with stairs leading into it.

1 For other designs of *Ṣaṣṭhī*, see Briggs ('20: figs. 1 and 2, opp. P. 66), Fuchs ('50: 109); and a different representation of *Ṣaṣṭhī*, *Sūryavarṃśī* ('62: 90), Mookerjee ('46: plate XVII).

2 These designs are now very rare; a few older women were able to draw these for us, full of complaint against the 'ignorant younger generation'.

The designs are drawn with white flour with the following exceptions: The *kuṇḍa sarvatobhadra vedi* and the *navagrahas*<sup>1</sup> have appropriate colours filled in with coloured rice grains. The *kohbar* basic design is drawn in red or yellow; there are no rules about the colours of the pictographs inside.

For the sanctity of the tattoo designs see p. 26.

## Songs as Ritual Formulae

The songs, because of many factors, differ in ritualistic value as ritual formulae.

I) First there are those which invariably accompany a particular ritual action, for example those sung at *silpohanā* (song No. 25), *imlī ghoṭāī* (No. 29) or *bhāvar* (No. 38) (also see note on No. 38). They are never sung on any other occasion and are not replaced by any other song on the specified occasion. They directly convey the meaning and purpose of the particular ritual.

II) (a) In the second type there is a greater choice: for example there are numerous *sohars* expressing various ideas connected with childbirth; any of these may be sung as the fancy takes the singers, much like *bhajans* in a devotional session, or hymns in a Christian service. They may be sung before, *during*, and after the ritual action and convey the general mood of the occasion. They are not sung on any other occasion, for example a *sohar* is never heard at a wedding.

(b) Some songs may be sung on a particular ceremonial occasion much like the (a) but without any ritual action whatsoever. For example a *sohar ulārā* has no accompanying ritual action but serves as a transition from the ritual *sohar* proper to *caṭnī*.

(c) Some songs may be sung on a specific ritual occasion but also on other occasions, for example a *caṭnī* which serves as a transition from the seriousness of the ceremonial mood to the frolicsome aspects of ordinary life and may be sung on occasions other than childbirth, such as a wedding.

III) Then we come to those songs which, or whose predecessors, at one time may have had a ritualistic significance but now are not sung with an action consciously accepted by the participants as

1 For these classical designs the reader is referred to *Sarvadeva-pratiṣṭhā prakāśa* of Caturthīlāla Gauḍa and the ritual text books listed by de Klerk ('51: 126).

a ritual. For example the swing, *jhūlā* (song Nos. 55, 56), was of great importance in some rituals<sup>1</sup> (Gonda, '43: 348 ff.), it is now only a form of frolic and sport. The *cautāls* also seem to be connected with the *vasanta rāga* songs sung at the worship of Rati and Kāma in ancient times (see *Varṣakṛtyadīpaka*: 288-289). Because these songs are sung at those festivals, which are of religious importance, with fixed rituals, in the annual cycle of life, they may be safely called ritual songs for all practical purposes.

There are also some types of songs which remain on the borderline, for instance the songs sung, with much shedding of tears, at the farewell of a bride (song No. 42), or the spontaneous outburst of women in singsong while crying around the bier of the dead. Even though marriage and death are serious ceremonial occasions, how ritualistic is the crying cannot be determined. Once again because of the nature of the occasion and a fixed place assigned to the song in it we regard it as a ritual song.

There is a similar problem about the tattoo songs. The tattoo design is ritualistic and sacred (see p. 26) but the songs accompanying the action of tattooing, only one of which is printed here, seem to be only work songs shedding no light on the sanctity or otherwise on the meaning of the design.

The degree of ritual sanctity of a song may also be indicated to a certain degree by the type of tune or style of singing and the attitude of the singers. For example (I) and (II) (a) are sung in a serious tune, almost like a chant, with a grave attitude not interspersed with laughter and jokes, but as the singers move towards (II) (b) and (c) the tunes become more lyrical and the mood more frolicsome.

There is, however, one exception to this: the *gāṇī* songs which have a deprecatory or openly sexual theme, or are parodies of other songs. These are the 'impudent' and 'improper' songs Speckmann must have had in mind (see p. 2). Even though they are accompanied with much laughter and, sometimes, perhaps, gestures of a sexual nature, they remain sacred ritual songs as

1 Kosambi ('62: 80) says; 'At Athens, the Vintage Festival was marked by girls swinging from the branches of Erigone's pine tree on rope swings; this should explain how Urvaśī appeared to Purūravas as *antarikṣa-prā* (*RV.* x.95.17) just before the end. Her swinging high through the air was as much part of the ritual fertility sacrifice as the chant and the dance'.

they have a fixed place at certain stages of the ritual. Also, in the view of anthropologists such songs in other cultures not only serve the purpose of cementing kinship (Greenway, '64: 61)-appropriate for the occasion of a marriage - but their singing is also a form of fertility rite (Gonda, '43: 351-352; Kosambi '62: 10).

## Date and Authorship

The tradition of singing on ceremonial occasions goes back to the earliest period of the Vedic Ritual.<sup>1</sup> In the *mahāvratā* ceremony (*Taittirīya Saṁhitā* VII.5.10.1) circa 1,000 B.C. women sang and danced (Gonda, '43: 346 ff). Likewise in the Vedic *śimantonnayana saṁskāra* (PGS. 1.17) the singing of songs of praise, *gāthās*, on the banks of a river was required. The singing at childbirth is described in some manuscripts of *Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa*<sup>2</sup> (some time between 300 B.C. to 200 A.D.). *Kālidāsa* (*Kumārasambhavam* 7.90) in the 4th century A.D. mentions singing in vernacular languages at the marriage ceremonial. Similarly the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (X. 15. 5, 12) refers to songs at Kṛṣṇa's birth. The *Śiva Purāṇa* (*Rudra Saṁhitā* 3.50) describes that after bringing the newly wedded Śiva and Pārvatī into the house from the wedding canopy, and performing the popular customs, *lokācāra* (verses 13-25), women sing songs addressed to Śiva which are teasing and lascivious in character, like the present-day *gālīs*. *Svāhā*, the consort of the fire-god, *Agni*, justifies this (verse 37): *sthiro bhava mahādeva strīṇām vacasi sāmpratam; vivāhe vyavahāroṣṭi purandhrīṇām pragalhatā* 'Be steady, Mahādeva, regarding these verses of the women; it is customary for women to become immodest at wedding times'.

The *paddhatis* (vide note 3 on p. 11), while assimilating much of the folk ritual with the classical Ritual, enjoin folk singing especially by women as part of their traditional ceremonial; e.g. *brāhmaṇāḥ sūryā-sūktam paṭheyuḥ; striyo maṅgalagītīḥ kuryuḥ* (*Vīramitrodaya, Saṁskāraprakāśa*, 828). 'Let the brāhmaṇas recite the *sūrya* hymn and let the women (at the same time) sing *maṅgala*, auspicious, songs', and (*Saṁskāra-ratna-mālā* pt. 1: 545) *dvijā mantrapāṭham purandhryō maṅgalagītāni kuryuḥ* 'Let the twice-born recite *mantras* and women sing *maṅgala* songs.'

1 For details, see Gonda: Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung und Wesen des indischen Dramas.

2 Note 509 on *Bāla Kāṇḍa* I.17.10 in the Baroda edition.

Tulasīdāsa in the 16th century recognised this singing coupled with popular customs, *loka rīti* (*Rāmacaritamānas: Bāla Kāṇḍa* 103; 263.I; 319; 320; 322-324; 326; 327 etc.). It is possible that he incorporated some of the folk material in his own work and gave it a literary polish; otherwise we cannot account for an isolated work like *Rāmalalā Nahachū* in *sohar* metre not found elsewhere in the literary tradition. Similarly *Sūradāsa*, his contemporary, took account of this type of singing (*Sūrasāgara*: 9.449; 10.658 etc.), calling it *maṅgala* singing (ibid.: 9.461, 468; 10.642) and also refers to *gālīs* (10.622). Even Kabīr speaks of the *maṅgala* singing by women on the occasion of marriages (*Padāvali* 1; *Kabīra Granthāvali* P. 78).

Can the authorship of individual songs be ascertained? After the *bhaṇita* verses of Jayadeva, the author of the Sanskrit *Gītagovinda* in which each poem includes the author's name in the last or the penultimate verse, there has been a tradition in Indian literature to include the author's name in a similar way. In our ritual songs there are some examples of this: for instance where the theme is based on Kṛṣṇa's life, especially in a *sohar*, the author is said to be *Sūradāsa* and where Rāma's life is the theme the author is said to be *Tulasīdāsa*. These songs, however, are not found in the works of these authors. It has been a practice of many less known Indian authors to attribute their works to more celebrated names and in the case of current singers the habit is a form of dedication to *Tulasīdāsa* and *Sūradāsa*. This dedication also gives the song more prestige and the ritualistic power of *maṅgala*. In general, however, the authors of most songs are not known except for a few modern non-ritual songs (see song Nos. 45, 90, 99, 100) The songs are a product of gradual growth in an oral tradition.

## The Types of the Ritual Song

The ritual songs are divided according to the ritual occasions on which they are sung. This division is traditionally followed by the singers also.

## The Songs of the Life Cycle

The *sohars*: sung by women at childbirth. When a birth is announced in the community the women come round in groups and start singing as they approach within the earshot of the house.

The ritual on that occasion (de Klerk pp. 98-100) and the drawing of the *chaṭṭhī kā cauk* (vide p. 15 above) is invariably accompanied by singing. The *sohar* tells a story of, or describes a situation generally with a theme woven around, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Śiva, Gaṅgā etc., or a divining of an auspicious dream, or some other legendary or supernatural subject. Together with thanksgiving to the deity concerned, there is often a description of how the child is obtained through the grace of a god or a goddess, or through the observance of some form of ritual, worship, fast or ascetic practice. The singing goes on up to the sixth or, in some families, the twelfth day after the birth.

*Sohar ulārā*: Although these are lyrics also with themes woven around Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, and other legendary figures, the emphasis here is not so much on the religious aspect as on the simple human sentiment and the celebration. They are sung after the *sohars* to change the mood, as a transition to the *sohar caṭnīs* (vide p. 16 above).

*Sohar caṭnī*: are also lyrics but of a saucy or romantic nature, perhaps to celebrate the union of the lovers which has brought forth the child. These complete the round of singing at childbirth (vide p. 16).

*Mūṛan* (S. *muṇḍana*): the women start singing as they come near the place of the ceremony of shaving a child's first hair which is often done at home but sometimes by a river or by the sea. The singing continues while the barber shaves the child's head.<sup>1</sup>

1 Even though the *grhyasūtras* (e.g. GGS. 2.9.10 ff.) enjoin the recitation of *mantras*, the ceremony is now performed - as de Klerk also notes ('51: 100) - without a priest and consequently without Sanskrit formulae. *Nāpita*, the barber, alone is the 'priest' of this ceremony. De Klerk describes his special duties in the various stages of the entire Hindu ritual ('51: 35, 97, 100, 104, 137, 138, 141, 142 etc.). Speckmann ('65: 139) confirms our own observation that in Surinam the persons carrying out these duties are no longer of the barber caste as such but belong to a new professional group, still called *nāū*. The greatest custodian of the women's ritual songs is *nāunī*, the barber woman. She directs and guides the women in the matter of their ritual and the attendant song, and receives some gifts in return (see song No. 32). In the same song she carries out the invitations (cp. de Klerk on *newtā*, '51: 137) for a ceremony. In song No. 15 the *nāpita* is referred to as '*nāūā brāhmaṇa*' as he goes to negotiate a marriage with the family of a prospective bridegroom on behalf of a client with an unmarried daughter. For his position as a journeyman see Wisser ('36: 37-40) and Lewis ('58: 56-59). There is ample material to explain the history and causes of the barber's rise to a semi-priestly position but that is a subject for another paper. It is essential to include Beidelman because his work on the Hindu Jajmani System is now recognised as more authentic and up-to-date.



### ***The Wedding Songs***

Sung by women; these have been recorded for thirty-four out of the sixty stages of marriage ceremonial enumerated by de Klerk ('51: 124-200) and summarised by Speckmann ('65: 136-146). (See pages 62-95).

### ***The Death Songs***

These are of two types. First are the dirges or lamentations sung by women, who come around the house in groups upon hearing the news of the death. They start crying as they approach the house, and burst into singsong which becomes louder and more hysterical around the bier. For obvious social and aesthetic reasons these dirges could not be recorded. They are forms of address to the dead in a manner somewhat like this: 'Oh my brother, why have you gone away, leaving me alone? On whom shall I lavish my affection from now on? Whom shall my children now call their *māmū* (maternal uncle)<sup>1</sup>? - and so on, together with the good qualities of the person remembered with great exaggeration. Then there come the songs sung by men during the night of keeping a 'wake' (*jagrātā*) after the burial.<sup>2</sup> These, mostly of religious nature, are as follows (i) *Nirgun* (S. *nirguṇa*), sung before midnight, stating the transience of the world and affirming the need for devotion to God. These songs are in Kabīr tradition. (ii) *Caubolā*, sung around midnight, dealing with some legendary theme of a death, for example the story of Hariścandra, the truthful king who had to become a cremation ground assistant. (iii) *Sargun* (S. *saguṇa*),<sup>3</sup> the songs of a general religious nature, with a little less pessimism about the transient nature of the world but still a continued need for devotion - sung after midnight. (iv) *Parātī* (S. *prabhāta* or *prātaḥ*), sung at dawn. These are calls to wake up, usually addressed to a god such as Kṛṣṇa, somewhat like the *suprabhātam stotras* of the Sanskrit ritual with which a day starts in a temple.

The time periods of the night for singing the *nirgun* etc. are

1 *O hamār bhayavā, tu ham ke chori ke kāhe cal gayelo. Ab ham ke kai itana pyār karī. Hamār larikan ab ke kai apan māmū kahi kai pukārī.*

2 Cremation is not practised among the Surinam Hindus.

3 Their theme is not necessarily confined to the subjects of the Hindi *saguṇa* literature; they are, in fact, difficult to define.

only tentative and are not strictly followed. All these songs may also be sung on other religious occasions such as *kathās* (vide de Klerk '51: 62).

### The Songs of the Annual Cycle

During the *Phagwā* festival songs are sung mainly by men but sometimes, separately, by women, to celebrate the coming of spring, with the themes of colours, youth, love and romance especially with reference to Kṛṣṇa and a little less to Rāma. Other religious or jocular themes may also be rendered. The singing begins on the day of *vasanta-pancamī* in the month of *māgha* (January-February) and continues throughout *phālguna* (February-March), until the days of *holī*, and *dhulaḥḍī* or *dhūriwār* on the 1st of the *caitra* (March-April) month. Although the priests describe the *holī* to be in memory of Prahlāda's godly triumph through the ordeal of burning, the songs preserve the character of the spring festival and have hardly any reference to the Prahlāda story. De Klerk ('51: 218-221) has described the ritual on this occasion in satisfactory detail but with an undue emphasis on the priest's role in the matter of singing. Apart from the singing processions visiting various homes, the singing takes place in any home or in a temple or any place available, usually in the evenings. Although there are many types of songs sung at this time the singing is referred to collectively as *cautāl* because the *cautāl* is the most prominent of all the songs of the *phagwā* festival. The singing party divides itself into two lines, facing each other, with a great many *ḍholaks*, *jhājh*, *majīrā*, *kartāl* etc. The same line is repeated by both parties several times and the singing is full of great gusto. One *cautāl* may take up to half-an-hour to complete. Then comes a *jhūmar* or an *ulārā* - the lyrics with dance rhythms - thus completing the cycle, when another *cautāl* begins. This may go on for hours and perhaps the whole night through. The other types of songs at this time are *horī* or *holī*, *cāitā*, *dhamār*, *rājpūtī* (with a theme of bravery), *belvārā*, *baisvārā*, *bhartāl*, *lej* etc. They differ from *cautāl* mainly in length, rhythm, rhyme, the style and tune of singing but not in subject matter.

Special mention must be made of the *kabīrs* (not related to the saint-poet of that name), which are short two-line pieces, sometimes even *dohās* borrowed from literary authors like Tulasīdāsa, in-

roduced with a singing shout of *sunā lo merī kabīr* (Hear my kabīr!) and closed with *jai bolo ramaiyā bābā kī* (Shout 'victory' to Rāma!).

The *jogīrā* is very similar to the *kabīr* except that it is introduced with *jogījī sa ra ra ra*.

These may be sung at any time during the festival but especially after the burning of the *holī* and on the day of *dhulāḥḍī*. They are not necessarily obscene songs as de Klerk states but may express anything in a short and pithy form (*vide* song No. 54).

*During the Rainy Season:* the month of *śrāvaṇa* (July-August) is the occasion for singing *jhūlā* (swing) and *kajrī* songs celebrating the season which is also the traditional time of a married woman's visit to her parental home, or meeting with her brother if he visits her in her marital home. All these themes are clearly depicted in the songs. The *jhūlā* songs also refer to the swing of Kṛṣṇa which he enjoys with Rādhā and Rukmiṇī. Sometimes the swing of Rāma and Sītā is also mentioned. The *jhūlā* songs may also be sung to rock a child's cradle, then the theme may be the child Rāma or child Kṛṣṇa.

*Marsiyā* and *jharrā* songs are sung at the Muslim festival of *muharram* in which the Hindus, especially women, also participate (*vide* de Klerk '51: 221; Speckmann '65: 30-34). The *marsiyās* are dirges or lamentations commemorating the martyrdom of the brothers Hasan and Husain at *Qarbalā* in 680 A.D.<sup>1</sup> The women make offerings of *lapsī*, a semiliquid sweetmeat, and other sweets as well as money, placing these in the *tāziā*, a stylized and very elaborately adorned representation of the bier of the martyrs; at the same time they make a *manautī*, a wish. The *jharrās*, also on the same topic, are sung with the *jharrā* dance which is similar to *daṇḍa-rāsaka* except that in the place of sticks the dancers hold broom-like objects made of the fibre of a tree. The dancers move in a circle, singing and keeping the beat by each dancer hitting his 'broom' on that of his neighbours on both sides.<sup>2</sup>

1 For further details see Pelly (1879).

2 Not only does the similarity of the *jharrā* with *daṇḍa-rāsaka* show a Hindu influence but a comparison of the songs with some of the Hindu songs also confirms this, for example, see notes on song Nos. 59A and 60A. It would appear that some Hindus converted to Islam adjusted the Hindu motif to the context of their new religion. The homage paid to the *pīrs* (Muslim saints and *paigambars* (prophets)) in *sumirans* (song Nos. 80G, 99A) is another example of mutual exchange between the two religions.

## Other Ritual Songs

These may be sung at a fixed time of the year or at any other time whenever the relevant worship is performed by the devotees. The occasions for some of these have been listed by de Klerk but his description of some of the details being somewhat incomplete we give it here in greater detail.

*Gangā-snāna*: on the full moon of the *kārtika* month (October-November) (de Klerk '51: 215-218) as well as on any Monday or Friday people, especially women, go to bathe in, and worship, a river or the sea as a form of Gangā. Several *tīrthas*, places for sacred baths, have been built in Surinam. Before leaving the home for the worship and the bath a woman may make her wish, *manautī*, in sentences such as: 'Oh Mother Gangā, I am making this offering and worshipping you. Do fulfil my wish', which may be a wish for a son or some other form of happiness or comfort. On reaching the river or the seashore they throw some copper coins in the river, together with flowers and a *piyarī*, yellow headscarf which must be five, seven, nine or any odd number plus a quarter yards long. Wooden slippers, *kharāū*, may also be offered and a pitcher is repeatedly mentioned in the songs (*vide* song No. 3). The songs are sung all the while to adore both the terrible (song No. 57) and the benevolent aspects of the deity (*vide* p. 36). After the worship a story regarding the powers of Gangā is told by an older woman.

The *Gangā-snāna* alone of the *vratas* - women's special days of fasting and worshipping a particular deity - seems to have survived in Surinam.

*Pacrā* songs are sung at the worship and in honour of the godlings described by de Klerk ('51: 86-88), particularly *Ḍīh*, *Śītalā* and, when worshipped by non-brahmins, Kālī Māī or Durgā. Any person reputed to have the power of communicating with the deity may act as a priest, called *ojhā*.

The *Ḍīh* or *Ḍeohār* is worshipped by taking subscriptions from the entire village, as a communal, *pancāyatī*, and not a personal worship because he is the guardian of the entire village.<sup>1</sup> The usual time is the month of *caitra* (March-April) during the bright

1 He seems to be connected with the Persian *dehāt*. See also Crooke (1894: 88). It is said that not even wind may pass in and out of the village without his permission.

fortnight after *Rāma-navamī*, the birthday of Rāma, but the rite may also be performed at the times of plague, cholera, smallpox, floods etc. An area under a tree, preferably a *pīpal*, by the road leading into the village is cleared. A square raised spot, *cautrā* (S. *catvara*) is plastered with cowdung and mud. Four red, triangular flags are placed in the four corners and a white canopy is tied to the flagpoles. Under the canopy a swing or a hammock is tied symbolising the seat or the chariot of the deity. Since *Ḍīh* is said to have no form, there are no images. The person acting as a priest or a priestess prays like this: 'Oh *Ḍīh Bābā*, may there be no suffering accruing to the people of this village. Be gracious unto us and guard and protect us. Keep watch over this village.' Then the worshippers, led by the *ojhā* beat the *ḍholak* and sing *pacrā* songs while offering *lapsī*, milk, betel nut, betel leaf, nutmeg, flowers, rum or other intoxicants, eggs etc. A cock, a pig or a he-goat - but never a female animal - may also be sacrificed. After the worship the four flags are taken and made to fly on the four corners of the village to ward off the malevolent forces and spirits.

Sometimes the worship of *Śītalā* and her other six sisters<sup>1</sup> may also be combined with that of *Ḍīh*, and then the *pacrās* are sung in their praise. Sometimes the worshippers, after making the animal sacrifice to *Ḍīh*, may proceed to a bloodless sanskritised worship, a *sāttvikī pūjā* of Durgā or Kālī performed by a brahmin priest; otherwise an *ojhā* officiates. Then the animal sacrifice is compulsory.<sup>2</sup> There are four singers and one dancer, a man or a woman. The *ojhā* hands a metal plate (*thālī*) for *āratī* (worship with light) to the dancer. The *thālī* contains saffron-coloured (with turmeric) or plain rice grains - called *akṣata* -, sugar, yoghurt, vermilion (*sindūr*), betel nut, betel leaf etc., and burning camphor or a lighted cotton wick in a clay lamp full of oil. The dancer dances and does the *āratī*, moving the *thālī* clockwise around the visage of the image. At the same time a male animal, such as a pig or a

- 1 According to our informants the names of these, a little different from those enumerated by de Klerk ('51: 87), are: *Sītalā*, *Chuṭkī* or *Kheṇī Kūdni*, *Phūlmatī*, *Dhamsā*, *Ākāsgāminī* or *Jogjatī*, *Masānī* and *Koṛhīniyā*. It is said that a king had seven daughters who suffered from these forms of afflictions and were deified.
- 2 We were informed by an *ojhā* that some years ago when it was suggested that a pumpkin may be cut instead of an animal there was a great deal of opposition to the suggestion.

he-goat, is sacrificed. While the dancer dances, the four singers lead the worshippers in singing *pacrā*, and beat the *ḍholak*. The *ojhā* falls into an hypnotic trance, and is now said to be possessed by the goddess. He throws his limbs about, shakes his head, dances, jumps and shouts. When the singing has thus shown its effect, that is to say, the goddess has arrived in response to the worshippers' invitation, it stops and those present gather around the *ojhā* who sits down and serves as an oracle, answering questions and granting wishes. Slowly the effect wears off. The meat is shared among the devotees.

*Jādū ṭonā*: these are incantations for various magical purposes such as a headache, fever, jaundice, snakebite etc., finding lost property, gaining someone's love, or power over a person, destroying an enemy, brushing off the effects of evil eye (song No. 65) and so forth (*vide* p. 14). The ritual action for each of these is peculiarly its own, handed down among the *ojhās* in an oral tradition. Several of these incantations have been recorded.

The *bhajans*: these may be sung at any religious or social occasion without a fixed time. Much like hymns, they address or praise various aspects or incarnations of God. They may also be religious exhortations to follow the way of God in order to terminate the painful cycle of birth, death and *karma-saṁsāra*.

The *godnā* or tattoo song comes into a special category. Strictly a work song of the *manihār* or *naṭuā* who used to go around the village shouting the offer of his services, it is connected with a marriage ritual. Almost all the women singers, especially the older ones, had tattoo designs on their arms, and sometimes chest, as well as little spots on the cheeks or the forehead etc. It was stated that in their young days, no one in the husband's home would receive food or water from their hands if they were not tattooed. After the marriage, the bride accompanies her husband only for a few days and then returns to the parental home. It is then that the bride's mother took her on to her lap and had a design tattooed on her right arm; on her return to the husband's home the tattoo was done on the left arm. It was believed that if the mother has her daughter thus tattooed in her lap they would meet again in heaven. There are many kinds of tattoo designs, such as the elephant with a *howdā*, a crown, and so forth but the most ceremonial one is known as *Sitājī kī rasoī*, *Sitā's kitchen* (fig. 18). Perhaps this design

symbolises a woman's role in the home although why the design as such (see fig. 6) is given this name is not clear unless it has some connection with *Sītājī kā cauk* (vide p. 15), meaning to express that the purpose for which the mother goddess had been invited in the form of the earth at the beginning of the wedding ceremonial has now been fulfilled and that she now leaves her stamp on the newly married woman. The songs sung while tattooing are of several types; some are *gāṭīs*, perhaps as an aid to the newly wed woman's fertility while others (see song No. 75) tell a story the theme of which is the irrevocability of a marriage at any price, which makes the tattoo, again, something like a stamp of marriage, to sanctify her womanhood so that food and water may be accepted from her hand in the husband's home.

### The Caste Songs and Work Songs

As we have now seen, the songs in this collection, with a few exceptions (see note 3 on p. 11), are those of the non-twice-born (the *sūdras* and women) and belong to their forms of ritual, professions and activities. In fact, singing and dancing were two of the professions allowed to the *sūdras* from very early times (vide Kane, II, 1, p. 121)<sup>1</sup> and all singing and dancing castes are still subdivisions of the *sūdras*. There were, however, few members of these castes among the Indian immigrants to Surinam, for in the four shiploads studied by de Klerk ('53: 98-101) there were only two *bhāṭs*, two *bhāṇḍs*, and four *naṭs*. Singing was, nevertheless, a common trait of all immigrant caste groups.

The greatest contribution of a single caste group to the song of the Surinamese has been that of the *Ahīrs*, a migrant people, perhaps originally of non-caste *vrātya* mercenary and 'republican' origin, who, as *Ābhīras*, at one time ruled over large tracts of India and contributed much to the Indian music tunes such as *Ābhīrikā* and others. Much of the cowherd aspect of the Kṛṣṇa legend<sup>2</sup> has been attributed to them (Bhandarkar '13: 36-38), as

- 1 The folk tunes of cowherds and cultivators were recognised, collected and tabulated by authors like *Mātāṅga* (*Bṛhad-desī* 1.2) who incorporated them into the classical music under the title of *deśī*.
- 2 By the time of Sūradāsa, Kṛṣṇa had been commonly called an *Ahīr* and the *gopīs* are *Ahīrnī* (*Sūrasāgara*, 10th *skandha*, 1922, 1925, 2596, 3063, 3156 etc.; *Bhramaragīta* songs 58, 118, 234 etc.).

they are *par excellence* the dairy-keeping caste.<sup>1</sup> Among the four shiploads of immigrants studied by de Klerk ('53: 99), out of 599 persons of what he calls the higher middle castes, 400 were *Ahīrs* and of related clans as follows: *Ahīr* proper - 209, *Goālā* or *Gwālā* - 31, *Gūjar* - 4, *Kurmī* - 156. The *Ahīrs* seem to have created the Indian *birahā* which was for long particularly their form of song but has now become the vehicle of creative poetry for all the Hindus of Surinam (*vide* p. 29). Song No. 88 is also a fair example of their Kṛṣṇa lore.

## The Work Songs

Apart from the songs in general which in many places refer to the work and duties of various castes, trades and professions (e.g. song No. 2 on midwife, the gardener's wife and others) there are special songs sung by various 'professional' castes, and by women, while performing their work, to lighten the burden or the monotony, to add some joy to their labour, and so on. These songs are of five types.

1. The first are those whose content has a direct bearing on the calling, for example the song No. 72 of the water-carriers, the *kahārs*.

2. The second type of work song not only refers to the professional work but has also a suitable rhythm to serve as accompaniment to that particular work, for instance the *dhobiyā birahā* (song No. 73) of the washermen. Some of these may also accompany a mimic dance such as *hathelā* of the washermen.

3. The songs of the third type do not refer to caste and professional work at all, but they are sung only to the rhythm of the work, for example song No. 71 sung while the potter, *kumhār*, turns his wheel. These songs may narrate a story, express devotion to God or show a sentiment of fondness for a beloved's beauty.

4. Those of the fourth type are sung after rendering a professional service, e.g., song No. 74 of the entertainers, *bhāṭs*, at a wedding, demanding their fees often in abusive terms shaming or coercing the client into giving more. An example of haggling over the fees has also been recorded but is not printed here.

5. *The Women's Work songs* are called *titillās*. They almost

1 For further details on the *Ahīrs*, see Bhagwānsingh Sūryavamśī (cf. p. 173).



invariably tell a story with a theme of the woes and tragedies of a woman's life, for example ill-treatment by the in-laws as in song No 77. They are usually long, sung to the rhythm of the work. They may (as in song Nos. 76, 77) or may not (as in song No. 78) refer to the work. The following two types of *titillās* have been recorded.

a) *Jātsār* or *pisaunī*: sung while grinding grain on a handmill, *jāṭā* or *cakkī*, the handle of which is sometimes turned by a single woman as in song No. 77 or by two women sitting opposite each other as in song No. 76. In the case of the latter the song may record a conversation.

b) *Ropanī* (planting rice) and *nirāī* (weeding the field or transplanting the bibit). These may be sung by an entire group working in the field.

## Other Songs

The *birahā* deserves special attention. It is a topical song, sung by both sexes, like the calypso of Trinidad. It may be composed instantaneously by any person on any subject. It may break all bounds of propriety and social rules. It may protest against any practice, custom or person, or may praise these. The author has heard long *birahās* composed on the spot to celebrate an occasion, for example the presence of an honoured guest. (See also p. 9 under *nagāṛā*). It may be sung on a *ḍholak* or without any instrument at all. There are, now fewer and fewer, all-night competitions of *birahā* composition and singing in which two parties may compete with questions and answers (see song Nos. 81, 82) or discussions on any topic, in a challenging manner (see song No. 82) until one party accepts defeat. The competitors address each other as *joṛā* (companion). The fame of a good *birahā* expert travels far and wide. For a definition of the *birahā* see song No. 79.

A *birahā* is divided into three parts: firstly, *Dohā* or *sumiran*, which may be a verse from Kabīr, Tulasīdāsa or any other celebrated author, but most often it is a folk composition, commemorating God, a favourite deity or many deities, one's own parents, husband, or *guru*, *Sarasvatī*, the goddess of speech, whose blessing is sought in the difficult undertaking of an instant composition or the rendering of the song, asking them to grace the singer with inspiration and, in the case of *Sarasvatī*, to abide in his throat

or on his tongue. It may also be only a reminder of a moral precept. Faster in beat is the second part known as *lacārī* or *alcārī*, the main composition on any topic. The finale, variously referred to as *jācanī* or *bisarjan*, rounds off the song by (a) referring back to, or thanking one or more of, the deities of the *sumiran*, even repeating a line or two of the same, (b) giving another moral precept in a *dohā*, or (c) by the singer introducing himself.

In reciting a long chain of *birahās*, or in a competition, the *sumiran* comes only right at the beginning, the *lacārīs* or main portions of the *birahās* continuing without interruption. The performers round off with the finale only at the end of the recital or the session. There is no fixed length to the *birahā*; it may end in a two-line stanza (e.g. song No. 79) or go on more than thirty lines (e.g. song No. 88).

The *rasiyās*, originated from the *pachāh*, are in the dialect of Braj where the *birahā* was not so well known. Though their proponents claim them to be topical songs equal to *birahās*, in our experience they deal mainly with the themes of love and romance, often with reference to the romantic and heroic exploits of Kṛṣṇa.

The *Women's Miscellaneous Songs* such as *caṭṇī* (cp. *sohar caṭṇī*, p. 16), *nakaṭās*, the songs of general complaint in love or ridicule of a rival, *ulārās*, the vigorous lyrics (cp. *sohar ulārā*, p. 16) - all of a saucy and lighthearted nature dealing with situations in love, family relationships, romance or neighbourhood events, differ from each other only slightly in tune or theme. The author has had to take the singing ladies' word for placing a song under any one of the titles in the text.

There are also songs without special titles, such as the song of invitation (No. 95).

The modern songs on socio-political themes have been composed in several of the styles listed above, such as *birahā* (song Nos. 97, 99), *bhajan* (song Nos. 96, 98, 100) etc. In the earlier period the singers were more concerned with their migration, for example song No. 97A gives caste oppression in India as the reason for it. Then came the question of whether or not to return to India as in song No. 97B. Later the singers were concerned with the need for social reform both in India and, inspired by its success there, in Surinam, together with the Indian struggle for independence (song Nos. 96, 98). But slowly *Bhārat*, that is India, was replaced by Su-

rinam and the singers sang of the problems of the Surinam Indian community as in song No. 100 which is the most popular song on this theme; several versions of this song have been recorded. The conflict of loyalties divided between India and Surinam has been resolved by the modern singer by paying homage to the Indian deities in religious terms and to the land of Surinam in patriotic terms (song No. 99) and by adapting Hindu ideas to a Surinam geo-political context, for example 'mukti (spiritual salvation) by bathing in Cola Creek'. There are also songs in praise of various Indian political parties of Surinam and their leaders - not included here - together with appeals for unity between the Hindus and Muslims of Surinam (song No. 98) also in order to keep them from becoming converts to Christianity.

## The Literary Background

The songs under examination must not be regarded as primitive or preliterate. They often show evidence of having followed the footsteps of the long literary tradition of India, or side by side with it. Some of the forms and subjects go back to great antiquity. For example, the interpolation of phrases and strophes, not connected with the context of the song, as *jubilations - stobhas* - was the practice of *sāman* singers in the earliest Vedic times (for the details of which *vide* Strangways '14: 250 ff.). The song of *silpohanā* inviting the ancestral spirits, *pitṛs*, has a form similar to VS. 19. 57 ff. and other *mantras* chanted at the *Śrāddha* ceremonies. The riddles or questions and answers in the *birahās* find their parallels in the Vedas (e.g. RV. 1. 164. 34, 35). It is curious that the *birahā* (song No. 82) speaks of the year as a cow, a motif vaguely reminiscent of RV. 1.164. The gaining of social acclaim and poetical or scholarly prestige by winning against a competitor in a series of versified questions and answers or some other form of exchange in instantaneous verse - as seen in the *birahās* - has been a very old tradition in India. For example in MB. *Vanaparvan* Ch. 133 Aṣṭāvakra gains admittance to the court after winning the favour of king Janaka in an exchange of questions and answers. Thereafter (Ch. 134) a similar exchange between Aṣṭāvakra and Bandī, the court scholar and poet, leads to the latter surrendering his court position and to the reinstatement to life of those whom he had previously defeated and deprived of life. Also in MB. (*Vanaparvan* Chs. 296,

297) Yudhiṣṭhira saves the life of his brothers by answering questions put by a *yakṣa*. After some questions have been posed the challenge in the *birahā* (song No. 82, line II), 'whoever would explain the meaning of my *birahā* - that is, whoever will answer my questions - may (thereafter) join me in singing' seems to echo the *yakṣa*'s own challenge; 'Answer these four questions of mine and then you may have a drink of water.'<sup>1</sup>

The *sumiran* in the *birahā* corresponds to the *maṅgalācaraṇa* or *nāndī* of the Sanskrit literature with all three of its forms, viz., *āśīs* - a blessing -, *namaskriyā* - a salutation to the deity -, and *vastunirdeśa* - a simple reference to the deity or one of its acts, or a moral precept. Similarly the *jācanī*, the finale of a *birahā*, is parallel to the *bharata-vākya*, the benediction at the end of a dramatic performance in the Sanskrit tradition.

The declaration of the *maṅgala* power of a song is in the well-known *māhātmya* tradition of Sanskrit literature and *stotras*.

Sometimes identical phrases are found in the Sanskrit *stotras* and our songs, for instance the invitation to *Sarasvatī* to abide on the singer's tongue (song No. 80 F) occurs in the traditional *Sarasvatī-stotra*: *sā me vasatu jihvāyām vīṇā-pustaka-dhāriṇī* (May she who holds a *vīṇa* and a book abide on my tongue), or in the annual worship of *Sarasvatī* (*Varṣakṛtyadīpaka*: 269): *sā me vāg-devateyaṃ nivasatu vadane* (May this goddess of speech live in my mouth), or in *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* (23.57): *sarva-jihvā sarasvatī* (*Sarasvatī* is the tongue of all).

The *titillās* and many *sohars* narrating episodes may have been inspired by the traditional *khaṇḍa-kāvya*s. Some of their conversational contents also have a highly dramatic effect. The lyrics are certainly identical with the *muktaka*, the song compositions complete in themselves. The *muktaka* form of our songs must have been borrowed from numerous authors, from Vidyāpati to Kabīr. The songs of Vidyāpati, especially on Śiva, 'are still sung in the temples of Mithilā and, out of his romantic compositions, many are also sung on the occasions of weddings and such festivities in the form of folksongs' (Tivārī '54: 170 intr.). Our own song

1 *Vide* also Kosambi ('62: 10): '...the Upanishadic riddles which display so much mysticism and philosophy are only a step above the deadly riddles asked by *yakṣas* of strangers at sacred springs. The wrong answer in the earlier days meant ritual sacrifice of the intruder'.

No. 36 seems to have taken its inspiration from Vidyāpati (pp. 310-311 etc.) describing Menā's horror at seeing Śiva, wrapped in snakes, as the prospective bridegroom for her daughter, and her refusal to wed Pārvatī to such a personage. The songs of Kabīr's *nirguṇa* tradition require no special discussion; their influence on the themes of our songs is all too evident. The songs of Sūradāsa, rather than Tulasīdāsa, seem to have made a considerable impact on the folk-singers because Tulasīdāsa did not use the *muktaka* form as Sūradāsa did. When the former did compose any *muktakas* they were in a linguistic style less comprehensible to the masses than that of the latter. Some of Sūradāsa's lines, if not complete songs, seem to have been borrowed or copied by our singers. Some examples of these can be given here.

<i>caraṇa dhōi caraṇodaka līnhau...</i>	:	1.239	(Cp. song No. 41)
<i>tuma to tīni loka ke ṭhākura</i>	:	1.239	(Cp. song No. 41)
<i>bhakti binu baila birānā hvaiho</i>	:	1.331	(Cp. song No. 66)
<i>motini cauka purāye</i>	:	9. 24	(Cp. song No. 23)
<i>tapasī dōu bhāi</i>	:	9.140	(Cp. song No. 69)
<i>kahana lāge mohana maiyā maiyā...</i>	:		
<i>dūri khelana jani jāhu</i>	:	10.155	(Cp. song No. 9)

On the other hand it is not possible to place all our songs in a totally literary tradition. They still remain folksongs. Not only are so many of them free of the rules of prosody and rhyme etc., they seldom show the complicated literary embellishments of *alaṅkāras* etc. with the refinement customary in the written tradition. Furthermore they show evidence of the folk mind's independence in their motifs, many of which are not found in literature. A journey by stages is described as travelling 'through one wilderness, and through the second wilderness, in the third one' there is a note of finality (song No. 78). A crying woman is asked whether she has trouble from father-in-law or from mother-in-law or is it that her parental home is far (song Nos. 3, 4). To make a point in a family crisis somebody lies down covering himself from head to foot and others come round begging him to get up (song No. 78). Many of such motifs occur repeatedly even in identical words. The analogies are simple and the expressions are taken from the day to day world of the people; see for example song No. 30.

There are also many divergences from the legends etc. of the

written literature. Even though the figures like Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are common to both the literary and the folk tradition, many of the episodes narrated are peculiar to our songs. They are either variants of the legends that might have existed from long ago and from which some might even have been borrowed by the literary authors, or they are new twists given to the literary stories to fit them into the folk context.

In song No. 1 Sītā has had her desire for a husband like Rāma fulfilled through the observance of various fasts and ascetic practices. In song No. 5 the queens of Daśaratha take a pregnancy-inducing wild root and consequently conceive. In song No. 87 Jaṭāyu loses the battle against the demon because the latter shoots a fire-missile. In song No. 69 there is a dialogue between Sītā and Mandodarī in which the latter takes Rāvaṇa's side. In song No. 88 Kṛṣṇa is supposed to have been fair and is stated to have turned dark because of the poisonous hisses of the snakes of the underworld.

There are also songs which radically condemn the popular Hindu concepts, giving new interpretations to some legends. These may have been handed down from non-Aryan sources, for example one of the songs (No. 70) in a series on Bali shows sympathy with him, advising him not to trust and not to give land to Viṣṇu, enumerating the latter's frauds such as the killing of Hiranyakaśipu, Prahlāda's father, and Rāvaṇa, the king of Laṅkā. While this echoes the advice of Śukra, the *guru of dānavas*, to Bali (*vide* Padmapurāṇa 25. 157-163)<sup>1</sup> the song is still remarkable in its hostility to Viṣṇu.

There are some deviations, however, which can more easily be explained. Subhadrā as Rāma's aunt (song No. 9), again as the aunt of Lava and Kuśa (song No. 8) and thus Rāma's sister, Kṛṣṇa as a guest of Rāma and Sītā (song No. 83), the river Sarayū, instead of Yamunā flowing by the city of Mathurā, (song No. 41), these allusions might at the first glance lead the listener of these songs to believe that perhaps the singers' distance from India had caused them to forget the tradition, but that is not the case. These deviations are found also in the versions published in India, for example, Subhadrā as Rāma's aunt (Tripāṭhī, '51. I: 182).

1 There Bali is referred to by the name Bāṣkali. For other references see Dīkṣitar's *Purāṇa Index*, vol. II, pp. 469-471.

These are in fact metaphors to describe ideal human relationships by referring to the legendary figures related to various God-Incarnates. The concept of the ideal aunt, the ideal guest or the ideal city alone is meant to be conveyed. 'Rāma' even becomes the title of honour for any person in the expression '*kavan rāmā*' (e.g. song No. 33) where, in actual singing, *kavan*, i.e. 'which, 'who' or 'some (person)' is replaced by the name of the person who may be involved in any capacity in the ceremonial or other observance; he becomes 'N.N. the Rāma'.

## Religion and Social Conditions

Although the religion of the songs generally conforms to the Hindu attitudes and doctrines - such as the recognition of a personal God, His incarnations, *mukti*, re-incarnation, worship through images as well as mysticism and yoga, transience of the world etc. - there are some songs which either bring the previously known points into greater focus or add a new detail.

As among the Surinam Hindus there are no distinctly separate Shivaite or Vishnuite cults, so there are no such distinctions in the songs either. Śiva, however, is offered worship together with Pārvaṭī (song No. 20), but usually she is the more important of the two, especially as women - apart from men's own *Kālī-pūjā* (*vide* p. 25) - naturally adhere to the cult of the mother goddess in their ceremonies. The men also sing of her as *Ādi Bhavānī*, the First Power of Śiva, and *Mahāmāyā*, with powers to give eyes to the blind man and a healthy body to the leper (song No. 62). She is throughout referred to as *Bhavānī*: the name Pārvaṭī occurs only as *Gaurā Pārvaṭī*, perhaps because she is the goddess of the girls, whom they worship (as *Girijā* also, see song No. 42) and who are referred to as *gaurī*, when they are given away in the wedding ceremony (*vide Saṁskāra-dīpaka* II: 125). In the *maṭkor* she is worshipped as the earth. In song No. 19 she has been linked with Rāma; 'First I worship Rāma and then Earth (which is) *Bhavānī*. Together with this, the name of the design drawn as '*Sītājī kā cauk*' (*vide* p. 15) leads us to her identification with *Sītā*, which also means the furrow<sup>1</sup> In song No. 67 Sarasvatī, through the

1 For further details on the identity of *Sītā* and *Kālī*, see Bulke ('62: 98). On *Sītā* as the deity of agriculture *ibid.* 12 ff. On the identification of Rāma and Śiva *ibid.* 736 etc.

motif of a red flag, seems to have been identified as an aspect of Pārvatī; she has a platform, *cautrā* (S. *catvara*), for her worship at Dhaulgiri, one of the highest Himalayan peaks. Perhaps the singer had in mind the nearby peak of Gaurī-Śaṅkara or Kailāsa, for Dhaulgiri itself has no traditional connection with Pārvatī. On the other hand, the *kumharavā* song No. 71 states that the forehead is Dhaulgiri in the human body. In that case it may be called the *cautrā* of *Devī*, the vital energy, in accordance with the yoga tradition, as well as the seat of Sarasvatī, wisdom.

The term *Gaṅgājī kā cauk* (vide p. 15) at the *maṭkor* also suggests the oneness of Gaṅgā with other aspects of the mother goddess, Sītā, Pārvatī, or mother earth. The song (No. 18) sung by women in procession towards the *maṭkor* spot confirms this view as it alludes to a journey towards Gaṅgā. An *ojhā* informant, asked about *pacrās*, stated that once in a dream he had received a *pacrā* from Durgā who wished to be worshipped as Gaṅgā. She gave him only one line of a song: *karo mili āratī saba gaṅgā maiyā kī* (Everyone, join together and perform *āratī* of mother Gaṅgā). Not only that all waters of Surinam, as of any other place,<sup>1</sup> are Gaṅgā in the general belief of the singers but they are representatives of the mother goddess. The singer of song No. 85 places her foot in the water and begs the mother goddess of the water, whom she calls *Kālī*, to let a crocodile grab her old husband; in return the singer would sacrifice to her a goat as a thanks-offering. In that song and in song No. 57 she is malevolent. There we see a worship through fear, and then from an object of terror she becomes a saviour, a giver of life, and in song No. 3 she is also perhaps a fertility goddess, giving a child. Vide also Kosambi's discussion ('62: 59) on Gaṅgā killing her seven sons, and then as the mother of Devavrata Bhīṣma see MB., Ādiparvan, Ch. 91 ff.

Song 81 mentions *Kālī* in another aspect: it is she who speaks from inside a drum, perhaps a *nagāṛā*, so that all thirty-six tunes, *rāgas*, arise out of it.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps that is also a reason for the worship of the *ḍholak* in the *mādar-pūjā*.

1 The Indian immigrants in the island of Mauritius go for a pilgrimage to a local lake which they regard as a manifestation of Gaṅgā. Similar examples are found elsewhere among overseas Indian communities.

2 This idea has its parallel in the legend that the fourteen alphabetical *Śivasūtras* of Pāṇini were revealed by Śiva beating his little drum, *ḍamaru*, fourteen times: *nṛttāvasāne naṭa-rāja-rājo nanāda dhakkām nava-pañcavāram uddhartu-kāmaḥ sanakādi-siddhān etad-vimarśe śiva-sūtra-jālam*. (Vide Bālamānoraṁā p. 4).

The sound of trumpets as an indication of the presence of the goddess is also mentioned by Whitehead ('21: 20) as well as the use of the skin of the sacrificial animal, offered to the goddess, for making a drum to be beaten at her worship (ibid. 75).



There are also minor cults, apart from those already mentioned (*vide Dīh*, p. 25), such as that of *Bhūiyā* or *Bhūmiyā* and *Ṭhaiyā* (song Nos. 21, 80E) the godlings of village land and of a spot.<sup>1</sup> Deified persons like *Lonā Camārin*<sup>2</sup> are also invoked in a magic context (song No. 65).

Regarding the position of women and the general social, family, caste and kinship relations, the findings of Speckmann coincide with the situations described or to be inferred from our own songs except that the songs bring certain points into a greater focus, for example, premarital love in the traditional society,<sup>3</sup> undersirable pregnancies (song No. 76), an incestuous interest (song No. 78), the reluctance of a woman to go to her husband's home in *gaunā* farewell because of other amorous attractions (Song No. 84), the attitudes towards a co-wife, *saut*, a woman's wish for the death of an old and incapable husband (song No. 85) and the theme of a woman's suicide (song No. 77) on which alone five songs have been recorded.

- 1 See also Crooke (1894: 44, 57, 65 etc.). Lewis ('58: 248, fig. 39) has a photograph of a *Bhūmiyā* shrine. Meyer ('37: II.170) relates it to Vedic *kṣetrasya patih*.
- 2 Re. the cult of the *Lonā Camārin*, see Briggs ('20: 27, 179, 183, 185).
- 3 Recorded but not printed in this collection.

## Chapter two

### The Songs and Translations

#### 1 Sohar i [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

#### Wishes fulfilled through religious observances<sup>1</sup>

- I. pahalī maḡana sītā mḡeḡ javana bidhi purave ho  
[pahalī maḡana sītā (mḡgāile) javana bidhi (puravāile) ho]  
[pahalī maḡana sītā mḡeḡ javana bidhi (puravelā) ho]
- II. sītā mḡeḡe ajodhyā ke rāja sarajū jī ke darasana ho  
[sītā mḡeḡe ajodhyā ke rāja sarajū jī ke (daraśana) ho]
- III. dusaṛī maḡana sītā mḡeḡ javana bidhi purave ho  
[dusaṛī maḡana sītā (mḡgāile) javana bidhi (puravāile) ho]  
[dusaṛī maḡana sītā mḡeḡ javana bidhi (puravelā) ho]
- IV. sītā mḡeḡe kosillā äisī sāsa sasura rājā dasaratha ho  
[sītā (mḡeḡ) (kausilyā) äisī (sāsū) sasura rājā dasaratha ho]
- V. tisaṛī maḡana sītā mḡeḡ javana bidhi purave ho  
[tisaṛī maḡana sītā mḡeḡ javana bidhi (puravelā) ho]
- VI. sītā mḡeḡe purusa bhagavāna devara bābū lachamana ho  
[sītā mḡeḡe purusa bhagavāna devara bābū (lachimana) ho]
- VII. cauthī maḡana sītā mḡeḡ javana bidhi purave ho
- VIII. sītā mḡeḡe goda ke balakavā ḡana bhara kheläḡ ho
- IX. milahu na sakhiyā sahelarī mili juli calāu ho
- X. sītā kauna bidhi kara leyau rāma bara pāyāu ho
- XI. māghāi māsa nahānī ḡana nahj tāpe ḡina nahj tāpāi ho
- XII. sakhi barata rahyaḡ parāivā rāma bara pāyāu ho

1 This is the most popular *sohar*; four versions have been recorded. The words in the brackets in the first six lines are given to show the variants (see p. 3) used by different singers in the same group. This system will not be followed in the balance of the text. Cp. R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 142).

- XIII. milahu na sakhiyā sahelarī mili juli calāu ho  
 XIV. sītā kauna kavana tapa kara leyau rāma bara pāyāu ho  
 XV. barata rahyau ekādasī aur duvādasī auro duvādasī ho  
 XVI. sakhi tulasī ke diyanā jalāyau rāma bara pāyāu ho  
 XVII. je yahi mangala gāve aura gāya ke sunāve, aura gāya ke sunāvāi ho  
 XVIII. sakhi tulasīdāsa bhali āsa amara phala pāvāi ho

- I. Sītā makes (her) first wish - (if) God<sup>1</sup> may fulfil it;
- II. Sītā wishes<sup>2</sup> that she may see in the kingdom of Ayodhyā the venerable (river) Sarayū.
- III. Sītā makes (her) second wish - (if) God may fulfil it;
- IV. Sītā wishes that she may have a mother-in-law like Kauśalyā and a father-in-law like Daśaratha.
- V. Sītā makes (her) third wish - (if) God may fulfil it;
- VI. Sītā wishes that she may have a husband like the Lord (i.e. Rāma) and that she may have his brother Lakṣmaṇa as her *devar*.<sup>3</sup>
- VII. Sītā makes (her) fourth wish - (if) God may fulfil it;
- VIII. Sītā wishes that a child of her (own) lap may play about all over the courtyard.
- IX. - Gather up, *sakhis*,<sup>4</sup> gather up and come along (to ask),
- X. What observances did Sītā perform (that she) obtained Rāma as (her) husband.
- XI. - Bathing in the very (cold) month of *māgha* (January-February) (I) did not warm (myself) by a fire; (I) did not warm (myself) by a fire.
- XII. *Sakhi*, I kept fast on the first day of the (lunar) fortnight and obtained Rāma as (my) husband.
- XIII. - Come on, *sakhis*, gather up and let us go (to ask),
- XIV. What and what (kind) of austerities did Sītā undertake (that she) obtained Rāma as (her) husband.
- XV. - I kept fast on the eleventh day of the fortnight and on the twelfth; again, on the twelfth,

1 Bidhi (S. Vidhi), the god of fate, or god Brahmā.

2 'maḡana māḡe' - she asks for the wish to be fulfilled.

3 *Devar*, husband's younger brother.

4 See note 1 on p. 5.

- XVI. *Sakhi*, I offered a light<sup>1</sup> to the holy basil (plant)<sup>2</sup> and obtained Rāma as (my) husband.  
 XVII. Whoever sings this auspicious song and makes it heard (by others),  
 XVIII. *Sakhi*, (says) Tulasīdāsa, (there is) a good hope that (she) attains the fruit of immortality.

## 2 Sohar ii [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

### Śiva and Pārvati<sup>3</sup>

- I. bhañiyā ke mattī mahādeva ho bhañiyā bhañiyā kare, bhañiyā bhañiyā kare ho
- II. gaurā bhañiyā ghoṭata alasānī to chana ta bikala bhāile ho
- III. tū to mahādeva bhañārī are bhañiyā bhañiyā kare, bhañiyā bhañiyā kare ho
- IV. sivavā hamare to bhāile haj gaṇapati bhūiyā pari loṭāj ho
- V. itanā bacana sivavā sunale sunahj nahj pāve, sunahj nahj pāvāj ho
- VI. sivavā līne bayala asavār ḍhūdhana cale dhagarina ho
- VII. pūche lāge rahiyā baṭohiyā se kūiyā panihārini ho
- VIII. dhana hama ka tū ḍagarā batāvatēu kahā re base dhagarina ho
- IX. bole lāge rahiyā baṭohiyā kūiyā panihārini, kūiyā panihārini ho
- X. sivavā aliyapura pātana hūā re base dhagarina ho
- XI. ke more ṭaṭiyā khurkāve banhana sarakāve, banhana sarakāvāile ho

1 Literally, 'kindled a *diyā*'. *Diyā* (S. *dīpaka*) is a clay lamp filled with oil in which a cotton wick is dipped. A common household object, it is also used as an offering of light to a deity.

2 *Tulasī* plant. This is worshipped as a manifestation of *Lakṣmī*, the consort of *Viṣṇu*. See *Brahmavaivarta Purāna (Prakṛti khaṇḍa)* 7.45-47; 21. 1-103 and *Padma Purāna* 58.109-145; 59.1-42 re. the legend of *Vṛndā* incarnating as *Tulasī*, and her worship. *Vide* also Viennot ('54: 17).

3 Cp. V. Prasāda ('62: 41-42); Daśaratha instead of Śiva searching for a midwife, K. Upādhyāya ('54: 108-109). Line XV: Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 225).

- XII. rāma kavane raniyavā ke pūta adhiyā rāti āvāj ho  
 XIII. dhagarina more ghara dhaniyā biyākula ta tumha kā bulāvahī (ho)<sup>1</sup>  
 XIV. jāū to sivavā ai jāvāu ho siva ho mahādeva hama bāṭi dhagarina ho  
 XV. sivavā torī dhana hathavā ki sākari muḥa ke phūhara to hama nāhī jāvāi ho  
 XVI. je yahi maṅgala gāi ke sunāvāile, gāi ke sunāvāi ho  
 XVII. tulasī de amara phala (*incomplete*)

- I. Mahādeva (is) addicted<sup>2</sup> to hemp and calls repeatedly 'hemp', 'hemp'.
- II. Pārvaṭī, grinding the hemp, felt languid, a moment, and then (she) became helpless (with pain).
- III. - You, O Mahādeva, are addicted to hemp and call 'hemp', 'hemp';
- IV. While, O Śiva, to me Gaṇeśa is (nearly) born and (would be) lying on the ground.
- V. Śiva heard just this statement and could not even hear (it complete)-
- VI. (He) Śiva took an ox<sup>3</sup> as (his) mount and started out to search for a midwife.
- VII. He began to ask the traveller on the road and the woman fetching water on the well;
- VIII. - Dear, would that you would tell me the way<sup>4</sup> to where a midwife lives.
- IX. The traveller on the road and the woman fetching water on the well began to tell (him);
- X. - Oh Śiva, (there is a) city called Aliyapur,<sup>5</sup> there a midwife lives.
- XI. - Who is knocking (at) my screen and loosening the ties;<sup>6</sup> has loosened the ties?

1 Added by the translator for uniformity's sake.

2 Or, 'he who gets intoxicated on'.

3 Presumably, Śiva's mythical bull, *Nandī*.

4 A polite idiom for 'please tell me the way'.

5 Perhaps, *Alīpur*.

Probably the song was sung originally somewhere where the midwife had been called from *Alīpur*.

6 *Ṭaṭṭī* and *banhan*: the screens made of thatch material and tied together to form the walls and rooms.

- XII. The son of which queen<sup>1</sup> comes in the middle of the night?  
 XIII. - Oh midwife, at my home (my) precious one is helpless (with pain or with imminent childbirth), so (she) calls for you.  
 XIV. - Go then, Śiva; Śiva, go (away). Mahādeva, I am a midwife;  
 XV. Śiva, (if) your precious one is tight of hand<sup>2</sup> and unrefined of mouth, then I shall not go.  
 XVI. Whoever sings this auspicious song and lets it be heard (by others);  
 XVII. Tulasī gives the fruit of immortality (*incomplete*)<sup>3</sup>

### 3 Sohar iii [*Paramaribo, 1967*] Gaṅgā as the goddess of fertility thanksgiving to Gaṅgā<sup>4</sup>

- I. jamunā ka ūcā kararavā tiriyaṅvā ika rove, tiriyaṅvā ika rovaī ho
- II. gaṅgā māi dehū tu apanī lahariyā to hama ḍūbi marabāi ho
- III. kiyā tora sāsū sasura dukha kiyā nāihara dūri base ho, ki nāihara dūri base re
- IV. tiriyaṅ ki tora kantā paradesa kavana dukha ḍūbi maro ho
- V. nahī more sāsū sasura dukha nahī nāihara dūri base
- VI. gaṅgā māi nahī mora kantā paradesa kokhiyā dukha ḍūbi marabāi ho

1 Though it appears to be a respectable way of speaking, it is actually a euphemism for a curse, 'son of so and so'.  
 2 Not generous in giving the fees.  
 3 It is customary to leave a final portion incomplete where the content can be guessed by everybody.  
 4 Cp. R. Tripāthī ('29: 4,5); D. Satyārthī (*Dhīre Baho Gaṅgā*: 6,7); Satyendra ('49: 124, 125); K. Upādhyāya ('54: 111); S. Anila ('57: 72, 73). Lines III-VI and XI-XIII, repeated in many of our recorded songs and in other collections. Lines XV, XVII '*more pichavaravā*' - motif is repeated in many songs.

- VII. gangā māi ika re santati (bina)<sup>1</sup> jaga sūnā to hama dūbi marabāi ho  
 VIII. ta jāū tiriyaṅvā ta ghara apane ta apane mandila bhītara, apane mandila bhītara ho  
 IX. tiriyaṅ āṭṭhau mahinā nau lagihaj to horilā janamihaj ho  
 X. āṭṭhau mahinā nau lagalai to horilā janama bhāilai, babūā janama bhāile ho  
 XI. sakhiyā bājai lāge anandan badhaiyā uṭṭhe lāgai sohara ho  
 XII. sakhiyā nanda ghara bajala badhaiyā uṭṭhana lāge sohara ho  
 XIII. dhīre dhīre bāje badhaiyā au rasai meṅ uṭṭhe sohara, rasai meṅ uṭṭhe sohara ho  
 XIV. sakhi satarag bājāe sahanaiyā sasura dvāre nāubati ho  
 XV. more pichavaravā sunaravā begai cali āvo, begai cali āvāu ho  
 XVI. are sonarā sone rūpe gaṛṭhāu kalasavā maj gaṅgā māi caṛṭhāibāi ho  
 XVII. more pichavaravā raṅgarajavā begai cali āvo, begai cali āvāu ho  
 XVIII. raṅgarejavā raṅgi lāo caṭaki piyariyā maj gaṅgā māi caṛṭhāibāi ho  
 XIX. jamunā ka ūcā kararavā tiriyaṅvā jaba āvai, tiriyaṅvā ika āvāi ho  
 XX. gaṅgā māi dehū tu apanī lahariyā maj kalasā caṛṭhāibāi ho  
 XXI. hā gaṅgā māi dehū tu apanī lahariyā maj piyarī caṛṭhāibāi ho  
 XXII. jāo tiriyaṅvā ghara apane to apane mandila bhītara, to apane mandila bhītara ho  
 XXIII. tiriyaṅ juga juga jiyē nandalāla tu kalasā caṛṭhāye ho, tu  
     (barhe)  
     piyarī caṛṭhāye ho  
 XXIV. tiriyaṅ juga juga barhe ahivāta tu kalasā caṛṭhāye ho, tu piyarī caṛṭhāye ho

I. On a high dune of the (river) Yamunā<sup>2</sup> a woman cries, a woman cries:

1 *Bina*: this is our interpolation without which the meaning would not be clear.

2 In the Hindu tradition all rivers or bodies of water may be referred to as Gaṅgā. See also de Klerk ('51: 215-217).

- II. - Oh mother Gaṅgā, (if) you (would) give me your one wave I (would) drown and kill myself.
- III. - Do you have trouble from father-in-law and mother-in-law, or, (is it that) your parental family dwells far?
- IV. Or (is it that) your beloved one (has gone) to a foreign land? Because of what sorrow (would) you drown and kill yourself?
- V. - I have no trouble with father-in-law and mother-in-law, nor (it is that) my parental family dwells far,
- VI. Mother Gaṅgā, nor has my beloved (gone to a) foreign land (but) for the pain of (the infertility of my) womb would I drown and kill myself.
- VII. Mother Gaṅgā, without a single progeny the world is empty so I would drown and kill myself.
- VIII. - Now, go, woman; now, go to your home;  
go inside your residence<sup>1</sup>  
- inside your residence.
- IX. Woman, it will take eight or nine months and then a baby boy<sup>2</sup> will be born.
- X. It took eight or nine months and then a baby boy was born, a good little baby boy<sup>3</sup> was born.
- XI. *Sakhi*, congratulatory music began to be played joyfully; (the sound of) *sohar* (singing) began to rise.
- XII. *Sakhi*, at the home of Nanda the congratulatory music was played; (the sound of) *sohar* (singing) began to rise;
- XIII. The congratulatory music plays (ever so) softly; (the sound of) *sohar* (singing) rises with sweetness.
- XIV. *Sakhi*, (there) is played a seven-coloured *śahnāī*,<sup>4</sup> and a music of welcome at the doors of the father-in-law's (home).
- XV. - O goldsmith (residing) behind (my) home, come in haste, come in haste.
- XVI. O goldsmith, chisel a pitcher of gold and silver (of which) I will make an offering to the mother<sup>5</sup> Gaṅgā.

1 The Sanskrit term *mandira* means a temple; *mandila* or *maṇḍila* used for a residence would suggest the sanctity of a home. See also p. 14.

2 *Horila* or *horil*, a term of endearment towards a baby boy.

3 *Babūā*, a term of endearment towards a young boy.

4 A musical instrument, like an oboe, not played in Surinam.

5 Variant: *gaṅgā ke caṛhāibe*; I will make an offering to Gaṅgā.



- XVII. - O dyer (residing) behind my (home), come in haste; come in haste.  
 XVIII. O dyer, dye and bring me a brilliant (ly dyed) yellow headscarf (which) I will make an offering to mother<sup>1</sup> Gaṅgā.  
 XIX. When the woman comes to the high dunes of Yamunā<sup>2</sup> - a woman comes (and says);  
 XX. - O mother Gaṅgā, give (me) your one wave; I will make an offering of the pitcher.  
 XXI. Yes, mother Gaṅgā, give (me) your wave; I will make an offering of the yellow headscarf.  
 XXII. - Go, woman, to your home - indeed, inside your residence; indeed, inside your residence.  
 XXIII. Woman, may *Nandalā*<sup>3</sup> live<sup>4</sup> for many aeons (since) you have made an offering of the pitcher; you have made the offering of the yellow headscarf.  
 XXIV. Woman, may (your) marital good luck<sup>5</sup> increase for aeons (since) you have made an offering of the pitcher, you have made an offering of the yellow headscarf.

#### 4 Sohar iv [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

#### Yaśodā offers her child to Devakī<sup>6</sup>

- I. bhitarā, se nisarī jasodā rānī subha dina sāvana  
subha dina sāvana ho
- II. lalanā jamunā ke niramala nīra kalasa bhari lāiya ho
- III. kāhe ke ghayalā ghaylariyā kāhe sūta ḍorī lāge  
kāhe sūta ḍorī lāge ho

1 See note 5 page 44.

2 See note 2 page 43.

3 Son of Nanda, Kṛṣṇa.

4 Variant: *barhe*; may increase, prosper.

5 *Ahivāt* (S. *avidhavātva*) synonymous in the dialect with *suhāg* (S. *saubhāgya*), the marital auspiciousness, a woman's state of marital happiness and luck whereby her husband may live long and her womb be fruitful.

6 The song gives a new twist to the legend. According to the literary tradition, Vasudeva and Devakī were imprisoned by Kāṁsa in Mathurā and their seven children were killed, one after the other, by the tyrant because of a forecast that one of their children would destroy him. Nanda, however, saved the eighth child, Kṛṣṇa, by bringing his new born baby daughter and taking back the boy across the Yamunā to his village, Gokula. In the song, however, Yaśodā, Nanda's wife, goes to fetch water from the river, hears Devakī crying on the opposite shore, crosses over and promises to give her own child to be killed to save Devakī's eighth child. Several versions have been recorded. Also cp. S. Avasthī (S.P. '50: 157) and Kumārī Saroja (Ibid: 297); R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 445); V. Prasāda ('62: 47, 48).

- IV. lalanā kehi sakhi pānī ke jāye to sata paṇa sangha liye ho  
 V. sonan ke ghayalā ghaylariyā resama sūta ḍorī lāge  
 resama sūta ḍorī lāge ho  
 VI. lalanā jasomati pānī ke jāye to sata paṇa sangha liye ho  
 VII. kōi sakhi hatha muḥa dhove re kōi sakhi ghayalā bhare kōi sakhi ghayalā bhare ho  
 VIII. lalanā kōi sakhi pāra nihāre tiriya ika rovāi ho  
 IX. nāhī yahā nāva navariyā nāhī re ghaṭa varavā ho  
 X. lalanā kehi bidhi pāra utarabe tiriya mana bodhaba ho  
 XI. aṅga ke basani kachauṭā bādhe sakhi saba sangha liye  
 sakhi saba sangha liye ho  
 XII. lalanā ghayalā je chāti uthagāi jamunā daha pāra bhaye ho  
 XIII. kiyā tore sāsū sasura dukha kiyā nāihara ati dūri base  
 kiyā nāihara ati dūri base ho  
 XIV. lalanā kiyā tore hari paradesa kavana dukha rovāu ho  
 XV. nāhī more sāsū sasura dukha nāhī nāihara ati dūri base  
 nāhī nāihara ati dūri base ho  
 XVI. lalanā nāhi more hari paradesa kokhiyā dukha rovāi ho.  
 XVII. sātahī pūta rāma di hale sātahī kansa harale  
 sātahī kansa haralāi ho  
 XVIII. lalanā aṭhavahī garabha janāye to una kara bharosā nāhī ho  
 XIX. cupi raho devaki cupi raho āurū tu cupi raho  
 XX. lalanā apana hi bālaka badhāibe to tuḥaro jiyāya debe ho  
 XXI. nunavā to milale udharavā au tela saba pāyaca  
 au tela saba pāyaca ho  
 XXII. lalanā kokhiyā ke kavana udhāra māgalau nāhī milai ho  
 XXIII. sākhi rahe cāna suruju sākhi rahe gaṅgā māi  
 sākhi rahe gaṅgā māi ho

XXIV. lalanā sākhi rahe ghara ke dharamiyā to hami devaki hiyā bāṭī ho

XXV. je yahi maṅgala gāvele gāya ke sunāvele,  
gāya ke sunāvele ho

XXVI. lalanā sehi bayekuṅṭha ke jāye amara phala pāvāi ho

- I. The queen Yaśodā emerged from inside; (it is a) good day of the *śrāvaṇa*<sup>1</sup> month<sup>2</sup>.
- II. Let<sup>3</sup> us (go), fill the pitchers with the clear water of (the river) Yamunā (and) fetch (them back).
- III. - Of what (are made the) pitchers<sup>4</sup> and of what kind of thread are the strings attached (to them)?
- IV. Which *Sakhi* goes to (fetch) water that (there are) five or seven<sup>5</sup> companions?
- V. - The pitchers are (made) of gold and the strings (made) of silk<sup>6</sup> are attached.
- VI. Yaśoda goes to (fetch) water so that there are five or seven<sup>5</sup> companions.
- VII. One *sakhi* washes (her) hands and face and another *sakhi* fills the pitcher;
- VIII. Another *sakhi* looks across (the river and finds that) a woman is crying.
- IX. (There is) no boat<sup>7</sup> nor a good stelling (to go across) here.
- X. In what way shall I get across and know the woman's mind?
- XI. She tied the garments around her body as *kachauṭā*<sup>8</sup> (and) took all the *sakhis* along;

1 July-August.

2 The second half of each odd-numbered line is repeated by the singers; the repetition is not translated.

3 Each even-numbered line begins with *lalanā*, a *stobha*-vocative meaning 'dear young one', as if the story is told to some such person.

4 *Ghayalā ghaylariyā*, 'the pitchers and so on'; a twin-word or 'Reimbildung'.

5 An expression meaning 'some', 'a number of'.

6 A string is often tied around the neck of a pitcher to dip the pitcher into a well or any deep water.

7 *Nāva navariyā*, 'a boat or any such thing'.

8 Tying the upper garment around the waist; gathering the ends of the lower garment such as a sari, passing it between the legs and tucking it into the waist at the back.

- XII. (They) braced the pitchers against (their) chests and got across the pool of Yamunā.  
 XIII. - Do you have some trouble from your father-in-law and mother-in-law? Or, (is it that) your parental family dwells very far?  
 XIV. Or (is it that) your husband<sup>1</sup> (has gone to a) foreign land? For what sorrow are you crying?  
 XV. - I have neither any trouble from father-in-law and mother-in-law nor does my parental family dwell very far;  
 XVI. Nor has my husband<sup>1</sup> (gone to a) foreign land - I cry for the sorrow of (my) womb.  
 XVII. Rāma gave (me) seven sons and Kāmsa took away all seven;  
 XVIII. (Now there) appears the eighth pregnancy but there is no assurance (of this one's safety).  
 XIX. - Be silent, Devakī, be silent.<sup>2</sup> Again, (I say) be silent;  
 XX. I shall have my own child killed and (I) shall have life given to your own.  
 XXI. - The salt can be had on loan and all the oil (one needs may be had) on account,  
 XXII. (But) how can there be a loan of the womb (and its fruit) - (that) cannot be had even if one begs (for it).  
 XXIII. - The sun and the moon remain (as my) witnesses; Gaṅgā remains (my) witness;  
 XXIV. The *dharma*<sup>3</sup> of (my) home remains (my) witness and, Devakī, I myself am here.  
 XXV. Whoever sings this auspicious song and makes it heard (by others);  
 XXVI. He goes to Vaikuṅṭha<sup>4</sup> and attains the fruit of immortality.<sup>5</sup>

1 *Hari*, God as *Viṣṇu*; such terms are often used by Hindu women to address their husbands or to refer to them.

2 Sc. 'Do not speak such inauspicious words'.

3 The supreme and natural law and personal virtue; here personified.

4 *Viṣṇu*'s or *Kṛṣṇa*'s heaven.

5 In another version of the song this line is: *sūra śyāma balī āsa*, '(says) *Sūra*(*dāsa*), (by the grace of) *Śyāma* (i.e. *Kṛṣṇa*) there is powerful hope that she attains...'

## 5 Sohar v [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

### (I) Pregnancy-inducing drug

### (II) An astrological forecast of Rāma's future

### (III) Against a woman's infertility<sup>1</sup>

- I. maciyahi bāiṭhī kausilyā rānī sīhāsana rājā dasaratha ho
- II. rājā hamare murāiyā ke sādha murāiyā hama khāiba ho
- III. haṣrau nagara ke luniyā begai cali āvau
- IV. bana pāiṭhi khodo bana-murāi kausilyā rānī hokhara ho
- V. haṣrau nagara ke nauvā begai cali āvau
- VI. rāgi rāgi pīsau bana-murāi kausilyā rānī hokhara ho
- VII. ika ghuṭa piyāi kausilyā rānī dusare sumitrā rānī ho
- VIII. sakhi sil dhoy piyahi kakahī rānī to tinahḡ garabha se ho
- IX. kausilyā ke janame haḡ rām sumitrā kē lachamana
- X. sakhi kekahī ke bharata bhuvāla tinahḡ ghara sohara ho
- XI. haṣaran nagara ke paṇḡit begai cali āvau
- XII. bāiṭho na canana piṛhāiyā to pothiyā bicārāu ho
- XIII. kauni ghare bhaye siri rāmacandr kaune ghari lachiman
- XIV. kauni ghare bharata bhuvāla kinahḡ ghare sohara ho
- XV. akchaya ghari bhaye siri rāmacandra akchay ghari lachimana
- XVI. akchaya ghari bharata bhuvāla tinahḡ ghara sohara ho
- XVII. akchay ghari bhaye rājā rāmacandar bahut sukha karihaḡ
- XVIII. barahe barasa rāmā hōihaj to ban ke sidharihaḡ
- XIX. itanā bacan rājā sunalaj to sunahḡ na pāilaj
- XX. rājā goṛe mūṛe tānalḡ cadariyā sovaḡi dhaurāhara ho

1 This is a new version of the story of Rāma's birth. It may be summarised in these words: Daśaratha's senior wife, Kauśalyā, feels a desire to eat wild radish which is sent for. The three queens share it and conceive. The four princes are born and an astrologer forecasts their future including that Rāma would be exiled to a forest at the age of twelve. At this Daśaratha is much perturbed but Kauśalyā consoles him by saying that she is satisfied as she, at least, no longer has to bear the stigma of infertility and, in any case, wherever Rāma would go he would be honoured by all.

- XXI. päithī jagāvai kausilyā rānī uṭho rājā dasaratha  
 XXII. hātha muḥa dhoho na kullā datūina karo  
 XXIII. rājā chuṭale bajhiniyā ke nama bhalaiyā rāmā bana jāihaj  
 XXIV. jaune ke gali rāmā jāihaj dhotiyā pachārihaj  
 XXV. gaṅgā asanāna karihaj tarihaj nagara saba log, bhalaiyā rāmā bana jāihaj  
 XXVI. je yahi mangala gāve aura gāi ke sunāve  
 XXVII. tulasīdāsa bali āsā mangala phala pāvai

- I. The queen Kauśalyā is sitting on a seat<sup>1</sup> and king Daśaratha on a throne;
- II. - King, I have a wish for (eating) a radish; I would eat a radish.
- III. - Oh cutter<sup>2</sup> of Hāsrāu city,<sup>3</sup> come speedily;
- IV. Having entered (deep into) the forest, dig out wild radish, (for) the queen Kauśalyā is feeling a craving (for it).<sup>4</sup>
- V. - Oh barber<sup>5</sup> of the Hāsrāu city, come speedily;
- VI. Crushing it repeatedly, grind the wild radish, (for) Kauśalyā is feeling a craving (for it).
- VII. The queen Kauśalyā drinks one sip, the queen Sumitrā (sips) the second time;
- VIII. *Sakhi*, Kaikeyī washes the grindstone and drinks - (and) then all three get pregnant.
- IX. To Kauśalyā is born Rāma (and) to Sumitrā (is born) Lakṣmaṇa;

1 *Mañca*, a raised seat made of wood or metal, like a platform.

2 *Luniyā* from S. *lu*, to cut. The singers, however, apply the term to a particular caste group employed for making mud huts. It is probable that they may have also been used for odd jobs or for cutting wood in the forests for planks etc. of the house.

3 This city cannot be identified. It may refer to a village where the *sohar* was first composed or where an incident similar to the one described in the song might have taken place. The singers stated that a *nagara* in the dialect means a small village with few houses. In Sanskrit *nagara* is a city.

4 *Hokhar*, the singers said that this is a special term for women's craving for a certain food in certain physical conditions including pregnancy. Here the craving is without pregnancy.

5 A *nāū* (S. *nāpita*), a man of the barber caste also employed to carry messages and otherwise assist at ceremonial occasions. See p. 20.

- X. *Sakhi*, to Kaikeyī are born Bharata and Śatrughna<sup>1</sup> - and *sohar* (is sung) in all the three houses.<sup>2</sup>
- XI. - O *Paṇḍit*<sup>3</sup> of Haṣrau city, come speedily;
- XII. Won't you sit on the sandalwood seat<sup>4</sup>, and (now) consider<sup>5</sup> the book?
- XIII. In which house<sup>6</sup> is born the glorious<sup>7</sup> Rāma? at what hour (is born) Lakṣmaṇa?
- XIV. In which house are born Bharata and Śatrughna - in whose house is the (singing of) *sohar* (befitting)?
- XV. - The glorious Rāma is born at the *akṣaya* hour<sup>8</sup>, and Lakṣmaṇa is born at the *akṣaya* hour.
- XVI. Bharata and Śatrughna are born at an *akṣaya* hour, at all the three<sup>9</sup> houses is (the singing of) *sohar* befitting.
- XVII. The king Rāmacandra is born at an *akṣaya* hour; he will cause much happiness;
- XVIII. When Rāma will be in the twelfth year he will depart to the forest.
- XIX. The king heard just this much statement; he had hardly heard it -
- XX. He covered (himself) with a sheet from head to feet and lay in the private<sup>10</sup> chamber.
- XXI. The queen Kauśalyā sits and awakens (him): - get up, King Daśaratha!

1 The song has the phrase 'Bharata bhuvāla'. This the singers explain to mean 'Bharata and Śatrughna', *Bhuvāl* being a folk name for Śatrughna the origin of which cannot be traced. The singers have also taken him for Kaikeyī's son whereas in the epic he is Sumitrā's son.

2 Or: 'there is (singing of) *sohar* in their houses'.

3 *Paṇḍit*, a priest and, in this case, an astrologer.

4 *Piṛhāī*, a small, low seat.

5 Make calculations from an astrological guidebook or almanac.

6 The places assigned to various planets etc. in a horoscope according to their positions in the heavens at the time of an occurrence such as a birth are termed 'houses'; on the basis of these the predictions are made.

7 *Śrī*, a general title of respect before a name.

8 *Akṣaya*, 'Name of a day which is said to confer undying merit'.

The line may, however, be translated to mean, 'at an hour which confers undecaying prosperity etc.'.

9 The three houses of the three wives of *Daśaratha*. It was customary for the different wives of a polygamous king to live in separate chambers or houses.

10 *Dhaurāhar*, a private chamber, usually upstairs.

- XXII. Won't you wash (your) hands and mouth, and do the rinsing and brushing<sup>1</sup> (the teeth)?
- XXIII. Oh King, the name 'bājh'<sup>2</sup> has been terminated, (now) it does not matter that Rāma will go to the forest.
- XXIV. In whichever (persons') street Rāma will walk (the persons) will wash his garment<sup>3</sup>.
- XXV. They will bathe in the river Gaṅgā and all the people of the city will be redeemed<sup>4</sup>.
- XXVI. Whoever sings this auspicious song and makes it heard by others,
- XXVII. (Says) Tulasīdāsa, there is a strong hope that he will attain the auspicious fruit.

## 6 Sohar Ulārā i [*Paramaribo, 1962*] Duties of some castes and professions

- I. jasodrā ke bhaye nandalāla bajāo re gvāliniyā
- II. mālin lāye phūl tamolin cūnariyā
- III. bhalā āisan resamavā cīr le āye paṭahāriniyā  
jasodrā ke...
- IV. bhalā mālin lāye phūla tamolin bīrauvā
- V. bhalā āise āise bandha lagāy ke le āve paṭahāriniyā  
jasodrā ke...
- VI. bhalā mālin kai raḡ raḡe tamolin kaise calī
- VII. bhalā juga juga jiye tore lāla kahata paṭahāriniyā  
jasodrā ke...

- 1 *Datūin* (H. *dātun*), about eight inches long sticks of various woods the ends of which are chewed to form a brush for the teeth every morning. They are still used in Surinam.
- 2 'Bājh', an infertile woman. This state left a woman totally insecure in society and in the family for she could not fulfil the function of her sex for which she was married.
- 3 *Dhotī*, a sheet-like garment approximately five yards in length, tied round the loins, with one end passed between the legs and tucked in at the back. That this people would wash Rāma's garment shows the great respect they would have for him. The next line expresses it more clearly - his presence would be regarded by this people like a bath in the sacred river Ganges, a dip in which is believed to redeem a person from all sins.
- 4 Lit. 'will swim across' - a term commonly used for redemption, the allusion is to swimming across the 'bhava-sāgara', the ocean of worldly existence.



- I. To Yaśodā is born Kṛṣṇa; play (the musical instruments), cowherdess!
- II. The *mālin*<sup>1</sup> brings the flowers and the *tamolin*<sup>2</sup> brings *cūnā*,<sup>3</sup>
- III. And,<sup>4</sup> oh, such silken garments does the *paṭahāriṇiyā*<sup>5</sup> bring along.<sup>6</sup> To Yaśodā...
- IV. Ah,<sup>4</sup> the *mālin* brings flowers and the *tamolin* the *bīṛā*,<sup>3</sup>
- V. And, oh<sup>4</sup> the *paṭahāriṇiyā* has sewed on such (beautiful) flowery pieces and brings them along.  
To Yaśodā...
- VI. Well,<sup>4</sup> in how many colours is coloured the *mālin*, and how does the *tamolin* walk?
- VII. May the darling child live for many aeons - says the *paṭahāriṇiyā*.  
To Yaśodā...

## 7 Sohar Ulārā ii [*Paramaribo, 1962*] Celebrations at Kṛṣṇa's birth<sup>7</sup>

- I. nanda ghara bāje badhaiyā lāla ham suni ke āye  
O suni ke āye suni ke āye  
nanda ghara... ..
- II. kahavā kanhaiyā tore janama bhaye haj
- III. kahavā bāje badhaiyā lāla hama suni...

1 A gardener's wife or a lady gardener.

2 A woman *tamolī* or a *tamolī's* wife. *Tamolīs* deal with betel-leaf and such other mouth-fresheners. *Tamolīs* in India often carried out their trade in association with courtesans, serving the customers and often acting as go-betweens. Their coquettish walk is proverbial.

3 *Bīṛā*, a wrapped up betel-leaf with many spices and mouth-fresheners inside; one of these is *cūnā*, edible white lime.

4 We have included *bhalā* as an example, but it cannot be accurately translated. See p. 5.

5 Wife of a *paṭahār*, or a woman of such profession. They deal in colourful flowery and other objects and small pieces including of clothing for children.

6 Throughout it may be translated as 'has brought along.' In these songs a general tense is often used to denote past, present or future according to the context.

7 Line I. Cp. Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 233).

- IV. mathurā kanhaiyā tore janama bhaye hai  
 V. gokulā bāje badhaiyā lāla hama... ..  
 VI. candā bhi āye surajū bhī āye  
 VII. are āye nau lakha tārā lāla hama... ..  
 VIII. jalase me nāce sukuvāri maiyā  
 [jalase me nāce (sukuvāra daiyā)]  
 IX. gokulā me nāce kanhaiyā lala hama... ..
- I. At Nanda's home congratulatory music is being played;<sup>1</sup>  
 I have just heard and come, dear!  
 At Nanda's home...
- II. Where has your birth taken place, O Kṛṣṇa?<sup>2</sup>  
 III. Where is the congratulatory music being played?  
 I have heard...
- IV. In Mathurā has your birth taken place, Oh Kṛṣṇa,<sup>3</sup>  
 V. In Gokula the congratulatory music is being played.  
 I have heard...
- VI. The moon came and the sun also came,<sup>4</sup>  
 VII. O, nine hundred thousand stars came.  
 I have heard...
- VIII. In the session the tender-limbed mother is dancing;  
 IX. (And) in Gokula dances Kṛṣṇa.  
 I have heard...

1 Here there may be some confusion as to which is the refrain, 'at Nanda's home...' or 'I have heard...'. In fact it is customary in singing to take either half first, and so the lines may be sung in this way also: '*ham suni ke āye - Nanda ghara bāje badhaiyā, lāla ham suni ke āye*'. This is also the case with many other songs.

2 *Kanhaiyā*, colloquial, diminutive form of Kṛṣṇa.

3 This is obviously a reference to Kṛṣṇa's birth in a prison in Mathurā and his being taken away immediately to be brought up with the foster-father Nanda in Gokula. This also makes it possible for the foster-mother in Gokula to be dancing in the celebration of the child's birth. In the variant '*sukuvāra daiyā*', however, the meaning is 'in the session the tender-limbed father is dancing'. See line VIII.

4 As deities.

## 8 Sohar Ulārā iii [Kwatta, 1962]

### Sītā's lament<sup>1</sup>

- I. khaṛī khaṛī siyā pachitāye lava kuśa bana meḡ bhaye
  - II. jo ghara meḡ hote sasurā rājā dasaratha
  - III. dete ajodhyā luṭāy  
lava kuśa...
  - IV. jo ghara meḡ hote sāsū kausilyā
  - V. detī harauvā pahirāy  
lava kuśa...
  - VI. jo ghara meḡ hote nanadī subhadrā
  - VII. detī kaḡanā pahirāy  
lava kuśa
  - VIII. jo ghara meḡ hote devarā bhaiyā lachimana
  - IX. dete aḡuṭhiyā pahirāy  
lava kuśa...
- 
- I. Sītā stands<sup>2</sup> and broods: - Lava and Kuśa are born in the jungle.
  - II. Were they born at home, king Daśaratha the father-in-law
  - III. Would have given (the whole city of) Ayodhyā away (but) Lava and Kuśa are born in the jungle.
  - IV. Were they born at home, Kauśalyā the mother-in-law
  - V. Would have put on a necklace (round my neck) (but)  
Lava and Kuśa...
  - VI. Were they born at home, Subhadrā the *nanad*<sup>3</sup>
  - VII. Would have put a bracelet on (my wrist) (but)  
Lava and Kuśa...
  - VIII. Were they born at home, brother Lakṣmaṇa the *devar*
  - IX. Would have put a finger-ring on (my finger) (but)  
Lava and Kuśa...

1 Cp. R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 58).

2 i.e., 'Sītā keeps standing (as if lost in her thoughts) and broods'.

3 Husband's sister.

## 9 Sohar Ulārā iv [*Paramaribo, 1962*] Anticipating the child's growth

- I. kahana lāge raghubara maiyā maiyā  
-kahana lāge raghubara
  - II. rājā dasaratha jī ke pitā hi pitā -kahana...
  - III. bhārata satrughana bhaiyā re bhaiyā - kahana...
  - IV. phūā subhadrā ke phūā hi phūā - kahana...
  - V. dūri khelana mati jāiho ho lalanā
  - VI. are khelo ghara ḡganiyā - kahana...
- I. The best of the Raghus (i.e. Rāma) has begun to call 'mother', 'mother'.
  - II. To king Daśaratha, 'father', 'father' -
  - III. To Bharata and Śatrughna, 'brother', 'brother' -
  - IV. To *phūā*<sup>1</sup> Subhadrā, '*phūā*', '*phūā*' - (he has begun to call).
  - V. Dear one, you must not go far to play;
  - VI. Play (right here) in the courtyard of the house.

## 10 Sohar Caṭnī [*van Drimmelpolder, Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. <sup>2</sup>calo tūr lāi rājā mehāniyā ke dār
- II. sone ke thārī meḡ jevanā parosyaḡ

1 *Phūā*: father's sister.

2 The song is expressive of a woman's longing for her beloved who is absent and without whom all her food, water and bed etc. are meaningless. Perhaps to lessen her boredom she invites her friends to come along to pick *mēhadī* leaves.  
Cp. R. Tripāthī ('29: 421); D. Simha ('44: 184, 199, 212, 418 ff., 467 etc.) K. Upādhyāya, ('54: 392-393; '57: 150; '60: 333).

- III. jeonā ke jevāiyā base gangā pār  
calo tūr...
- IV. sone ke gerūā gaṅgā jal pānī  
V. gerūā ke ghuṭāiyā base gangā pār  
calo tūr...
- VI. pāca hi pāna pāca bīrā jurāyo  
VII. bīrā ke kucāiyā base gaṅgā pār  
calo tūr...
- VIII. phūl maj jhār jhār seja lagāyau  
IX. sej ke suvāiyā base gaṅgā pār  
calo tūr...

- I. Come, let us (go), pick and bring a limb of *mēhadī*,<sup>1</sup> O<sup>2</sup> king.
- II. I dressed the meal in a gold plate -<sup>3</sup>
- III. He who should eat the meal is dwelling across the (river) Ganges.  
Come...
- IV. (In the) gold pitcher (I filled) the water, the (sacred) water<sup>4</sup> of the Ganges -  
V. He who should drink from the pitcher is dwelling across the (river) Ganges.  
Come...
- VI. Just five betel leaves (made into) five *bīrās* -  
VII. He who should chew the *bīrā* is dwelling across the (river) Ganges.  
Come...
- VIII. After (carefully) brushing (repeatedly) I made the bed with flowers -<sup>5</sup>  
IX. He who should sleep on the bed is dwelling across the (river) Ganges.  
Come...

1 A plant the twigs and leaves of which are kneaded to make reddish patterns on hands and feet especially during the rainy season as a sort of cosmetic.

2 A general term of affection. It is not clear who is being addressed here.

3 *Thālī*. An Indian metal plate with upturned corners.

4 '*Gaṅgā jal pānī*'. The Hindi word '*pānī*' is simply water but to express sanctity the Sanskrit term '*jala*' is often used.

5 It used to be customary to spread flowers on the marital bed; often the flowers had to be examined carefully for fear of worms etc.

## 11 Mūṛan i [*Paramaribo, 1967*]

### The right conditions for the ceremony<sup>1</sup>

- I. jala bhari le hilorī hilora resama ke ḍorī
  - II. resama kī ḍoriyā jabai nīka lagai
  - III. jaba sone ghāilavā hoy  
resama kī ḍorī jala bhari...
  - IV. sone ghāilavā jabai nīka lāge
  - V. jaba pātara tiriyaḅā hoy,  
resama kī ḍorī jala bhari...
  - VI. pātara tiriyaḅā jabai nīka lāge
  - VII. jaba goda horilavā hoy,  
resama kī ḍorī jala bhari...
  - VIII. gode horilavā jabai nīka lāge
  - IX. jaba kāsī meḅ muṅḅana hoy,  
resama kī ḍorī jala bhari...
  - X. kāsī meḅ muṅḅana jabai nīka lāgai
  - XI. jaba lāurī nanadiyā hoy,  
resama kī ḍorī jala bhari...
  - XII. lāurī nanadiyā jabai nīka lāgai
  - XIII. jaba gāṭhī rupaiyā hoy,  
resama kī ḍorī jala bhari
- I. Fill the water with heaving movements<sup>2</sup> (with the aid of a) string of silk<sup>3</sup>.
  - II. The silken string looks well only then -

1 Cp. Archer and Prasād ('43: 169). We have recorded three versions.

2 *Hilor* is the movement of billows; in this case the to and fro movement of the persons drawing water from a well as they drop the pitcher into the well and draw it back with a string tied around the pitcher's neck.

3 The reference to drawing water in this refrain may on one hand be merely an indication of the gossip among the ladies at a village well, on the other hand it may refer to the custom of performing the shaving ceremony near a sheet of water. It is also possible that the silken string also obliquely refers to the hair itself as it is wetted with water during the ceremony prior to being shaved.

- III. When there is a pitcher (made of) gold.<sup>1</sup>
- IV. The pitcher of gold looks well only then -
- V. When the woman (fetching it) is slim.<sup>2</sup>
- VI. The slim woman looks well only then -
- VII. When (there) is a sweet little baby boy in (her) lap.
- VIII. The child in the lap looks well only then -
- IX. When (his) *muṇḍana* (i.e. the shaving ceremony) takes place in the (the city of) Kāśī.
- X. The *muṇḍana* in Kāśī looks well only then -
- XI. When the little *nanad* is (present there).
- XII. The (presence of the) little *nanad* looks well only then -
- XIII. When there is money in the knot.<sup>3</sup>

## 12 Mūran ii [Uitvlugt, 1962]

- I. sira gobhuvāre bāra lalüā,
- II. ī lalüā khelaḷ cakārī bhāvariyā
- III. ājī ājā ke goda lalüā<sup>4</sup>  
sira gabhuāre...
  
- I. (This) child (has) on (his) head the pre-natal<sup>5</sup> hair.
- II. This child plays *cakrī bhavar*,<sup>6</sup>
- III. (Sitting) in lap<sup>7</sup> of (this) grandmother and grandfather.

1 The refrain is not translated with each repetition.

2 Dr. V. Agravāl ('62: 86) translates *pātar* as *tīkṣṇa* (sharp) but whether in features or in nature is not clear.

3 The knot in the corner of a *dhotī* (men's lower garment), *sārī*, or *oṛhanī* (women's headscarf) in which the money is tied; idiomatically, a purse.

4 The same lines are repeated for a time to last through the ceremony, changing *ājā* (paternal grandfather) and *ājī* (paternal grandmother) to *bappā* (father) *maiā* (mother), *phupphā* (husband of father's sister), *phūā* (father's sister) and other relatives.

5 *Gobhuvāre* or *gabhuāre* (from S. *garbha*, foetus). This first hair is regarded as being full of impurities from the foetal stage.

6 This is made of a small disc with two holes through which two strings pass. The player holds the strings on both sides and spins the disc till the strings get tight, then releasing it to spin back.

7 It is customary that the child sits in someone's lap during the ceremony.

The songs of the sacred thread are sung at these stages of the ceremony:

1. The candidate asks to be prepared for the ceremony.
2. He asks for the sacred thread, and receives it.
3. He goes round the *ācārya*, the preceptor.
4. He is given a belt of the *muñja* grass.
5. He is given a staff.
6. He begs for alms, and receives, especially from the ladies.
7. He goes away, presumably to Kāśī, to study.
8. The ladies sing asking him to come back, and he returns to the ceremonial canopy.

All have been recorded, some in several versions, but only (7) and (8) are printed here.

### 13 Janëü i [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. cāitahi barüā teja cale bāisākha meḡ pahuçāi ho
  - II. bhikṣā dëo e maiyā<sup>1</sup> bhikṣā dëo maj to barüā barāhmana ho
  - III. jau maj jānatyū ai barüā hamare ghare äihäu ho
  - IV. osara maj jutāi ke ghana motiyā bovāvatiū ho
  - V. motiyana thāra bharāi ke maj barüā ke detiyäü ho
- I. The boy candidate<sup>2</sup> walks fast in (the month of) *caitra*<sup>3</sup> and arrives in (the month of) *vaiśākha*<sup>3</sup> (and begs on the way).

1 The song continues while the initiate is going round the gathering receiving alms. The same lines are repeated, replacing the word *mayiā* (mother) with other lady relatives, e.g. *dādī* (paternal grandmother), *nānī* (maternal grandmother) etc.

2 *Barüā* (S. *vaṭu*), a young boy who has not yet been initiated into the study of the Veda.

3 *Caitra*: February-March. *Vaiśākha*: March-April. The two months of the spring season are the time enjoined for the *upanayana* ceremony of a *Brāhmaṇa* child. *Vasante brāhmaṇam upanayīta* (ApDS. 1.1.19).



- II. - Give alms, O mother;<sup>1</sup> give alms. I am but a young *Brāhmaṇa* candidate.
- III. - If I had known, O young candidate, that you would come to my home,
- IV. I would have ploughed the top storey (of my home)<sup>2</sup> and would have got a thick (crop of) pearls sown.
- V. I would have (then) filled a plate<sup>3</sup> with the pearls and given to (you), the young candidate.

#### 14 Janēū ii [*Corentijnpolder, Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. more ājā<sup>4</sup> ke kaṭhina karejā to bana ke paṭhāvāj ho
  - II. more ājā hi gharahj vidyāmān to bana ke paṭhāvāj ho
  - III. more bāraha barasa ke umiriyā daradi nahj lāgāi ho
  - IV. more ājā ke kaṭhina karejā daradi nahj lāgāi ho
  - V. more bāraha barasa ke umiriyā to bana ke paṭhāvāj daradi nahj lāgāi ho
  - VI. ghumi calo ai ghumi calo avaro se ghumi calāu (ho)<sup>5</sup>
  - VII. beṭā bāraha barisa ke umiriyā tu bana ke sidhārēu ho
  - VIII. tore ājā ke kaṭhina karejā to bana ke paṭhāvāj ho
- I. - My paternal grandfather's heart is hard, so he is sending (me away) to the forest.<sup>6</sup>
  - II. My paternal grandfather is himself a learned person right (here) at home, still he is sending (me away) to the forest.
  - III. My age is (only tender) twelve years - (my paternal grandfather) feels no sympathy.<sup>7</sup>

1 Not necessarily one's own mother. Any lady may be addressed in this way.

2 Perhaps she means that she would have ploughed down even the land where her house stands.

3 *Thālī*. A variant is *kañcana thāra*: a plate made of gold.

4 The song continues very long by repetitions and in each repetition the women singers replace the word *ājā* (paternal grandfather) by terms for other male relatives.

5 Added by the translator to maintain uniformity.

6 To the *āśrama*, the hermitage of a preceptor.

7 Literally, '(there) comes no (feeling of) pain (or pity) (in his heart)'.

- IV. My paternal grandfather's heart is hard; he feels no sympathy.
- V. My age is (only tender) twelve years; still he is sending (me away) to the forest and feels no sympathy.
- VI. - Turn round, son; turn round. Again (we insist), turn round (and come back).
- VII. Son, your age is (only) twelve years (and yet) you are departing for the forest.
- VIII. Your paternal grandfather's heart is hard, so he is sending (you away) to the forest.

## The wedding songs

[For the details of the ceremonials see de Klerk ('51: 127-191) and Speckmann ('65: 135-146) without reference to which the meaning of the songs will not be clear.]

The songs for the following stages of the *tilak* ceremony have been recorded.

1. Placing *sagun*, various auspicious and religious objects in a *thālī*, metal plate. The song includes fish among these, which may be due to some Mithilā influence since this is not actually used in the ceremonies in Surinam. The song also may declare the ancestry of both sides.
2. General preparation of the *cauk*, prayers and offerings including a *homa* (fire-sacrifice), kindling a clay-lamp and the reading of scriptures.
3. The bride-to-be of the bridegroom sits down for the *tilak* ceremony and is blessed by the relatives, while receiving the *tilak* mark on the forehead.
4. Giving gifts, because of which the ceremony has become known as *tilak caṛhānā* (making an offering of the *tilak* gifts) or *tilak denā* (giving the *tilak* gifts). This song is printed here.
5. Departure of the visiting party.

## 15 Tilak [*Paramaribo, 1967*]

### Fixing the marriage, the amount of Tilak gift and the dowry.<sup>1</sup>

- I. purubahi desavā āye nauvā brāhmana ho
- II. ṭhāṛḥa bhāile rājā ke duvāre ho
- III. kiyā tuḥṭ brāhmana bhicchā levāu ho
- VI. kiyā piyabo ṭhandā pānī ho
- V. nāḥi maḥ rājā ho bhicchā lebai ho
- VI. nāḥi o piyabe ṭhandā pānī ho
- VII. tore ghare he rājā rāma kuṣvāre haj
- VIII. more ghare sītā kuṣvārī ho
- IX. kahū to he rājā tilaka caṛḥāvau ho
- X. nāḥi re ghumari ghara jāu ho
- XI. dvāre se rājā mahali bhītara gāile ho
- XII. rānī rājā eka mati kīnha ho
- XIII. kāi lakha he brāhmaṇa tilaka caṛḥāiba ho
- XIV. kāi lakha daheja deba ho
- XV. nau lakha he rājā tilaka caṛḥāibe ho
- XVI. dasa lakha daheja debai ho

- I. The barber (and the) Brāhmaṇa<sup>2</sup> came to the eastern country,
- II. (They) stood at the king's gates.
- III. - O Brāhmaṇa, do you (wish to) take alms or -
- IV. would you drink cool water?
- V. - O king, I would take neither alms -
- VI. Nor would I drink cool water.
- VII. O king in your home (there) is Rāma (who is) unmarried;
- VIII. In my home (there) is Sītā<sup>3</sup> (who also is) unmarried.

1 Cp. R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 202).

2 Or the *barber brāhmaṇa* (vide note on p. 20).

3 Not necessarily the legendary person but the title of any marriageable girl. The same applies to other figures in the wedding songs (see p. 35).

- IX. If you say, O king, (then) I would make the *tilak* offering;
- X. If not, I would return and go home.
- XI. The king went inside from the gates;
- XII. The queen and the king (consulted and) became of one mind.<sup>1</sup>
- XIII. - O Brāhmaṇa, how many hundred thousands would you make as the *tilak* offering,
- XIV. How many hundred thousands would you give as the dowry?
- XV. - O king, I shall make nine hundred thousand the *tilak* offering;
- XVI. I shall give ten hundred thousand (i.e. a million) as the dowry.

## 16 Telvān<sup>2</sup> [*Paramaribo, 1967*]

- I. ke na more bovale rāi sarasōiyā ke na ho perāve karavā tela ho
- II. kekare kakahiyā maḥ māga sāvāraḥ kekare ṣḍure suhāg
- III. bābā more bovale rāi sarasōiyā mātā perāve karavā tela ho
- IV. bhāujī kakahiyā maḥ māga savāraḥ harijī ke ṣḍure suhāga.  
(prabhujī ke...)

- I. Who (among)<sup>3</sup> my (relatives) sowed the *rāi*<sup>4</sup> mustard and who presses the bitter<sup>5</sup> oil?
- II. With whose comb shall I part my hair (and) through whose vermilion the *suhāg*<sup>6</sup> (shall come to me)?

1 That is, agreed between themselves.

2 De Klerk mentions the *telvān* only in connection with *hardī* and *cumāvan* ('51: 145) of the bride. He has missed the ceremony before the worship of the drum (p. 138) in which the *nāunī* oils and parts the hair of the mother of the bride or the bridegroom and places vermilion (*sindūr*) in the parting. In the absence of the *nāunī*, a woman relative may perform the action. The same may also be done at the *maṭkor* spot (d.Kl. p. 139).

3 *na* in the text appears to be only *metri causa*.

4 A sort of black mustard.

5 *Karvā tel*, the usual term for mustard oil.

6 The marital auspiciousness and good luck. The vermilion in the parting of the hair is the symbol of *suhāg*.

- III. My father sowed the *rāī* mustard and mother has the oil pressed.
- IV. I shall part my hair with (my) *bhāujī's*<sup>1</sup> comb, and through glorious *hari's*<sup>2</sup> vermilion the *suhāg* (shall come to me).

### 17 Mādar-Pūjā<sup>3</sup> [*Saramacca, 1962*]

- I. kekare duvāre māḍara pūjahj
  - II. kekare duvāre māḍara bājāi ho
  - III. kekare duvāre pūjata suhāvana ho
  - IV. kekare duvāre māḍara bājahj bājata suhāvana ho
- I. At whose door are they worshipping the *māḍar*?
  - II. At whose door is the *māḍar* sounding?
  - III. At whose door the worship being performed seems glorious?
  - IV. At whose door is the *māḍar* sounding and, sounding, seems glorious?

1 Brother's wife. Because she is a *suhāgin*, the lady blessed with marital fortune, the comb that makes the parting in her hair would magically bring the same auspiciousness to the singer.

2 *Hari*, Lord Viṣṇu, or *prabhu*, God and master - the husband. It is he who is the agent of the marital status, hence his vermilion brings the *suhāg*.

3 De Klerk has placed a question mark after '*manar pūjā*' in the note ('51: 138) on the worship of the drum, not realising that this worship is referred to as *māḍar-pūjā*. Concerning the relationship of the drum with the mother goddess see p. 36.

### 18 Maṭkor procession [*Clarapolder, Nickerie, 1962*] The procession walking towards the Maṭkor spot

- I. rāmnagara ke rahiyā batāy deyo  
rahiyā batāy deyo, ḍagariyā batāy deyo
- II. jaune ghāṭa more sasurū<sup>1</sup> nahāyeḡ
- III. taune ghāṭa morī ḍoliyā utār deyo  
rāmnagara ke...

- I. Tell me the way towards Rāmnagar;<sup>2</sup> tell me the way, tell me the path.
- II. The 'stelling'<sup>3</sup> at which my father-in-law bathes,
- III. Put down my *ḍolī*<sup>4</sup> on that very 'stelling'.

### 19 Maṭkor i [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*] Worship of Rāma (as Śiva?) together with the earth (which is) Pārvatī

- I. pahile maj sumirauḡ rām phira se bhūiyā bhavānī
- II. sone ke thārī meḡ jēunā parosyauḡ
- III. pahile jevaj rām phira se bhūiyā bhavānī  
pahile maj...

1 The song is repeated with *sasurū* (father-in-law) replaced by other terms such as *bhasurū* (husband's elder brother), *deorā* (*devar*: husband's younger brother) and in the final repetition, *samiyā* (*svāmī*, master, husband).

2 A state and a city across the river Gaṅgā from Vārāṇasī (Banāras). The song indicates that the walk is towards Gaṅgā (see discussion on p. 36). It may also be symbolic of the transition, crossing over, to the marital status.

3 *Ghāṭ*: an area for bathing with steps going down into the river; or a point of crossing over.

4 *Ḍolī*: a type of palanquin.

- IV. jhājhara gaṛūā gaṅgā jala pānī  
 V. pahile ghūṭe rām phira se bhūiyā bhavānī  
     pahile maj...  
 VI. laṅg ilāycī ke bīrā juṛāyau  
 VII. pahile kūcaj rām phira se bhūiyā bhavānī  
 VIII. phūla nivārī ke seja bichāyau  
 IX. pahile sovaj rām phira se bhūiyā bhavānī  
     pahile mai...

- I. First I remember Rāma and then Earth (which is) Pārvaṭī.  
 II. I have served a meal in a gold *thālī*;  
 III. First Rāma eats and then Earth (which is) Pārvaṭī.  
     First I...  
 IV. A jar (and a) pitcher - and for water the (sacred) water of (the river) Gaṅgā;  
 V. First Rāma drinks and then Earth (which is) Pārvaṭī.  
     First I...  
 VI. I have prepared a *bīrā* with cloves and cardamom and -  
 VII. First Rāma chews and then Earth (which is) Pārvaṭī.  
     First I...  
 VIII. I have spread a bed of flower-like *nīvār*,<sup>1</sup>  
 IX. First Rāma sleeps and then Earth (which is) Pārvaṭī.  
     First I...

## 20 Maṭkor ii [*Nieuw Nickerie*, 1967]

### Worship of Śiva and Pārvaṭī

- I. lālī dhujā phaharānī bhavānī tore sevā na jānu, lālī dhujā...  
 II. kahavā se āve siva sankara jogī, kahavā se āve mahādeva,  
     bhavānī tore sevā...  
 III. kahavā se āve devī duragā, kahavā se āve pārvaṭī,  
     bhavānī tore sevā...

1 Four inches wide strips of specially prepared cotton which come in rolls. Beds are then woven out of these. Not known in Surinam.

- IV. kahavā baiṭhāṭ siva sankara jogī, kahavā baiṭhāṭ mahādeva,  
bhavānī tore sevā...
- V. bediyā baiṭhāṭ siva sankara jogī, bediyā baiṭhāṭ bhagavān,  
bhavānī tore sevā...
- VI. kā ū caṛhāṭ siva sankara jogī, kā ū caṛhāṭ bhagavān,  
bhavānī tore sevā...
- VII. dudhavā caṛhāṭ siva sankara jogī, homiyā karāṭ bhagavān,  
bhavānī tore sevā...
- I. O Pārvaṭī (you who have a) red flag fluttering, I do not know (the right way of) serving you.
- II. From where comes the yogī Śiva Śaṅkara?<sup>1</sup> From where comes Mahādeva?<sup>2</sup>
- III. From where comes the goddess Durgā<sup>3</sup>? From where comes Pārvaṭī?
- IV. Where shall I make the yogī Śiva Śaṅkara sit? Where shall I make the lord<sup>4</sup> sit?
- V. I shall make the yogī Śiva Śaṅkara sit on the altar. I shall make the lord sit on the altar.
- VI. What offering shall I make to the yogī Śiva Śaṅkara?  
What offering shall I make to the lord?
- VII. I would make an offering of milk to the yogī Śiva Śaṅkara.  
I would have a *homa*<sup>5</sup> performed unto the lord.

## 21 Maṭkor iii [*Leiding 8A, 1962*] Remembering the deities

- I. ṭhaiyā manāvauṭ maṭ bhūiyā manāvauṭ ṭhaiyā bhūiyā dharama tuhār
- II. tuhare sarana maṭ jaga ṭhānyau jo jaga pūrana har  
ṭhaiyā manāvauṭ...

1 Śiva the giver of peace; Śiva in his benevolent aspect.  
2 The great god, Śiva. In a variant: *bhagavān*.  
3 The terrible aspect of Pārvaṭī.  
4 *Bhagavān*.  
5 Offerings into the fire.



- III. tuhare sarana purakhe maj jaga ropyau jo jaga pūrana hār  
ṭhaiyā manāvau...
- IV. tuhare sarana kālī maj jaga ropyau jo re jaga pūrana hār  
ṭhaiyā manāvau...
- V. tuhare sarana sāyar maj jaga ropyau jo re jaga pūrana hār  
ṭhaiyā manāvau...
- VI. tuhare sarana ḍihavā maj jaga ropyau more jaga pūrana hār  
ṭhaiyā manāvau...

- I. I please<sup>1</sup> ṭhaiyā<sup>2</sup> and Bhüiyā;<sup>3</sup> ṭhaiyā and Bhüiyā, it is your nature (to accept worship and be pleased).
- II. I have undertaken the sacrifice<sup>4</sup> by taking refuge<sup>5</sup> with you who are the fulfillers<sup>6</sup> of the sacrifice.
- III. I have undertaken the sacrifice, O ancestor, taking refuge with you who are the fulfiller of the sacrifice.
- IV. I have undertaken the sacrifice, O mother Kālī, taking refuge with you who are the fulfiller of the sacrifice.
- V. I have undertaken the sacrifice, O Sāī<sup>7</sup>, taking refuge with you who are the fulfiller of the sacrifice.
- VI. I have undertaken the sacrifice, O Ḍīh,<sup>8</sup> taking refuge with you who are the fulfiller of the sacrifice.

1 *Manānā*: to please with conciliatory gestures someone who has been, or is liable to become, angered. In the case of a deity, it is to win his pleasure, grace and benevolence.

2 See p. 37.

3 See p. 37.

4 *Yajña*.

5 In other words, 'I have done it on your strength, not mine'.

6 i.e., 'You are capable of seeing it to completion'.

7 Tombs of old saints, especially Muslim, worshipped by Hindus also.

8 See p. 24.

## 22 Maṭkor iv [*Leiding 8A, 1962*]

### Placing vermilion marks on the cauk remembering Gaurī and Gaṇeśa together with minor deities

- I. ṭīkaṃ maḥ gaurī gaṇeśa re ṭīkaṃ dharatī maiyā māga tuhāra re
- II. ṭīkaṃ maḥ gaurī gaṇeśa re ṭīkaṃ dyuhare bābā mātha tuhāra re
- III. ṭīkaṃ maḥ gaurī gaṇeśa re ṭīkaṃ kāliyā maiyā mātha tuhāra re
- IV. ṭīkaṃ maḥ gaurī gaṇeśa re ṭīkaṃ sātahu bahinī mātha tuhāra re
- V. ṭīkaṃ maḥ gaurī gaṇeśa re ṭīkaṃ yahi re pānī mātha tuhāra re

- I. I mark Gaurī and Gaṇeśa with the *ṭīkā*;<sup>1</sup> O mother earth, I mark the parting of your hair with the *ṭīkā*.
- II. I mark Gaurī and Gaṇeśa with the *ṭīkā*; *Ḍīh bābā*, I mark your forehead with the *ṭīkā*.
- III-V. Respectively for mother Kālī, seven sisters, and 'this water'.<sup>2</sup> [That is to say, the lines are repeated with variation].

1 *ṭīkā*: the vermilion mark placed on the forehead or in the parting of a woman's hair. Here it refers to the seven spots of vermilion and oil placed in the *cauk*. Cp. de Klerk ('51: 138).

2 *Jala-devatā*, the water deity. Cp. song No. 85. *Vide* p. 36 and Eliade ('64: 163-187).

### 23 Māṛo cauk i [*Saramacca, 1962*]

#### The cauk of the wedding canopy I<sup>1</sup>

- I. surahini gaiyā ke gobarā se aḡanā lipāve, are aḡanā lipāve sunaho siva sankara ho
  - II. motiyana cauka purāvāi sunaho siva sankara ho
  - III. sone ke kalasā dharavaḡi mānika diyanā barāvāḡi ho sunaho siva sankara ho
- I. One has the courtyard smeared with the dung of the heavenly cow;<sup>2</sup> yes, the courtyard is smeared - hear, oh Śiva Śaṅkara!<sup>3</sup>
  - II. One has the *cauk* filled in with pearls<sup>4</sup> - hear, oh Śiva Śaṅkara!
  - III. One has the pitcher (made of) gold placed and has the jewel-lamp kindled - hear, oh Śiva Śaṅkara!

### 24 Māṛo cauk ii [*Uitvlugt, 1962*]

#### The cauk of the wedding canopy II<sup>5</sup>

- I. aba rāma janakapura āye sakhi mila ke maṅgala gāveḡ
- II. kāhina ke tore khambhā gaṛā hai kāhina māṛo chavāye, sakhi re...
- IIa. mangala gāveḡ sakhi dhaula macāveḡ, rāma janakapura...
- III. kḡsana ke more khambhā gaṛā hai aba kḡsana māṛo chavāye, sakhi re...

1 Cp. Archer and Prasād ('43: 73); Satyendra ('49: 79).

2 S. *surabhi*: used here as a hyperbole.

3 This refrain is a *stobha*.

4 Actually, white flour.

5 On *maṛo* and *cauk*, cp. Archer and Prasād ('43: 73, 85 etc.); S. Anil ('57: 85); Line I: *rāma janakapura āye*: Archer and Prasād ('43: 84).

- IV. kāhina ke tore cauka purā hai aba kāhina kalasā bharā hai sakhi re...  
 V. sonana ke more cauka purā hai motiyana kalasā bharā hai sakhi re...  
 mangala gāveṣ saba dhāula macāveṣ, rāma janakapura...
- I. Now Rāma has come to the city of Janaka; all *sakhis* having gathered, sing auspicious songs.  
 II. - Of what are your posts (made which are) dug in? With what (kind of canopy) is your *māro* shaded? All...  
 IIa. They sing auspicious songs and have a jolly time; Rāma has come...  
 III. - Of bronze are my posts (made which are) dug in; now, with bronze is the *māro* shaded. All...  
 IV. - With what has your *cauk* been inlaid? With what is the pitcher filled? All...  
 V. - With gold (pieces?) has my *cauk* been inlaid; with pearls is the pitcher filled. They sing auspicious songs (and) all have a jolly time. Rāma has come...

## 25 Silpohanā<sup>1</sup> [*Paramaribo*, 1967] Calling the spirits

- I. silā pohe bāiṭṭhī janaka dēi, ādhā baṛā lihaṭ curāi  
 marāuvā morā jūṭh bhāile

1 Not mentioned by de Klerk by this title but the ritual, starting from the use of the *sil* and *loṛhā* ('51: 144, line 19 ff.), has been described under *Piṭṛ-pūjā*.

Cp. R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 205); Satyendra ('49: 197).

Our singer seems to have made some confusion in this song. Line I appears to be part of a *gāli*, a parody of a *silpohanā* song, which has been wrongly inserted here. The author was informed by another singer that line VI is also part of another song, sung after this one, in which the ancestors are called by respective names, replacing the phrase *kavana rāmā*; this second song could not be recorded completely.

- II. pāca pāna nau narivara; jai sarage bāṭyau dēutā pittara  
 purukhī purukhā  
 ājī ājā  
 tuharau devatā tīnu loka jaga purayau
- III. pāca pāna nau narivara; jai sarage bāṭyau sārī sarahaj  
 bahū samete  
 tīnu loka jaga purayau
- IV. pāca pāna nau narivara; jai bhūlala cūkala  
 isarala bisarala  
 dēuta pittara  
 ājī ājā  
 tuharau devatā tīnu loka jaga purayau
- V. pāca pāna nau narivara; jai havā bayār  
 ādhī bavaṇḍar  
 sāpa gojar  
 kīrī bicchī  
 tuharau devatā tīnu loka jaga purayau
- VI. pāca pāna nau narivara; sarage jo bāiṭhe kavana rāmā  
 toharo nevatā hai āja
- I. Janaka Devī<sup>1</sup> sat to grind (on the) grindstone; (she) stole half a *barā*.<sup>2</sup>  
 My *māṛo* became *jūṭhā*.<sup>3</sup>
- II. Five betel leaves and nine coconuts;<sup>4</sup> you who are in heaven, gods and ancestors,<sup>5</sup>  
 male ancestors and female ancestors,<sup>5</sup>  
 paternal grandfather and maternal grandmother for you, O deities, (the world  
 with all) three realms has been filled with sacrifice.<sup>6</sup>

1 A hypothetical name; or, perhaps the singer was thinking of someone at whose home the song was previously sung on some occasion.

2 A savoury part of the offering made from the gram ground on the grindstone.

3 *Jūṭhā*: that which remains after one has eaten from food; thus polluted and not fit for offering to men or gods. If one eats in a sacred or ceremonial place, the place also becomes polluted.

4 Part of the offering.

5 *Pitar* (S. *pitr*), the ancestors who have attained a certain place in the higher realm of the dead. The terms *purkhā* and *purkhī* denote male and female ancestors in a profane sense.

6 Yajña.

- III. Five betel leaves and nine coconuts; you who are in heaven, *sālīs* and *salhajs*,<sup>1</sup>  
together with the daughter-in-law,  
(the world with all) three realms has been filled with sacrifice.
- IV. Five betel leaves and nine coconuts; those who have been forgotten and have slipped  
from memory,  
lost and scattered,<sup>2</sup>  
gods and ancestors,  
paternal grandfather and maternal grandmother, for you, O deities, (the world  
with all) three realms has been filled with sacrifice.
- V. Five betel leaves and nine coconuts; those (which are)<sup>3</sup>  
air and breeze,  
gale and storm,  
snakes and worms,<sup>4</sup>  
insects<sup>5</sup> and scorpions,  
for you, O deities, (the world with all) three realms has been filled with sacrifice.
- VI. Five betel leaves and nine coconuts; you N.N. Rāma who are today sitting in heaven,  
today (this) invitation (is extended) to you.

## 26 Kalsā Goṭhāī [Paramaribo, 1965]

- I. ādhe maṛauvā meṇ naga cune ādhe me nagini cune re  
II. tabaḥu na maṛavā suhāvana ek re nanada binā re  
III. ādhe maṛauvā meṇ gota bāiṭhe ādhe meṇ gotini bāiṭhe re  
IV. are tabaḥu na maṛavā suhāvana eka re nanada binā re

1 *Sālī*, wife's sister. *Salhaj*, Wife's brother's wife.

2 A twin-word, *isaraḷ-bisaraḷ*, meaning in general, 'forgotten and so on'.

3 The idea seems to be 'those spirits who have become rulers of, or have taken abode in, the  
airs and breezes, gales and storms, or those who have become re-incarnated as snakes etc.'.

4 A kind of poisonous worm.

5 Or, ants.

6 Cp. R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 200).

- V. bāhar se bhāiyā bhītar bhaile bhaujī se mati karḇ re  
 VI. dhana āvata bāṭī bābā ke dulārī ghara bhajini boleo re  
 VII. āvo na nanadī gotāina more ṭhakurāin re  
 VIII. nanada bāiṭho na mājhe maṛauvā kalasa hamare goṭhāu re  
 IX. bhāuji kalasa goṭhāunī kāhū dehihau kalasa tohare gūṭhaba re  
 X. devai maṅ hāthe ke munariyā are gale bhara tilariyā ho re  
 XI. nanadōiyā ke caṛhane ke ghuravā caṛha usi gharavā jāiho re
- I. Under half the wedding tent jewels are inlaid and under the other half semi-precious stones are inlaid;  
 II. Even then, without (that) one, the *nanad*, the *maāro* does not appear attractive.  
 III. Under half the wedding tent are sitting the kinsmen and under the other half are sitting the kinswomen;  
 IV. Even then without (that) one, the *nanad*, the *māro* does not appear attractive.  
 V. The brother (of the bride) went inside from outside and is discussing with the *bhāujī*.  
 VI. The precious darling of (her) father is just coming - said the *bhāujī* in the house.  
 VII. - Come (won't you?), oh *nanad*, (my) kinswoman, my duchess!  
 VIII. *Nanad*, sit (won't you?), in the centre of the *māro* and tie up my pitcher.  
 IX. - *Bhāujī*, what would you pay me (as the fees) for the *kalasā guṭhaunī*?<sup>1</sup> (Tell me and) I will tie your pitcher.  
 X. - I shall give (you) a finger-ring (for your) hand and a three-string necklace to (adorn<sup>2</sup> your) neck.  
 XI For the *nanadōī*<sup>3</sup> I will give a horse to ride which you will mount (with him and) go to his home.

1 The same as *kalasā-goṭhāī*, the name of the ceremony.  
 2 To fill it entirely, *gale bhar*.  
 3 *Nanad*'s husband.

## 27 Hardī and Cumāvan<sup>1</sup> [*Leiding 8A, 1962*]

### A<sup>2</sup>

- I. köirini köirini tuḥa baṛī rānī re, kahavāḥ ke haradī
- II. sṛcāreyu āju re kahavāḥ ke haradī
- III. hamare dulahini bhāī āisī sukvāra re
- IV. haradī ke jhāra sahā nahj jāi re, haradī ke jhāra
- V. hamarī dulahini bhāī āisī sukvāra re
- VI. telavā ke jhāra sahā nahj jāi re, telavā ke jhāra

### B<sup>2</sup>

- I. kahavāḥ ke haradī, kahā re sṛcārī re kahavāḥ ke haradī
- II. köirini köirini tuḥa baṛī rānī re, kahavāḥ ke haradī
- III. <sup>3</sup> jaune dulahe rāmā khelata dekhyau re
- IV. tavane dulahe rāmā cauke jo baiṭhe re
- V. cūmana baiṭhī jāgha sunnarī bappavā kavana rāmā dhe
- VI. ika bāra cumalī dulahini mukha bhara dehu asīs
- VII. cūmana baiṭhe jāgha sunnare mappavā kavana rāmā re
- VIII. ika bāra cumalī dulahina dēī mukha bhara dehu asīs

### A

- I. O oilwoman,<sup>4</sup> oilwoman, you are a great queen; from where is the turmeric?
- II. The turmeric from which place has been gathered (here) today?
- III. Our bride has grown so tender -
- IV. The smell<sup>5</sup> of the turmeric cannot be borne (by her).<sup>6</sup>
- V. Our bride has grown so tender -
- VI. The smell of the oil cannot be borne (by her).

1 Lines I and II '..... *telini rānī, kahavāḥ kā telu sṛcāryo āj*' (H.S.B.I. Avadhī: 216).

2 The A is for *haradī*; B is for *cumāvan*.

3 The lines III and IV are for the bridegroom's ceremony, and V and VI are for the bride's.

4 *Köirin*, the wife of a man who is *kolī* by caste - one of whose professions is to press oil.

5 The smell of its vapour; *jhār*.

6 Is unbearable for her.



**B**

- I. From where is the turmeric? Where has been gathered the turmeric (and) from where?
- II. O oilwoman, oilwoman, you are a great queen; from where is the turmeric?
- III. The bridegroom Rāma whom I had seen playing (as a child),
- IV. The same bridegroom Rāma is (now) sitting on the board<sup>1</sup> (being anointed in this ceremony).
- V. The beautiful (bride) is sitting in the lap to kiss;<sup>2</sup> N.N. Rāma (is the) father (whose) daughter (she is).
- VI. (She the) bride has been kissed once; do give her a mouthful of blessings.<sup>3</sup>
- VII. The handsome (bridegroom) is sitting in the lap to kiss; N.N. Rāma (is) his mother.<sup>4</sup>
- VIII. The bride, the goddess, has been kissed once; give her a mouthful of blessings.

## 28 Lāvā [*Livorno, 1962*] Roasting the Lāvā

**A**

- I. kāhina kī torī culiyā kāhina lagalēu caukone
- II. kavane saharavā ke bhujāinī lāvā jo bhūjāi
- III. sonana ke torī culiyā rūpe lagalēu caukone
- IV. dīliyā saharavā ke bhujāinī lāvā je bhūjāi
- V. <sup>5</sup> kajaṛī bana lakaṛī komharā ghara ke khappaṛā
- VI. dīliyā saharavā ke bhujāinī lāvā jo bhūjāi

1 *Caukā*, a wooden seat only a few inches from the ground, also known as *caukī*.

2 This has been translated here too literally. For the details of the *cumāvan* ceremony see de Klerk ('51: 145).

3 This line may be wrong; it should probably refer to the bridegroom; *ika bāra cumale dulahe rāmā mukha bhara dehu asīs*. The singers often make such mistakes while singing.

4 The term *mappavā* is new; it may mean mother and father. The singers stated it to mean only mother.

5 After line IV, there may be two question lines analogous to the lines I and II, to which V and VI should be the answer.

**[Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]**

**Mixing the lāvā<sup>1</sup>**

**B**

- I. mora lāvā tora lāvā ekai meṅ milāy deyo  
e bhujāiniyā, e bhujāiniyā
- II. tora bahinī mora bhayā ekai meṅ sutāy deyo
- III. tore khete boyo maṅ borā  
e bhujāiniyā, e bhujāiniyā

**A**

- I. Of what is your fire-pit (made) and of what are the four corner supports (which have been) fixed?<sup>2</sup>
- II. Of which city is the *bhujāinī*<sup>3</sup> who is roasting the *lāvā*?<sup>4</sup>
- III. Your fire-pit is (made) of gold (and) the four corner supports are (made) of silver.
- IV. The *bhujāinī* who is roasting the *lāvā* is of the city (of) Delhi.
- V. The wood is from the *kajar*<sup>5</sup> forest (and) the tiles<sup>6</sup> (are) from a potter's house.
- VI. The *bhujāinī* who is roasting the *lāvā* is of the city of Delhi.

**B**

- I. Your *lāvā* and my *lāvā* - mix (them) in one, oh *bhujāinī*, oh *bhujāinī*!
- II. Your sister and my brother - make them sleep in one bed.
- III. I have sown the (seeds of) stringbeans in your field, oh *bhujāinī*, oh *bhujāinī*.

1 The ladies take the roasted paddy to a friend's house; two heaps of *lāvā* are mixed together several times by two ladies who have a marital family relationship with each other, for example a *nanad* and a *bhaujāī*. This represents the union of two families and, as the grain being mixed also represents fertility, it is an occasion for lascivious *gālīs*.

2 Four corner pieces of iron placed under the roasting pot on the fire-pit.

3 The wife of a man of *bharbhūjā* caste or profession who usually roasts the grains.

4 The paddy is soaked and then roasted; the roasted form, like popcorn, is called *lāvā* or *lāvā* (S. *lājā*).

5 Any thick forest where elephants roam.

6 *Khappar*, clay tiles used to cover the coals to adjust the heat.

### 29 Imlī Ghoṭāī [*Paramaribo, 1965*]

- I. bahinī cāuke bāiṭhī bhāiyā paḷagā bāiṭhe nā
- II. bhāiyā kholi deyo dāna ke gaṭhariyā to imalī ghoṭāvāo nā
- III. dahine hāthe lelai loṭavā bāyē re hāthe patāiyāi nā
- IV. sāta pheri kaṭale bhayanavā to māmā imalī ghoṭāvaye nā
- V. kiyā tuḥḥ bahinī jurāilo ki aba hā jurāilī nā
- VI. bahinī jo kucha bace more kāmāiyā yahi re hama lāin nā

- I. The sister is sitting on the board<sup>1</sup> (and) the brother is on the bed.
- II. Brother, open up (won't you?) the bundle of gift and have the leaves crushed.
- III. (He) took the water-vessel<sup>2</sup> in the right hand and the leaves in the left,
- IV. The *bhayan*<sup>3</sup> cut (the leaves with her teeth) seven times and so the *māmā*<sup>4</sup> has the leaves crushed.
- V. Are you, sister, satisfied? Yes, I am now satisfied.
- VI. Sister, whatever (could be) saved from my use - (all of) that I have brought to you (as a gift).

### 30 Dressing the bridegroom [*Uitvlugt, 1962*]

- I. baṛī dhūma se sājo larikā haj amīrq ke
- II. joṛā una kar āye pacāsō ke, jāmā lākha kar āye - larikā haj...
- III. pagiyā una kar āye hajārō ke, maurā lākha kar āye - larikā haj...

1 See note 1 on song No. 27, p. 77.

2 *Loṭā*, a small pitcher.

3 Sister's daughter.

4 Mother's brother.

IV. mojā una kar āye hajārḳ ke, panahī lākha kar āye - larikā haj...

- I. Bedeck him with great fanfare; he is a son of the rich.
- II. His suit has cost many fifties, his top coat cost a hundred thousand.
- III. His turban cost many thousands, his crown cost a hundred thousand.
- IV. His socks cost many thousands, his shoes cost a hundred thousand.

### **31 Barāts departure [*Paramaribo, 1965*]**

#### **Preparations of the wedding party (barāt) for departure to bride's home**

- I. dekho kaisī sajī hai barāta āja more lālan ke
- II. dulahā hamāre ajab saje haj, ajaba saje haj
- III. dekho jaise surajavā ke jot - āja more...
- IV. dulahā ke dādā ajab saje haj, ajaba saje haj
- V. dekho jaise rājā mahārāj - āja more...
- VI. dulahā ke nānā ajab saje haj, ajaba saje haj
- VII. jaise rūsa ke mahārāj - āja more...
- VIII. dulahā ke bhayyā ajab saje haj, ajaba saje haj
- IX. dekho ghoṛe caṛhe asavāra - āja more...
- X. dulahā ke māmā ajab saje haj, ajaba saje haj
- XI. jaise amerikā ke mahārāj - āja more...

- I. See, how well is the *barāt* of my dear one adorned today.
- II. Our bridegroom is amazingly adorned, is amazingly adorned,
- III. See, like the light of the sun; today...
- IV. The bridegroom's paternal grandfather is amazingly adorned, is amazingly adorned.

- V. See, like the kings and emperors; today...
- VI. The bridegroom's maternal grandfather is amazingly adorned, is amazingly adorned,
- VII. Like the king of Russia;<sup>1</sup> today...
- VIII. The bridegroom's brother is amazingly adorned, is amazingly adorned,
- IX. See, (he is the) rider mounted on the horse; today...
- X. The bridegroom's *māmā* is amazingly adorned, is amazingly adorned,
- XI. Like the king of America;<sup>1</sup> today...

### 32 *Nechū*<sup>2</sup> [*Uitvlugt*, 1962]

- I. ghara ghara ghumalī nāuniyā to gotinī bulāvāi
  - II. janaka dulārī ke nechū sabahj kōi āvahj
  - III. kōi ḍāre cuṭakī munariyā kōi re ḍāre rūpara
  - IV. kōi ḍāre ratanā padāratha bhari gāile sūpara
  - V. kausilyā ḍāre cuṭuki munariyā sumitrā ḍāre rūpara
  - VI. kekahī ḍāre ratanā padāratha bhari gāile sūpara
- I. The *nāunī* has walked from home to home; the *nāunī* invites the kinswomen;
  - II. May each and everyone come to the *nechū* of the darling daughter of Janaka.
  - III. One throws<sup>3</sup> in a little finger-ring, another throws silver (coins?).
  - IV. One throws in the jewel things (and) the *sūp*<sup>4</sup> is filled.
  - V. Kauśalyā throws in the little finger-ring, Sumitrā throws the silver.
  - VI. Kaikeyī throws the jewel things (and) the *sūp* is filled.

1 See p. 3.

2 Cp. R. Tripāṭhī ('51: 255). Lines III-VI: cp. D. Simha ('58: 109).

3 The gifts thrown in the *sūp* at this occasion belong to the *nāunī*.

4 A kind of winnowing tray made of wicker work.

### The barāt's arrival at the bride's home

The following are the stages of the arrival and welcome as occasions for singing:

1. The arrival of the *barāt*, and waiting to be received by the bride's guardians and other relatives.
2. The bride's male relatives and guardians go out of the *māro* and receive the guests: this is known as *agavānī*.
3. *Dvāra-pūjā*, welcoming the guests in a worshipful manner, and then (*gale milanā*) embracing.
4. *Parchan* (S. *prārcana*) of the bridegroom done by the ladies after the *barāt* has been led into the *māro*.
5. Giving a light refreshment to the bridegroom, consisting of sweetened water etc. The bridegroom's *bahanōī* (sister's husband) or some other relative keeps a close watch to detect any tricks of mixing some magically 'medicated' stuffs which might be given to the bridegroom to bring him under the power of his would-be bride or to weaken him in some other way. Because of the auspicious nature of this refreshment it is referred to as *sagunī*.

The songs for these stages have been recorded but only for (2) and (4) are printed here.

### 33 [*Uitvlugt, 1962*]

#### Welcoming the barāt

- I. e to dala utara āye, āve ye militar, āve ye militar
- II. kiyā re kadama juṛi chāḥa re
- III. e to dala utara āye kavana rāmā duvariya
- IV. jehi ghara kāinā kuvāra re
- V. āgana doriya bahoro kavana rāmā
- VI. tohare āile dularū damāda re

- I. Oh, these parties have arrived (and) alighted; here come these friends<sup>1</sup>.
- II. Is the shade under the *kadam* tree satisfactory?
- III. Oh, these parties have arrived and alighted at the door of N.N. Rāma.
- IV. At whose home (there) is a virgin daughter.
- V. Sweep clean the courtyard and the gateway, N.N. Rāma.
- VI. The dear (would-be) son-in-law has come at your (doorsteps).

### 34 Parchan [*Paramaribo*, 1962]

- I. parachan nikaṛī haḷ kavana rānī ghara se
  - II. dasa sakhi agavā e dasa sakhi pachavā
  - III. dasa sakhi guhane laga āḷ re
  - IV. apane rāmā maḷ apane parichabe
  - V. aura jani kōī pariche more rāmā re
  - VI. dekho ī janī jāisana basana kara lerüā
  - VII. khuli gāile açarā çaçaki gāile lerüā  
aba aḷaki gāile lerüā
  - VIII. khū khū khū khū haḷsale damāda re
- I. The queen N.N.<sup>2</sup> has emerged from the house to do the adoration;
  - II. Ten *sakhis* in front, ten *sakhis* at the back,
  - III. Ten *sakhis* have attached (themselves to her) sides.
  - IV. - I shall adore<sup>3</sup> my Rāma<sup>4</sup> myself;
  - V. And someone (fem.<sup>5</sup>) (else also) should adore my Rāma.

1 *Militar*, perhaps from S. *mitra*, friend; or, perhaps acquaintances, those whom one meets.  
 2 In another version the name of the woman is given as queen *Mandodarī*, Rāvaṇa's wife, the reason for which is not clear.  
 3 *Parchan*.  
 4 The bridegroom.  
 5 Whoever is nearby is addressed.

- VI. See, this person (fem.<sup>1</sup>), how is this string of the clothing;  
 VII. The *āca*<sup>2</sup> has opened up, the string burst, now, the string got stuck!  
 VIII. <sup>3</sup> The son-in-law laughed out - ho ho ho ho!

## General marriage songs I

(These are sung throughout the ceremonial week but especially in the *māro* awaiting the ceremony to begin. Two examples are given here.)

### 35 [*Paramaribo, 1965*]

#### The qualifications of a girl in an arranged marriage<sup>4</sup>

- I. sūtala rahilyau maj bābā phulavariyā re
- II. dhāi bakhariyā ke jāu re
- III. kekare duvāre maiyā bājana bajaḷ
- IV. kekara maiyā racalyau biyāha re
- V. sūtala rahilau beṭi bābā phulavariyā re
- VI. dhāi bakhariyā ke jāu re
- VII. bābā duvariya beṭi bājana baje re
- VIII. tuharo beṭi racalyau biyāha re
- IX. na sikhalyau e maiyā līpana potana
- X. nahḷ sikhalyau sijhahi rasōi re
- XI. sāsū nanada mili bābā gariyāihāḷ  
[sāsū nanada mili (bhaiyā) gariyāihāḷ]
- XII. more būte sahā ī na jāi re
- XIII. sikhi lehu e beṭi līpana potana
- XIV. sikhi lehu sijhahi rasōi re

1 See page 83 note 5.

2 The upper portion of the sari or the *orhani*, especially the part covering the bosom.

3 The lines VI-VIII have a *gālī* element.

4 Cp. R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 191); D. Simha ('44: 404).



XV. sāsū nanada mili bābā gariyāihāj  
[sāsū nanada mili (bhaiyā) gariyāihāj]

XVI. lai līho açarā pasāri re

- I. I was asleep in father's flower garden;
- II. I run and go towards (his) storeroom.
- III. - Mother, at whose door are the musical instruments being played?
- IV. Mother, whose wedding have you arranged?
- V. - Daughter, You lay asleep in (your) father's flower garden
- VI. And ran to go towards (his) store-room.
- VII. Daughter, (it is) at (your) father's door (that) the musical instruments are being played;
- VIII. Daughter, (it is) your wedding (that) I have arranged.
- IX. - Mother, I have not learnt plastering and smearing (the floor),
- X. Nor have I learnt to cook meals.
- XI. The mother-in-law and *nanad* will join together and curse my father<sup>1</sup>;
- XII. This will be unbearable for me.
- XIII. - Daughter, learn to plaster and smear (the floor),
- XIV. Learn to cook the meals.
- XV. (Your) mother-in-law and *nanad* will join together and curse your father -<sup>1</sup>
- XVI. (Then), you should spread the *añcal* and take (the curses quietly).

### 36 General marriage songs II [*Paramaribo, 1965*]

#### Śiva's marriage<sup>2</sup>

- I. calalaj mahādeva gāurā biyāhana
- II. suravana chatra dhara āin re

1 Variant: *brother*.

2 Cp. Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 234); Archer and Prasād ('43: 5 ff.); D. Simha ('44: 44-45 intr., and longest song on this theme: 280-288, 302 etc.); K. Upadhyāya ('54: 241, 244, 246; '60: 304); T.L. Śāstrī ('62: 152). This song confused and mixed with one on Rāma, U. Tivārī ('54: 170 intr.).

- III. bichiyana kuchiyana ke m̄aurā dharāvahj
- IV. ṣapavā ke ḍāre haj janēuvā re
- V. parachana nikale haj s̄āsu maināin
- VI. ṣapavā cale haj phuphukāra re
- VII. supavā bīge haj s̄āsū belavā ke taravarā
- VIII. pachavā se gāile bhaharāi re
- IX. āisana bara se maj gaurā na biyahavā
- X. bhalu rahihaj kuṣvāra re
- XI. tani eka bhesavā badalatyau mahādev
- XII. nāihara ke lokapati āin re
- XIII. machiyā bhelasa dhari ke āile mahādeva
- XIV. kanhavā ke lagale chipa āin re
- XV. gaurā lai ke urabe maj
- XVI. gaurā lai ke bilasavā
- XVII. gaurā lai ke urabe patāl re

- I. Mahādeva proceeded to marry Pārvaṭī.
- II. The gods came holding parasols,<sup>1</sup>
- III. (Śiva, however) put on a crown of scorpions and such things,<sup>2</sup>
- IV. (And) wore a sacred thread (consisting) of snakes.
- V. The mother-in-law, Menā, came out to perform the adoration;<sup>3</sup>
- VI. The snakes began to move with hisses.
- VII. The mother-in-law threw the *sūp* under the good tree of *bilva*.<sup>4</sup>
- VIII. (And) stumbled (backwards) after that.
- IX. - I shall not wed Pārvaṭī to such a bridegroom -
- X. Rather that she should stay a virgin.
- XI. - Would that, oh Śiva, you would change your dress a little;
- XII. The world-rulers<sup>5</sup> (belonging to my) parental home have come (to attend the wedding; what would they say?).

1 Symbols of royal power and authority. 'Holding parasols (over their heads)'.

2 A twin-word, *bichiyana-kuchiyana*.

3 The *parchan*.

4 A tree traditionally associated with Śiva; its leaves form an important offering to Śiva in the ritual of his worship.

5 *Loka-pati*, the guardian-gods of various realms including the four quarters.

- XIII. Śiva took the form of a fly and came;  
 XIV. He came hiding around (Pārvaṭī's) shoulder.  
 XV. - I shall take Pārvaṭī and flee.<sup>1</sup>  
 XVI. I shall take Pārvaṭī and enjoy (together with her).  
 XVII. I shall take Pārvaṭī and flee to the underworld.<sup>2</sup>

### Kanyā-dāna

At the stage of *kanyā-dāna*, there are several little ceremonial steps for which the songs are sung:

1. Preparatory to the ceremony.
  2. Giving the bride's hand to the bridegroom.
  3. Pouring water over the *lōṭ*, the ball of flour dough containing some gifts.
  4. As an epilogue to the *kanyā-dāna*.
- Here a song combining (2) and (3) is recorded.

### 37 [Leiding 8A, 1962]

#### Giving away the bride<sup>3</sup>

- I. k̄apai hātha gaṛūā o are k̄apai kusā kai dārī
- II. maṛaye meḡ k̄apaj kavana rāmā käise deve käinā maj dāna re

- 1 Or elope. The story of Śiva hiding under Pārvaṭī's *añcala* in various forms is an important motif throughout the literature.
- 2 The connection of Śiva with *pātāla*, the underworld, is not unknown elsewhere, for example, *Vīramitrodaya*, *Pūjā-prakāśa* (: 312): 'One who bathes Durgā, with faith, in cold water, attaining the heavenly realm, plays with the *nāgas*'. It is known that the realm of the *nāgas*, the snakefolk, is *pātāla*, here identified with heaven and Durgā, of course, is an aspect of Pārvaṭī. In the song, on the other hand, it is possible that Śiva means to say that since he has been insulted because of his snakes, he will kidnap Pārvaṭī and take her to the world of the snakes, *pātāla*, itself. The version of Archer and Prasād ('43: 5), however, simplifies the problem: *jani ammā uṛahū jani ammā burahū; jani ammā khilahū pātāla re*. Pārvaṭī says to her mother; 'whether, mother, you fly, or, mother, you drown or, mother, you flee away', to marry Śiva is my inevitable fate. According to K. Upādhyāya ('60: 8) *pātāl khilnā* is a Bhojpurī idiom meaning 'to go far away'. It is probable that our Surinam version of the song has been derived from some such previous form.
- 3 Cp. R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 143); V. Prasāda ('62: 172); Jain (H.S.B.I. Baghelī: 255). The ritual but without the motif of trembling: (H.S.B.I. Ḍogrī '57: 558); (Ibid. Kuluī: 708).

- III. aba käise kâpo re bābā e āi gāile dharamavā ke jūni re
  - IV. barisāu barisāu re bābā jāisai udaka būda
  - V. baṭoro baṭoro samadhi rāmā jāisai ghoghīyā sevāra
- I. The water-vessel trembles in the hand; O, the blade of *kuśa* (grass) trembles;
  - II. N.N. Rāma trembles - 'how shall I give the girl away?'
  - III. - How would you tremble now, oh father; the hour of duty<sup>1</sup> has arrived.
  - IV. Rain, rain,<sup>2</sup> oh father, like the water drops.
  - V. - Gather, gather, oh *samadhī*<sup>3</sup> Rāma, as a snail (gathers) the waterweeds.

### 38 Bhāvar<sup>4</sup> [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. bābā hī bābā pukārāile bābā na bolāj ho
- II. bābā pahalī bhāvariya ke ghumale abahj maj bābā ke ho
- III. dādā hī dādā pukārāile dādā na bolāj ho
- IV. dādā dusarī bhāvariya ke ghumale abahj maj dādā ke ho
- V. nānā hī nānā pukārāile nānā na bolāj ho
- VI. nānā tisarī bhāvariya ke ghumale abahj maj nānā ke ho
- VII. bhaiyā hī bhaiyā pukārāile bhaiyā na bolāj ho
- VIII. bhaiyā cāuthī bhāvariya ke ghumale abahj maj bhaiyā ke ho

1 *Dharma*.

2 The sentiment expressed is also most appropriate as the water is being poured into the joined hands. Rain: give freely like the waterdrops falling when it rains.

3 The bride's father and the bridegroom's father are *samadhīs* to each other. The bridegroom's father is addressed in this line.

4 Since 'walking round the fire, the *bhāvar*, is the Hindu wedding *par excellence*, the importance of this song cannot be overemphasized. H.S.B.I. alone gives versions in seven North Indian languages and dialects: Avadhī (p. 219); Baghelī (p. 255), Bundelī (p. 341), Braj (p. 378), Gaṛhvālī (p. 612), a shorter version in Cambiālī (p. 721), and a Rājasthānī version (p. 445) with only four circumambulations because in Rājasthān that is the customary number instead of the seven which are usual elsewhere.

- IX. mausā hī mausā pukārāile mausā na bolāj ho  
 X. mausā paçavī bhāvriyā ke ghumale abahj maj mausā ke ho  
 XI. kākā hī kākā pukārāile kākā na bolāj ho  
 XII. kākā chaṭhavj bhāvriyā ke ghumale abahj maj kākā ke ho  
 XIII. māmā hī māmā pukārāile māmā na bolāj ho  
 XIV. satahj bhāvriyā ke ghumale to bhāilī parāi ho
- I. I call only 'father' 'father', but father does not answer.  
 II. Father, having made the first circumambulation I am still father's own.
- III-XII <sup>1</sup>
- XIII. I call only 'māmā' 'māmā', but māmā does not answer.  
 XIV. Having made the seventh circumambulation I have now become another's.

### 39 Sindūra-Dāna<sup>2</sup> [*Paramaribo, 1967*] (Gālī)

- I. bābā bābā pukārāi bābā na jānāj  
 II. delai chinārī pūta sēdura jagata saba jānāi
- I. She calls 'father' 'father';<sup>3</sup> father does not know -  
 II. A son of an adulteress has given the vermilion; the whole world knows.

1 The second to the sixth circumambulations, referring to paternal grandfather, maternal grandfather, brother, *mausā* (husband of mother's sister), *kākā* (father's younger brother), *māmā* (mother's brother). It is not necessary that the same order should be followed. Other relatives may also be mentioned instead of these.

2 This one seems to be the parody, as a *gālī*, of the first two lines of a serious song for the occasion found in Indian collections but not recorded in Surinam. Cp. R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 162-163); Archer and Prasād ('43: 64-65); D. Sirmha ('44: 393); D. Satyārthī (*Belā Phūle Ādhī Rāta*: 22). They all record lines somewhat in this vein: a good man (or, a man of refinement) is giving the vermilion and I become another's.

3 The lines may be repeated, replacing 'father' by other male relatives.

#### 40 Kohbar<sup>1</sup> [Uitvlugt, 1962]

- I. bāje nagārā ke joṛī rāja ghara dulahā āye
- II. jaba dulahā āye āgane meṅ sasuru karāye dvāra pūjā -  
rāja ghara...
- III. jaba re dulahā gaye māro meṅ, sasuru karāye kanyā dāna -  
rāja ghara...
- IV. jaba re dulahā gaye kohbara meṅ, salahaja khelāve jūā cālī -  
rāja ghara...

- I. A pair of *nagārās*<sup>2</sup> is sounding; the bridegroom has come to a royal home.
- II. When the bridegroom comes into the courtyard, (his) father-in-law has the *dvāra-pūjā* performed.
- III. When the bridegroom goes into the *māro* (his) father-in-law has the *kanyā-dāna* performed.
- IV. When the bridegroom goes into the *kohbar*, his *salhaj* has (him) play the game of dice.

1 When, after the wedding ceremony in the *māro*, the bride and the bridegroom are taken to the *kohbar*, a private chamber with various designs, the women again take over and this is an occasion for much fun, jokes and games of chance to see which of the newly wedded ones will rule the roost. For example, a *hāsulī*, a neck ornament, also depicted in the *kohbar* design as a symbol of marital bond, is thrown up to see whether the bride or the bridegroom would catch it. If the boy wins, his relatives say: *mor pūtā jitelai, chinārī dheriyā hārelī* (My son has won; the daughter of an adulteress has lost). If the girl wins, the boy's relatives say: *mor pūtā hārelai, chinārī dheriyā jitelī* (My son has lost; the daughter of an adulteress has won). There are many types of such little games.

2 See fig. 7.

## 41 Khicrī Gārī<sup>1</sup> [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. ūce khāle mathurā nagarī hai ho
- II. <sup>2</sup> tara jamunā bahi āī, hā sītārām se banī<sup>3</sup>
- III. <sup>4</sup> utari pare haj jamunā ke nikaṭa para
- IV. nau dasa tilaka ramāī, hā sītā...
- V. uriyahi uriyahi pari gaye pātara

- 1 The song may be summarised as follows: Kṛṣṇa (here, perhaps, any bridegroom) arrives with his party and all the guests sit to dine together. At the same time the singing of *gālīs* begins and the singers cast aspersions on Kṛṣṇa's relatives. His sister Subhadrā had eloped with Arjuna by his permission. His father's sister, Kuntī, had seven lovers or husbands: her first child, Karṇa, was born from Sūrya, the sun-god, while she was an unmarried girl, then she was married to Pāṇḍu, from whom she had no son but her three sons were born through intercourse with three gods. This makes five the number of her lovers. As Pāṇḍu's other wife, Mādri, had two sons from intercourse with two gods, they may indirectly be referred to as Kuntī's men also. Thus the number reaches seven. Upon hearing these remarks Kṛṣṇa, or the bridegroom, becomes annoyed and goes back to his mother but she persuades him to return to his *susrāl*, where he finally accepts the *gālīs* in good humour, forgetting his pride of being a 'duke of the three worlds'.

These songs are sung when the meals are served. They are particularly called *gārī* or *gālī*, as well as *khicrī*, the meal-time being especially an occasion for relaxation and cementing of kinship (*vide* p. 17 f.). This song is a good mixture of the deprecatory and respectful themes. Cp. Archer and Prasād ('43: 143, 153). Lines XI-XIV: Archer and Prasād ('43: 139, 148, 157); Satyendra ('49: 219); S. Anila ('57: 93). Lines XIX-XXI, XXIII-XXV as part of another non-deprecatory song in which the bridegroom praises his *sūsrāl* (*family by marriage*): our own recorded variant and K. Upādhyāya ('54: 252); (H.S.B.I. Bundelī: 342). Lines XXVII-XXX: our own recorded variant and cp. Archer and Prasād ('43: 158).

- 2 Each even numbered line begins with the *stobha*, *rāmjū*, in the recording.
- 3 *Hā sītārām se banī* is a *stobha*, not translated repeatedly.
- 4 In another recorded version [Leiden 8A, 1962] there are additional lines, being given here for reference to p. 33.:
  - III. *nāva navariā gopiyā carhe āye ho kṛṣṇa garul carhi āye*
  - IV. *utari pare jamunā ke nikaṭa para bārīna pāva pakhāre*
  - V. *carāṇa dhōi caranāmṛta line ho dhani dhani bhāgya hamāre*. etc.
- III. The *gopīs* came sitting in the boats and such; Kṛṣṇa came mounted on *Garuḍa* (Viṣṇu's mythical bird).
- IV. They (all) alighted near (the river) Yamunā and washed the feet with water.
- V. (The hosts) washed (the guests' feet) and took the *caranāmṛta* (a sip from the water used for washing the feet).

- VI. sajana bāiṭhe jaḡha jorī, hā sītā...  
 VII. mevā au pakavāna miṭhāi ho  
 VIII. aba rasa khīra banāi, hā sītā...  
 IX. jevana bāiṭhe haj krisna kanhāi  
 X. deta sakhīyā saba gārī, hā sītā...  
 XI. bahini to tuharī rahālī subhadrā dēi  
 XII. arajuna sanga sidhārī, hā sītā...  
 XIII. phūā to tuharī rahālī kuntā dēi  
 XIV. unahj to rahj sata bhatarī, hā sītā...  
 XV. hātha lukuṭiyā kānhe kamariyā ho  
 XVI. au krisna calina risiyāi, hā sītā...  
 XVII. gokula se mathurā cali āye ho  
 XVIII. jahavā jasomati māi, hā sītā...  
 XIX. ḡasi ḡasi pūchele mātā jasodrā ho  
 XX. kahāu lalana sasurārī, hā sītā...  
 XXI. kāo kahū maiyā āisa sasurārī ho  
 XXII. are nita re bhojana nita gārī, hā sītā...  
 XXIII. rāmā duhāi rājā dasaratha kiriyā ho  
 XXIV. aba nahj jābe sasurārī, hā sītā...  
 XXV. baṛhe lalana tore sāre sasuriyā ho  
 XXVI. nita re bhojana nita gārī, hā sītā...  
 XXVII. hama to hūāj tina loka ke ṭhākurā  
 XXVIII. hamare una ke kauna gārī, hā sītā...  
 XXIX. jau tuḡ hao tina loka ke ṭhākurā  
 XXX. kāhe ke gayau sasurārī, hā sītā...  
 XXXI. dehu na dehu sakhina saba gārī ho  
 XXXII. aba hama lebe paṭukā pasāri, hā sītā...

- I. The city (of) Mathurā is situated in a high and low (terrain);
- II. The river Yamunā<sup>1</sup> has come flowing downwards; yes, it has become so with (the grace of) Sītā and Rāma.
- III. (The guests) alighted at (a spot) near Yamunā,
- IV. displaying<sup>2</sup> nine or ten *tilakas*.<sup>3</sup>

1 Another variant has *sarayū* which is, in fact, the river flowing by the city of Ayodhyā, not Mathurā.

2 *Ramānā*, literally, to affix with a great interest.

3 *Tilakas*, in this case, marks not only on the forehead, but various religious marks on other parts of the body also. This indicates that the guests assembled are very religious and pious.



- V. the leaves<sup>1</sup> (for serving the meals) have been spread out.  
 VI. The gentlemen have sat down with (their) thighs close to each other.<sup>2</sup>  
 VII. (There are) dried fruits and nuts,<sup>3</sup> savouries and sweetmeats,  
 VIII. Now, the tasty rice pudding has been made.  
 IX. Kṛṣṇa<sup>4</sup> has sat down to dine -  
 X. (And) all the *sakhis* are giving (i.e. articulating) *gālīs*.  
 XI. - As to your sister, she was lady Subhadrā -  
 XII. (Who) went away with Arjuna.  
 XIII. As to your *phūā*, she was lady Kuntī.  
 XIV. It was she who was the (wife of) seven husbands.  
 XV. A stick in the hands, and a shawl on the shoulders -  
 XVI. (Thus) Kṛṣṇa started out (as he got) displeased.  
 XVII. He came away from Gokula to Mathurā -<sup>5</sup>  
 XVIII. Where (there is the) mother Yaśodā.  
 XIX. With repeated laughs mother Yaśodā asks -  
 XX. - Dear boy, tell (me of your) marital home.  
 XXI. - What shall I tell (you), mother? The marital home is such (that)-  
 XXII. There is ever dining and ever cursing.  
 XXIII. (I say it) in the name of Rāma, and (I swear in the name of) Daśaratha -  
 XXIV. Now I shall not (at all) go to the marital home.  
 XXV. - May your entire marital home<sup>6</sup> prosper, dear boy -  
 XXVI. (So you may) ever (have) dining and ever the curses.<sup>7</sup>  
 XXVII. - We are the dukes of the three worlds -  
 XXVIII. How can (there be a) *gālī* (relationship) between us and them?  
 XXIX. - If you are the duke of the three worlds -  
 XXX. Why did you (need to) go to the marital home?

1 Even now, lotus and banana leaves are used for plates.

2 This indicates that there are so many guests that there is not sufficient space.

3 *Mevā* is the common noun for dried fruits and nuts.

4 *Kṛṣṇa kanhāi*, the twin name is a colloquial form.

5 This must be 'from Mathurā to Gokula', as he is leaving the dinner party which is in Mathurā.

6 *Sāre sasuriyā*: perhaps, the *sālās* (wife's brothers) and *sasur* (father-in-law).

7 *Gālī*.

XXXI. - *Sakhis*, all, give (i.e. articulate) the curses -<sup>1</sup>

XXXII. I shall spread out (a corner of my) garment<sup>2</sup> and receive (the curses in a corner thereof).

## 42 Vidāi and Gaunā [*Paramaribo, 1965*] (The bride's farewell)

- I. kahe rājā rāmacandar suno janaka rājā
- II. bidā tu kara do dulārī ke
- III. ke more gaṅgā se jala bhari läihj
- IV. ke more s̄jce phulavārī, janaka rājā...  
kahe rājā rāma...
- V. ke more girijā ke pūjā karana jāihaj
- VI. ke more citavai atārī se, janaka rājā...  
kahe rājā rāma...

- I. Says king Rāmacandra; listen, O king Janaka!
- II. Bid thou farewell to (your) darling daughter.
- III. - Who will (now) fill and fetch water for me from the (river) Gangā?
- IV. Who (will) water my flowerbed?
- V. Who will go to worship my (shrine of) Pārvaī?
- VI. Who will look out (for me) from the terrace?

## 43 The arrival at bridegroom's home [*Paramaribo, 1965*] The arrival at bridegroom's home

- I. haṣsamukha pūche dulahā ke māī<sup>3</sup> kā pāyo,
- II. beṭā sasurār kā pāyo.

1 See for note 1 page 91.

2 *Paṭukā*: a length of cloth worn on the shoulder.

3 The song may continue very long by repetition, in each repetition 'mother' is replaced by terms for other lady relatives such as *māī* (wife of mother's brother), *bhaujāī* (brother's wife) etc.

- III. hama to pāye maiyā<sup>1</sup> caṛhane ke ghuṛavā
- IV. mora dhaniyā nava lakhavā ke hār
- V. ghuṛavā to maiyā desa apanāibe
- VI. mora dhaniyā hoihaj dāsī tuhār

- I. With a smiling face the bridegroom's mother<sup>1</sup> asks: what did you get (as gifts)?
- II. Son, what did you get (as gifts) in the *susrā*?
- III. - I got, mother,<sup>1</sup> a horse for mounting (and riding) -
- IV. And my precious one (got) a necklace worth nine hundred thousand.
- V. Mother, I shall have the horse incorporated into the estate,
- VI. And my precious one will be your maidservant.

#### 44 Kaṅgan-sirāi<sup>2</sup> [*Paramaribo, 1967*]

- I. tor khicariya mor khicariya ekai meṃ milāo re
- II. tor dādā<sup>3</sup> mor dīdī<sup>3</sup> ekai lag sutāo re
- I. Your *khicī* (rice mess) and my *khicī* - mix these in one.
- II. Your (elder)<sup>3</sup> brother and my (elder) sister<sup>3</sup> - make them sleep together.

#### Death songs

#### 45 Nirgun [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. teṛī do dina kī hai jindagānī re, garavai mati dekhi javānī
- II. māyā kāyā kā ḍara chāyā, kyō mūrakha mana meṃ ḍarapāyā
- III. rahe ānī jānī, garavai mati...  
teṛī do...

1 See note 3 page 94.

2 See de Klerk on *kaṅganmokṣan* ('51: 185). When, after spending a few days the bride returns to her parental home, the ceremonial bangles (de Klerk, '51: 143) which were tied around her wrists are loosened, also the *māṛo* is broken, the deities and the ancestral spirits are given leave, *visarjana*.

3 The song continues long by repetition, the words *dādā* (elder brother) and *dīdī* (elder sister) replaced by other relations. Cp. this song with 28B.

- IV. gāi javānī āyā burhāpā, kāpana lāgati kāyā  
 V. ghara ke loga mukha se nahī bole, rovana lage re bānī  
 VI. bhare naina se pānī, garavai...  
     teṛī do...
- VII. yaha kāyā māṭī me miri jāye, ūpara giri jāy pānī  
 VIII. isa dehī para dūba jamegī, cari gāi gāu dīvānī  
     garavai...  
     teṛī do...
- IX. liyā diyā tere saṅga calegā, amara rahata nisānī  
 X. natthidāsa ne yaha samajhāyā, raha gāi amara nisānī  
     teri do...
- I. Your life is for two days (only); do not be proud seeing (your) youth.  
 II. The fear for the body ('s survival), an illusion, overshadows the people; why is the fool frightened in the mind?  
 III. (It is all) coming and going (i.e. transient); do not be proud...  
     Your life is...  
 IV. Youth passed, old age came; the body starts to shake.  
 V. The people of the family do not speak (to the person any more); the speech begins to cry.  
 VI. The eye is filled with water;<sup>1</sup> do not be proud...  
     Your life is...  
 VII. This body (finally) mingles with earth and water falls on top (of it).  
 VIII. The *dūb* grass will grow on this body -and a crazy cow grazed and went away. Do not be proud...  
     Your life...  
 IX. (What you have) taken and given, (that) will go with you - that mark (of your life) remains immortal.  
 X. Natthidāsa<sup>2</sup> has admonished thus - (and) his mark (this song) remains immortal.

1 The composition is faulty; this is the approximate translation.

2 In this case the singer himself was the composer.

## 46 Caubolā [*Party from Meerzorg, 1967*]

A and B are sung as one song but the styles of singing of the two sections are different.<sup>1</sup>

### A

- I. rovaṭī tāṛā dēī rānī sune putra kā khabar
- II. de de māre sīsa dharani para, more nikase nā prānī  
aba sune putra... rovaṭī tāṛā...
- III. nainḡ bahatā nirdayī jal, bāḡḡ kī kahānī  
sune putra...  
rovaṭī...
- IV. chāṭī lihin lagāy rote meḡ, rovana lāḡī rānī  
sune putra...  
rovaṭī...
- V. bidhanā terī kahā bigārī, kahana lagī rānī  
sune putra...  
rovaṭī...

### B

- I. sira se cunarī utāri ke(rānī) gaṭharī lihina saḡbhār
- II. sira para rakha ke cal dāī maraḡhaṭa ke majhadhār
- III. gaṭhariyā sira se utārī maraḡhaṭa ke majhadhār.
- IV. āḡe lāī lakariyā tora karī aba agini kī taiyārī
- V. ikalī karatī hai kām nahī hai dūjā nara nārī
- VI. aba āya khare haj bhūta deta rānī ko gārī

### A

- I. The lady, queen Tārā, cries, as she hears the news of the son('s death).

1 For the legend of Hariścandra, *vide* MP. chapters 7 and 8. Having donated all his kingdom to Viśvāmitra, the sage, the king Hariścandra had to sell himself as a slave to a *cāṇḍāla*, a cremation ground attendant. His wife Śaiḡyā (Tārā in the song) was sold with her son, Rohitāśva, as a domestic slave. The boy was killed by a snakebite and Śaiḡyā had to take him to the same cremation ground where her husband was an attendant. Hariścandra, as a matter of duty, demanded the appropriate fee for the cremation which his wife could not furnish. This was his final test and then not only his kingdom but the very life of his son was restored.

- II. (She) hits her head over and over on the ground; my breath is not passing away.<sup>1</sup>  
 Now, as she hears...  
 The lady...
- III. Water flows from the eyes pitiless(ly) (in this) story of the<sup>2</sup> gardens.  
 As she hears...  
 The lady...
- IV. In (the course of the) crying (she) embraced (the child) to her bosom; she began to cry  
 (even more?).  
 As she hears...  
 The lady...
- V. Oh Fate,<sup>3</sup> what wrong did (I do) to you? - (so) the queen began to say.  
 As she hears...  
 The lady...

## B

- I. The queen removed the headscarf from (her) head and upheld the bundle;<sup>4</sup>
- II. Having placed (it) on her head she started off (towards the) centre of the cremation  
 ground.
- III. (She) took off the bundle from her head in the centre of the cremation ground.
- IV. (She) broke the wood and brought (it) forward (and) has (*sic*) now made preparations  
 to (set) fire.
- V. She is doing (all) the work alone; (there) is no second man or woman (to help).
- VI. Now the ghosts have come (round) (and) are standing; they curse<sup>5</sup> the queen.

1 The meaning conveyed is: she wishes to kill herself, but with repeated hitting of her head on the ground her breath is still not passing away. The singer has used the word *prāṇī*, for rhyme, instead of *prāṇa*.

2 It was in a garden that Tārā's son had been bitten when she was sold as a slave to a master.

3 *Bidhanā* (S. *Vidhi*, *vidhāna*), *Brahmā*, the master of fate.

4 *Sābhāranā*: to take charge, uphold. Here, perhaps, to prepare or to make. She wrapped the boy's body in a bundle made with her headscarf.

5 Lit. 'give (i.e. articulate) curses to the queen'. Cremation grounds are well known as haunts of ghosts.

### 47 Sargun [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. mālika sirī bhagavān to soca mana kāhe ku kare
  - II. jangala bīca ika hiranī hiranā byādha lagāye phāṣ
  - III. hiranī kūda bagala bhāī ṭhāī hiranā ke gala phāṣ  
mālika sirī...
  - IV. bolī hai hiranī suniye hiranā mānau merī bāt
  - V. badhikā ke ghara kharacī nā ai beci khāye tor māṣ  
mālika sirī...
  - VI. itanī suna lāī jaba badhikā ne kāṭa diye gala phāṣ
  - VII. ye tīṅṅ baikunṭha sidhāre gāvata tulasīyadās
- I. The glorious Lord is the master;<sup>1</sup> then, O mind, why do you brood?<sup>2</sup>
  - II. (There were) a deer and a doe<sup>3</sup> in the jungle; the hunter fixed his trap.
  - III. The doe jumped clear and stood to one side, but (there was) a net around the deer's neck.
  - IV. The doe has said to the deer: listen and believe what I say;
  - V. There isn't (money for) expenses in the killer's home; he will sell your meat and (buy something to) eat.
  - VI. When the killer heard this much, he cut the net off from the neck.
  - VII. All these three went to *Vaikunṭha*.<sup>4</sup> Tulasīdāsa sings.

1 Or, protector.

2 Worry, or grieve.

3 The singer stated that the song was a parable referring to the relationship of *Puruṣa* (soul) and *Prakṛti* (matter).

4 Viṣṇu's heaven.

#### 48 Parātī<sup>1</sup> [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. gaila ko baṭohī cāle pañchī cāle cuganā
- II. uṭho re lalana mere uṭho re kriśna aba
- III. uṭho jasomati ke lalana  
gaila ko...
- IV. ḍāri ḍāri pañchī bole kāgā bole kāre
- V. gokula meḡ dhūma mace uṭho re dulāre
- VI. jāgo jī jāgo lālā nanda ke dulāre  
gaila ko...

- I. The travellers have started out for the path; the birds have started out (to seek) pickings (of food).
- II. Arise, oh my dear boy; awake now, oh Kṛṣṇa!
- III. Awake, oh son of Yaśodā!  
The travellers...
- IV. The birds are singing on every branch; the black crows are articulate;
- V. In Gokula the clamour is rising: rise, oh (our) darling one!
- VI. Wake up, do wake up, O dear, darling boy of Nanda!  
The travellers...

#### The annual cycle

#### The songs of the Phagwā festival

#### 49 Phagwā i [*Party from Meerzorg, 1967*]>

##### A. Cautāl

- I. kānhā deta musukiyana gārī dhare more sārī.
- II. tuma to ḍhoṭā nanda lālā ke hama brisabhāna dulārī
- III. kāhu na dāma lage jamunā taṭa, parabhu bīca kare ṭhagahārī  
dhare more sārī

1 Line I. *bāṭ ke baṭohī cale...* (H.S.B.I., Braj: 476). Line IV: cp. S. Guptā ('65: 66).



- IV. kans ke māra bidhansa karaṇ sakhi suna lau hāra hamāra
- V. hamahṛ rāra karaba jamunā para tumhē dekhaba ākha ughārī  
dhare more sārī
- VI. ranga bhare madamātala gvālina bole bacana samhārī
- VII. duragāprasāda carana raghubara kī dāi ke dāna calī brijanārī  
dhare more sārī

### **B Jhūmar**

- I. mati jāhū kanta paradesa basanta nirāne
- II. lage āma baurana madhukara kunja dikhāne
- III. birchā bhaye patidhāra ṭesa mana māj phulāne
- IV. bihaga payāna karata apāne para
- V. dina dina yaha adhika tapāne
- VI. raho bhavana diladāra bāta itanī suna kāne
- VII. tuma bina sorahṇ sīgāra kavana hamarau dukha jāne
- VIII. hama birahina khelaba kikare sanga
- IX. piyā tana ko daradiyau nahj jāne

### **C Ulārā**

- I. giradhārī ho lālā choṛa deyo bahiyā miruka jāihaj
- II. sone ravārdār kaḡana cūrī lāge anamol
- III. dhara bahiyā jhakajhoraṇ cūrī lāgana phūṭa
- IV. jauna bāta tuma tākyau vā se nāhī bhēṭa  
chori deyo bahiyā...

### **A**

- I. Kṛṣṇa smilingly teases<sup>1</sup> (me and) takes hold of my sārī.
- II. - You are the boy of Nanda, the dear one; I am the darling daughter of Vṛṣabhānu.
- III. On the bank of Yamunā it costs (him) nothing<sup>2</sup> and lord (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) commits the robbery.<sup>3</sup>  
Takes hold...
- IV. (He says:) I (can) kill and destroy Kaṁsa; *Sakhi*, listen to my statement;

1 Here *gārī* can be translated only in this way.

2 'There is no restriction'.

3 'Lawlessness', 'lawless behaviour', in this context.

- V. (He says:) I shall keep noise<sup>1</sup> on the Yamunā bank (and) I shall look at you with open eyes.  
Takes hold...
- VI. The cowherdess full of colour and the frenzy of youth says (this with her) words (chosen) carefully;
- VII. Durgāprasād<sup>2</sup> (says:) (I take) refuge at the feet of the best of Raghus (i.e. Rāma); the woman of Vraja<sup>3</sup> gave a gift<sup>4</sup> and (then) went (her way).

## B

- I. Beloved, do not go abroad;<sup>5</sup> the spring (season) has come close.
- II. The mango (trees) have begun to blossom, the bumblebees are seen in the groves.
- III. The trees have become leafy (and the) *tesū* flowers are blooming (in their) minds.<sup>6</sup>
- IV. The birds are starting out on (their) journeys on the wing -
- V. (And) these days are getting warmer daily.
- VI. Oh Kṛṣṇa, listen to just this request;<sup>7</sup> O thou with (a generous) heart, stay home;
- VII. Without you (my) sixteen adornments (are futile); who (can) know my suffering?
- VIII. With whom shall I play (when) in separation?<sup>8</sup>
- IX. (My) beloved knows not at all the pains of (my) body.

## C

- I. Oh darling *Giridhārī*,<sup>9</sup> let go (of) my arms; they will get sprained.

1 'I shall make trouble', 'quarrel'.

2 The composer of this song.

3 Kṛṣṇa's land of birth.

4 Gift of her youth.

5 *Pardes*, any place far away.

6 Perhaps, not yet in full bloom.

7 *Bāt*, statement, speech, matter.

8 *Birahin* (S. *virahinī*), a woman in the state of separation from her lover.

9 He who holds up (or, held up) a mountain; a reference to Kṛṣṇa's having lifted the *Govardhana* mountain. Perhaps the epithet is intentionally chosen to compare the softness of the arms with the hardness of the mountains; i.e., 'this is not a mountain but tender arms; do not hold them so tight'.

- II. (My) bracelets are (made) with gold finery (and) the bangles look invaluable;
- III. You hold<sup>1</sup> and shake my arms (and the) bangles begin to break.
- IV. The matter you are (actually) after would not come to fruition.<sup>2</sup> Let go (of) my arms.

## 50 Phagwā ii [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*] Dhamār

- I. kita le gayo yāra pahāraṇa meṅ kita le gayo
  - II. rastā choṛa kurastā lāyo, lahaḡā phaṭa gayo jhāraṇa meṅ  
kita le...
  - III. sāro dina jangal meṅ bītyau, pālai pari gyau gaṅvāraṇa meṅ  
kita le...
  - IV. sājha bhāi dina gayo bhavana ko, bheṭa bhāi diladāraṇa meṅ  
kita le...
- 
- I. Into what mountains has the lover taken me (astray);  
into what...
  - II. Abandoning the (right) way, he brought (me) to the wrong path; (my) skirt was torn up  
in the bushes -  
into what...
  - III. The whole day passed in the forest; I got involved with<sup>3</sup> the (uncultured) rustics -  
into what...
  - IV. The evening came - the day (had) passed - (then I proceeded) to the home (and) a  
meeting took place among the (people) of good hearts.  
Into what...

1 Literally, the third person ('he holds') has been used which does not fit.  
2 Literally, 'you will not come across it' or 'it will not be presented to you'.  
3 Lit., 'there was involvement with...'

## 51 Phagwā iii [*Party from Meerzorg, 1967*]

### Cāitā<sup>1</sup>

- I. rājā gaye kauna desa köiliyā kuḥukata bana meḡ
  - II. ika to köiliyā (hāy) dusare savatiyā
  - III. tisare piyā ho paradesa -  
köiliyā kuḥukata... rājā gaye...
  - IV. aḡhiyaḡ ke kājara dhumilla hōi gāile
  - V. jobana ubhare baḡa jor -  
rājā gaye...
  - VI. yāda karau mohi bhūlo to nāhī
  - VII. nayana bahāve (dekho) nīra -  
rājā gaye...
  - VIII. dayā karo jagadīsa more svāmī
  - IX. tuhī to dharāiho mohe dhīra -  
rājā gaye...
- 
- I. To what land has (my) king<sup>2</sup> gone? The *koya*<sup>3</sup> bird sings in the woods.
  - II. On the one hand the (singing of) *koil*, on the other a co-wife;
  - III. Third, the beloved (being) abroad -  
The *koil*... To what land...
  - IV. The collyrium in the eyes has gone faint;
  - V. The (signs of) youth<sup>4</sup> are swollen with great force -  
To what land...
  - VI. Remember me; do not forget me (would you?)
  - VII. (See! how) the water flows from (my) eyes<sup>5</sup> -  
To what land...
  - VIII. Have mercy, ruler of the world, my master;
  - IX. You alone will (be able to) console me.<sup>6</sup>

1 Cp. Archer and Prasād ('43: 194).

2 One of the usual epithets of the beloved, used by women.

3 A black bird in India known for singing in the spring. Not seen in Surinam.

4 *Jobanā*, the breasts, as the signs of youth.

5 Lit. 'the eyes make the waters flow'.

6 'Give me patience'.

## 52 Phagwā iv [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*] Rājpūtī

- I. de dai pāco bāna sahodrā maiyā, ḍharakā de ratha ko pahiyā
  - II. cakra byūha ropyau kairo ne, dala meḥ kōi jānat nāy, sahodrā maiyā
  - III. jaba maḥ rahyau udra ke bhītara, pitā kahī kathā sāmajhāy, sahodrā maiyā
  - IV. bāri baras umara ko choṭo, rana dekhyau ita nāy, sahodrā maiyā
  - V. chau daravāje toṛa bahāvau, satavā jānata nāy, sahodrā maiyā
- I. Give me the five<sup>1</sup> arrows, mother Subhadrā<sup>2</sup>; give a push to the chariot's wheel.
  - II. The Kaurava has arranged the wheel formation, (the way of entering which) no one in (our) group knows, mother Subhadrā.
  - III. When I was inside (your) womb, father had told the story<sup>3</sup> with an explanation, mother Subhadrā.
  - IV. Twelve years old, young in age, (I) have not yet seen a battle, mother Subhadrā.
  - V. I can break and throw away six (of the) gates (but) I do not know (the way to break) the seventh, mother Subhadrā.

1 This seems to be a confusion with the five arrows of *Kāma*.

2 Subhadrā was the sister of Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna's wife, Abhimanyu's mother. While Arjuna was fighting on another front, the Kaurava army was arranged in *cakra-vyūha*, the wheel formation which no one but Arjuna knew how to break into. When Subhadrā had been pregnant with Abhimanyu, Arjuna had told her the art of breaking into such a formation but she had fallen asleep before he could complete the story and tell her how to get out of it. Abhimanyu is stated to have thus learnt the art of breaking into a *cakra-vyūha* while still a foetus, but he could not get out of the *vyūha*, was surrounded by enemies and killed. *Vide* MB. *Droṇaparvan* (*Abhimanyu-vadhaparvan*) chapters 34 ff., also note on 7.34.18.

3 That is, the details.

**53 Phagwā v [Nieuw Nickerie, van Drimmelpolder, and party  
from Meerzorg, 1967]**

**Kabir**

**A**

- I. ara ra ra ra ra ra ra
- II. (bhaiyā) suna lo morī kabīr
- III. rāma lachimana bharata satruhana au hanumantā bīr
- IV. Ī pācṇ ko sumirana kari ke tabai maj gāū kabīr
- V. (bhalā) jay bolo ramaiyā bābā kī

**B**

- III. tulasī khare bajāra mē ki saba kī rākhaj khair
- IV. nā kāhū se dosatī nā kāhū se bair

**C**

- III. citrakūṭa ke ghāṭa pai bhāi santana kī bhīr.
- IV. tulasidāsa candana ragaṛaj tilaka deta raghubjīr

**D**

- III. calatī cakkī dekhi ke diyā kabīrā roy
- IV. do pāṭana ke bīca mē sābita rahe na koy

**E**

- III. maj āī kachu aura kū au hyā hai gāī kachu aur
- IV. laḥgā phāṭyau gāṭha ko dekha calī pahagaur

**A**

- I. ara ra ra ra ra ra ra
- II. Brother, listen to my *Kabīr!*
- III. Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata, Śatrughna and the brave Hanumān -
- IV. (First) remembering these, then I sing (my) *Kabīr*.
- V. Say (all), victory to bābā Rāma.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ramaiya bābā*, a colloquial lighthearted diminutive for Rāma, something like 'uncle Johnny'.

**B**

- III. Tulasīdāsa,<sup>1</sup> standing in the market-place, wishes for the welfare of all;  
 IV. Neither friendship with anyone nor enmity with anyone!

**C**

- III. There gathered a crowd of sages at the *ghāṭ* of Citrakūṭa;  
 IV. Tulasīdāsa grinds the sandalwood and the brave one of the Raghus (Rāma) gives the *tilaka* marks.

**D**

- III. Seeing the moving mill Kabīra cried out;  
 IV. Between the two grindstones no one (was saved and) emerged whole.

**E**

- III. I (fem.) came to some other purpose; here (I) became something else;  
 IV. The skirt of my possession got torn; (I) have seen (the village of) Pahāgaur, and am now going back.

### 54 Phagwā vi [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*] Jogīrā

**A**

- I. jogījī sa ra ra ra  
 II. āye the ika dhāma se utare ekāi ghāṭ  
 III. havā lagī saṣara kī ho gaye bārai bāṭ  
       jogījī sa ra ra ra

**B**

- I. jogīrā sa ra ra ra  
 II. ek galī me āṭ jāṭ ek galī me rahnā

1 This verse is usually attributed to Kabīr, not to Tulasīdāsa.

- III. aur galī meṃ maj nahī jāū tere lāge nainā  
 IV. calī cal nāle nāle calī cal khāle khāle  
     jogīrā sa ra ra ra

**C**

- I. jogīī sa ra ra ra  
 II. rāma nāma se kūṃ cāle masakhariṃ se gāī  
 III. calī cal nāle nāle calī cal khāle khāle  
     jogīī sa ra ra ra

**D**

- I. jogīī sa ra ra ra  
 II. maj āī kucha aur ko hyā hai gāī kucha aur  
 III. laḡā phātyau gāṭha ko dekha calī pahāgaur  
     jogīī sa ra ra ra  
     calī cal nāle nāle calī cal khāle khāle  
     jogīī sa ra ra ra

**A**

- II. <sup>1</sup>(We) had come from an (identical) place and disembarked at the same harbour;  
 III. The wind of the world touched (us) (and) we became totally separate.<sup>2</sup>

**B**

- II. I come and (go) through only one street and live only in one street;  
 III. I shall not go to another street (because) your eyes have touched (me).  
 IV. Keep moving (with me) along the aqueduct; keep moving (with me) along the ditch.<sup>3</sup>

**C**

- II. The well is kept moving by the name of Rāma, and the cart with jokes<sup>4</sup> -  
 III. Keep moving... (as in B. IV above).

1 The untranslated lines are simply jublations 'jogīī sa ra ra ra' etc.

2 *Bārah bāṭ*; twelve weights, all separate.

3 An invitation to elope, by a man to a woman.

4 The singer explained: the fields in India are watered by a bull who keeps turning the watering wheel of a well; he manages to remain on the monotonous job only by silent repetition of the name of Rāma. When people travel together on carts, the long and slow journey passes better with mutual jokes and teasing.



## D

II-III. Identical with *Kabīr* E III-IV.

### 55 Kajarī and Sāvan Kā Jhūlā [*Ansoe, 1967*]

#### The occasion for a woman's visit to her parental home<sup>1</sup>

- I. jamunā bica parale h̄ḍolavā, kaho sāsū jhūlana jābe h̄ḍolavā
- II. jau re bāuhara tore jhulanavā ke sadhavā, nāihare se biranā bulāva -  
h̄ḍolavā nāihare se biranā bulāva
- III. nāihara nāihara jī na karo sāsū nāihara basāilai baṛī dūr -  
h̄ḍolavā nāihara basāille baṛī dūr
- IV. more pichavaravā suganā bhaiyā mitavā nāihara khabari janāvo -  
h̄ḍolavā nāihara khabari janāvo
- V. sugavā ke debo maṛī dūdha bhāta khoravā jau bhaiyā āvahj āja -  
h̄ḍolavā jau bhaiyā āvahj āja
- VI. jhūlane baiṭhele sāsū barhāitina h̄ḍolavā, suno sāsū binatī hamār -  
h̄ḍolavā suno sāsū binatī hamār
- VII. ekai cunariyā hamaj detyau sāsū nāihara nevatā hama jābe -  
h̄ḍolavā nāihara nevatā hama jābe

1 During the rainy season a woman longs to visit her parental home (see p. 23) and to swing under a tree. In this song she is under an inconsiderate mother-in-law who taunts her to call her brother if she wants to enjoy the swing. She is not even given a new *oṛhanī*, without which a woman does not venture to go out, to cover her head so that she may go to her brother's home. But she befriends a parrot with the offers of delicious titbits, and this bird carries her message to her brother. Her brother arrives and gives his turban to serve as on *oṛhanī*, much to the chagrin of the mother-in-law.

Line V.: *dūdha bhāta khoravā* to parrot - Fraser (J.A.S.B. 1883: 7-8); to a crow - D. Simha ('58: 92); K. Upādhyāya, ('60: 354).

Line VII: Cp. K. Upādhyāya, ('60: 265).

- VIII. jai bāuhara tore jāne ke sudhavā nāihare se māgi paṭhāvo-  
hīḍolavā nāihare se māgi paṭhāvo
- IX. bhaiyā khole sira se pagariyā sāsū rahāile khisiyāi -  
hīḍolavā sāsū rahāile khisiyāi
- I. By the<sup>1</sup> river Yamunā a swing<sup>2</sup> has been fixed; say, mother-in-law, (if I have your permission) I would go to swing on the swing.
- II. - Daughter-in-law, if you have a wish to swing, call (your) brother from (your) parental home.  
The swing, from the parental home...<sup>3</sup>
- III. - (Please, honoured one), do not keep repeating *naihar*, *naihar*, (my) *naihar* is settled very far.  
The swing, (my) *naihar*...
- IV. (The daughter-in-law says:) Oh parrot living behind (the home), brother, friend, make the news known in (my) *naihar*.  
The swing, the news...
- V. I shall give milk, rice and *khoyā*<sup>4</sup> if (my) brother arrives today.  
The swing, if brother...
- VI. The honoured mother-in-law sat to swing in the swing; (the daughter-in-law says:) mother-in-law, listen to my request.  
The swing, listen to...
- VII. Would that you would give just one headscarf (to travel with); I would (like to) go (accepting an) invitation (to visit) the *naihar*.  
The swing, (to visit) the *naihar*...
- VIII. - If, daughter-in-law, you have a wish to go, ask to have (the headscarf) sent from the *naihar*.  
The swing, from the *naihar*...

1 Literally, 'in the middle of the river', but that is only a *lakṣaṇā*, a figure of speech.

2 *Hīḍolā*, a cradle-like swing with comfortable pillows etc.

3 Unlike most songs, the refrain here is variable, adding 'the swing', and taking the last part of the line. It is not possible to translate these lines literally without violence to the language.

4 Dehydrated milk.

- IX. The brother (has arrived and) is opening the turban from (his) head (to give to his sister as her headscarf); the mother-in-law had to contain her frustration.  
The swing, the mother-in-law...

### 56 Kṛṣṇa's cradle<sup>1</sup> [*Ansoe, 1962*]

- I. jhūle jhūle kanhaiyā jī ke pālanā  
 II. kahavā kahaiyā tore janama bhaye haj  
 III. kahavā kī nāra ye lāravā  
     jhūle jhūle...  
 IV. gokula kanhaiyā tora janama bhaye haj  
 V. mathurā kī nāra ye lāravā  
     jhūlo jhūlo...  
 VI. e kāhina ke tore pālanā banī hai  
 VII. kāhina lāge phūlanā  
     jhūlo jhūlo...  
 VIII. resama ke more pālanā banī hai  
 IX. motiyana lāge phūlanā  
     jhūlo jhūlo...  
 X. ke more lalanā ke pālanā jhulāve  
 XI. debe maj hātha ke kāganā  
     jhūlo jhūlo...  
 XII. mātā jasodrā pālanā jhulāve  
 XIII. debe maj hātha ke kāganā  
     jhūlo jhūlo...
- I. There rocks, rocks, little Kṛṣṇa's cradle.  
 II. Where has your birth taken place, Kṛṣṇa?  
 III. And where is this loving lady?  
     Rocks, rocks, little... ..  
 IV. In Gokula<sup>2</sup> has your birth taken place, Oh Kṛṣṇa,

1 Sung for children. See p. 23.

2 Here, there seems some confusion in the singers' minds. According to the popular legend Kṛṣṇa was born in Mathurā and then taken to Gokula. The lines here should be reversed as follows: 'In Mathurā has your birth taken place and this loving lady is of Gokula'.

- V. And this loving lady is of Mathurā.  
Rock, rock, little... ..
- VI. Of what is your cradle made?
- VII. Of what are the floral decorations<sup>1</sup> (that are) attached?  
Rock, rock, little... ..
- VIII. My cradle is made of silk,
- IX. And the floral decorations (that) are fixed (are of) pearls.  
Rock, rock, little... ..
- X. Who would rock my dear child's cradle?
- XI. (To him/her) would I give the bangle of my hand.  
Rock, rock, little... ..
- XII. Mother Yaśodā rocks the cradle -
- XIII. (To her) I shall give the bangle of my hand.  
Rock, rock, little... ..

### **57 To gangā [*Nieuw Nickerie*, 1967] As a fearsome force**

- I. gaṅgā jamunavā ke lahariyā dekhi nā; maiyā jiyarā ḍarāile  
lahariyā dekhi nā
- II. sāvana bhadauvā ke umarala nadiyā; lahariyā dekhi nā
- III. panavā hi phulavā ke bojhalā naiyā;  
lahariyā...
- IV. ghare sāsū risiyāihaj dupahariyā bhaye
- V. ghare prabhu risiyāihaj jevanāra binā
- VI. ghara bālaka rovaj dūdha binā
- VII. gaṅgā māi deyo na bidāiyā gharavā jāū apāne
- I. Seeing the wave of Gangā and Yamunā,<sup>2</sup> mother, (my) heart is afraid  
Seeing the wave...

1 *Phulnā* or *phundnā*, various colourful embellishments tied around the cradles etc. of a child.

2 *Nā* in the song seems to be only a *stobha*.

- II. The river is flooded (as it is the time) of *śrāvaṇa* and *bhādrapada*.<sup>1</sup>  
Seeing the wave...
- III. The boat is heavy with (the burden of) only leaves and flowers.  
Seeing the wave...
- IV. At home the mother-in-law will be annoyed when it is midday.
- V. At home (my) lord will be annoyed without (his) meal.
- VI. At home the children will cry without milk.
- VII. Mother Gaṅgā, allow (me) leave (won't you?) (so that) I may return to my home.

## Other ritual songs

### 58 Gaṅgā Snāna [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

#### Call to Gaṅgā-Snāna

- I. parabī āi nhāna calo jamunā
  - II. kāhe ko nhāna karyau kairo paṇḍavā; kāhe ko nhāna karyau saba duniyā - parabī āi...
  - III. punyau ko nhāna karyau kairo paṇḍavā; māvasa nhāna karyau re duniyā - parabī āi...
  - IV. kāhe ko dāna karyau kairo paṇḍavā; kāhe ko dāna karyau saba duniyā -
  - V. sonā ko dāna karyau kairo paṇḍavā; anna ko dāna karyau duniyā - parabī āi...
- I. The sacred day<sup>2</sup> has come; come along to bathe in the Yamunā.<sup>3</sup>
  - II. For what occasion did the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas take a (sacred) bath? For what occasion has the whole world taken a (sacred) bath?

1 *Śrāvaṇa*: July-August; *bhādrapada*: August-September.

2 (S. *Parvan*).

3 See note 2 p. 43.

- III. The Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas took the (sacred) bath for the occasion of full moon; the whole world has taken a (sacred) bath for the occasion of new moon.
- IV. What<sup>1</sup> was the gift made by the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas? What is the gift made by the whole world?
- V. The gift of gold was made by the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas. The gift of food (grains) has been made by the whole world.

### 59 Marsiyā [*Paramaribo, 1967*]

#### A

- I. <sup>2</sup>kahavā hasana tore janama bhaye kahavā chināyo nāravā
- II. kahavā hasana tuḥ gena khelyo kahavā gaṇvāyo jānavā
- III. makkā madīnā more janama bhaye dharatī chināyo nāravā
- IV. cauke para maḥ to gena khelyo karabal gaṇvāyo jānavā

#### B<sup>3</sup>

- I. cārḡ tarafa diyanā jale bicavā bajhiniyā caukī bhare
- II. he allā mero goda bhari de chūṭe bajhiniyā ke nāma re, hāy hāy

#### A

- I. Where has your birth taken place, Hasan, (and) where was your umbilical cord cut?
- II. Where did you play ball, Hasan, (and) where did you lose your life?
- III. My birth took place at *Makkā* (i.e. Mecca) (or) *Madīnā* (i.e. Medina) (and my) umbilical cord was cut on earth.
- IV. I played ball in the courtyard, mother, (and) lost (my) life in (the battlefield of) Qarblā.

1 'What was given as a donation?'. It is customary both in India and Surinam to make gifts to priests and the poor on sacred days and after the sacred baths in rivers etc.  
 2 Compare line I with line II of song No. 7 on Kṛṣṇa. See also note 2 on p. 23.  
 3 This song is for a *manautī*; see p. 23.

**B**

- I. On all four sides clay lamps burn and in the centre (thereof) an infertile woman fills (i.e. draws) the *cauk* (designs).<sup>1</sup>
- II. (She prays:) O God, fill my lap (with a child) (so that my) title of a *bājh*<sup>2</sup> may be removed; oh, oh.

**60 Jharrā [Paramaribo, 1967]****A<sup>3</sup>**

- I. aba choṭī moṭī khīrakī candana chīrakī jhimi jhimi āī bayariyā re hāy
- II. kēi biricha tale bhījata hōihaj hasana husain donḡ bhaiyā re hāy

**B**

- I. nadiyā kināre eka semal maliyā lagāye phulavariyā
- II. e maiyā tore desa ke suganā phūla hare liye jātu haj
- III. phūla ke ūpara khūna ṭapakai is bakhata hamare kōī nahj

**A**

- I. Now, a tiny little window, sprinkled with the sandal (essence) (is there); (then) there came a little breeze with a drizzle, oh!
- II. Under which tree must the two brothers, Hasan and Husain, be getting wet, oh?!

1 On *cauk* see pp. 14 ff. Any designs made at the *tāziā* are not known.

2 Cp. song No. 5, line XXIII.

3 Cp. '*rimajhima rimajhima meha barisale pavana bahe puravāī, kavane biricha tare bhījata hoihaj rāma lakhana dūno bhāī* on the brothers Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa: D. Simha ('44: 469). See also p. 23 and note on song No. 59.A.

**B**

- I. On the bank of the river there is a *sema*<sup>1</sup> tree (where) a gardener is cultivating a flower garden.
- II. Oh gardener, the parrots of your country are robbing and taking away the flowers.
- III. On the flower (there) drips blood;<sup>1</sup> at this time no one is<sup>2</sup> ours.

**61 Pacrā i [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]****To Durgā**

- I. dharamai dharama bināḡ tuhe mātā nā jāne devi kauna rūpa haḡ
  - II. sonavā ke duragā motī lāye aḡiyā rūpana jhālara lāḡī
  - III. kahā devī tuḡa baḡhalī cāuriyā kahā lihai autāra
  - IV. ḡḡalāja devī janama bhaye haḡ kamarū lihau autāra
  - V. bindvāvana meḡ banī hai cāuriyā mathavā navāye sansār
- I. Totally according to duty<sup>3</sup> do I pray to you, mother; it is not known<sup>4</sup> what form the goddess has.
  - II. Durgā has brought<sup>5</sup> gold or pearls (and there) is a lace of silver attached to (her) blouse.
  - III. Goddess, where have you (had) your altar<sup>6</sup> built and where have<sup>7</sup> you incarnated?

1 The *sema* flowers are red.

2 That is, 'we have no one to save or help us'.

3 Another meaning suggests itself to the mind: 'I pray to the goddess in each object because it is not known what is her real form'.

4 Idiomatically translated, 'who knows'.

5 Perhaps, *lagāye*, 'has it affixed' (knit together, interwoven, embroidered).

6 S. *catvara*, a raised platform, *sthaṇḡila*; see p. 25.

7 In the original, actually, third person future, 'shall incarnate'.



- IV. The goddess has taken birth at Hingalāj<sup>1</sup> and (her) incarnation (has taken place) in Kāmarūpa.<sup>2</sup>
- V. The altar has been built in Vindyāvana;<sup>3</sup> the (whole) world bows the head.

## 62 Pacrā ii [Ansoe, 1967] To Pārvatī as Mahāmāyā<sup>4</sup>

- I. sumarau ādi bhavānī maha re māyā  
II. pahale maj sumirau rāmā se lachamana, sītā guhane laga jāū  
are mahā re māyā  
III. ādhe ke nadiyā nīra bahatu hai ādhe gaṅgā jala nhāy  
are mahā re māyā  
IV. aḍharā ke aḅhiyā dāiho koḅhiyā ke kāyā  
are mahā re māyā  
V. bajhanī ke pūta dīho khilāve mahā māyā  
are mahā re māyā

- 1 Satyendra ('49: 377), explaining 'hingalāj kī īsurī' (the goddess of Hinglāj) in a song, states: 'Hingulaj is in Bilochistan (West Pakistan: *author*), about twenty miles from the sea shore at the bank of the river *Aghor* or *Hingul* or *Hingulā*, in a corner of a mountain called 'Hingulā'. It is one of the *pīthas* of *Devī*. Here the *brahma-randhra* (fontanelle) of the 'Satī' had fallen. Here *Durgā* is known as the *Mahāmāyā* or *Koḅḅarī*. For a long time now this famous shrine is maintained by the Muslims as a sacred place of their *Pīrs*. See also the song about the worship of *Hinglāj* by Emperor Akbar (H.S.B.I. Chattīsgarhī: 289).
- 2 Perhaps *Kāmākṣā* temple, the centre of the tantric worship and an important *pītha* of *Śakti* in Assam.
- 3 It is not clear whether this is Vṛndāvana or Vindhyāvana. If Vṛndāvana, it is not certain which temple is meant, unless it is the pedestal of Tulasī (see p. 40), which is also called Vṛndāvana (*vide* Kosambi '62: 56). On the other hand there is an important *pītha* of *Śakti* in the Vindhya hills near Mirzapur which seems more likely to have been meant here as it is in the homeland of the immigrants.
- 4 Cp. Lines IV-V, T.L. Sāstrī ('62: 77).

- I. I remember the Pārvaṭī of the Origin,<sup>1</sup> the Great Māyā.
- II. First I remember Rāma (and) then Lakṣmaṇa; I attach (myself) to Sītā's side -  
O, the Great Māyā.
- III. In one half of the river (just ordinary) water flows (and in the other) half (one) bathes  
in the (sacred) water of (the river) Gaṅgā -  
O, the Great Māyā.
- IV. You would give eyes to the blind and (a wholesome) body to the leper -  
O, the Great Māyā.
- V. You would give a son to the infertile woman. (It is the) Great Māyā that causes (one  
to) play -<sup>2</sup>  
O, the Great Māyā.

### 63 Pacrā iii [*Paramaribo, 1967*]

#### To pārvaṭī as Śītālā<sup>3</sup>

- I. jau maj jānatyū bhavānī maiyā yahi bāṭe āihāi ho  
[jau maj jānatyū (sītā la) maiyā yahi bāṭe āihāi ho]
- II. maiyā rahiyā meṣ sagarā khanāvatyū ḍaphaiyā mārati āvatyu ho
- III. jau maj jānatyū sītala maiyā yahi bāṭe āihāi ho
- IV. maiyā rahiyai meṣ bagiyā lagāvatiyū jūre jūre āvatiyu ho
- V. jau hama jānatyū sītala maiyā yahi bāṭe āihāi ho
- VI. maiyā rahiyā meṣ baniyā basāvatyū lavaniyā lai caṛhāvatiyū ho
- VII. jau hama jānatyū sītala maiyā, are ho bhavānī maiyā āihāu ho

1 This is the most philosophical aspect of the mother goddess, as the origin of the universe, the first material principle, the *Śakti* of God, *prakṛti* in the *Sāṅkhya*, and *māyā* in the *Vedānta*. Re, Rāma as Śiva and Sītā as Pārvaṭī, *vide* p. 34 and song No. 19.

2 *Khilānā*: when the worshipper is possessed by the goddess (*vide* p. 26) his movements are known as *khelnā*, for it is the play of the goddess.

3 Cp. D. Sirmha ('44: 48-49).

- VIII. maiyā rahiḃā meḃ ahirā basāvatyū ḃaheriyā lai ke caḃhāvatiyū ho  
 IX. jau hama jānatyū sātaū maiyā yahi bāṭe āihāu ho  
 X. maiyā rahiḃā meḃ ahelavā basāvatyū badhaiyā lai bajāvatiyū ho  
 XI. jau hama jānatyū bhavānī maiyā, are ho sītala maiyā, ehi bāṭe āihāu ho  
 XII. maiyā rahiḃā meḃ pasiyavā basāvatyū chavanavā lai caḃhāvatiyū ho
- I. Had I known, mother Pārvaṭī (Śītalā), that you would come by this route -  
 II. Mother, I would have had a pond dug on the way (so that) you would have come taking dips (in it).  
 III. Had I known, mother Śītalā, that you would come by this route -  
 IV. Mother, I would have had a garden grown on the way so you would have come in the cool (shades).  
 V. Had I known, mother Śītalā, that you would come by this route -  
 VI. Mother, I would have settled a shopkeeper on the way and taking clothes (from him) I would have made an offering (thereof to you).  
 VII. Had I known, mother Śītalā, O mother Pārvaṭī, that you would come -  
 VIII. Mother, I would have settled a cowherd on the way and taking yoghurt (from him) I would have made an offering (thereof to you).  
 IX. Had I known, all seven mothers,<sup>1</sup> you would come by this route -  
 X. I would have settled a hunter<sup>2</sup> on the way and taking the killed (creature from him) I would have made an offering (thereof to you).

1 For the seven deities of small-pox, the seven Śītalā sisters, see p. 25.

2 *Badhaiyā bajāvatiyū* (I would have made congratulatory music played) seems to have no connection with the presence of an *aheliyā*, a hunter. Hence, *badhaiyā* (from S. *vadha*) must mean the killed creature, and perhaps the singer meant *badhaiyā caḃhāvatiyū* (I would have made an offering of the killed creature) or, *badhāvatiyū*.

- XI. Had I known, mother Pārvaṭī, O mother Śītalā, that you would come by this route -  
 XII. I would have settled a *pāsī*<sup>1</sup> on the way and taking<sup>2</sup> a a thatch (from him) I would have made an offering (thereof to you).

## 64 Pacrā iv [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

### To Ḍīh<sup>3</sup>

#### A

- I. ratha sājo ḍīha ratha sājo; rathavā sājata bhāī der
- II. purabāi disā se cale haḍ ḍīh rājā, dharatī badaravā akulāy
- III. kāhai ke dharatī badaravā akulāilai, ham jāve sevak guhār

#### B

- I. ḍihavā lāgau sahāy; dharam sevakavā tuhaḍ binai kare
- II. kaunahḍ phulavā ḍihavā lobhāy gāilai; kahavā lagāyo itanī der

#### A

- I. Prepare the chariot, Ḍīh, prepare the chariot; delay took place in preparing the chariot.
- II. The king Ḍīh has started out from the East; the earth and clouds get restless.
- III. Why are the earth and crowds getting restless? I am going at the call of (my) servant.

1 A low caste. They often worked as labourers to thatch huts etc.

2 It should probably be *chavanavā lai chavāvatīyū* (I would have caused a thatch to be made).

3 These songs are reminiscent of the *āvāhana* in classical ritual. See also Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1886: 220) and K. Upādhyāya ('54: 443).

- I. Ḍīh, be (our) company as a helper - the dutiful servant prays to you.
- II. By what flower (on the way) has Ḍīh been tempted? Where has he (been) delayed so long?

### 65 Ṭonā (Incantations) [*The Hague in the Netherlands, 1966, Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

#### To brush off the effects of the evil eye from a person

- I. pipre kā pāṭ bargade kā ṭonā
- II. <sup>1</sup> ... jhāre apanā ṭonā
- III. dohāi lonā camārin kī
- IV. dohāi bajarang balī kī
- V. dohāi mahādev jī kī
- VI. dohāi gaurā pārbatī kī
- VII. dohāi pāco pāṇḍavḡ kī
- VIII. dohāi pāco pañca kī
- IX. dohāi guru paramesvar kī -  
chū!<sup>2</sup>

- I. The leaf of *pipal*, the (magical) influence of *vaṭa*.
- II. Such and such<sup>1</sup> brushes off his (magical) influence.
- III. In the name of Lonā camārin.<sup>3</sup>
- IV. In the name of the steel-limbed,<sup>4</sup> strong one.
- V. In the name of Mahādeva.<sup>5</sup>
- VI. In the name of Gaurī Pārvatī.

1 The name of the person concerned.

2 At this the *ojhā* brushes the person. (See p. 14). There are different methods for different problems or diseases.

3 See p. 37

4 Hanumān who has the limbs of *vajra*, steel or diamond, the motif of strength.

5 Śiva.

- VII. In the name of the five Pāṇḍavas.  
 VIII. In the name of the five jurymen.<sup>1</sup>  
 IX. In the name of the Guru, the Supreme Lord.  
 Touch!<sup>2</sup>

## 66 Bhajan i [*The Hague in the Netherlands, 1966*]

- I. bhajana binā baila birānā hōiho  
 II. dhobī ke ghara gadahā hōiho ladiyana lāda ladāiho  
 III. hota bhinasāra ḍaṇḍe khāiho hippo hippo karata pahūcāiho  
 bhajana binā...  
 IV. naṭavā ke ghara bāḍara hōiho nāka kāna chidavāiho  
 V. bīca sabhā me khīsa nipoṛiho apanā bharama gavāiho  
 bhajana binā

- I. Without devotion you will be (born) a crazy bull.  
 II. You will be (born) a donkey in the house of a washerman; you will be loaded with loads (of laundry);  
 III. At the coming of morning you will be beaten with sticks and you will carry the burden to destination with many a bray.  
 Without devotion...  
 IV. You will be (born) a monkey in the house of a showman<sup>3</sup> and you will have (your) nose and ears pierced;  
 V. In the middle of a gathering you will show your teeth<sup>4</sup> and lose your illusions.<sup>5</sup>  
 Without devotion...

1 *Pañc*, the five members of a council which arbitrates and dispenses justice.

2 See page 121, note 2.

3 *Nata*, a caste of showmen. Some of them also give shows with trained animals, including monkeys, on the roadside. The nose and ears of the monkeys are pierced for ornaments.

4 In a semblance of laughter or annoyance, as demonstrated by these show monkeys.

5 'You will be thoroughly disillusioned'.

## 67 Bhajan ii [Ansoe, 1962]

### A (*Sumiran: dohā*)

- I. satya bacan aura dinatā para tiya māta samān
- II. itane meḡ hari nā mile tulasī hai jhūṭha jabān

### B (*The Bhajan*)

- I. basau tu hamare hirday meḡ sārādā māī
- II. sursati more hirday basihai bhūlā gñāna batāī
- III. dhaulāgiri para banala cautarā tero kirati maiyā tīnḡ jaga ṭhāī  
basau hamare...
- IV. devi ke āgana pīpar sohaj baṭa sohaj pachavāre
- V. sone ke chatara bhavana par sohaj lāla dhujā meḡ...<sup>1</sup> phaharāī  
basau tu...

### A

- I. Truthful speech and meekness, (beholding) another's woman as mother -
- II. If just by this God is not met, (says) Tulasīdāsa, then one's word is untrue.<sup>2</sup>

### B

- I. Mother Sarasvatī,<sup>3</sup> abide in my heart.
- II. Sarasvatī will abide in my heart (and) tell (me) the forgotten knowledge.
- III. (Her) altar is built on Dhaulgiri.<sup>4</sup> Mother, your repute is spread throughout the three realms.  
Abide in my heart...

1 The words are not clear in our tape.

2 If one says that he practised all these and yet did not find God, he is speaking untruth somewhere.

3 Here, *Sarasvatī* is identified with the general mother goddess. The prayer is to Sarasvatī, the goddess of wisdom, but the description given in the song applies to *Devī*, the general mother goddess.

4 See p. 36.

- IV. In the courtyard of the goddess the *pīpal* trees appear beautiful (and) at the back (of the shrine) the *vaṭa* trees appear beautiful.
- V. The gold parasols appear beautiful on the building, and on the red flag flutter...<sup>1</sup>  
Abide in my heart...

## On myths and legends

### 68 The romantic aspect of kṛṣṇa<sup>2</sup> [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. rādhe jī kī ungarī meḥ ḍasa liyo kāliya nāg
  - II. bābā nanda jī ke bāga meḥ jhūlā jhūle jāḍ, maj to jhūlā jhūla rahī nāga ḍanka ḍasakāye  
rādhe jī kī...
  - III. nāga ḍanka ungarin meḥ māryo girī dharana dhaharāy
  - IV. aiso rādhā parī dharana par tana kī khabara ita nāy  
rādhe jī kī...
  - V. eka sakhī ika nārī dekhe dūjī kara rahi byār
  - VI. tījī sakhī ika jala bhara lāi cauthī baida ghara jāy  
rādhe jī kī
  - VII. baṛe nanda ghara baṛe bāyagi unahī ke baida bulāva
  - VIII. āya baida āḡgana bhayo ṭhaṛo ghūghaṭa meḥ musakāy  
rādhe jī kī...
  - IX. sūra syāma bali āsa carana kī hari caranana dhara dhyān
  - X. krisna mile to rādhā jīvai nā tana tajata pirān  
rādhe jī kī
- I. The Kāliya<sup>3</sup> snake bit Rādhājī's finger.

1 The words are not clear in our tape.

2 In the song Rādhā plays a trick to meet Kṛṣṇa whom she is, probably, forbidden to meet. She pretends that she has been bitten by a snake. One of her friends helps her by suggesting that there is a good physician in Nanda's home; who else but Kṛṣṇa? He arrives disguised as a physician and saves Rādhā's life, who would die if she did not see her lover.

3 In the classical myths, Kṛṣṇa danced on the head of the Kāliya and subdued him.



- II. - I am going (with the intention) to swing on a swing in father Nanda's garden;<sup>1</sup> I am swinging on the swing and the snake bites (with its) fang.  
Rādhājī's finger...
- III. The snake bit in the finger with the fang; She fell on the ground with a dizziness;
- IV. Rādhā so fell on the ground that (she has) no consciousness of (the state of her) body.  
Rādhājī's finger...
- V. One *sakhī* examines a vein, another fans the breeze;
- VI. The third *sakhī* filled and fetched some water, (and) the fourth goes to the house of a physician.  
Rādhājī's finger...
- VII. - In the home of big Nanda there is a great expert, call him alone as a physician;
- VIII. The physician came and stood in the courtyard, (and Rādhā) smiles inside the veil.  
Rādhājī's finger...
- IX. (Says) Sūradāsa (regarding) Kṛṣṇa, there is great hope of (finding refuge at his) feet (by) meditating on the feet of Hari.
- X. If Kṛṣṇa is met (only) then Rādhā would survive; (if) not, (then) her body (would) give up the breath.

## 69 Conversation between Sītā and Mandodarī<sup>2</sup> [*Ansoe, 1962*]

- I. siyā jī ke milane maḍodara āyo re, siyā jī ke milane  
 II. ke kara tū ho baṛī dulārī ke kara suta byauhārī re  
 III. nāma tumhāre kāhū kekare purusa sanga āyo  
 siyā jī ke...

1 Nanda's garden is purely metaphorical here; she could not have been swinging in Nanda's garden, see lines VII and VIII.

2 Cp. Conversation between *Mandodarī*, taking Rāma's side, and *Rāvaṇa*: R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 487).

- IV. rājā janak ke baṛī dulārī dasaratha suta byauhārī re  
 V. nāma hamāro māta jānakī tuharo raḍāpā dekhana āyo  
 siyā jī ke...
- VI. kumbhakaran as beṭā hamare bīr bharata as bhāī  
 VII. das mastaka ke jodhā hamaro kā karihaj tapasiyā donḡ bhāī  
 siyā jī ke...
- VIII. lachan kuvar as devar hamaro bīr bharat as bhāī  
 IX. hanūman as nāyak hamaro chana hi meṡ lankā garada hōi jāi  
 siyā jī ke...
- X. tulasīdāsa bhajo bhagavānā hari caranana cita lāī re  
 XI. lankā ke nāsa kara ajodhyā meṡ jāi  
 siyā jī ke...
- I. Mandodarī came to meet Sītājī; to meet Sītājī.  
 II. - Whose very darling daughter are you (and) married to whose son?  
 III. What is your name and with whose man have you come (here)?  
 IV. - (I am the) very darling daughter of the king Janaka, married to the son of Daśaratha.  
 V. My name is mother Jānakī (and I) have come to see your widowhood.  
 VI. - Ours is a son like Kumbhakarṇa<sup>1</sup> (and) a brother like Bharata;<sup>1</sup>  
 VII. Having ten heads (Rāvaṇa) is our warrior; what will the two ascetic brothers do (before them)?  
 VIII. - Mine is a *devar* like prince Lakṣmaṇa, (who has) a brother like brave Bharata;  
 IX. Ours<sup>2</sup> is a leader like Hanumān; Laṅkā will burn to ashes in a moment -  
 X. (Says) Tulasīdāsa, worship God Hari, fixing the mind on (His) feet -  
 XI. Who destroys Laṅkā and goes (back) to Ayodhyā.

1 There must be some confusion in the singers' mind. According to the epic, Kumbhakarṇa was Rāvaṇa's brother and Bharata was Rāma's brother.  
 2 'Ours' and 'mine' are often interchangeable in the language of these songs.

## 70 On Bali and Viṣṇu in Vāmana incarnation<sup>1</sup> [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. rājā mata de dāna jamī ko
- II. yā hī ne harinākusa māryo duniyā desa dhunī ko
- III. yā bāmhana kū choṭo mati jāne ū to chaliyā desa dunī ko
- IV. yā hī ne haricanda chalyau hai nīra bharyo bhangī ko
- V. yā hī ne moradhvaja chalyo hai lāye sera banī ko
- VI. yā hī ne rājā rāvana māryo jodhā lankapurī ko  
rājā mata de...

- I. King, do not make a gift of the land.
- II. This very one killed Hiraṇyakaśipu: (when) the (whole) world was a country of that dedicated one.<sup>2</sup>
- III. Do not take this Brāhmaṇa (to be) little; he is a (well-known) crook of the country (and the) world.
- IV. This very one has cheated Hariścandra<sup>3</sup> who (had to) fetch water for a sweeper.
- V. This very one has cheated Mayūradhvaja<sup>4</sup> (having) brought a lion of the forest.
- VI. This very one killed the king Rāvaṇa, the warrior of the city of Laṅkā.  
King, do not make...

1 See p. 35. During the Vāmana incarnation Viṣṇu, in the form of a dwarf brahmin, begged Bali, the powerful demon king, for the amount of land he would cover in three steps. Śukra, the guru of the *rākṣasas*, advised Bali not to make the gift. See VP. I. 19.52 also.

2 Hiraṇyakaśipu, the father of Prahlāda, was killed by Viṣṇu in the *nṛsimha* (man-lion) incarnation. It appears that the singer has confused his lines; the second half of the line V should be here. For Prahlāda and Hiraṇyakaśipu, see VP. I. chapters 16 ff.

3 See on song No. 46.

4 'He whose flag bears the sign of a peacock', a name of Bāṇa. Bāṇāsura's daughter, Uṣā, fell in love with Aniruddha, Kṛṣṇa's grandson, whom the girl's father tried to kill, which resulted in a war and the destruction of Bāṇa's kingdom.

## The caste songs and worksongs

### 71 i. Kuḥaravā (of the potters) [*Parapasi*, 1967]

#### On a religious theme<sup>1</sup>

- I. kevala mukha hari bhajane kaḥ diyā
  - II. goṛavā kahe hama duniyā me bharamab; daṭavā kahe ham anāra ke biyā  
kevala mukha...
  - III. hathavā kahe ham dāna jo debai; daṭavā...  
kevala mukha...
  - IV. oṭhavā kahe ham panavā jo kucabai; daṭavā...  
kevala mukha...
  - V. nakunā kahe ham sugavā ke ṭhṛavā; daṭavā...  
kevala mukha...
  - VI. aḥhiyā kahe ham duniyā me dekhav; daṭavā...  
kevala mukha...
  - VII. mathavā kahe ham dhaulagiri pahaṛavā; daṭavā...  
kevala mukha...
  - VIII. sūra syāma bali āsa carana ke; unhāi carana cita lāyā  
kevala mukha...
- 
- I. Only the mouth is given to worship God
  - II. The foot<sup>2</sup> says: I shall wander through the whole world; the tooth says: I am a pomegranate seed;  
Only the mouth...
  - III. The hand says: I shall give what (is known as) gift; the tooth...  
Only the mouth...

1 The other *kuḥaravās* (or, *kumharavās*) recorded include (1) a song in which, while turning his wheel, the potter remembers his beloved's beauty, (2) one dealing with the story of Śravaṇa Kumāra with a version requiring the making of a special type of pot, and (3) a curious song with borrowed *dohās* plus a refrain.

2 Or, leg.

- IV. The lip says: I shall chew the betel leaf; the tooth...  
Only the mouth...
- V. The nose says: I am a parrot's beak; the tooth...  
Only the mouth...
- VI. The eye says: I shall see (everything) in the world; the tooth...  
Only the mouth...
- VII. The forehead says: I am the Dhaulgirī<sup>1</sup> mountain; the tooth...  
Only the mouth...
- VIII. (Says) Sūradāsa, regarding Kṛṣṇa, there is great hope of (His) feet; (He) brought His mind only to His feet.  
Only the mouth...

## 72 ii. Kaharavā (of the water-carriers) [*The Hague in the Netherlands, 1966*]

- I. jala bhara ke jānakī lāvata hai
- II. kethuvana ke terī gagarī ghāilavā, kethuvana ke deharī bajāvata hai - jala bhara ke...
- III. sonana ke more gagarī ghāilavā, raghuvara ke dehrī bajāvata hai - jala bhara ke...
- I. Sītā fills and fetches water.
- II. - Of what are your pitcher and vessel<sup>2</sup> (made) (and) at whose doorstep do they keep sound<sup>3</sup>?
- III. - Of gold are my pitcher and the vessel; they keep sound at the doorstep of the best of Raghus (i.e. Rāma).

1 See p. 36.

2 *Gagarī* is a metal pitcher, *gharā* is made of clay.

3 *Bajānā* idiomatically also means to have one's presence registered in the course of a duty.  
'At whose doorstep do you carry out the duty of fetching water?'

### 73 iii. Dhobiyā Birahā<sup>1</sup> [*Paramaribo, 1967*]

- I. moṭī moṭī roṭiyā poyau baraiṭhin, bhinahj jābai dhobi ghāṭa
  - II. tīna cīja mata bhulihau baraiṭhin, hukkā tamākhu āga
  - III. dhobiyā calā reha kṛ, pancō; āile badariyā gher
  - IV. uṇavā se dhobina pukāre; lāvau gadahavā pher
- I. You should bake thick *roṭīs*,<sup>2</sup> good lady; I shall go to the washerman's *ghāṭ* early in the morning.
  - II. You must not forget three things, good lady, *huqqā*,<sup>3</sup> tobacco and fire.
  - III. Jurymen, the washerman started out on (his) way; the cloud came hovering.
  - IV. The washerwoman calls from high; turn the donkey (and) bring (it) back.

### 74 iv. Bhāṭ (singer and dancer) seeking his payment [*Paramaribo, 1967*]

- I. sūmini sūma se byāha bhaye; chaṭṭakaī dhāna ke ḍāre haj sukhavā
- II. jaba gidhdhana ke ghara halla uṭhe; jaba kuvana ke ghara bāje badhauvā
- III. māi dulle pūta barātai; siyāra bajāvata dhūdhuka thaiyā
- IV. aba sūmini mṛa pasāya rahī; jahā, būri mare sāre cāra sau kuvā

1 Line II: cp. K. Upādhyāya ('60: 213).

2 Flat, thin bread like a pancake cooked without oil.

3 The Indian smoking vessel.

- I. A miser woman got married to a miser man; they have thrown only a few ounces<sup>1</sup> of paddy for comfort (as an excuse for a gift).
- II. When sounds (of celebrations) rise in the home of vultures, when congratulatory music plays in the home of crows;
- III. (When) mother is the bridegroom and the son the wedding party<sup>2</sup> (and) jackals play the rhythms of the instruments.<sup>3</sup>
- IV. Now the miser woman is giving away rice-water into which four and a half hundred crows were drowned and died.

## 75 The tattoo song<sup>4</sup> [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. galiyā ke galiyā phirale naṭovavā; kōhi sāvāra godanā godāihaj re sāvāliyā
- II. apāne mahāliyā se nanadī pukāre; more bhaujī godanā godāihaj re sāvāliyā
- III. kiyā liho natūavā sauvā kodāvā; kiyā liho nanadī hamāra re sāvāliyā
- IV. agiyā lagāvāṣ sāvāra sauvā kodāvā; hama lebai nanadī tuhāra re sāvāliyā
- V. hara joti āile kudariyā goṛi āile; baiṭhele mathavā nivāy re sāvāliyā

1 *Chatāk*: a small measure, one-sixteenth of a kilogram.

2 Perhaps it is the other way round: where the son is the bridegroom and mother alone is the total wedding party.

3 According to D. Simha ('44: 296) *dhūdhuk* is the larger of the *nagārā* drums. *Thaiyā* is a drumbeat.

4 The song may be summarised thus: the tattoo artist is making his round of the neighbourhood when he is called to render his services. A married woman has herself tattooed and then offers her husband's sister as a fee. When the husband returns home from his daily work, not finding his sister at home, he goes out looking for her. He finds the tattoo artist and asks him to give his sister back in return for a basketful of gold but he is rebuffed, for the girl is now the tattooer's properly wedded wife and was, at the first place, given as his proper fee. It is probable that this was the *bhaujāī*'s way of getting rid of her *nanad*. On the real purpose of the song see p. 26.

Cp. Archer and Prasād ('43: 208) with the *stobha*-refrain: *more hari ke lāl*, also our recording from Guyana.

- VI. maiyā maj dekhyauḥ dhaniyā maj dekhyauḥ; nāḥi dekhyauḥ re bahini hamāra re sāvāliyā  
 VII. tohare bahinī prabhu naṭuvā ke bhūkhala; ū to gāile naṭuvā ke sātha re sāvāliyā  
 VIII. lāvo na dhaniyā re hāthe ke chariyavā; bahinī khojana hama jāba re sāvāliyā  
 IX. eka bana gāile dusara bana gāile; tisare me neṭuvā bhīṭāna re sāvāliyā  
 X. levo na natūā re ḍāla bhari sonavā; choṛi devo bahinī hamāra re sāvāliyā  
 XI. agiyā lagāḡ tore ḍāla bhari sonavā; ī to bātī biyahī hamāra re sāvāliyā  
 XII. tore dhaniyā re godanā godāileḥ hama to leī godanā ke dāna re sāvāliyā

- I. The *naṭa*<sup>1</sup> made (his) round (from) street to street (shouting:) is there a beautiful one<sup>2</sup> who would have a design tattooed?<sup>3</sup>  
 II. A *nanad* calls from her palace: my *bhāujī* will have a design tattooed.  
 III. - Would you take, O *naṭa*, (some) *sauvā*<sup>4</sup> or *kodḡ*<sup>5</sup> or would you (rather) take my *nanad*<sup>6</sup> (as your fee)?  
 IV. - Beautiful one, I would put fire to *sauvā* and *kodḡ*; I would take your *nanad*.<sup>6</sup>  
 V. (The man of the house) returned after ploughing (with a) plough; he returned after digging (with a) shovel; he sat down with his forehead bowed.  
 VI. - I have seen mother, I have seen (my) precious one; I have not seen my sister.  
 VII. - Your sister, lord, was hungry for a *naṭa*; she has gone with the *naṭa*.  
 VIII. - Bring (me, won't you?) the stick (which I carry in my) hand; I shall go to search for (my) sister.

1 *Naṭuā*, a caste who do tattooing by going round the villages and towns.

2 *Sāvā* (S. *śyāmā*), a young beauty.

3 *Sāvāliyā* at the end of the line is merely a *stobha* or an aid to rhyme, addressing the listener as 'beloved'.

4 A coarse grain (S. *śyāmāka*).

5 A coarse grain.

6 In another version: *nanadī javān* (youthful *nanad*).



- IX. He went (through) one wilderness<sup>1</sup> (and) went through the second wilderness; in the third the *naṭa* was met.  
 X. - Take, oh *naṭa*, a basketful of gold; leave my sister (and) give (her back to me).  
 XI. - I would set fire to your basketful of gold; she is my wedded one.  
 XII. Your precious one had a design tattooed and I took (your sister as) (my) fees.<sup>2</sup>

### [Other songs] Titillās

#### 76 Pisaunī [*Paramaribo*, 1965]

#### An unwanted pregnancy<sup>3</sup>

- I. jhīne jhīne gehūā re bāse kēi ḍelariyā ho  
 II. nanadī bhāujī gohūā pīsāī ho rām  
 III. nahī pare khikiyā nahī re nikase pisanā ho  
 IV. nanadī bhāujiyā muṭhiyā thāmāī ho rām  
 V. maj to se pūchū merī mainā are nanadiyā re  
 VI. kāhe tori muḥavā hai pīyara ho rām  
 VII. are bābā ke bakhariyā bhāujī haradī pīsati rahyaḥ  
 VIII. haradī chitakiya muḥavā pīyara ho rām  
 IX. maj to se pūchū more mainā are nanadiyā re  
 X. kāhe tore chatiyā hai sāvāra ho rām  
 XI. are bābā ke bakhariyā bhāujī baṭhulī mājatī rahyaḥ  
 XII. baṭhulī chitakiya chatiyā sāvāra ho rām  
 XIII. maj to se pūchū more mainā are nanadiyā re  
 XIV. kāhe tora peṭavā phūlala ho rām

1 *Ban*, in the folksongs, a wilderness between two villages. S. *vana* means simply a forest.

2 *Dān*, in this case not a donation.

3 Cp. D. Simha ('44: 150-152); K. Upādhyāya ('60: 194, 274). Line I: Cp. R. Tripāthī ('29: 264); D. Simha ('44: 132, 170 etc.).

- XV. bābā ke bakhariyā bhāujī roṭiyā povatī rahyaṃ  
 XVI. roṭiyā mahakiya peṭavā phūlala ho rām.

- I. (There are) tiny little wheat (grains) in a basket (made of) cane.
- II. *Nanad* and *bhāujī* are grinding wheat (in a handmill).<sup>1</sup>
- III. The fistful (of grain) is not going in (for a while), nor is the flour coming out;
- IV. *Nanad* and *bhāujī* are holding back (their) fists.
- V. - I ask you, my Mainā,<sup>2</sup> my *nanad* -
- VI. Why is your face pale?
- VII. - O, I had been grinding turmeric in father's storehouse, O *bhāujī* -
- VIII. (By) the turmeric having been spilled, (my) face (got) pale.
- IX. - I ask you, my Mainā, my *nanad* -
- X. Why is your breast dark?
- XI. - O, I had been washing wares in father's storehouse -
- XII. (By) the ware (which was sooty) having slipped (my) breast (got) dark.
- XIII. - I ask you, my Mainā, my *nanad* -
- XIV. Why is your tummy swollen?
- XV. - I had been baking *roṭī* in father's storehouse -
- XVI. (By) the *roṭī* having scattered its fragrance my stomach (has) swelled.

## Titillā II

### 77 Pisaunī ii [*Paramaribo*, 1965]

#### The suicide of a maltreated daughter-in-law<sup>3</sup>

- I. sera bhara gohuvā dihina hamare sāsū ho nā
- II. bāuhara calahu nā pīse pisanavā ho nā

1 *Ho rām*, a *stobha* and an aid to rhyme.

2 A name. There are other songs regarding a person of this name e.g. Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 237-238).

3 Lines VII-VIII: re. the woes of an infertile woman cp. B. Upādhyāya ('54: 85); K. Upādhyāya ('60: 240).

- III. kuṭi pīsi jaba pisanā liyāvāi ho nā
- IV. sāsū tāulo na apane pisanavā ho nā
- V. sāsū dhare seravā nanada dūi seravā ho nā
- VI. rāmā ho āpu prabhu dharē pūrā seravā ho nā
- VII. sāsū māre ucavā nanada nīce girāva ho nā
- VIII. rāmā ho āpu prabhu devaj taravariyā ho nā
- IX. ehi re biragavā dhana ghāilā uṭhāvāi ho nā
- X. rāmā ho paniyā ke gāile sāgara talavā ho nā
- XI. ghāilā to bhari bhari dhare haḷ jagatiyā ho nā
- XII. rāmā ho cīra choṛi pāiṭhe nahāi ho nā
- XIII. ika būra buṛale dusara būra buṛale ho nā
- XIV. rāmā ho tisare meḡ gāile tāra buṛāva ho nā

- I. My mother-in-law gave (me) a full kilo of wheat:<sup>1</sup>
- II. - Daughter-in-law, come on (won't you?) (to) grind (the wheat into) flour.
- III. After grinding<sup>2</sup> when I bring the flour (I say):
- IV. Mother-in-law, weigh up (won't you?) your flour.
- V. The mother-in-law places the kilo (weight) and the *nanad* two kilos<sup>3</sup>
- VI. <sup>1</sup>(And) the lord himself places a complete kilo.
- VII. The mother-in-law pushes upwards, the *nanad* pushes downwards.
- VIII. The lord himself gives (a hit with a) sword.
- IX. In this very mood of disenchantment the precious one<sup>4</sup> took up (her) pitcher;
- X. (And) (she) went away to (fetch) water (from the) lake or the pond.
- XI. Having filled the pitchers (she) placed<sup>4</sup> (them) on the platform -
- XII. (She) took off (her) clothes and took<sup>4</sup> a dip, bathing.
- XIII. (She) took one dip, took the second dip -
- XIV. In the third (dip) she drowned (herself) in the pond.

1 *Ho nā* and *rāmā ho*, *stobhas*.

2 *Kuṭi pīsi*: a twin-word; after crushing, grinding and so on.

3 That is, inaccurate weights.

4 These are in the present tense in the text.

### Titillā III

#### 78 Ropanī and Nirāṁī [*Paramaribo, 1965*]

#### Consequences of an incestuous suggestion<sup>1</sup>

- I. sātau bhāiyā ke runavali bahiniyā ho rām
- II. sōi runavali bhāilī panihārini ho rām
- III. are bhari bhari ghāilā runavali dhara līna jagatiyā ho
- IV. kōi more ghāilā uthāvahi ho rām
- V. are ghoravā caṛhala āve jāisala biranā ho
- VI. ohi more ghāilā uthāvāi ho rām
- VII. are ghāilā uthāvata more chuṭi gāi aṅcaravā ho
- VIII. biranā ke pari gāi najariyā ho rām
- IX. are ghoravā to bādhe bhāiyā ghore ghora rasāiyā re

1 The story in the song needs to be summarised. Brother Jaisal's glance falls on the body of his sister as he helps her to lift up her pitcher of water. His mother and *bhaujāī*, always a *devar's* confidante, fail to dissuade him from his resolve to marry his own sister; he just lies there on a bed and refuses to get up till his demand is acceded to. Finally, Runvali, the sister, agrees to marry him. He makes arrangements for her bridal apparel etc. and finally carries her away in a bridal palanquin. As she passes her father's garden and the pond, she asks the palanquin-carriers to stop so that she may visit her father's garden and the pool for the last time. However, she goes to the pond and drowns herself. The last lines of the song seem to convey an indirect meaning: even her dead body cannot be caught in Jaisal's net; only her father, happy at the way the family's honour has been saved, finally manages to fish her out. The brother is left with repentance. Cp. Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1886: 249-250) where the brother's name is Hansarāj. Other authors record a song very similar to this one but without an incestuous suggestion [also recorded by us in Nieuw Nickerie and Guyana] in which one Mirzā tries to kidnap the girl and her brother tries to save her. Brother's name as Horil Singh: Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 239); Jay Singh: R. Tripāthī ('29: 334-339; 368-380 several versions from various districts); the girl's name Kusumā and the brother's name Gangārām: B. Upādhyāya ('54: 50-51). Another version on *Mirzā* (H.S.B.I. Avadhī: 195). Line X motif in many of our recordings; cp. also R. Tripāthī ('29: 17). Lines XXXI-XXXIV motif in many of our recordings; also Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 240). Lines XXXV-XXXVIII, re. *ban*, vide song No. 75 and many of our recordings; Cp. S. Anila ('57: 248). Lines XLVI-IL, besides the *Mirzā* songs, Cp. D. Simha ('58: 109, 110).

- X. sutale cadariyā muḥavā dhāki ho rām  
 XI. are pānī datūini lai ke māiyā jagāvai ho  
 XII. uṭho beṭa karo datūiniyā ho rām  
 XIII. kāise maj karaṭ vohi datūiniyā ho  
 XIV. runavali se raco more biyahavā ho rām  
 XV. kā tuḥṭ jāisara tuharī akiliyā ho  
 XVI. dhiyavā se hōihaj more patohiyā ho rām  
 XVII. are pānī datūini lai ke bhāujī jagāvāj  
 XVIII. uṭho bābū karo datūiniyā ho rām  
 XIX. kāise maj karaṭ bhāujī yahi datūiniyā ho  
 XX. runavali se raco mora biyahavā ho rām  
 XXI. are kā tuḥṭ jāisara tuhari akiliyā ho  
 XXII. are nanadi se hōihaj devaraniyā ho rām  
 XXIII. pānī datūini lai ke runavali jagāvai  
 XXIV. uṭho bhāiyā karo datūiniyā ho rām  
 XXV. kāise maj karaṭ runavala yahi re datūiniyā ho  
 XXVI. tuma hī se raco more biyahavā ho rām  
 XXVII. jau tuḥṭ biranā re hama se lobhāilo  
 XXVIII. goṛe mūṛe gahanā gaṛhāvau ho rām  
 XXIX. jau tuḥṭ biranā re hama se lobhāilyo ho  
 XXX. hālī beḡe kaparā besāhau ho rām  
 XXXI. ḥaṣi ḥaṣi jāisara gahanā gaṛhāvai  
 XXXII. rōi rōi pahirai runavala bahinī ho rām  
 XXXIII. ḥaṣi ḥaṣi jāisara ḍoliyā phanāvai  
 XXXIV. rōi rōi bāiṭhai runavala bahinī ho rām  
 XXXV. eka bana gāilī dusara bana gāilī re  
 XXXVI. tisare meḡ bābā ke bagiyavā ho rām  
 XXXVII. eka bana gāile dusara bana gāilī ho  
 XXXVIII. tisare me bābā kai sagaravā ho rām  
 XXXIX. hina eka ḍoriyā thamāo bhāiyā kaharā ho  
 XL. dekhi lēi bābā ke sagaravā ho rām  
 XLI. cali calo runavali cali calo dhaniyā ho  
 XLII. calalai maj bagiyā lagāiba ho rām  
 XLIII. calate maj sagarā khanāiba ho rām  
 XLIV. tuharā sagaravā bhāiyā niti uṭhi dekhabai ho  
 XLV. bābā ke sagaravā dūlabha hōihai ho rām  
 XLVI. rōi rōi jāisara jaliyā ḍarāvai  
 XLVII. nikarai ghoghhiyā sevaravā ho rām  
 XLVIII. are ḥaṣi ḥaṣi bappāi re jaliyā ḍarāvāj

- IL. nīkarale runavali bahiniyā ho rām  
 L. jau maḥ jānatyaḥ runavala āisa chala kariho re  
 LI. nāhḥ maḥ karatyaḥ biyahavā ho rām

- I. Of seven brothers (there is one) sister (named) Runavali.
- II. This very Runavali became a water-fetcher (i.e., went to fetch water).
- III. Runavali filled the pitchers and placed them one by one on the platform.
- IV. - May someone (help to) lift my pitchers (onto my head).
- V. Brother Jaisal is coming mounted on a horse,
- VI. (It is he (who)) would (help to) lift my pitchers.
- VII. While lifting up the pitchers, my *āncala* slipped off,
- VIII. (and) the brother's glance fell (on me).
- IX. The brother tied the horse up with a rope which ties the horse -
- X. (and) lay down having covered his face with a sheet.
- XI. The mother (tries to) wake (him), with water and toothbrush<sup>1</sup> held (in her hand):
- XII. - Get up, son, and wash your mouth.<sup>2</sup>
- XIII. - How shall I wash my mouth (so)?
- XIV. Arrange (first) my marriage with Runavali.
- XV. - Is your intelligence just like you,<sup>3</sup> Jaisar?
- XVI. Is (she) from daughter going to be my daughter-in-law?
- XVII. The *bhāujī* (tries to) wake (him) with water and toothbrush<sup>1</sup> held (in her hand):
- XVIII. - Get up, *bābū*,<sup>4</sup> and wash your mouth<sup>2</sup>
- XIX. - How shall I wash my mouth (so)?
- XX. Arrange (first) my marriage with Runavali.
- XXI. - Is your intelligence just like you, Jaisar?
- XXII. Is (she) from *nanad* going to be my *devarānī*?<sup>5</sup>
- XXIII. Runavali (tries to) wake (him) with water and toothbrush held (in her hand):

1 See n. 1, p. 52.

2 *Vide* note 1, p. 52.

3 There seems to be an attempt at punning here: *Jaisar* is the name and *tuhḥ jaisī* would mean 'like you'.

4 A vocative of respectful endearment.

5 Wife of *devar*, the husband's younger brother.

- XXIV. - Get up, brother, and wash your mouth.  
 XXV. - How shall I wash my mouth (so)?  
 XXVI. Arrange (first) my marriage with yourself.  
 XXVII. - If, brother, you are tempted with me -  
 XXVIII. (Arrange to) have jewellery made (for me) from head to foot.  
 XXIX. If, brother, you are tempted with me -  
 XXX. Soon, quickly, (arrange to) buy (suitable) clothing (for my wedding).  
 XXXI. With repeated laughter (of happiness) does Jaisar (arrange to) have the jewellery made;  
 XXXII. Sister Runavali wears (it) constantly crying.  
 XXXIII. With repeated laughter (of happiness) Jaisar (helps her to) mount the palanquin;  
 XXXIV. Sister Runavali (climbs in and) sits constantly crying.  
 XXXV. (She) passed through one wilderness, (and) passed through the second wilderness;  
 XXXVI. In the third one (there is) father's garden.  
 XXXVII. (She) passed through one wilderness, (and) passed through the second wilderness;  
 XXXVIII. In the third one (there is) father's lake.<sup>1</sup>  
 XXXIX. - Brother *kahārs*,<sup>2</sup> stop the palanquin just for a moment;  
 XL. Let (me) see father's lake (before departure).  
 XLI. - Come on along, Runavali; come on along, precious one;  
 XLII. I will have a garden planted (immediately) upon arrival.<sup>3</sup>  
 XLIII. I will have a lake dug (immediately) upon arrival.<sup>3</sup>  
 XLIV. - Your lake, brother, I will see regularly upon getting up (every morning);  
 XLV. Father's lake will be difficult to get (to see).  
 XLVI. With repeated cries Jaisar has the net thrown in (to the lake);  
 XLVII. (There) emerge (only) snails and moss.  
 XLVIII. With repeated laughter father has the net thrown in to the lake);  
 IL. (And) sister Runavali ('s dead body) came out.

1 *Sāgara*, a pond or a lake. S. *sāgara*: ocean.

2 The palanquin-bearers, in this case; by caste, the water-fetchers.

3 *Calalai*, Bhojpurī; *calate* or *calatai*, Avadhī.

- L. Had I known, Runavali, that you would deceive (me) so;  
 LI. I would not have undertaken (this) marriage.

**79 Birahās i [The Hague in the Netherlands, party from Meerzorg, and Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]**

**The definition of a Birahā<sup>1</sup>**

- I. nā birahā ke khetī bārī (re jorā)  
 II. nā birahā lage ḍār  
     [nā birahā (phare) ḍār]  
     [nā birahā (phale) ḍār]  
 III. birahā hai ika desa ke bhāvarā  
 IV. jina ke kaṅṭha bāitha jāta  
     (jisa ke kaṅṭha basi jāy)  
     (kōī birahā ke na pāye pār)  
     (nā birahā ke pār)  
     (nā kōī pāve pār)
- I. There is no cultivation (or) gardening of (a) *birahā*;  
 II. Nor (does) the *birahā* grow (fructify) on a branch.  
 III. The *birahā* is a bumblebee of some country,  
 IV. On the throat of whomsoever<sup>2</sup> it sits  
     [On the throat of (whomsoever)<sup>3</sup> it sits]  
     (No one finds the limit<sup>4</sup> of a *birahā*).  
     (There is no end<sup>4</sup> to the *birahā*).  
     (No one finds the limit<sup>4</sup> (thereof)).

1 The variants of the song itself provide an example of the changeability of the *birahā*. Other versions: Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1886: 235); K. Upādhyāya ('54: 93) identical with Grierson; (H.S.B.I. Kanāujī: 415 with reference to the songs of washermen, the *dhobīs*).

2 Plural.

3 Singular.

4 Literally, the other shore.



## 80 Birahās ii [*Various sources*] Some *Sumirans*

### A

- I. sumir gāve rām ke sumira to bhaiyā lachaman
- II. ki sumir gāve sakala jahān, ki bhaiyā re sumir gāve sakala jahān
- III. ek to maj sumiraṅ apane māta pitā ke bhaiyā
- IV. jin kara kokhiyā lihina avatār

### B

- I. bīra bakhānaṅ mahābīra ke jo parabata para ḍaṛa kīnha
- II. siyā khojana ke kārana sanghaṛī lankā dahana kara dīnha
- III. to niścaya prema praṭīta se binaya ham kariya sanamāna
- IV. tina ke kāraja sakala subha ū to siddha karata hanumāna

### C

- I. svara bina mile na surasatī aba gura bina milata na gyāna
- II. are hansa bina motī nā mile more bhayavā cāhe lākhḡ tu karahu payāna

### D

- I. pahale guru ke hama gāyḡ jina guru racata jahāna
- II. sāre sriṣṭi racāya ke bhāī phir sab meḡ rahe bāsa

### E

- I. pahile maj sumiraṅ onkāra bhagavān javana racale haj sakala jahāna
- II. taba sumiraṅ maj dharaṭī mātā ke suno bābū ho, jin ke ṭhaiyā bhūiyā sarani hamār
- III. taba sumiraṅ maj māta pitā ke suno srotā gana
- IV. javana posa kara karale sayān

### F

- I. sumiraṅ surasati ke nām pūrana kar deyo merā kām
- II. devā jībhiyo pai kariyo mukām, cārudatta jībhiyo pai a kariyo mukām

**G**

- I. bāiṭhe ā kara diyava digambara pīr paigambar more mātā
- II. aba rakhiya re lāja hamār
- III. hai toro sarana mātā gāva birahavā mātā baravā na vākya hamār
- IV. aur surasatī hā sumirana karaṭ terā
- V. bāiṭho more kaṇṭha dhujā pai karo ḍerā

**H**

- I. pahile maḥ sumiraṭ apane guru kā, apane guru kā
- II. ai mātā aba jina guru racyau jahāna
- III. are pānī se guru binda racata haḥ o bhaiyā
- IV. aba racā alakhapuriyā nirabān

**A**

- I. (One) remembers<sup>1</sup> and sings of Rāma, and remembers (and sings of) Lakṣmaṇa, too.
- II. (One)<sup>2</sup> remembers and sings (of) the whole world -<sup>2</sup> yes, O brother, (one) remembers and sings of the whole world.
- III. First<sup>3</sup> I remember my mother and father, O brother,
- IV. (From) whose womb (I) have taken incarnation.<sup>4</sup>

**B**

- I. I narrate (about) Hanumān the brave<sup>5</sup> who did dippings<sup>6</sup> on the mountain.
- II. (And) who, for the purpose of searching for Sītā, O companion, burnt down (the city of) Laṅkā.
- III. Certainly,<sup>2</sup> with a feeling of love I make (humble) request (and pay) my respects - (to Sītā) for whom I did all the pious deeds,

1 Remembering, here, connotes paying homage.

2 The terms *ki*, *to*, *aba*, *are* are used as *stobhas*. In A. III, however, *to* emphasizes 'first'.

3 Literally, 'one', not 'first'.

4 Birth, which is a form of incarnation for the soul.

5 Or, I term *Hanumān* brave.

6 *Daṇḍ karnā*: to do exercise; perhaps the reference is either to his realisation of strength before jumping across the ocean to Laṅkā or to his bringing a peak of the Himālayas with the curative herbs.

IV. (I) all whose good undertakings may Hanumān (thus pleased) fulfil.

### C

- I. Sarasvatī<sup>1</sup> cannot be obtained without (good) tune<sup>2</sup> (and), now,<sup>3</sup> knowledge cannot be had without a guru.<sup>4</sup>
- II. <sup>3</sup>Without a swan pearls cannot be had,<sup>5</sup> my brother, even if you make a hundred thousand advances.<sup>6</sup>

### D

- I. First I sing of the Guru<sup>7</sup> - the Guru who has created the world;
- II. (He Who) after creating the whole creation remains pervading in all.

### E

- I. First I remember the God, *Om*,<sup>8</sup> who has created the entire world.
- II. Then I remember the mother earth, - listen, O friend,<sup>9</sup> whose (aspects of) *Ṭhaiyā* and *Bhūiyā* are my refuge.
- III. Then I remember (my) mother and father, - listen, O groups of listeners, -
- IV. (The mother and father) who nourished (me) and made (me grow into an) adult.

### F

- I. I remember the name of Sarasvatī. Fulfil (O Sarasvatī) my undertaking.
- II. God(dess), make (your) abode on (my) tongue; (asks) Cārudatta:<sup>10</sup> make (your) abode on (my) tongue.

1 It may be translated here as knowledge, eloquence and poetic ability.

2 Perhaps the singer has, *metri causa*, confused the order of words and really means: 'The tune (or poetic and musical ability) cannot be obtained without (the grace of the goddess) Sarasvatī'.

3 See page 142, note 2.

4 Preceptor.

5 Perhaps the reference is to the legend that swans eat pearls.

6 Or (S. *prayatna*), efforts.

7 God, the Preceptor.

8 The sacred syllable as the name of God.

9 *Bābū*, used as a term of respectful familiarity.

10 The name of the composer.

**G**

- I. The gods, the sky-clad ones,<sup>1</sup> *pīrs* and prophets<sup>2</sup>, (and) my mother (goddess),
- II. (I pray to you all:) keep my honour.
- III. (It) is (by taking) refuge with<sup>3</sup> you (that) I sing the *birahā*; mother, do not confuse my sentence(s).
- IV. And, oh Sarasavaī, I do remembrance<sup>4</sup> to you -
- V. Sit, make your camp on the flag of my throat.<sup>5</sup>

**H**

- I. First I remember my Guru, my Guru -
- II. Oh mother (goddess), the Guru who has created the world.
- III. The guru creates *bindu*<sup>6</sup> out of water, O brother;
- IV. (And he) has<sup>7</sup> created the *nirvāṇa* of the imperceptible city.<sup>8</sup>

## 81 Birahās iii [*Paramaribo*, 1962]

### The mother goddess in the drum

**A Sumiran**

- I. aba asa bhajana bajāo bhajaniyā ho
- II. aba tumhē devē guru sudha bhāī

1 Perhaps Śiva or the *Jaina Tirthankaras* of the Digambara school, although the latter seems unlikely.

2 The Muslim term *paigambar* is used.

3 In the text, the genitive case is used.

4 See page 142, note 1.

5 The tongue, probably.

6 Reference to the *haṭhayoga* doctrine according to which a yogi creates the drop (*bindu*) of *amṛta* (nectar of immortality) through a process of absorbing the seminal fluids into the system. These doctrines have come to the folk singers through a tradition of Gorakhnāth and Kabīr etc.

7 See page 142, note 2.

8 *Alakh* (S. *alaksya*: the Imperceptible God) is the call of some sects of sādhus. It is also possible that the term here is a corruption of *alakāpurī*, the city of heaven.

**B (Competition; riddles)**

- I. kâhe kī torī nagārā banī hai
- II. are kâhe lāgī aba khāl
- III. kauna sa okara bhītara bole
- IV. aba uṭhe chafisāq rāg
- V. candana kā gaṭhī banī nagārā e bhainī
- VI. bhalā bakare ke lāge khāl
- VII. are kālī bhavānī oke bhītara bole
- VIII. aba uṭhe chafisq rāg

**A**

- I. Now, play<sup>1</sup> such a song, O brother songster,
- II. (In which) the guru may give you inspiration, brother.

**B**

- I. Of what is your *nagārā* made?
- II. The skin of which (animal) is affixed (thereto)?
- III. Which one (i.e. who) speaks therein -
- IV. So that (all the) thirty-six tunes<sup>2</sup> arise (out of it)?
- V. - Carved of sandal, (thus) is made the *nagārā*, oh sister,
- VI. (And) the skin of a he-goat is affixed (thereto).
- VII. Kālī, (an aspect of) Pārvatī, speaks therein -<sup>3</sup>
- VIII. (So that), (all the) thirty-six tunes arise.

**82 Birahās iv [Saramacca, 1962]****Competition; riddles: the year as a cow**

- I. ke gaiyā ke bārah thanavā o bhaiyā, aba cuciyā tin sau sāṭh
- II. jo more birahā ke aratha lagāve o bhayavā, te gāve hamāre sāṭh

1 *Bajānā*, to play an instrument.

2 The thirty-six *rāgas* and *rāginis* of Indian music.

3 See p. 35 f.

- III. eka barasavā me bārah mahinnā, aba dinavā tin sau sāṭh  
 IV. maj tore birahā ke aratha lagāṭ e sakhiyā, tuma gāvo hamāre sāṭh

- I. Which cow has twelve udders, oh brother, and<sup>1</sup> three hundred and sixty nipples?  
 II. Whoever explains the meaning of my *birahā*, brother, he may sing with me.  
 III. - (There are) twelve months in a year and<sup>1</sup> three hundred and sixty days.  
 IV. I explain the meaning of your *birahā*, *sakhi*, and (now) you sing with me.

### 83 Birahās v [Saramacca, 1962; party from Meerzorg, 1967]

#### Alcārī: Kṛṣṇa as Rāma's guest

- I. rāma tore bāge me sītā ke phulavārā  
 II. lachamana devare bāiṭhe rakhavārī  
 III. tūr tūr nebulā paṭhāve sasurārī  
 IV. ohi nebulā ke banī hai tarakārī  
 V. jevana bāiṭhāj kriśna murārī  
 VI. aura sītā caṇar ḍulāy
- I. Rāma, in your garden (is) Sītā's flower-bed -  
 II. (Where) (her) *devar*, Lakṣmaṇa, sits keeping guard.  
 III. He picks and picks lemons and sends them to *susrā*;  
 IV. Of these very lemons, the curry is made.  
 V. Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Murā, has sat to dine -  
 VI. And Sītā fans (with a) whisk.

1 *Aba, stobha.*

## 84 Birahās vi [*Paramaribo, 1965*]

### Alcārī: the woman with a roving eye avoiding the *Gaunā*

- I. mora muṛavā nā bānho nāuniyā, e bhaiyā
- II. aba hama gāune na jāb
- III. are gavane ke laḍūā savere kōī khāihaj, alabelā
- IV. aba cirāi dāihaj hamār
- V. are calī jāta goṛī hiri phiri cita meḥ, alabelā
- VI. aba naynā milegā roy
- VII. naynā baṛā kharāba, ai bhāiyā
- VIII. aba saba se karata piṛī
- IX. are eka choṛi ke hajār karatu hai, alabelā
- X. aba yahi mūrukha kā rīt

- I. Oh *nāunī*, tie not the (hair on) my head, oh brother.<sup>1</sup>
- II. Now, I shall not go (to my marital home in the) *gaunā*.<sup>2</sup>
- III. Somebody else will eat<sup>3</sup> the *laḍḍūs* (of the occasion of) *gaunā*.
- IV. (They) will give my (portion) to the birds.
- V. - Go (along), fair one, with (some) turn of the mind;<sup>4</sup> (won't you?).<sup>3</sup>
- VI. (If I go), the eye will meet a cry,<sup>5</sup> oh brother;<sup>1</sup>
- VII. The eye is very bad -
- VIII. (It) falls in love with (any and) all.
- IX. It leaves one and makes (with a) thousand -
- X. This is the custom of a fool.

1 Only a *stobha*.

2 The bride's final farewell to the parental home to go to her husband's house, after she has been there once for a short while and returned to the parents' home. Cp. de Klerk (51: 182) and under *Dongā* (ibid.: 186).

3 *Alabelā*, a swain; here, a *stobha*.

4 *Hiri phiri cita meḥ*: after turning the matter this way and that in (your) mind.

5 The wording in the text is rather free; *naynā milegā roy*: '(?) the eye will cry out'.

## 85 Birahās vii [*Paramaribo, 1965*]

### Alcārī: water as Kālī. a woman praying for her husband's death

- I. aḡuri au goṛ maiyā dharati maḡ sumirauḡ more mātā
- II. aba caura caura ḡyāuhār
- III. are kālī maiyā tuhare bharosavā more mātā
- IV. maḡ to aba ḡāro jalāuvā meḡ goṛa
- V. kālī kalakattā meḡ ḡārai dihini jhaḡḡā
- VI. jina ke pūj na lihini angarej
- VII. kālī maiyā tohare maḡ khasiyā caṛrhāiho more mātā
- VIII. kaḡ buṛhāvā ke dhare ghariyāl
- IX. are buṛhava bhatār more jiyā ke javān bāḡe more mātā
- X. u to ṡikuli de ke jari jāy

- I. (Bowing to you, touching you with my) knees and fingers, I remember you, my mother  
\_1
- II. (And I remember) the ḡīh of every platform.
- III. (My) dependence (is only) on you, mother Kālī;
- IV. (And) I have now placed (my) foot in the water.<sup>2</sup>
- V. Kālī has dug in her flag in Calcutta -
- VI. (Kālī) whom (even the) Englishmen have worshipped (there).
- VII. Mother Kālī, I shall make to you the offering of a goat, my mother -
- VIII. (If) somewhere a crocodile takes hold (of) the old man.
- IX. O, (my) husband is old; (the state of) my heart<sup>3</sup> is young, my mother -
- X. Whereas he gets burnt (merely) by placing a mark (on my forehead).

1 The mother goddess.

2 Identification of *jala-māṡṡ* or *Garigā*, see note 2 on song No. 22.

3 *Jiyā* (S. *Jīva*) may be translated here as life: my life is still young.



## 86 Birahās viii [*Paramaribo, 1962*] Alcārī: the penalties for a gambling husband

- I. saiyā mora juvārī jūā khele sārī ratiyā
- II. bājū hāre bandā hāre hāri gaye nathiyā
- III. solahq singāra svāmī kara ḍāle kuvṛiyā
- IV. are maṭiyā khudāy ke saṛaka piṭavāve re
- V. aba saṛaka ke ūpar rel daurāyē - saiyā mora juvārī
- VI. jāy ke tab gorakhpur meṅ kar de ham nalisiyā
- VII. gorakhpur se āy gaye do caparasiyā
- VIII. hathavā meṅ beṛī ḍāle goṛavā jāṛiyā
- IX. āge āge saiyā calē pāche caparasiyā
- X. kanhavā kudāra dhare muṛavā pai ḥasiyā
- XI. are dhīre dhīre kāṭau jahalakhānavā ke maṭiyā
- XII. kīdhaṅ svāmī beṭ lagē kīdhaṅ lāge laṭhiyā

- I. My master is a gambler; he gambles the whole night (through).
- II. (He) lost the arm and the armband<sup>1</sup> (and) lost away (my) nose-ring;
- III. All (my) sixteen adornments (has) the master made alien.<sup>2</sup>
- IV. (There are those who) get the earth dug and have a roadway beaten -
- V. (And) on that rail(way a train) runs. My husband is a gambler.
- VI. So, then I went and made a report at the Gorakhpur (district police station).
- VII. Two policemen came from Gorakhpur.
- VIII. They place handcuffs<sup>3</sup> on the hands and chains on the feet;
- IX. (My) master walks in front and the policemen walk behind.
- X. (He had to) place a shovel on (his) shoulder and a sickle on (his) head -

1 Idiomatic: 'He lost the arm and the band'.

2 *Kuvṛiyā*, the meaning is not clear.

3 *Beṛī* is actually the chain placed around the ankles; here reversed.

- XI. (Now,) dig the prison earth<sup>1</sup> slowly:  
 XII. Where (on my) master ('s body) the cane gives a lash and where a stick!

## 87 Birahās ix [*Livorno, 1962*]

### Long Birahā: Jaṭāyu attempts to rescue Sītā<sup>2</sup>

#### A *Sumiran*

- I. guru hamāre haḷ bāniyā sahaj karḇ ho byaupār
- II. bina dhaḷi bina pālaḷā taulata saba sansār
- III. guru ke chabi kā baranaḷ
- IV. bhaiyā, guru hamare prāna adhār

#### B *Alcārī*

- I. brahma vesa jaba dharai nisācara bikaṣā mḷgane āi
- II. hai rānī sītā ke mālana māhḷ āna ke alakha jagāi
- III. ratha para nirakhata jāta jaṭāi
- IV. lai bhikaṣā nikasī rānī ratha para leta biṭhāi  
ratha para...
- V. lai ke ratha jaba calā nisācara sarana sarana guharāi
- VI. ratha para byākula bhaye jānaki sarana sarana guharāi
- VII. are hoy kōi jodhā rāma ke dala meḷ ratha se leta chuḷāi  
ratha para...
- VIII. itane bacana jaba sune jaṭāi ratha gāile nagacāi
- IX. nārī kauna ki nāma tumarau kyā kauna harala lai lai jāi  
ratha para...
- X. sarajū ke tire ajodhyā nagaḷi dasaratha suta raghurāi

1 Perhaps, dig the earth while imprisoned with hard labour. Slowly, for it is a long sentence.

2 The episode of the song is well known in the Rāma story. Rāvaṇa, the demonic king of Laṅkā disguises himself as a begging mendicant and thus luring Sītā out of her hut in the forest kidnaps her. Jaṭāyu, a vulture, who is said to be Garuḷa's son, attempts to rescue her and is knocked down in the fight.

Cp. (H.S.B.I. kanāujī: 404) and S. Anila ('57: 114).

- XI. hai nārī rāma kī nāma aur sītā hara nisācara lai lai jāī  
ratha para...
- XII. itane bacan jaba sunai jaṭāī ure pankha phaharāī
- XIII. hai cōcana māra mahājudhi karḷe ratha se ho leta chuṛāī  
ratha para...
- XIV. hai agini bāna jaba choṛai nisācar cōca pankha jala jāī
- XV. gendā hoyā bhūiyā gira gāile rāma hāya rāma guharāī  
ratha para...
- XVI. paṛai paṛai khagapati guharāvai suno jānaki māī
- XVII. jo para hamare kaṭe pare haī una ko tu deyo lagāī  
ratha para...
- XVIII. mana mana sītā dihai asīsā prāna rahaī ghaṭa māhī
- XIX. ye rahiya raghuvara cali āihai kahiyo kathā tu duharāī  
ratha para...

### A

- I. My guru is a tradesman (who) does the business easily:
- II. Without weights<sup>1</sup> and without scales (he) weighs the entire world.
- III. How shall I describe the guru's visage;
- IV. Brother, the guru is the (very) basis of my life.

### B

- I. When the night-prowler<sup>2</sup> took the guise of a brahmin (and) came begging for alms;
- II. He announced 'alakh'<sup>3</sup> in the garden of the queen Sītā -
- III. (At that time) Jaṭāyu is going on (his) chariot, watching.
- IV. When the queen emerged, with the alms (to be given) held (in her hands), (the night-prowler) forced her to sit in his (own) chariot.
- V. When the night-prowler started out with the chariot, (Sītā) cried out, 'refuge, refuge'.  
Jaṭāyu...
- VI. The daughter of Janaka became helpless on the chariot, crying out 'refuge, refuge'.

1 *Dharī*, approximately five kilograms.

2 S. *Nisācara*, a rākṣasa or demonic person.

3 See note 8, p. 144.

VII. O, would there be a warrior in Rāma's party who may have (me) released from the chariot?

Jaṭāyu...

VIII. When Jaṭāyu heard just these words, he came near to the chariot;

IX. Whose woman (are you and) what is your name? Who is kidnapping (and) taking you away?

Jaṭāyu...

X. (There is a) city (by the name of) Ayodhyā at the bank of (the river) Sarayū (where) the son of Daśaratha is the king of the Raghus.

XI. I am the woman of (that) Rāma and (my) name is Sītā; the nightprowler is kidnapping (and) taking me away.

Jaṭāyu...

XII. When Jaṭāyu heard just these words (he) flew up, fluttering (his) wings;

XIII. He made a great war, hitting with the beak, (and he) would have had her freed from the chariot.

Jaṭāyu...

XIV. When the night-prowler shot a fire-missile, (Jaṭāyu's) beak and the wings are burnt;

XV. (He) became a ball and fell on the ground; (he cries out:) Rāma, oh Rāma.

Jaṭāyu...

XVI. Lying there, the king of the birds cries out; hear, oh mother Sītā;

XVII. My wings which are lying cut off, do fix them back (again on me).

Jaṭāyu...

XVIII. In (her) mind (silently) Sītā has given a blessing: may life remain in (his) vessel.<sup>1</sup>

XIX. On this very path the best of the Raghus will come walking, you should repeat and tell him the episode.

Jaṭāyu...

<sup>1</sup> The vessel of the body, i.e., 'May he live on'.

## 88 Birahās x [*Leiding 8A, 1962*]

### Long Birahā: Kṛṣṇa's adventure into Pātāla; an *Ahīr* narrative<sup>1</sup>

- I. janame kanhāi gokulā mahārājā
- II. bābā ghara nanda bhayā sārā
- III. geḍa ke khol kara dāba liye haj gāl mā
- IV. hīci hīci geḍā māre kadama ke jhāra mā
- V. ucharini geyanā girini jamunā ma
- VI. kariyā ke beṭa pahira nagicānā
- VII. taba kūda parini siri kṛisna kanhāi
- VIII. o māre buḍhukiyā pātāla cali jāi
- IX. jahā nāga soṇe nāgina beniyā ḍulāi
- X. o tahā gāini siri krisna kanhāi
- XI. o dekhe nāgini sibir hōi jāi
- XII. o janam manukh havāj hamare kahā, āi
- XIII. o bhāgo bhāgo tu siri krisna kanhāi
- XIV. o uṭhi nāga choṛihaj phuphukārā
- XV. taba gore kanhaiyā sāvare hōi jāi
- XVI. tab una ḍāṭe kanhaiyā re bhāi
- XVII. aur tore nāga ke nāgin ham nā ḍarāi
- XVIII. aḡuṭhana mār nāgin nāgāu jagāi
- XIX. au uṭhe nāga choṛini phuphukārā
- XX. tab gore kanhaiyā sāvare hōi jāi
- XXI. choṭe choṭe bṛdā ke dāg pari jāi
- XXII. o bansī phūki garura guharāi
- XXIII. tab to garura calini hai āi
- XXIV. tab garula jhapāṭe nāgini gāi dabakī
- XXV. o nāgana ke muruchāna bhayo re
- XXVI. o kusa ukhāra kānhā nagāḡ ke bānhe
- XXVII. o nāga nāthi gokula ke lēijāi
- XXVIII. o saba bāhar phūla o dihini lagāi
- XXIX. ghara ghara kanhaiyā dhūma macāi

1 Cp. Archer and Prasād ('43: 101).

XXX. kōi ka phore gagarī kōi ke phore loṭā  
 XXXI. kōi sakhiyana gāvana māre jhoṭhā

- I. Kṛṣṇa is born the king of Gokula.
- II. The whole house of father Nanda<sup>1</sup> became happy.
- III. He (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) released the ball<sup>2</sup> and hid (it) in (his) cheek.
- IV. With full force, repeatedly he threw the ball against the *kadam* tree.
- V. The ball bounced and fell in the (river) Yamunā.
- VI. The son of Kāliya first came near.
- VII. (So) Śrī Kṛṣṇa jumped down (into the river).
- VIII. Diving down (he) reached the underworld.
- IX. Where the *nāgas*<sup>3</sup> sleep and the *nāginīs*<sup>4</sup> fan (them with the) fans -
- X. There went Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
- XI. The *nāginīs* see him and bristle up.<sup>5</sup>
- XII. - Being of human birth where(fo)re have (you) come (down) here?
- XIII. Run, run away, Śrī Kṛṣṇa!
- XIV. The *nāgas* will wake and give out hisses (on you) -
- XV. (And) then the fair Kṛṣṇa will go dark.
- XVI. Then, oh brother, Kṛṣṇa scolded them.
- XVII. - And, oh *nāginīs*, I fear not your *nāgas*.
- XVIII. The *nāginīs* goaded the *nāgas* with (their) thumbs (and) woke (them) up.
- XIX. And the *nāgas* woke and gave out hisses.
- XX. Then the fair Kṛṣṇa (began to) go dark.
- XXI. Tiny little drop-like spots appeared (on him).
- XXII. He blew (his) flute and called<sup>6</sup> Garuḍa<sup>7</sup>

1 The word seems to have been used with a double meaning; as the name of Nanda, and as a shortened form of *ānanda*, happiness. Otherwise the sentence makes no sense.

2 Perhaps, he got the ball from somewhere; released it from a hiding place.

3 The snake-folk.

4 The female snake-folk.

5 *Siharnā*: to experience a tremble of excitement, fear or emotion, coupled with the hair standing on edge.

6 *Guharānā*: translated differently in the last song, according to the context.

7 Viṣṇu's vehicle, a mythical bird, a sworn enemy of the *nāgas*.

- XXIII. Then Garuḍa travelled and (has)<sup>1</sup> arrived.  
 XXIV. Then Garuḍa pounced (and) *nāginīs* cringed.  
 XXV. The *nāgas* fainted away.<sup>2</sup>  
 XXVI. Kṛṣṇa dug up (some) *kuśa* (grass) and tied the *nāgas* up.  
 XXVII. He bound the *nāgas* and carried them to Gokula.  
 XXVIII. All (the people) placed flowers outside (their homes, to welcome him).  
 XXIX. In every home Kṛṣṇa caused (a happy) uproar.  
 XXX. He broke someone's pitcher; he broke someone's water-jug,  
 XXXI. (and) some *sakhis* sing swaying (with frenzy).

## 89 Birahās xi [*Various Sources*] Finale (Jācanī or Bisarjan)

### A

- I. devā jībhiyo pai kariyo mukām, cārudatta jībhiyo pai kariyo mukam

### B

- I. premī yaha sansāra meṅ saba se miliyo jāy; saḡharyā re, saba se miliyo jay  
 II. nā jāne kisa bhesa meṅ dādā nārāyana mili jāy  
 [nā jāne kisa bhesa meṅ (bhaiyā) nārāyana mili jāy]

### C

- I. manāi janamavā pāi ke re aba tumahj bhajo hari nāma  
 II. jāune dini pāiho tuma ghoṛe ke janamiyā re mukha meṅ parī doharā lagāma

### D

- I. sāhaba ke ghara dūra hai re joṛā aba jāise lābi khajūra  
 II. caṛhata cākhi prema rasa re bhāi aba girai to cakanācūra

1 Such, grammatical irregularities are commonplace.

2 Literally, 'fainting happened to the nāgas'.

**A**

- I. God(dess), make (your) abode on (my) tongue; (asks) Cārudatta,<sup>1</sup> make (your) abode on my tongue.

**B**

- I. Beloved,<sup>2</sup> in this world you should go and meet all; companion, you should go and meet all.
- II. (One) knows not in what guise, brother,<sup>3</sup> God<sup>4</sup> may be met.

**C**

- I. Having attained human birth now you should devote (yourself to the) name of God.<sup>5</sup>
- II. The day you will obtain birth (in the species) of the horse,<sup>6</sup> there will be fixed double reins in your mouth (so you would not be able to utter God's name).

**D**

- I. The Sire's home is far, O companion, like a tall tree of dates.
- II. Climbing up, one may taste the juice of (divine) love, O brother, and if (one) falls, he (is shattered to) bits.

## 90 Birahās xii [*Party from Meerzorg, 1967*] Finale (introducing the composer)

**A<sup>7</sup>**

- I. hansū sahara gulajāra hai more bhaiyā
- II. aba bastī hai apampāra

1 The Sumiran (see No. 80 F.) repeated at the end of the *birahā* also as the finale.

2 *Premī*, in this case a fellow lover of God.

3 *Bhaiyā*, brother, but *dādā*, elder brother.

4 *Nārāyaṇa*, i.e. *Viṣṇu*.

5 *Hari*, i.e. *Viṣṇu*.

6 In a reincarnation into a lower species as a result of not worshipping God in the present life.

7 A is a composition by a singer born in Surinam and shows the local linguistic effects; B is by an immigrant born in India.



- III. o pārāmāribo meḡ sahara ke habarā meḡ more bhaiyā
- IV. aba prema ke lāge bajārā
- V. hare mariyamburg asa koṭhī na dekhā
- VI. kantorau ke āge dukāna
- VII. aba hansū asa gāū na dekhā
- VIII. jahā carahana ke adhikāra

**B<sup>1</sup>**

- I. are rāmaharakha hansū ke rahavaiyā
- II. ham to āile divākara āj

**C**

- I. jilā javanapura mora hai
- II. aba cakavaliyā hai gāva
- III. sūpara bhagata ke putra hauḡ
- IV. aba bhagavantadāsa hai nāma

**A**

- I. The city Hansū<sup>2</sup> is a flourishing one, my brother;
- II. (And) the habitation (there) is unending.<sup>3</sup>
- III. In Paramaribo, across (the river from the) city, my brother,
- IV. Now, there is established a market-place (full) of love.
- V. O, an estate<sup>4</sup> like Maryamburg (I) have not seen (elsewhere),
- VI. (Where I have a) shop in front of the office.<sup>5</sup>
- VII. (I) have not seen cows (so good elsewhere) as in Hansū<sup>2</sup> -
- VIII. Where (there is an) open right to pasturage.

**B**

- I. Rāmaharakh, a resident of Hansū,
- II. I have come to the *Divākara*<sup>6</sup> today.

1 See page 156, note 7.

2 *Ansoe* is a village to the east across the Surinam river from Paramaribo.

3 A hyperbole.

4 *Koṭhī*, an industrial estate; in this case Marienburg, the only remaining sugar estate in Surinam. For a further list of Indianised Dutch names in Surinam, see Adhin (1964).

5 *Kantoor*: Hindi form *kantorau*; in this case the office of the Marienburg sugar estate.

6 The office of the *Arya Dewakar Sabha* in Paramaribo where the singers had been invited for this recording.

## C

- I. My district is Jaunpur,
- II. And Cakavaliyā is (my) village.
- III. I am the son of a devotee (named) Sūpar<sup>1</sup> -
- IV. (And) (my) name is Bhagavantadās.

### 91 Rasiyā [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

- I. chorā paradesana mati jāye
  - II. meṛī teṛī yahī re gujara hai jāye, chorā paradesana...
  - III. mero tero pyāra baṛhyau hai maḷ roya roya ke mara jā
  - IV. paradesana ko pānī laganau pīyatāī mara jāye
  - V. paradesana kī nāri burī haj to pai jādu dekhi calāy  
paradesana mati jāye
- I. Young man, do not go abroad.
  - II. I and you will be able to manage (together) right here; young man...
  - III. Yours and my love is waxing strong; I shall die crying and crying.
  - IV. The water of the foreign lands is infectious; one dies immediately upon drinking it.
  - V. The women of the foreign lands are bad; they glance and put magic on you. Young man, do not go abroad.

### 92 Nakaṭā<sup>2</sup> [*Paramaribo, 1962*]

- I. suno sakhi saiya jogiyā hōi gāile, hamahū joginī hōi jāb  
suno sakhi...

1 The singer stated this to be *Sūpardās*.

2 Cp. Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 248); R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 414); D. Simha ('44: 463); K. Upādhyāya ('54: 150); S. Anila ('57: 105); K. Upādhyāya ('60: 267).

- II. jogiyā ke sohe lālī gudaṛiyā ho, joginī ke sohe paṭa cīrā  
suno sakhi...
- III. jogiyā bajāve sone sārāṅgiyā ho, joginī dū raha tāl  
suno sakhi...
- IV. galiyā ke galiyā jogī pheriyā lagāihaj, joginī gāihaj malhār  
suno sakhi...
- I. Listen, *sakhi*, (my) master has become a *jogī*;<sup>1</sup> I, too, shall become a *joginī*.<sup>2</sup>  
Listen, *sakhi*...
- II. A red quilt<sup>3</sup> looks charming on the *jogī*; on the *joginī* (also) the hermit-like clothing<sup>4</sup> looks  
charming.  
Listen, *sakhi*...
- III. The *jogī* plays on a gold *sārāṅgī*<sup>5</sup> (and the) *joginī* is keeping the beat (with her hands).  
Listen, *sakhi*...
- IV. The *jogī* will make (his) rounds from street to street (and the) *joginī* will sing the *malhār*.<sup>6</sup>  
Listen, *sakhi*...

### 93 Ulārā (general)<sup>7</sup> [*Paramaribo, 1962*]

- I. bāje muralī kadama tare suno sakhiyā

1 A wandering mendicant.

2 A female wandering mendicant.

3 *Gudaṛī*, a piece of clothing made of rags stuffed together and sewn. The colour of a mendicant's clothing is reddish; more accurately, ochre.

4 *Cīra*: clothing in general but in this case it denotes what may be suitably worn by a hermit in the forest, for example, barks etc. used to cover the body. The clothing Sītā had to wear when departing for the forest is referred to as *cīra*.

5 See p. 10.

6 An Indian tune especially suited for the rainy season. Here it connotes the singer's worry about wandering about behind her husband during the rains.

7 Cp. *sohar ulārā* (song Nos. 6 ff.) and *cautāl ulārā* (song No. 49C.) Cp. Fraser (J.A.S.B. 1883: 4-6, 32); D. Sirmā ('44: 474) on the theme of having a love letter written through a man of the clerical caste, *kāyath* (S. Kāyastha).

- II. kikare hāthe ciṭhiyā likhi bheje, kikare hāthe likhāye patiyā  
bāje...
- III. ūdho ke hatho ciṭhiyā likhi bheje mādho ke hātho likhāye patiyā  
bāje...
- IV. ciṭhiyā likhāvana gāile munsī mahaliyā pāche se ciṭhiyā bācisa piyā  
bāje...
- I. The flute is being played under the *kadam* tree; listen, *sakhi*.
- II. Through whose hand may (one) have the letter written and despatched? Through  
whose hand must the letter be written?<sup>1</sup> The flute...
- III. Through Ūdho's hand may the letter be written and through Mādho's hand may the  
letter be written.<sup>2</sup>  
The flute...
- IV. (She) went to the scribe's palace to have the letter written; thereafter did the lover read  
the letter.  
The flute...

#### 94 Caṭnī (general)<sup>3</sup> [*Paramaribo, 1962*]

- I. kahā macāve sora papiharā kahā macāve sor
- II. jaise caṭake more māge ke seḍurā vaise caṭake piyā mor,  
papiharā kahā...
- III. jaise caṭake more ākhe ke kajarā vaise caṭake piyā mor,  
papiharā kahā...
- IV. jaise jhalake more dāte batisiyā vaise jhalake piyā mor,  
papiharā kahā...

1 See page 159 note 7.

2 This must be *paṭhāye*: 'to whose hand...? To *Mādho*'s hand must the letter be delivered'.

3 See *sohar caṭnī* (p. 20 and Song No. 10).

Cp. *papiharā kāhe macāve sor*, K. Upādhyāya ('54: 395).

- I. What is the *papīhā*<sup>1</sup> singing?<sup>2</sup>
- II. As the vermilion in the parting of my hair glitters<sup>3</sup> so shines<sup>3</sup> my lover.  
What is...?
- III. As the collyrium of my eyes shows bright,<sup>3</sup> so shows bright my lover.  
What is...?
- IV. As my (set of) thirty-two teeth reflects (splendid), so reflects my lover (splendid).  
What is...?

## 95 Invitation [*Saramacca, 1962*]

- I. āy ke mila lo gale bahiyā, bahinā more āo āo
  - II. prema rasa ke jēunā, banā hai
  - III. āy ke jeva lo more jēunā, bahinā more... āy ke mila lo...
  - IV. prema rasa ke geṛūā bharā ye
  - V. āy ke ghuṭa lo more geṛūā, bahinā more... āy ke mila lo...
  - VI. prema rasa ke biravā juṛāyo
  - VII. āy ke kuca lo more biravā, bahinā more... āy ke mila lo...
  - VIII. prema rasa ke sejiyā lagī hai
  - IX. āy ke sūa lo more sejiyā, bahinā more ... āy ke mila lo...
  - X. prema rasa ke geḍavā dharī hai
  - XI. āy ke khela lo more geḍavā, bahinā more.. āy ke mila lo...
- I. Come, meet (and embrace me with) your arms (around my) neck; my sisters, come, come.
  - II. A meal has been prepared with the sap of love;
  - III. Come and eat up my meal, my sisters...
  - IV. A water-vessel has been filled with the sap of love;
  - V. Come and sip (of) my water-vessel, my sisters...
  - VI. A *bīrā*<sup>4</sup> has been made up with the sap of love;

1 S. *cātaka*, a bird known for its cry of *piū* (lover).

2 *Sor macānā*: literally, making a loud noise.

3 *Caṭaknā*, may be translated in these various ways.

4 See p. 53, n. 3.

- VII. Come and chew my *bīṛā*, my sisters...
- VIII. A bed of the sap of love has been made up;
- IX. Come and sleep on my bed, my sisters...
- X. A ball of the sap of love has been placed;
- XI. Come and play with my ball, my sisters...

## Modern socio-political compositions I

### 96 Modern i [*Paramaribo, 1962*]

#### On India<sup>1</sup>

- I. bacāiho na hari bhārata dūbā jāy
  - II. mela milāpa mitratā vipratā kāhū ke na suhāy,  
bacāiho...
  - III. caḥṭ disa ke ika phūṭa parata para dekhata jiyā ghabarāy,  
bacāiho...
  - IV. bāla vivāha kurīta desa kā are mūrakha desa cahāy,  
bacāiho...
- I. Save (won't you?), God,<sup>2</sup> India is sinking.
  - II. Union and neighbourliness,<sup>3</sup> friendship and wisdom,<sup>4</sup> appeal to no one (today).  
Save...
  - III. On seeing the occurrence of divisions in all the four quarters the heart gets perplexed.
  - IV. The child marriage (is) a bad custom of the country - a foolish country (alone) wishes  
(to continue) (it).  
Save...

1 The author is not certain whether this is a genuine folksong or taken from a published work. It has evidently been inspired by the songs of some modern reform movements.

2 *Hari*, i.e. Viṣṇu.

3 *Mel milāp*, a twin-word denoting a general gregariousness.

4 *Vipratā*, (good qualities of) brahminhood.

## 97 Modern ii [*Paramaribo*, 1967]

### 1. On Indian migrations because of caste oppressions

### 2. Reactions to Surinam

#### A

- I. dhanya bakhānī bhārata kā, are bāmhana chatriya kā
- II. o raiyata ke chūta lagāye
- III. unahj jora se rāja karata haj, are besavā ke saṅgata kīnha
- IV. are raiyata bhāgi kara ṭapuvana ke āina
- V. hā bhārata karavaṭa līnha
- VI. o dhanya bakhāni o gyāni mahatamā ke re, bhārata khaṛā kara dīnha

#### B<sup>1</sup>

- I. bhārata bhāi lāuṭa jāo ghara kḥ
- II. bārahai barasa hama bana me rahabe, terahe me āi gaye ghara kḥ,  
bhārata bhāi...
- III. sādhu loga ke sevā karihau, naṅgana ke dāiho cīra,  
bhārata bhāi...

#### C

- I. kuliya ke lobhī bakaravā re, are kamavā ke lobhī saradār
- II. are päisā ke lobhī surināma ke choriya re, nahj cīnhaj buṛhavā javāna

#### A

- I. (I) call India blessed<sup>2</sup> (and) the *Brāhmaṇas* and *Kṣatriyas* (thereof, too),

1 Cp. D. Simha ('44: 260); the song is addressed by Rāma to his brother Bharata to return to Ayodhyā, but the Surinam singer lengthening a *mora* said 'Bhārata' instead of Bharata and interpreted it as an advice to return to India.

2 Here, sarcastically.

- II. (Who) attached (un)touchability to (their) subjects.
- III. They rule by the power of these very (subjects) (while they) keep the company of prostitutes.
- IV. The subjects escaped and came to the islands<sup>1</sup>
- V. (And) yes, India turned on her side.<sup>2</sup>
- VI. O, (I) call the wise great souls blessed (who) made India stand up.

## B

- I. Indian bretheren, return to (your) home(land).
- II. I shall live in the forest for twelve<sup>3</sup> years, and in the thirteenth (I) return home.  
Indian brethren...
- III. (There) you will serve the good people<sup>4</sup> and (you) will give clothing to the naked.  
Indian brethren...

## C

- I. The whitemen<sup>5</sup> are greedy for coolies<sup>6</sup> (and) the drivers<sup>7</sup> are greedy for work;
- II. The girls of Surinam are greedy for money; (they) discern not old or young.

1 The immigrants called all the foreign countries to which they were recruited islands because when being recruited they were led to believe that they were being taken to some islands not far from Calcutta - so they state.

2 In sleep, about to wake up.

3 Rāma's own exile was for fourteen years. There must be some confusion in the singer's mind. The immigrant's contract was initially for five years.

4 *Sādhus*, also monks.

5 *Bakarā*, a term commonly used for white men by the people of all non-white races in Surinam. Its derivation is not clear but it may have some connection with *blanc*.

6 Coolies, in India 'porters'; but throughout the countries where the Indian labour was recruited to work in the estates etc. this term denotes an Indian in general.

7 *Sardārs*, the drivers of the labour gangs.



## 98 Modern iii [Ansoe, 1967] On Surinam politics

- I. bhayle desa ājād mila kar raho eka sāth
  - II. mati karo utapāt yahi desavā meḥ
  - III. cāhe raho sirinām cāhe jāo hindustān
  - IV. mati bano kristān, yahi desavā meḥ
  - V. jaba se bhāile khurāfāt hindū muslim donḡ sāth
  - VI. taba se bhāile barabād, yahi desavā meḥ
  - VII. mān lo gāndhījī ke kahanā tum na karo manamānā
  - VIII. aba na lagegā ṭhikānā yahi desavā meḥ
  - IX. suna lo hindū muslim bhāī donḡ bhārata ke pūta kahāī
  - X. mati karo takarār, yahi desavā meḥ
- 
- I. The country has become independent;<sup>1</sup> live together in unity.
  - II. Do not cause disruption in this country.
  - III. Whether you live in Surinam<sup>2</sup> or you go to India -
  - IV. Do not become Christians in this country.
  - V. Since the trouble has started between the Hindus and Muslims together -
  - VI. Since then there has been destruction in this country.
  - VII. Accept the teachings of Gandhiji; don't do (just according to your own) wishes -
  - VIII. (Otherwise there) will be no place<sup>3</sup> (for you) in this country.
  - IX. Listen, Hindu and Muslim brethren, both are called the sons of India -
  - X. Do not argue (against each other) in this country.

1 This refers to the independence of India. Perhaps the singer wishes the Surinamers to learn from the example of India in certain ways. On the other hand, the Indians of Surinam are on record as being against the independence of Surinam at this time.

2 The word Surinam has many Indianised forms: Sarnām, Sirinām (as here) and even Śrīnām and Sirīrām.

3 Or, 'There will be no settlement'.

**99 Modern iv [Ansoe, 1967]  
A Patriotic *Birahā* on Surinam geography**

**A *Sumiran***

- I. dīhavā digambara pīr paigambara jagadambā
- II. more agama gyāna ghaṭa kholaj
- III. au birhā maj gāṭ mātā tumhare saranavā jagadambā
- IV. more bandha galā deyo khol

**B *Alcārī***

- I. kahū bayāna maj sīnāma kā pardesī jarā sun leyo dhyāna lagāy
- II. pahile banā sahara saharātana phira pīche gaṅvāī bana jāy
- III. tekare pīche sāndarēi jahā para fīkhafelta hai bhāy
- IV. tekare pīche pārānāma hai vahā se boksīta bikaṭī hai bhāy
- V. tekare pīche afubākā hai tahā para pārī dihala baḍhāy
- VI. tekare pīche kolā krīka hai vahā para sīdhe mukti ho jāy

**C *Finale***

- I. jilā hamārā kamavainā hai bhāī bhajaniyā re yākalesa hai grāma hamār
- II. nāma hamārā rāmanārāyana va duvāre āmra vrikṣa laharāye

**A**

- I. O Dīh and sky-clad ones,<sup>1</sup> *pīrs* and prophets (and) mother of the universe -
- II. May (you) open the vessel of impenetrable knowledge for me.
- III. And I sing the *birahā*, mother, (by taking) refuge with you, O mother of the universe.
- IV. Loosen and vanquish<sup>2</sup> my bonds.

1 See note 1, p. 144.

2 *Galā denā*, literally, to make (them) rot away.

**B**

- I. I describe Surinam<sup>1</sup> (to you), O foreigner, concentrate and listen a while.
- II. First (there are) built the city and the urban areas,<sup>2</sup> then, after that the villages are made.
- III. Thereafter (comes) Zanderij<sup>3</sup> where there is the airport, brother.
- IV. Thereafter is Paramaribo; the bauxite<sup>4</sup> is sold from there, brother.
- V. Thereafter is Afobakka;<sup>5</sup> there the water has been stopped (in a dam).
- VI. Thereafter is Cola Creek; (by bathing) there *Mukti*<sup>6</sup> is directly attained (by one).

**C**

- I. My district is Commewijne, brother songster, (and) my village is Jagtlust.<sup>7</sup>
- II. My name is Rāmnārāyan and at the gate (of my house there) flourishes a mango tree.

1 Srināma; see note 2 on song 98.

2 The singer's reference is not really to their construction but rather that 'they are found so built: start from the city of Paramaribo and travel to various places'.

3 *Sanderēi fīkhafelt*: Zanderij Vliegveld.

4 *Bokṣīt*: the Hindi form of bauxite. Paramaribo has the bauxite factory where ships arrive on the Suriname river to collect bauxite.

5 The hydroelectric project where a dam has been built on the Suriname river.

6 Salvation. The reference is to the Hindu belief that sins are washed away by bathing in certain sacred rivers. The Cola Creek is a popular resort near Zanderij, but it is not yet 'sacred'; perhaps the singer is well on the way to sanctifying it.

7 The Hindi form is *Yākles*.

**100 Modern v [Ansoe, 1967]  
On Surinam Indian community (economic history)**

**A**

- I. kisa n̄da so rahe ho hindustāna vāle
- II. khandak meḡ gir paṛe ho ūce nisāna vāle

**B**

- I. tuma para gama kī ghaṭā hai chāī, aba se khabaradāra raho bhāī
- II. kalakattā se bharatiya kara ke bheja diye saba bhāī
- III. lāi utāre surināma meḡ ḍipu meḡ bhāta khiyāi
- IV. paranāsī meḡ pahuḷe jā kar bakarā rapoṭ sunāī
- V. sabbala kaṭalisa hātha meḡ le leyo<sup>1</sup> jangala kāṭau tū jāi
- VI. jangala kāṭe koko kāṭe kofī bhī tuṛavāī
- VII. ciyūṭī ciyūṭā kāṭana lāge hāya hāya cillāi  
aba se...
- VIII. pāca barasa jaba giramiṭa kāṭa gaye kheta base taba jāi
- IX. aḡarāma baḡarāma paidā kara ke gola mirica saba khāi
- X. kauṛī kauṛī paisā joṛe joṛa dhare ghara māhi
- XI. paisā lai ke kākā miriṇḍā kāgaj diyā thamāi
- XII. kantorau meḡ paisā nahī hai rovata ghara ko jāi
- XIII. hāy dayā hama aise jana kī larakana ke deta paṛhāi  
aba se...

1 Another version gives the name of the composer: *aura sabalasingha kaṭalasa thāma lo jangala kāṭo jāi*, '(says) Sabalsingh, (they ordered); 'hold a cutlass, go and cut the jungles'. Sabalsingh was a Punjabi immigrant who used to go around singing on various socio-political topics. Another version of the song gives the date as 1949. The episode is as follows. A *notaris* named Achmed Theodoor de Miranda opened a private banking house. His agent Karamat Ali went round and persuaded a large number of Indians to bank their money with Miranda, who, in league with Karamat Ali, used the money for personal benefits. In 1949, Miranda's son who took over after his father's death, announced his insolvency with the result that much suffering accrued to the Indians who lost their money.

**C**

- I. hātha joṛa kara vinaya karata hṛ suniye kāna lagāi
- II. bhūla cūka ko māfi karanā ho gaye bhajana banāi  
aba se...

**A**

- I. What (kind of) sleep are you sleeping, O people<sup>1</sup> of India?
- II. You have fallen in a ditch, oh (people) of a high standard.

**B**

- I. The cloud of sorrow is hovering over you; be alert from now.
- II. All the brethren were recruited from Calcutta and sent (here) -
- III. (They) were brought and made to disembark in Surinam; (they) were fed on rice in the Depot.<sup>2</sup>
- IV. They went and reached the estate<sup>3</sup> (and the) white man (read out) an order (for them) to hear:
- V. - Take shovels and cutlasses in the hands, go and cut the jungles.
- VI. (The immigrants) cut the jungles, cut cocoa and were made to pick<sup>4</sup> coffee also.
- VII. Ants and insects<sup>5</sup> began to bite (them and they) cried 'oh, oh'.  
Be alert from now...
- VIII. When they completed the five years (period) of the contract,<sup>6</sup> then they went to settle down on (their own) fields.

1 Or, people from India.

2 The temporary shelters where the immigrants were kept before embarking on board at Calcutta and where they had to await appointment to the estates upon arriving in Surinam were called Depots.

3 *Parnāsī*, a *Neger Engels* word perhaps from *plantage*, plantation.

4 Lit., the coffee was 'made to be picked'.

5 Small (fem.) ants and large (masc.) ants.

6 *Girmiṭ*, the Indianised form of 'agreement'. After working five years at the estates the immigrants had the freedom to return to India or to accept the grant of farm land, which was usually a piece of jungle to be cleared and then used for cultivation.

- IX. After they had produced anything anyhow, the black pepper ate it all.<sup>1</sup>
- X. Farthing by farthing<sup>2</sup> (they) saved (some) money; having saved (they) placed (it) in a (banking) house.
- XI. Uncle Miranda<sup>3</sup> took the money and handed (them a piece of) paper.
- XII. (When they wanted the money back they were told:) there is no money in the office. They come back home crying.
- XIII. Oh, (let there be) on us the pity of some such person who may educate (our) children.<sup>4</sup>  
Be alert from now...

### C

- I. Clasping (my) hands I make (this) appeal; listen with attentive ears.
- II. (You must) forgive the mistakes and slips (which) have taken place in composing this song.  
Be alert from now...

1 'After the Indians produced various crops with great difficulty, the Negroes enjoyed the fruits thereof': this is the general sense of the line. '*Gol mirc*' (black pepper) is one of the terms used by Indians for the Negroes, because of their curly hair.

2 *Kaurī*, a sea shell, originally used as the smallest currency.

3 Indianised form: *Miriṅḍā*.

4 It was felt that the Indians were cheated because they were not literate enough to understand the banking and the papers and receipts etc. Also, the money lost had been saved by many with the intention of educating their children and these hopes were now shattered.

## Bibliography

### Abbreviations

AGS	Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra
AgGS	Āgniveśya Gṛhyasūtra
ApDS	Āpastamba Dharmasūtra
ApGS	Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra
BPS	Baudhāyana Piṭṛmedhasūtra
GGs	Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra
HkPS	Hiraṇyakeśī Piṭṛmedhasūtra
H.S.B.I.	Hindī Sāhitya kā Bṛhat Itihāsa
JASB	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
JGS	Jaiminīya Gṛhyasūtra
JIAS	Journal of the Indian Anthropological Society
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
MB	Mahābhārata
MP	Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa
PGS	Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra
RV	R̥gveda Samhitā
SP	Sammelana Patrikā
VP	Viṣṇu Purāṇa
VS	Vājasaneyī Samhitā

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