VED PRAKASH VATUK

THIEVES IN MY HOUSE

(FOUR STUDIES IN INDIAN FOLKLORE OF PROTEST & CHANGE)

AVIDYALAYA PRAKASHAN

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Four Studies in Indian Folklore of Protest and Change

by

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To my four children

Sanjaya, Aruna, Sunita and Jaidev

in whom

the East and West unite

and

whose generation may be the true hope

of

the future on this planet.

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Ved Prakash Vatuk

CONTENTS

I

AN INDIAN FOLK VIEW OF THE WEST AND WESTERN INSTITUTIONS

THE IMAGE which the Indian folk have of the West, and their attitudes toward Western culture and institutions, have been formed very largely out of India's experience with the British colonial presence during a period of some two hundred years. Only a small part of this image has come through direct contact with Westerner on their own home ground. This is what has filtered down through hearsay from the relatively few educated Indians of the upper and middle classes who have spent time abroad and have returned to reinterpret their impressions to their countrymen. In more recent years Western films and (perhaps more important) Indian films portraying a version of Western or Westernized Indian life have played a noticeable role in the development of a Western image. The press, which like the press everywhere selects occasional "exotic" news stories for the shock and amusement of its audience, should also be mentioned.

Because of the very pervasive nature of the British impact on India, and the recency of the British departure, it is not surprising that in the folklore of various genres are reflected aspects of an Indian folk view of the West—or more precisely of certain British colonial institutions and ways of life which are generalized by the folk as characteristic of the West as a whole. It is this process of generalization which

makes this study particularly interesting and significant, far beyond the immediate implications of an examination of a nation's own interpretation of her colonial history.

In this paper I will discuss the folk view of the West as revealed in some of the folklore of an area in north western India, from a collection made by myself in the summers of 1965 and 1966 in Meerut District, Uttar Pradesh, and Ludhiana District, Panjab. This collection includes songs, proverbs and tales, in the dialects of Hindi and Panjabi spoken in these two regions respectively. As the genres represented in this collection are varied, so also are the explicit or manifest functions which they typically serve in this society. Within the collection of songs are *bhajans*, sung or led by semi-professional singing groups at political, religious and social-reform meetings such as those sponsored by political parties, religious movements such as the Arya Samaj, or reform movements like Sarvodaya. Here the presentation of a certain type of image of the West serves an explicitly propagandistic role. But this element is not present in the songs sung by individuals and groups on other occasions. The *alha*—traditional war ballads in a prescribed meter—are sung in the rainy season, by men, along with a shorter type of song, *kajali*. These ballads include many songs about ancient battles and heroes, but more modern *alhas* tell about events in the struggle for freedom from the British, about the World Wars and the role of the various great powers and of India in them. *Holi* songs are sung during the month of *phalgun* (March-April) which concludes with the Festival of Colors of the same name. The *chopai* is a song of children, appropriate particularly to the festival of Ganesh *puja*, the worship of the god Ganesh. Singing beggars have their own distinctive songs which describe exciting events or eulogize heroic personalities—these are

sung while begging on the street, in train compartments and at religious fairs and the like.

Women have their traditional life cycle songs and songs associated with particular phases of the annual festival cycle. Modern leaders or martyrs appear in versions of these songs replacing older mythological or legendary figures. For example, at the time of marriage a ceremonial song called *ghorī* (horse) or *ghurchadhī* (riding of the horse) is sung when the bridegroom mounts a horse to circle the village before departing for the wedding ceremony at the village of his bride-to-be. Some of the newer songs sung on this occasion depict the marriage of Gandhi or the Independence hero Bhagat Singh to the bride called Freedom.

Other songs are sung simply for entertainment by men or women in a gathering of friends. Prose narratives have a similar function. They are typically told in the evening to groups of children ; or women may tell stories to one another. Preacher-singers tell stories to buttress their point in the course of lectures and singing performances at rallies or meetings. Proverbs and anecdotes and what might be called " folk slogans " are popular in this society both as a means of entertainment and as educative devices. They are commonly used in discussion or argument to prove one's point.

In the next three chapters I have made analyses of this and similar material from North India and from Indian communities in British Guiana and California. Here I will limit my discussion to what this folklore reveals of the folk view of recent Indian history and of the people and institutions which had so important a role in this history.

At no point does the chasm between East and West seem more unbridgeable than when we compare the history of British rule in India as written by Western historians (and

by some Western-educated Indian historians) with the same history as retold by the folk. Whereas the emphasis of the former is on the advantages of education, economic development and modernization brought to the subcontinent, and on the reform of the evils of a backward Indian society by enlightened representatives of a great civilization, the latter describes the mindless eradication of revered traditions and the destruction of a prosperous and highly advanced culture by greedy and immoral invaders. While the Western historian accedes to the British claim to have brought justice, peace and the concept of social equality to the Indian populace, the folk tell of British atrocities, injustice and racism. The folk see the British period as one of continuous unrest and the last hundred years of British rule as an unceasing struggle for freedom by honorable men against a heartless tyrant. The great folk heroes of this period are those described in Western histories as minor terrorists and fanatics. Men honoured and revered by the British (a notable example being Winston Churchill) are the folk's villains.

> Oh, Uncle Churchill !
> Don't go,
> Until the structure of this house (India)
> Is totally destroyed !

The initial admission of the British into India is viewed by the folk as an unfortunate incident of misplaced hospitality to a treacherous guest. They tell of the openhanded welcome by India to the foreigners, a gesture returned by deceit and ingratitude. Subsequent political developments, which led to the entrenchment of British rule are viewed in a similar light. The folk history of the whole period during which British hegemony was firmly established on the subcontinent is one in which a proud, honest people, naive to Western political machinations, succumbed, betrayed, to

a people who had no respect for human decency, who raped and looted, plundered and massacred, to gain their selfish ends.

These rascals neither left Hindus alone
Nor let Muslims be free
Having divided us both
They ruined India.
The house of the Nabob of Oudh was plundered,
All the jewelry of the old mother of Asafuddaula was taken away.
In Lucknow, in Dacca, in Peshawar, shooting was rampant,
Rajguru, Vasudev, Bhagat Singh were hanged.
In Jaliyanwala Garden machine guns fired,
Tens of thousands of Hindus and Muslims were turned into ashes.
In Kanpur they dug a ditch forty yards in length and width.
Tens of thousands of necks were chopped off and thrown into it.
In the Rebellion of 1857, oh young ones, so many atrocities were committed
The corpses of children were pierced through and paraded throughout open markets.
The breasts of uncounted mothers and sisters were cut off,
And innumerable women were killed and thrown into wells.
In the square of Allahabad people were hanged on every *nim* tree.
The Bloody Gate of Delhi, which makes your heart bleed,
Was made red with the blood of those Indians.
They made people spit on the ground and lick it.
They skinned beloved sons before the eyes of their fathers.
Lord Ranjit Singh's children were exiled,
Baji Rao Peshva's kingdom was taken away,
Lady Mainavat was burned alive,
The Queen of Jhansi was killed and mixed into the dust.
Neither Hindus nor Muslims were left alone.
For two hundred years they made this India dance so sadly.
Millions of brave persons were hanged, millions were killed

Millions of houses were ruined, I cannot sing the *alha* of all that.
Our sweet little children were made victims of bullets,
The honor of millions of our mothers and sisters was raped cruelly.
Old, young, and children; all were killed in hundreds of thousands.

While a good deal of the folklore about the British period deals with the early years, the major concern of the folk is with the struggle for Independence. Among the many events of this period, the most widely sung and told are the Revolt of 1857 (generally called the Mutiny by Western historians), the death of Bhagat Singh, hanged by the British in 1931 for throwing a bomb into the Central Assembly at Delhi, also oft-mentioned is the massacre at Jaliyanvala Bagh in 1919, in which a peaceful political gathering was fired upon, resulting in many deaths. The most important legendary heroes of this period are Subhash Chandra Bose, who organized the Indian National Army to fight against the British during World War II, the Nehrus—Jawaharlal, his father and sisters—and of course their greatest leader, Mahatma Gandhi.

The most important concept in the folk interpretation of the freedom struggle is the idea of renunciation and sacrifice. The folk literature draws fully on those historical personages who demonstrated in their way of life the path of renunciation. Motilal Nehru (Jawaharlal's father) who, it is said "had his shirts laundered in Paris" is praised for giving up a successful law practice and enjoyment of the riches it provided, in order to join the Independence movement. Jawaharlal gave up fine Western-style tailored suits to wear coarse homespun clothing of Indian design "which scratched his tender body". The folk tell of how his skin peeled off as a result and blisters appeared. They tell also of his

experiencing the death of his wife while he was in jail, far from her side. They sanctify him for remaining celibate, renouncing the indulgence of a second marriage after her death. Of Bhagat Singh, the folk relate incidents of his happy marriage and of how he left it in order to make the ultimate contribution of his life to the goal of expelling the British from India. Subhash Chandra Bose left the comfortable position of District Magistrate in order to lead the Indian National Army to fight in Burma and to die there. In fact the legends surrounding Bose are many ; according to some he was not killed but went into hiding where he lives on to this day. Another sanctified hero is Vinoba Bhave who is still living. Bhave burned the diplomas which attested to his accomplishments in the British educational system in order to lead a grass-roots movement for India's rural development. The legends of Gandhi's suffering in the cause of freedom are, of course, innumerable.

Minor local figures also occur in folklore by virtue of their sacrifice or suffering. In my own village I have been told often about the peasant who was asked by the police to reveal the whereabouts of a freedom worker and who was offered a reward if he would do so. Instead he chose the torture of being dragged by a car along a paved road.

Incidents which occurred during the imprisonment of Independence movement leaders provide additional material for the folk. Revolutionaries like Jayaprakash Narayan and Aruna Asaf Ali, who have played important roles in post-Independence India as well, appear as victims of unusual suffering. They are said to have been laid on ice, hung by their feet from the ceiling and choked with smoke, and placed with their hands under a table on which many persons sat. Tortures are described which in Western history appear only in descriptions of German concentration camps.

The folk also like to humanize their heroes by describing their simplicity of life and their sympathy and compassion for the common people. Their love for Pandit Nehru is seen in many legends and songs, as they describe his forbearance and willingness to accede to the whims of the simple peasants. Here is one such story :

> Once Nehru was visiting a village when a peasant brought him a full jug of milk, asking him to drink it down. At first Nehru demurred, saying that he had already eaten too much and was full. The peasant insisted, saying "If you cannot even drink one jug of milk, how can you fight for freedom against the foreigner ?" So Nehru had to drink the milk.

It should be noted here that milk is regarded as the prime strength-giving food and is drunk in large quantities, when available by village people.

Another story features Vijaya Lakshmi, Nehru's sister :

> Once she spent a long, hot day going from door to door in the villages, collecting money for the freedom movement, a few pennies from each household. At the end of the day in the burning sun she had collected only a few rupees. Her father, feeling pity for his daughter said, "I could have given you that much money myself !" To which she replied, "But how then could I have collected so many hearts ?"

The idea of the innocence of the Indians, and their misplaced trust in the treacherous British, appears also in the folk's descriptions of recent history. In the first World War it is said that the British fooled Gandhi, telling him that if Indians cooperated in the war effort that they would be given freedom when it was over. Thus Indians were encouraged to contribute to a war fund and to join the British troops who fought in Europe. To this day, if a person earns an academic degree for which he has shown no competence, he is said to have earned the degree in a " war fund." There are a number of folksongs which tell of the bravery of the

Indian contingent which fought against the Germans, "Number Six." Gandhi at that time encouraged Indians to enlist and many folk poets were recruited by the British government to help encourage such enlistments. The following verse was first sung over All-India Radio at that time by a professional folk drama performer, *sangi* :

Enlist in the army !
Recruiters are standing at your door !
Here you wear ordinary, mediocre clothes,
Whatever you can get, torn, and old.
There you will get a good suit and boots !

No sooner was the war over than the British changed their minds, and instead of freedom came the Rowlett Act, hailed as a reform by the British, but interpreted by the Indian people as a breach of faith, a hardening of oppression. It was at this time that the incident at Jaliyanwala Bagh occurred :

This cruel government, O brothers,we will not keep.
They came here to trade
And have become the noose around our neck.
This cruel government, brothers, we will not keep.
In their pride of being white
They went to Jaliyanwala Garden
And killed many thousands.
This cruel government, O brothers, we will not keep.

In another song,reference to this incident is combined with mention of the first World War :

In 1914 the Kaiser was faced in battle by the Whites (i.e., British)
Number Six platoon of Jats (an Indian caste) went into the battlefield
Bravely they fired.
If there were no bullets left, they fought with staffs.
Having won victory, when we began to come home
They took off our uniforms and began to call us damn fools.

And in Amritsar, Dyer began to shower tyranny on us.
By shedding blood in the Garden (Jaliyanwala).

The portrayal of personnel and events of modern history in the guise of traditional heroes, gods and mythological incidents, is a frequently used device in Indian folklore. Gandhi is often referred to in songs and stories as Mohan, not only because this is the first part of his name (Mohandas), but because it is one of the names of Lord Krishna. Gandhi's time in jail is described in terms of Lord Krishna's birth in the prison of his maternal uncle, Kansa. Krishna took birth in order to deliver his mother from the jail of this tyrant. Gandhi went to jail to deliver his Mother India from another tyrant, Great Britain.

From Mohan's mouth came out the words, "Free India, Free India."
With joy, everyone heard "Free India, Free India."
Making it their cottage, good sons are settling down joyfully in Jail.
When these ascetics come out, they will see free India, free India.

In another song :

We will leave our homes and go to prison
We are not afraid of prison
The prison where our Lord Krishna was born
The prison where Mahatma Gandhi spent his life
Is our dear, pleasurable house.

In another context Gandhi is referred to as Rama, who tries to find Sita (India), abducted and imprisoned by Ravana (the British) in the epic Rāmāyaṇa. In folklore Gandhi is called Mahatma because of the belief that his soul had the power to perform miracles. Because of his miraculous power even the British—who fear no man—are consumed by fear. Thus the struggle with the British is portrayed in song and legend as a battle of gods against demons, good

against evil, virtue against sin. The Nehrus are also cast in mythological roles. Jawaharlal is compared with Buddha, who in order to achieve salvation renounced wealth, his kingdom, and a devoted wife. Jawaharlal Nehru is sometimes called *betāj kā bādshah*, "king without a crown" in this context.

Word play is another folkloristic device to which the names of Indian heroes lend themselves. Jawahar and Moti (the name of Jawaharlal's father) mean "jewel" and "pearl" respectively, and these words are used in songs about the Nehrus :

> Let this garland of love and unity not break
> Otherwise these "pearls" and "jewels" will scatter.

In a similar way, the names of Nehru's sister, Vijaya Lakshmi (Victory, Goddess of Wealth) are used by the folk poet :

> Oh dyer, dye me a shawl of homespun cloth
> On one corner Saint Gandhi with his spinning wheel
> On the other corner Vijayalakshmi,
> The dearest princess of India.

Another device uses the familiar festival and religious cycle and common daily experiences to represent historical events. The norms of kinship behavior are used in this way also. Gandhi is frequently portrayed as a bridegroom who goes (to jail) to bring back his bride (Freedom). Jail is called the home of the in-laws and the British are the in-laws themselves. In-laws are people with whom one has a close tie, but a tie with built-in antagonism. The fact that the word for in-laws is used in common parlance as a particularly obscene curse word makes it quite appropriate as an epithet for the British. India is the mother, making this kinship image complete :

> Gandhi has become the bridegroom, the government the bride
> Motilal has become the *sarhu* (wife's sister's husband),

Irwin (Viceroy of India) has become the *sala* (wife's brother)
All the volunteers have become the members of the marriage party
Jail has become the father-in-law's house.

A less obvious aspect of this kinship image is the proscription in this part of India against taking anything—even hospitality—from the family of the daughter's bridegroom. Great Britain has taken untold riches from India and has become, after two hundred years a guest, a taker of hospitality, who has long outstayed her welcome :

One day a guest
Two days a guest
On the third day begins to stink.

Great Britain is therefore often depicted in folklore as an in-law who has lowered herself by ignoring the most fundamental rules of kinship behavior.

Your home has been penetrated by thieves
Gandhi, light the lamp.
All your brothers wear Indian caps.
Who is this in the hat ?
All your brothers wear Indian shirts (*kurtās*)
Who is this in the jacket ?
Gandhi, light the lamp.
All brothers of yours wear *dhotis* (loincloths)
Who is this in trousers ?
Gandhi, light the lamp.
All your brothers wear Indian sandals
Who is this in the boots ?
Gandhi, light the lamp.

Unlike earlier invaders of the Indian Sub-continent, the British—by their own admission and intent—remained outside of Indian society, despite their long sovereignty over the land. Their position as outsiders, not guests but unwelcome intruders, is reflected in the names that are used in folklore to refer to the British, close to synonyms for the

British when appearing in context. The least derogatory of these are three words which literally mean "foreigner"—*phirangi, pardesi,* or *bilayati*—and the term *angrez,* which means "Englishman." All of these are used at present for any Westerner or may also be used for other non-Indians as well. Having no position in the Indian caste system, into which other newcomers had been assimilated, the British were nevertheless generally agreed to be of low status, as a result of their personal habits, religious beliefs, and their behavior toward Indians. They were called *mlecch* (a word long used for those outside the pale, dirty, impure, degraded, non-Aryan), *adharmī* (irreligious, unethical), *vidharmī* (adherents of a different religion) and "pope-follower" (meaning follower of a deceitful religious despot). Drawing on parallels in their own caste stereotypes, the folk use the caste-related terms *baniā* and *sodāgar* (meaning money-lender, trader, in a derogatory sense) and *kasāi* (butcher) to allude to the British as economic exploiters and killers and eaters of flesh.

Indians make a distinction between the *dacoit* who robs in the daylight by force, the thief who sneaks into the house at night, and the *thag,* who cheats one out of something. All three terms are used to describe the British. They are *dacoit* because they used force to get what they wanted, they are sneaky thieves when it suits their purposes, they are *thags* because they cheated Indians out of their wealth and their freedom and broke every promise they ever made. It is in this latter role, perhaps, that the British incurred the greatest hatred, for they are said to pretend friendship, only to stab one in the back as soon as it is turned :

> Loving a foreigner is like warming oneself with straws,
> You burn your house down and he will never be yours.

Being of light skin color, the British, and Westerners in general, are called *gore* (fairskinned people)—a not necessarily unfavourable appellation—but at the same time they are called *bandar* (monkey) and *giddar* (jackal), the latter referring to their supposed cowardice in battle and their reputation for cunning treachery. They appear in the folklore as *dusman* (enemy), and in the frequently used device whereby historical and legendary incidents are related in terms of the great mythological heroes of the ancient past, the British are assigned the roles of the demons or evil tyrants. For example, they are compared to Ravana, villain of the Ramayana, Kansa, Lord Krishna's uncle, jailer of his mother and would be murderer of Krishna himself, and Hiranyakashyap, a demon killed by Lord Vishnu in the form of a half-man, half-lion.

In this connection it is worthwhile pointing out that much of the difference between the Western historian's and the Indian folk view of Indian history is a matter of linguistic usage. The greater part of the vocabulary which is the stock in trade of the former—and of Western scholars who write about contemporary Indian problems—finds no place in folk recitals of India's past and present. For example, such terms as terrorist, political unrest, free enterprise, capitalist system, constitutional reforms, free world, underdeveloped nations, are either not used at all or are used with connotations opposite to that which the Westerner understands. And in their evaluation of Indian leaders, particularly of those who led them in the struggle for Independence, the distinctions so important to the Westerner between violent and non-violent methods, between extremist and moderate, find no recognition.

Those British governmental institutions which were introduced into India during the colonial period, and which

have become an integral part of post-Independence society as well, receive short shrift from the folk poet. He has little admiration for the system of law and justice of which his former rulers are so proud. One reason for this is probably the fact that legal disputation—*mukadamebāzī*—has become almost an addiction for the Indian peasant, and its evils are sung along with the Western-associated evils of drunkenness, prostitution, and gambling. In a bilingual play on words the folk turn the word "court" into the Hindi *korat*, "destruction." The court is not seen as an institution which assures justice for all, but rather as an expensive, unreliable and impersonal agency through which those with means are enabled to extricate themselves from punishment for their crimes and assert their will over those who cross them. The impersonality and objectivity of the courts—on which the West takes pride—is seen as one of the prime evils of the system. Impersonality is equated with inhumanity. One of the notions concerning freedom was that courts would be abolished :

> Law cases will stop, lawyers will become vendors of peanuts
> And their clerks will sell loquats in the market.
> If all Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Sikhs
> Will live like brothers
> All these police chiefs and constables will sell burlap bags and bamboo mats
> And the Inspector will sell jugs of *jaljīrā* (a spicy drink).

The role of the lawyer in the court system is seen as a dishonest one. The fact that a lawyer can be hired to defend the right of either side in a case is regarded as sufficient evidence that "truth" has no place in legal procedure. Further evidence is the alleged practice whereby lawyers instruct their clients to lie in order to win a case and hire witnesses (at the defendants' cost) to say whatever the lawyer deems wise. A popular anecdote in this area is the following :

> One day Truth came to court. The lawyer of the prosecution argued his case heatedly, proclaiming that Truth was on his side. Then the defendants' lawyer argued with equal conviction and vigor that Truth was on his side. Truth began to get a headache, which was intensified when the judge gave a third version of Truth as a compromise. Truth was so confused by that time that he ran away from the court as fast as he could, and he has never returned to the court since that time.

In another anecdote, a clever client gets the better of his lawyer :

> Once a peasant was charged with murder. He came to a lawyer and asked his help. The lawyer agreed and suggested that he plead innocent by virtue of insanity. When anyone asked him a question in court, he should simply reply "Hum." The client complied. During the trial he pretended to understand nothing and uttered only "Hum, hum." The judge affirmed that the defendant was indeed insane and ordered him released. Now the lawyer demanded his fee, but the client simply shook his head and said, "Hum, hum." The lawyer became enraged. He demanded that his client stop this nonsense and pay his fee. The peasant answered, "If this can save me from a murder charge, it can surely also save me from your fee." He walked away.

A small item published recently in an Indian newspaper summarizes the folk attitude toward the Western court system :

> An Englishman in India complained to a judge about the slow pace of the legal process in the over-burdened Indian courts. "In Great Britain this business would have been completed in two days, and here I have already waited for two months." To this the judge replied, "Before your people gave us this system we could have dispatched the matter in two minutes."

The police are similarly a Western introduction to India, although even during the colonial period the lower ranks

were filled with Indians. The police are greatly feared and distrusted by the folk. At the same time they are regarded as incredibly stupid and are the butt of ridicule :

> A Brahman teacher was shouting at a student one day in school, "I have made so many donkeys like you human! " A potter was passing by. He had many donkeys (the potter's beast of burden) but no son. He thought, "If this teacher can change one of my donkeys into a son, how wonderful it will be !" He brought one of his donkeys to the teacher, and the teacher, thinking it was useless to argue with such a simpleton, agreed to do what the potter asked. He took the donkey, sold it, and bought sweets to eat. A month later the potter returned and asked for his son. The teacher said, "You have come too late. Your donkey was so smart that he not only turned into a man quickly but acquired so much knowledge that he has been appointed police chief." The potter thanked him and set off to see his son at the police station, bringing a supply of grass, the donkey's favorite food. When he arrived he began to call the familiar donkey's call, "*A dari, a dari.*" The police chief was enraged and gave him a swift kick. The potter, unruffled, simply said, "Even though you have become human, you have certainly not forgotten your old habit of kicking."

Another story paints a similar picture of the police; in this case the policeman appears as a man of illegitimate birth—*kadhellar* :

> A *Dom* (untouchable, scavenger caste) was trying to get a seat in an overcrowded railway compartment. The train had already begun to move when he finally managed to climb on, but he found himself in the compartment reserved for railway police. They were ready to throw him out, but he pleaded with them in a pitiful voice. Finally one said, "Let him stay, he will entertain us, poor *Dom*." The other constables joined in and demanded that he entertain them. The *Dom* said, "Should I tell a tale about myself, or about someone else ?" The policemen said, "We hear

> about the world every day. Why don't you tell about yourself?" To that he answered, "Well, sir, I am returning home after an absence of twelve years. My wife has written that a son has just been born to us." "How is that possible, when you have been away for twelve years?" "What do I lose by my absence? When he grows up I shall simply enlist him in the police force!" The policemen were so angry that they threw him of the compartment at the next station.

A further belief of the folk is that a policeman is given intensive training in the use of curse words and obscene abuses. The faster and more varied his vocabulary, the sooner he is promoted.

Much of the attitude of distrust toward the police is clearly traceable to the colonial period. Then they had extraordinary power over the lives of the peasants and are credited with countless atrocities in the name of their foreign masters. Their treachery is mentioned in the following saying of this area :

> Police, moneylenders and chauffeurs are never to be trusted. They may speak sweetly, but their real feelings can never be known.

The police are believed by the folk to be intimately associated with criminal elements in the society. When a robbery takes place, police are said to be found afterwards at the lair of the robbers, taking their share of the loot. Only after the haul has been divided will the police answer the victim's call for help. When they arrive they will beat the victim and neglect to further investigate the case. The police are also believed to be susceptible to bribery. They are said to take bribes from all parties concerned in a case and to then proceed to beat and imprison whomever they wish. The folk are convinced that the police decide who is guilty long before the trial takes place. Criminals roam freely,

while innocent citizens pay for the crimes of others. The following proverb illustrates this :

They tell the thieves, "Go and commit theft !"
Then they go to the merchant and say, "Be careful !"

A verse from a song also expresses a similar thought :

Someone does it (commits crime)
But someone else pays for it.
Truthful persons are hanged.
While thieves enjoy life !

The police are thus seen as holding all the power of the executive and judiciary branches of government, all by virtue of their nightstick. Thus the proverbial saying :

Why should he fear anything, he whose father is a police chief ?

And another with a similar point :

I don't care about the salary, just make me a police chief !

English education was introduced into India quite early in the colonial period, primarily for the purpose of training indigenous young men to serve in the lower echelons of the colonial administration. But aside from this practical goal, the British felt that they were doing a favour to India, to open the Indian mind to Western scientific and humanistic thought and to enable India's people to share exposure to Western cultural values and ideals. The folk, on the other hand, could not disagree more vehemently. For them Western education (particularly as taught in the English language), was nothing more than a device by which Indian children were caused to forget their language and heritage, their homes and families, and were turned into unthinking and unfeeling bureaucrats, helping their rulers fill British coffers. This proverb illustrates a folk view of the English educated Indian:

Little educated, good for no work;
Better educated, good for nothing but to leave the village.

English education was also believed to have a bad moral effect on students, making them dishonest and irresponsible,

making them forget the sacrifices of their parents who had given them their education. The English alphabet is referred to jokingly as *aibkī sīdī*, "ladder for miconduct," and anecdotes are told of educated boys who deceive and take advantage of their parents' ignorance. For example :

> A student who had already spent his monthly allowance, sent his father a letter (in Hindi), in which he wrote that he needed seventy rupees (equivalent to his usual monthly allowance) for "blotting paper." This word he wrote in English. His father, not being able to read English, and assuming that this mysterious word must be something very important, had to borrow money at high interest in order to satisfy his son's request.

Another anecdote in the same vein :

> A father brought ten pounds of butter to his son, who was living in a college dormitory (quantities of butter are believed to be necessary food for intellectual accomplishment). While he was there his son's roommate asked, "Who is this peasant ?" To this the son replied, "He is just one of our servants." This conversation took place in English. The son had to leave the room for some reason, and the father asked the roommate what they had been saying. When the roommate explained, the old man became so angry that he immediately withdrew his son from college.

Not only is English education thought to destroy the moral fibre of the youth, it is also believed to have a delirious effect on the mind. There are a number of legends about local B. A. students who became mad as a result of the pursuance of their studies.

A major focus of the folk's resentment of English education is what they see as the denigration and undermining of India's religious, cultural, and historical heritage. Indian children were told in school that their forefathers were barbarians, whereas their parents were proud of their "Aryan" heritage, transmitted through the centuries as an ancient and

noble tradition. The stories of Indian culture heroes, such as Rama and Krishna, were regarded by English teachers as baseless legends, and the thousands of saints, heroes, kings, queens, and sages of India's past were completely ignored in the history lessons of English schools. Indian children were not taught that India had been the richest and most civilized country of the world at the time of the British takeover, nor were they told of the scientific achievements of ancient India. Thus the folk feel that English education turned out people without a cultural heritage, "black gentlemen" and "oxen of the Company" (British East Indian Company), who knew nothing but how to do the routine work demanded of them in service of their masters. As it was expressed in song :

What kind of marijuana have you fed the country ?
Alas, oh foreign education, you have shown not the slightest pity.
From Aryans, you made us Hindu, from Hindu you made us Black,
From Black you made us Coolie, oh what have you done to us ?
Instead of wheat and rice, meat was swallowed,
Killing milk, you made a cup of liquor,
Hating handmade cloth, you made India bankrupt
You made darkness here, while making light there.
Instead of *namaste* (an Indian greeting) you really made a mess : *gur gur de, gur bai* (good day, good-bye).
You taught my children to smoke cigarettes
Waste their time playing cards
And calling their father a damn fool.
Since you have come to India
Deep darkness has fallen in the nation.
Cars came, and with them also came poverty
And our culture has been butchered.
Without learning, you are humiliated and destroyed, oh India, dear country.

In America, Arjuna was married, Pandu was married in Persia,
King Dhritrashtra was married in Kabul, from whence Mother Gandhari came.
Now lawyers are astonished to see trains and engines;
In one hour a wooden horse went twenty-six miles
Which was king Bhoj's vehicle.
Seeing a phonograph, people were dumbfounded;
In Vikramaditya's throne there were thirty-two machines
Whose speech was each different.
In the airplane of foreigners only four persons can sit;
In the *pushpak vimān* ("Flower Airplane") of Rama many chiefs sat,
Our dear Ramayana tells us that.

A similar attitude prevails among the folk toward the attempts of the British and other Westerners to convert Indians to Christianity. Missionary activity in India was greatly resented by the folk as attempts at conversion—encouraged by the British government—were felt to constitute attacks on Hinduism. In fact, such an approach was characteristic of missionary activity in India. Particularly abhorrent are the changes in eating habits which accompanied conversion—the introduction of meat and eggs into a formerly vegetarian diet. The downgrading of Hindu religious figures, gods and sacred rites aroused great indignation. Legends are numerous which extoll those Indians who exposed Christianity's defects, who debated with English missionaries on theological matters and emerged victorious. Some of these are Lekh Ram, Dayanand, Shraddhanand, all of whom appear in the folklore as symbolic saviours of Hinduism, sacrificing their own kin, renouncing comforts, in order to demonstrate the corruption of Western religion :

When Mother placed the envelope in his (Lekh Ram's) hand,
He opened it immediately and began to read, leaving his food.

In it was written that some Hindus are going to become *adharmī*,
"Please come right away, if you can, to save them."
Mother said, "Oh dear son, you have just arrived
And you are ready to go again now, 'and your son is sick.'"
He replied, "Mother, there is only one son,
But there are many with their religion in danger."
When in the morning he received the telegram
That his son had passed from this world,
He said, "Worry not, everyone has come to go away."

The attitude toward Christianity and missionaries is well illustrated in the linguistic usage of the word "pope" to mean, in north Indian languages, a cheat, one who fools others with false promises, a religious despot. This word is used also to refer to orthodox, reactionary Hindu priests on occasion. The folk also believe that Indian spiritual thought has made great contributions to the West, and commonly speak of East and West in terms of the spiritual/material dichotomy. Emphasizing the unique spiritual heritage of India, they tell of the successes of their Hindu missionaries abroad. Vivekananda's name is mentioned as a true son of Mother India, who could defeat anyone in religious argument. It is said of his brilliance that he could speak for three hours on any subject without preparation. His triumphal tour of America is described with pride, and an anecdote is related in which Vivekananda spoke about a dot on the wall for many hours to the surpirse—and probable stupefaction—of his American hosts. Going much further back in history, the folk tell of the Mahābhārata hero Arjun, who not only defeated America in battle, but was even married to an American girl.

Much of the antagonism toward Christian missionaries is due to the firm conviction that in terms of morality the West ranks far below India. Since this is the case, what can

she offer the Indian people ? The very expression, "You have become *kristān* (Christian)" is used in the sense of "You have lost all traces of morality." On the one hand is the fact that Westerners are enthusiastic and undiscriminating meat eaters, for the eating of meat, though practised by some in India even before Western contact, is very generally regarded as a cruel and filthy habit. Westernization is commonly equated with the adoption of a meat and egg diet, and is therefore viewed with suspicion and abhorrence. Since the British believe in the dietary necessity of eating meat and eggs and therefore not only followed such a diet themselves but actively promoted it among those Indians (particularly Christian converts) over whom they had some influence, they are regarded with scorn. A similar attitude is expressed toward the consumption of alcohol and the smoking of cigarettes, particularly as these are practised by women as well as men in the West.

> It was not even in my fate to have a potato,
> Now I eat eggs.
> Instead of an earthen lamp
> I now light a gas pressure lamp.

This is the line of a Christian convert in a folk drama on the theme of Christianity. To a good Hindu, of course, to be able to eat an egg is no improvement in condition ! The West is also believed to be a place of extreme sexual laxity, where parents sell their daughter's favors, where unmarried boys and girls are encouraged to engage in sexual play, and where the concept of marriage as an enduring relationship scarcely exists. The "love match," far from being romantically idealized by the folk, is regarded as an institution of extreme depravity, and it is generally believed that Westerners change partners with remarkable frequency, flitting from one to another at the urging of sexual whims.

It is perhaps relevant to mention here that the attitude of the folk toward Germany is often seen to be considerably more favourable than that toward the British. Germany is one of the few countries, apart from England and America, of which the average peasant is likely to be aware as a separate entity. On the one hand the folk appreciate what they believe to be the great respect of the Germans for India's oldest and most sacred books, the Vedas. These books, and the Mahābhārata are often said to contain all the scientific discoveries which the West has only begun to make again in the past fifty years. The early German scholars who began the Western study of India's ancient texts are said to have taken the secrets of "modern" science from them, and in this way to have laid the groundwork for the present scientific age.

Hitler's use of the name "Aryan" for his Master Race and his adoption of the swastika (although in reversed form) to identify his movement is regarded as evidence of his respect and admiration for Indian culture. The Indian folk are in general unaware of Hitler's persecution and extermination of millions of European Jews and other dissenters from his regime. However, in any case Jews are identified with the Indian *baniā*—moneylenders and traders—and are believed to share the stereotyped attributes which are very similar to the characteristics attributed to Jews by anti-Semitic Europeans. The little which is known by Indians about Hitler's treatment of the Jews, therefore, is not such as to dim their admiration of him and his nation. It must also be appreciated that during this century Germany was the major adversary of Great Britain in two World Wars, and on the ancient principle that the enemy of an enemy is a friend, it is perhaps not surprising that many Indians, unaware of any of the larger issues in these conflicts, would feel

sympathetic toward Germany's attempts to defeat Great Britain. This is particularly the case since in the second World War, when the urge for Independence had reached the point of desperation, a segment of the Independence movement actively cooperated with German and Japanese efforts against the Allies. In *alhas* sung during the second World War, Hitler is praised in glowing terms as a poor orphan boy who rose to a powerful position and gave Great Britain the kind of punishment she had been giving India for the past centuries. Some verses of these songs are :

Oh brave people, free your country !
Remember the Honorable Tilak !
The World War has started again;
This time Hitler has made great preparations.
He has bombed Poland already.
You too, take his example, and fight joyfully.
Oh brave people, free your country !

In this world, nothing but action is great.
The value of those who do not act is nil.
Look at Mussolini, whose father was a *Camār* (untouchable, shoemaker) in Italy.
Look at Hitler, who was just an orphan laboring boy in Germany !
He was even once jailed,
Thus he was nothing.
But by his actions, he became great.

Racial discrimination had been observed since the beginnings of the British period. In Indian cities British and other European residents lived in exclusive areas, as did Anglo Indians, those of mixed British and Indian parentage who soon formed an in-marrying group, regarding themselves as superior because of their white blood and in turn despised for the same reason by Indians. Reserved seats for whites in trains, white-only hotels and restaurants, exclusive

white clubs and other restricted public and private facilities, were evident to every Indian. The folk believed that in England every public place was closed with the sign "No dogs, no Indians". The British called Indians "black coolies", and denied equal pay for equal work by those with equal qualifications. Justice in India was always presumed to be biased in favour of the European. Pay differentials for Indians and British on the same job were routine. A soldier who fought to save his masters from defeat was likely to be in the front ranks and killed first, but was paid far less than his British mate. A story about two soldiers, one white and one black, illustrates the folks perception of British justice :

> An Indian soldier was hit by a white soldier in the course of an argument. A complaint was brought against the white soldier for assault. The judge sent the latter to the hospital and jailed the black soldier, reasoning that something must be wrong with a white man who couldn't kill a black man with one blow. And a black man who wasn't killed by a white man in a fight must be a very dangerous character.

The Western democratic form of government, based on the principle of elections and legislation by the people's representatives, began very gradually to be introduced in India even before freedom was granted by Great Britain. The present Indian government is almost entirely structured after the Western pattern. But the Western type of democracy is not fully accepted nor favoured by the folk. They particularly distrust the system of political parties and elections. This is not because they oppose the concept of participatory democracy, it is rather because they feel that these institutions hinder true participation by the people in deciding their own destiny. One reason for this attitude is that the electoral procedure requires attributes which are greatly

at variance from those traditionally regarded as characteristic of a good ruler. The campaign requires that each contender beat his own drum—or blow his own horn—while condemning the motives, intentions, abilities and honesty of his opponents. The ideal ruler in traditional terms is incapable of carrying through such activities. Rama, the epitomy of the wise and fairminded king, did not go before the people asking for their vote. He was selected by them and agreed to serve because of their unanimous acclaim. He never said a bad word about his colleagues nor about those who served him in any capacity. To the modern office-holder, name calling is a stock-in-trade. Thus it is a general belief that if one wants to ruin his reputation forever, he need only stand for an elective position. One song has it :

Rightly have they called them "election" (*a-lakshan*, "without attributes")
They really talk nonsense
Brother fights against brother, castes are separated from each other
Sometimes for *sarpanch* (local judge), sometimes for *pardhan* (council chairman)
Sometimes for members of Parliament and Assemblies
In one village there are four parties, seeds for division
Everyone blows his own trumpet before every one
Some threaten, some are polite with both hands folded together
They fight in every way, these village councils do nothing but destruction.
Lecture after lecture they shower down, many of them
Very clever in their tactics
They burn money in election campaigns, after becoming leaders they stab you.
They become leaders by lying, looting the poor
Elections are truly an evil, our house is divided by them
All our ethical laws are broken
Only sins multiply, so does dishonesty, instead of love.

The following lines are from another song, again concerning elections :

Do not hold elections, this is no time for fighting
Open the ledger book and look at the record of your ancestors
Did the leader Subhash or Gandhi ever fight elections ?
And Lord Rama or Krishna ?—they were greatest of all.
Don't you have any thought of your own dignity and respect ?
Don't hold elections, if you want good for all
Stop this act now, why delay ?
Now, think the good for all; that is the only true human religion.

It is felt that the electoral system and the system of administration and judiciary introduced at the local level has caused division in the villages and has disrupted the unity which they believe to have been characteristic of the traditional *panchayat* system. While the folk dreamed, before freedom, of the reintroduction of a traditional system of government offering true local rule, they now view the complicated legal institutions which have come into being and which set a premium on the formal settlement of local disputes as a threat to ancient tradition. A *panchayat* inspector once told me that in his area few cases are brought before the *panchayat* court, and those that do come up are settled informally in a brotherly fashion. But such a *panchayat* is branded inactive by the higher echelons of the administration, and recognition is given to those *panchayats* which have the largest number of disputes to record. The folk poets express their feelings about modern government in this manner :

There is so much noise about democracy, they say it is people's rule.
But no one pays any attention to the people, this is a real tragedy.

There is a big drama of election, begging for votes and fooling the public,
Only to make their conditions worse later.
All of them speak sweetly, sitting in their cars in groups,
Trapping the simple-minded public,
Only to tax them heavily later and make them totally bankrupt.

Concerning the persons in power before the 1967 elections, the following verse was heard :

In U. P. (Uttar Pradesh State) there is the *raj* (reign) of a barren woman (Sucheta Kripalani, Chief Minister of U. P.);
In the center is the reign of a widow (Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister);
Above all there is *kamraj* ("reign of lust", Kamraj, President of the Congress Party);
How can you expect *ramraj* ("reign of Rama", ideal government) ?

In connection with this song, it should be pointed out that barrenness and widowhood are regarded as punishments of a woman for her sins in a previous incarnation.

One of the cherished notions of the folk about India's Independence was that it would be accompanied by equality of wealth. The impression was that when India became free, every peasant's child would live under conditions free from exploitation of courts, landlords, tax collectors, and the like. Capitalism—which to the peasant means a situation in which some are rich without doing any work, while others remain hungry—would die a natural death and food would be sufficient for everyone. Thus freedom meant equality of opportunity to earn and live a decent life, equal distribution of land and wealth. Differences between rich and poor were expected to end. With such a background, it is understandable that the word "capitalism", and its Hindi

and Panjabi equivalents, have very negative connotations for the Indian folk. It is a term avoided even by political parties of the far right in their propaganda. On the other hand, movements like the Bhoodan or Land Gift Movement of Vinoba Bhave, which stress the idea of voluntary donations by the haves to the have-nots, have a great deal of appeal. The image of the future which such movements offer are preferred and earn more confidence than government sponsored development programs in which, as someone remarked, "American barren women come to tell a mother of six what kind of pain one suffers in childbirth." The following three examples give an idea of the folk's attitude toward modern government and development programs. The third of these is one of the many songs about the Land Gift movement circulating in this area:

What they call *vikās khand* (block development) is actually *vināsh khand* (destruction development).

A.D.O.'s (Assistant Development Officers), B.D.O.'s (Block Development Officers), many officers have increased.

Without bribery, none will talk to anyone, they are so spoiled.

Clerks are trained in that also, even the doorkeepers are arrogant.

Miseries have multiplied, for poor people the officials are the scepter of misery.

× × ×

The reign has changed, but not the ways

Bribery takers, thieves, thugs, dishonest ones have not changed

Neither police chief nor police captains are changed

Nor have the canal deputies and other officials changed.

× × ×

Wake up ! Saint of the age of truth has come to your door.

He has brought the message of the Master of the Three Worlds.

Wake up ! Wake up, people !
Wash your hearts, wash your bodies.
Look upward, the moon has risen !
Drink the rays of light of life.
Mother Bhavani is awake, why are you sleeping ?
To make the villages an abode of joy
The ascetic has left his forest
To lift up the fallen ones,
Having taken the help of truth and non-violence.
Look at the wonder of God !
He is performing the sacrifice of Land Gift.
You give your offerings,
Whatever you can share.
You will not meet this auspicious festival again.
Have at least one dip into the river for sure,
The Ganges has come to your home.
Look at the wonders of God !
Wake up ! The saint has come to your door !

It seems clear from the above discussion that the dream of freedom which was conceived by the folk has not been fully realized, with respect to the abolition of Western institutions. Many feel that for them that dream died with Gandhi's death. Modern rulers are nothing more than "black *sahibs*" replacing "white *sahibs*". The government is still an impersonal Jungle of bureaucracy. The Western outlook of its leaders has led the country into mental slavery, replacing their former physical slavery. As one metaphor puts it, Sita was released from Ravana's jail, but never went outside Delhi. There the liberator was shot and she has been in jail ever since, never returning to her true home, the India of the villages. Delhi's alliance with the Western invaders is not looked on favorably by the folk. Programs of "development", such as family planning, while accepted by many *bhajanopdeshak* singers, have nevertheless remained targets of suspicion to the folk mind. Even foreign aid

has not been accepted with enthusiasm. One hears frequent comments to the effect that both the wheat and dried milk sent by America is unfit for human consumption, since all the "essence" has been removed before it is sent to India. They feel that all these programs are nothing but traps sent for the people by Western-minded leaders—many of whom never fought for freedom themselves. A similar plot, by Indian leaders and their Western colleagues who supported Pakistan against India in the recent conflict between the two countries, is suspected. This can be seen in the songs composed after 1965, for example the following:

Against India the world came to fight.
No one came emptyhanded, all came armed.
From London, the English came in their fiercest form ;
With airplane and innumerable Patton tanks came stupid America.
For eighteen years Pakistan made preparation for the war;
Only in order to prepare for war were their people given anything.
The greatest cunning in this was that of Britain and America,
Superficially these rascals showed friendship towards India also.

If the war starts this time the world will come to an end.
When France is destroyed, all corruption will be destroyed.
When America is finished, with it will go capitalism.
When the seed of London is destroyed, all the evil will come to an end.

For twenty-eight days, night and day, the fight was fought,
When small guns were not enough, nor small bombs,
The bastard America came with its big bombs and Patton tanks.

To conclude, the attitudes toward the West and Western institutions, as created by the history of the past two hun-

dred years, are not very complimentary. Basically Western values are seen as diametrically opposed to Indian traditions, and despite their acceptance by India's leadership and the ritual participation in them by the folk, they are not really accepted by the village people. Despite the actual material progress made by India in the last twenty-one years—which is not small by any standard—the system seems to be in a very transitional state. The results of the last election have cautiously reprimanded—though not repudiated—the ruling party, while showing no firm faith in others. When a system is in opposition to tradition and does not solve the problems it creates itself, such as bureaucracy, impersonal rule, costly justice, breaches between ruler and the ruled, it will find it difficult to function. In these days of bewilderment, when the glitter of Western civilization blinds India's rulers, the folk often find themselves in a hopeless situation. They sometimes find themselves asking Gandhi, who won freedom for India by Indian means, with the help of the Indian masses, dressed in homespun clothes as boycott of foreign goods, to come and see his country's condition and do something to solve its problems before it is too late :

> If you can, O Bapu (Gandhi), see the condition of your country.
> You, who brought freedom, come and see at least for once
> Who has spent the nights of misery, who has gotten comfort.

II

PROTEST SONGS OF EAST INDIANS IN BRITISH GUIANA[1]

BRITISH GUIANA is a country of about 83,000 square miles situated on the northeast coast of South America. It is bordered on the north by the Atlantic Ocean, on the northwest by Venezuela, on the east by Surinam (Dutch Guiana) and on the south by Brazil. Most of the population of the country is located in the coastal region, a strip about 270 miles, long and varying in width from 10 to 40 miles. The climate here is characterized by warm year-round temperatures and high rainfall. Much of the coastal land is below sea level and is maintained for agriculture by an extensive dyke and drainage system. The interior of British Guiana is largely equatorial forest with some savannah. It is thinly populated, predominantly by American Indian peoples.

Originally established and settled by the Dutch, the colony was ceded to Great Britain in 1814. In the early years a fairly flourishing native population was decimated by the fighting against the Dutch, intertribal warfare, the introduction of European epidemic and venereal disease, and the Indian slave trade. Attempts by the Dutch to acquire cheap labor by using the American Indians met with great resistance from the adult members of the Indian community, and the practice arose of capturing children to be brought up as slaves while slaughtering their recalcitrant parents.[2] The American Indian population numbered in 1961 approximately 23,600 out a total population of almost 600,000.[3] "Africans",

as the descendants of the African slave population are called, constitute about one third of the total population, while East Indians, the descendants of indentured laborers from India, approach 50 per cent of the total. Mixed peoples, Chinese, Portuguese, and other Europeans complete the racial picture.

At the time of cession to Great Britain, coffee and cotton, grown by African slave labor, formed the major agricultural products. A decline in world prices for these products encouraged the increased production of sugar, and in later years, up to the present time, sugar became the mainstay of the colony's economy.[4] In 1807 the slave trade was prohibited by Great Britain and labor problems began to be felt in all of her colonies. The slave population had had no natural increase after being brought to British Guiana, and after the supply of slaves was stopped, there was a continuous decline in slave population. The slave owners had discouraged the formation of lasting family ties among their slaves and had never encouraged childbirth, since the presence of pregnant women slaves and small children lessened the amount of work that could be gotten out of their investment. The fact that very few women were brought as slaves in proportion to the number of men and the high death rate among the slaves were other factors in the decline of the labor force. Between 1817 and 1834 there was a decrease from 101,712 to 82,824.[5] Efforts were made in this period to "breed" slaves, much in the manner of breeding stock, but without conspicuous success.[6] Suggestions began to be made about searching for another source of labor—in 1811 a proposal was made for the importation of Chinese but the planters refused to consider the possibility of using any but slave labor.[7]

In October 1833 an Act of Parliament was promulgated in the colony freeing all slaves and paying compensation in the amount of £20,000,000 to their owners.[8] In British Guiana the Act was implemented under the so-called Apprentice System, under which slaves were to work for their former masters for a futher 4 or 6 years (depending upon the type of work) with reduced hours of work before obtaining complete freedom.[9] In fact, slavery was terminated completely in British Guiana in 1838, two years before originally contemplated.[10]

Now the planters awoke to the necessity for tapping other sources of labor, for sugar production on the scale carried on in British Guiana requires a very large and steady work force. Even during apprenticeship the ex-slaves began to show great reluctance to continue their former work, and after 1838 the situation became pressing. Africans left the plantations in large numbers to settle on small holdings or to live as squatter farmers on any available land. Those who consented to continue to work in sugar demanded higher wages than the planters cared to pay, considering that this labor had formerly been free. Many refused to work long steady hours, preferring to work only enough to support themselves.[11]

The first attempt to import free labor occurred in 1834, when a few Madeirans were brought to the colony. Ex-slaves from the West Indies were also recruited at this time, but these were in insuffcient numbers to have any effect on the overall labor situation. In the next few years small numbers of Germans, Irish, English, Scots, Maltese, and Madeirans were tried, but none of these experiments met with outstanding success, principally because the imported workers were either unable or unwilling to accustom themselves to the climate and to the type of work demanded.

Officials on Madeira were opposed to the drain on able manpower from the island, and indeed in all cases it would have been impossible to secure laborers in sufficient numbers without the active cooperation of the governments of their own countries.[12] India was, like British Guiana, a colonial possession of Great Britain, and it was not difficult to persuade the British Parliament and the British Government of India to concur in a proposal which an independent India, in the interests of her own citizens, would certainly have rejected.

Indian laborers had been shipped to Mauritius in increasing numbers since the abolition of slavery on that British-owned island in 1834.[13] In 1836 an enquiry was sent to a Calcutta firm engaged in this trade with the purpose of obtaining similar laborers for British Guiana. The reply is worth quoting:

> We are not aware that any greater difficulty would present itself in sending men to the West Indies, the natives being perfectly ignorant of the place they go to or the length of voyage they are undertaking.[14]

In May 1838 the first ships carrying Indian indentured laborers arrived in British Guiana. They brought about 400 men and women under five-year contracts, with guaranteed return passage at the end of this time.[15] Shortly afterwards reports of mistreatment of Indian laborers in the colonies led to an embargo being placed on all emigration from India, pending investigation.[16] This first group in British Guiana remained, however, for the length of their contract period. Eighteen had died on board ship; of the remainder one fourth died under indenture. In 1843 ships were chartered to transport the laborers back to India under the terms of their contract, and all but 60 sailed for home.[17]

In 1845 emigration was allowed to be resumed, but because of various abuses it was again halted in 1848.[18]

The planters in British Guiana and in the other colonies felt that India was a bottomless well of labor and that continuance of emigration from that country was the only solution to their need for large numbers of sugar workers. They pressed for reopening of emigration and finally succeeded in 1851. The indenture system then continued in operation without a break until its final abolition in 1917.[19]

In its final form, indenture consisted of a five-year labor contract. After serving his first five-year term, the laborer could sign on for another five years, under the same conditions, for the same or a different employer, or he could strike out on his own. Although in the early years no more than two five-year periods of indenture were allowed, after 1864 any number of additional contracts were permitted.[20] During the period of a contract the worker was not allowed to change employers, and failure to work, absence from the estate without a pass, or unsatisfactory performance of work was punishable by fine and imprisonment. Work days lost by such imprisonment were added to the indenture period.[21]

Employers were required under the terms of the contracts to supply housing, sanitary, and medical facilities for their workers. They were to provide regular work six days a week for seven hours a day (outdoors) or ten hours indoors. A wage of one shilling a day was to be paid each adult male, with correspondingly less for women and children. If work was set on a task basis it was supposed to be such that could be completed in the time specified for daily work and at a rate that would not be less than the daily rate. Extra pay was to be given for overtime work. Although the laborers' part of the contract was enforced by penal sanctions, the planters could not be fined for failing to meet their obligations. A laborer was permitted to sue his employer for unpaid wages, but in fact it was made difficult for him to

do so, not only because in order to go to Georgetown to complain to the immigration officials he was required to have a pass signed by his employer, but also because the whole administrative and jural system was under the control of the planters and of those who were in sympathy with the planters' interests.[22]

After ten years' residence in British Guiana, not necessarily all under indenture, the laborer was entitled to repatriation under the specific terms of his contract. Although in the early years repatriation was made without charge to the emigrant, the cost to the colony came to be regarded as excessive, and in 1895 the contracts began to provide that the emigrant pay one fourth of his own return passage (one sixth in the case of a woman). In 1898 the emigrant's share was increased to one half for men and one third for women.[23] This change had the additional effect of making it difficult for Indians to return home after serving their terms and thus pressuring them to sign on for additional terms of indenture. This in turn saved the expense of bringing more laborers from India to replace those repatriated.

The program of immigration from India was financed by the colony itself. The cost of administration and of medical attention for the laborers on the estates was paid out of the general revenue. The planters were, however, required to maintain their own estate hospitals. The costs of recruitment, transportation, and repatriation were paid from a special fund supplied from the fees paid by the planters who used indentured labor and from an acreage tax on sugar estates.[24]

In the early twentieth century public opinion in India began to be aroused against the system of indenture, largely under the influence of Gandhi, whose efforts in behalf of Indians in South Africa had brought the problem to the

indignant eyes of the world.[25] The Government of India was finally persuaded to forbid further emigration under this system in 1917. In 1920 all existing indenture contracts in British Guiana were cancelled.[26] In the entire period 238,979 Indians were brought to British Guiana under indenture and up to 1938 74,645 had been repatriated.[27] Even up to 1955 small numbers of Indians were returning to India under the terms of their indenture contracts.[28]

Today the Indian population constitutes almost one half that of the total population of British Guiana. Although indenture has been abolished, sugar is still the mainstay of the economy and a large proportion of these Indians still work on the sugar estates. Rice is now the crop second in importance in the colony, thanks to the efforts of Indian farmers. Most of the rice is grown on small holdings, although a few large mechanized rice farms are to be found.[29] Although some Indians are employed in the mining industry, and there are Indian traders and white collar workers, the overwhelming majority of Indians are rural dwellers, engaged in some form of agricultural production.

The songs which form the basis for this paper were recorded in British Guiana in August and September of 1962. They were sung in most cases at my request, by persons in various parts of the country, by persons of all ages, in many walks of life. My total collection numbers almost 900 songs. Of these, the great majority were found to be of Indian origin, sung in the Bhojpuri dialect of Eastern Hindi, the language of the area from which a majority of the immigrants came.[30] These are the traditional songs sung on ceremonial occasions in India, as well as religious and festival songs, and they are the same types of song, in the similar form, that are sung in India today. However, about ten per cent of the songs in the collection are clearly

of more recent origin, according to the evidence of subject matter and linguistic usage. Again, about half of this number are songs that I have grouped under the rubric "protest songs."[31] These are songs which deal with the trials of the period of recruitment, the ocean voyage to British Guiana, and the time of indenture on the sugar estates. They tell of outstanding events in British Guiana's history, of the political events leading to India's freedom seen from the vantage point of the emigrant, and of the attempts to gain independence for British Guiana. Some of the later compositions deal with party politics of British Guiana, and others are concerned with the decline of Indian consciousness and Indian moral values in modern British Guiana. All represent an expression of protest against the singers' lot in life, against changing times, and against a political and economic atmosphere in which freedom is lacking.

Almost all the protest songs are sung in a language that differs from the Bhojpuri of the older songs, brought from India. It can be characterized as a creolized Hindi. Its vocabulary is largely Hindi, but without the grammatical complexities of the standard language as it is written or even as it is spoken in India. Distinctions of number, gender and case, important in standard Hindi, are blurred, if not entirely disregarded. Words of the creole English, *taki-taki,* spoken by working-class Indian and African alike in British Guiana are interspersed. Some of the songs are almost entirely in *taki-taki,* or have creole English verses with a "creole" Hindi chorus.

The songs are usually sung with accompaniment of typically Indian musical instruments. Women use a small Indian drum, the *tabla.* Men sing with one or more of the following instruments : harmonium (although Western in origin, this instrument is extremely popular in India among

folk musicians), *sārangī* (an Indian stringed instrument rested with its base on the knees and played with a bow), cymbals, and *tabla*.

The music of the songs is for the most part clearly Indian in form, although a few of the late songs show African or Western influence. An adequate analysis of the music of the songs in this collection awaits the examination of a trained musicologist.

Contrary to the persistent theme in the writings of British apologists for the indenture system, Indians did not leave for work in the colonies in order to escape religious or political persecution or widespread hunger and disease at home. Ont he contrary, Indians, particularly villagers, were reluctant to travel at all, and it took considerable persuasion on the part of the recruiters, or "*arkati*," to gather men and women in sufficient numbers to render their calling a profitable one. Recruiters were hired in India and paid according to number of people they could recruit for indenture. Twice as much was paid for a woman as for a man, because of the greater difficulty of recruiting women in a society in which there is no class of respectable single women. Deception, trickery, blackmail, and even kidnapping were employed by the recruiters, and the villagers' ignorance and gullibility were exploited. They were told that Demerara (British Guiana) was a place near Calcutta, that they were going to a land where plants grew gold, and were convinced that they would return to India in a few years as wealthy men.[32] Female recruiters wandered around such places as wells and the outskirts of villages where women gather, listened to their gossip and secrets and played upon the weaknesses discovered.[33] A song exclaims:

> Oh recruiter, your heart is deceitful,
> Your speech is full of lies !

Tender may be your voice, articulate and seemingly logical,
But it is all used to defame and destroy
The good names of people.

After agreeing to go with the recruiter, the prospective emigrant was registered with the local magistrate and taken, with others, to Calcutta. Here they had to undergo medical examinations, so that those unfit could be weeded out. Even here, many people actually unfit to undertake the journey were slipped through by unscrupulous recruiters who were paid only if their recruits actually embarked.[34] Here also religious marks, such as pigtails and sacred threads, were often stripped off, and thus the first step was taken in the process of making the recruits feel fallen and outcast in the eyes of their people. Their own clothes were taken and they were issued with clothing for the voyage. One of the folk poets describes their feelings in this way:

When we reached Calcutta, our miseries increased.
We were stripped of all our beautiful clothes,
Rosary beads and sacred threads.
Bengali rags decorated us now.
The *sādhu's*[35] hair was shaved,
And *sādhū*, Dom,[36] Chamar,[37] and Bhangi[38]
All were thrown together in a room.

While waiting for the ship to take them to British Guiana, the recruits were given meals not suited to their customs or religious convictions. If they refused to eat, the *bābūs*, Indian clerks placed in charge, used force:

They beat us with a cane, lifting us over their heads,
They threw us on the floor;
In abusive language they called us *sāla* and other names.[39]

At this point, however, there was no escape; they had already signed away their freedom for the coming years. They were to be transported from one huge prison, as Gandhi called India, to another country of slavery:

"What sins have we committed, oh Lord,
That Thou hast given us these miseries ?"
Repenting in their hearts they called for mother and father,
Blaming their fate, their *karma*,[10] or even the Lord Himself.

The voyage across the seas to British Guiana is likened in song to the Vaitarini River, the waters crossed by dead souls on the way to hell. One song tells of being fed rotten fish mixed with pulses and rice, and of being forced to lick leftovers and even steal food in order to fill the stomach. For the latter crime the emigrants were tied with a rope, their faces blackened, and paraded around the decks.

Before 1909, when steamships began to be used to transport the immigrants, the journey from India took at least three months, and often longer.[11] Because of overcrowding, the lack of sufficient pure water and sanitary facilities, epidemics often raged on the ships. In 1856-57 shipboard mortality ranged from 5.75 to 31.17 per cent, and in 1864-65 from 22 to 50 per cent. In 1871 certain reforms in the provided facilities reduced the death rate, which then varied from less than one per cent to 5.47 per cent each year.[12] The following song is sung by an emigrant who is coming to the realization of what he has committed himself to:

Listen, oh Indian, listen to the story of us emigres,
The emigres, who cry constantly, tears flowing from their eyes.
When we left the ports of Calcutta and Bombay,
Brother left sister, mother left daughter.
In the deep love of the mother country we cried;
Water flowed from our eyes.
The villagers were simple, and they faced the meanest of mean people
For whom they were no match.
Painful is our story, choking is our voice;
When brother sold brother all shame was gone,

The mothers were looted.
In need of a few grains, we became beggars.

Upon arriving in British Guiana the immigrants were unloaded from the ships and distributed among the sugar estates. They were called "coolies," a name which has persisted to modern times as an epithet for the people of Indian descent. Resentment at the name appears in many songs:

We came to Dem'ra,
With the name "coolie,"

says one line, and another:

Why should we be called coolies,
We who were born in the clans and families of seers and saints ?

At the plantations the laborers were housed in "lines" or "ranges," barracks of a single storey, 50 to 100 feet long, containing a number of rooms, with a verandah extending the length of the building. The partitions between the rooms did not extend to the ceiling, thus facilitating ventilation but also making privacy impossible. The rooms, of an average size of 120 square feet, were inhabited either by a family or by a number of single workers. Provisions for clean water and latrines were notably deficient and crowding was common.[13] The "coolie lines" are described by the folk singers as "stables."

The planter was the guardian of the indentured laborer in more ways than one. He had judicial powers in the regulation of disputes between his laborers—"on some plantation the laborers were not expected to take their disputes to the magistrate's court until the manager had first. . . given the plaintiff permission 'to take out a summons'."[14] With the power to shift a man's residence within the plantation or to expel him, and to levy fines, he was able to settle disputes, marital, financial and other, on his plantation.[15]

The attitude of the white community in British Guiana toward the Indian laborers is reflected in the writings of Henry Kirke, a long-time resident of the colony, and himself a magistrate.[46] Kirke sees "nothing repressive in the colony"[47] and affirms that the planters were "uniformly kind"to their workers.[48] The failure of the majority of Indians to accumulate wealth under indenture he attributes to their character rather than to the system,[49] although a study made on this question shows that a man working for ten years at the best-paying job on the estates could with greatest thrift save a maximum of 162 dollars, while men in lower-paid jobs and women could save nothing, when their share of the cost of return passage is taken into consideration.[50] In Kirke's view, the Indians were lazy and intemperate, continually falling into dissoulte habits, the most common of which was drink.[51]

Kirke's view of the judicial system is also enlightening. He feels that the cases brought by Indian workers against their employers were "purely imagined and grossly exaggerated" by "oriental imagery and metaphor,"[52] and he describes several such cases which struck him as particularly humorous. In fact, it was very difficult for a laborer to bring any complaint against the planter, even for recovery of wages due him. Absence from the estate without a pass was a criminal offense, punishable by a jail term, and a pass had to be signed by the employer. In order to bring suit, a laborer had to go to Georgetown to the immigration officials for permission, and even if his case did come to court he had little chance of winning.[53] On the other hand, prosecutions against laborers for breaches of the labor laws were frequent. Between 1872 and 1915, the percentage of prosecutions for this cause to the total number of indentured laborers varied from 14.7 to 39.2 per cent, with an average

of about one fourth of the laborers prosecuted each year.[51] Nath says about this matter:

> Nearly all the cases brought were either decided against the immigrants or withdrawn on the immigrant's paying the cost of the summonses. A few of them were acquitted but those instances could hardly be considered acquittals at all as they took place only when the charges were badly drawn up, or when the immigrants were found by the magistrate to be so sick as to be more fit to be sent to hospital than to the gaol.[55]

The workers were never to remain in their barracks on a working day—they should always be either in the field, in the hospital, or in jail. The British Guiana depicted in the songs of this time thus shows an understandable preoccupation with the court house, the police station, and the jail.

> It drives one out of his mind,
> British Guiana drives us out of our minds.
> In Rowra there is the court house,
> In Sodi is the police station,
> In Camesma is the prison.
> It drives one crazy,
> It is British Guiana.
> The court house in Wakenaam,
> The police station in Parika
> The prison in Georgetown,
> Drive you crazy.

Working conditions on the estates were hard. Although the contracts stipulated a seven hour day in the field and ten hours in the factory, overtime was common in the busy times of year and the laborers were frequently occupied from 15 to 22 hours a day.[56] Whipping was used on some of the plantations as a spur to increased labor or as punishment for failure to work. The following song describes the course of a working day:

On one side are sitting Pama and Pulma;
On the other sits Hulkar.
Pama said to Pulma, "Wake up all the Kafris."[57]
"How much work do you have for them ?" asked the boss.
"To cut Number 20 field."
The Kafris were hardly sleeping when they were awakened.
They awoke startled, and Pulma reported,
"I have shown them their way at 5 A.M.,
To cut the cane in Number 20 field."
With cutlasses in their hands the Kafris ate half-boiled rice and plantain.
Reaching Number 20 they crossed trenches after trenches, full of alligators,
And began to work.
So the whips and chains began to pour on them.
What's next, oh Lord ?
Our bread is snatched away too.

Another song describes the variety of work done by the Indians in British Guiana:

These moneyed people have become our masters.
They now do what comes to their minds.
They made us clear the whole jungle,
They made us cut cane, dig trenches,
Harshly are we driven to build their palaces, to dig their canals,
And to build their big city, Georgetown.
And we wander street to street, remaining beggars.

It is perhaps no wonder that Kirke sometimes found that his prisoners preferred remaining in jail rather than being sent back to the plantations to work.[58]

The conditions under which the indentured laborers suffered, conditions which did not cease with the abolition of the indenture system, were bound to cause resentment among the Indians. This resentment was not only expressed in song but was translated into action, as a long series of strikes and riots, beginning in 1872 and continuing into

recent years, shows.[59] A song describing a meeting of workers at Port Mourant in 1939 is typical:

> Listen to the astonishing event of 1939;
> Come and see the rally of Port Mourant.
> All the people entered the hall for the rally
> And began to play instruments.
> After the music they ate,
> And then a fire, two fires, fires were shot.
> Poor Mr. Single fell down shot dead,
> Shot dead by the planters.
> Police came to take statements,
> But for what ?

One of the worst evils of the indenture system was the great disparity in numbers of men and women. In 1838 only three women were brought for every one hundred men and although in later years the statutory requirements were changed so that after 1870 a minimum of 40 women to every one hundred men had to be brought to the colony, this minimum was not always attained and seldom exceeded.[60] Because of the extra expense of recruiting women, and their lesser value as laborers, the planters were not eager to increase the proportion of women. Since the government did not in the early years make provision for the recognition of Indian customary marriages, couples were sometimes separated in the distribution of the laborers among the estates. Cases occurred in which husbands were tried in court for sleeping with their own wives, because the latter were under age for British civil marriage.[61] In addition to the difficulties thus made for the Indian married couple, severe moral and criminal problems arose from the disparity of women. All writers of this period speak of the prevalence of murders of women and other men by jealous husbands or lovers, and the songs describe similar cases. A story written by a British Guiana Indian tells similar story,

of a girl abducted in India after her marriage there and brought to British Guiana as an indentured worker, where she is forced to sleep with various white men. The girl commits suicide when she is unable to save herself.[62] In such an atmosphere trafficking in women was bound to occur, and the planter or the foreman, in the role as arbitrator of domestic disputes, had the power to redistribute the available women as suited their interests. A frequent theme in the folk songs is the breakdown of Indian values and traditional behavior which began in the early indenture period. Thus in one song:

> Wonderful is this Dam'ra Island :
> All the traditions are going in the opposite direction.
> Sisters wear long dresses, pressing them under their heels;
> Gentlemen wear short skirts, showing half their legs.
> O these women !
> Tying Madrasi *kortif* on the head, parting their hair on the side.
> Right in the middle of the market, pushing people with their shoulders, they eat.
> No shame is left.
> Cigarettes they press between their lips, they sit on chairs.
> With no shame before their father-in-law or brother-in-law,
> They giggle, laugh and talk.[63]

Another song with a similar motif comments:

> They don't give a damn for their brother or sister,
> Nor do they recognize their grandparents.
> They have cast away their parents.
> Without knowledge of Indian culture, the girls and boys do what they please,
> Throwing away the traditions of their home.
> Every day our race is becoming degraded, without the knowledge of Indian culture.

Although one solution to the lack of women in the Indian community—marriage to African or other women—was

rarely resorted to by Indians, such marriages or liaisons did occasionally occur. They were, and still are, looked upon with disfavor by Indians; marriages of an Indian woman and an African man are considered even more reprehensible, as the following song demonstrates:

As the hot spices are mixed into the *dāl*,[64]
So mix the muskrat and the coolie girl,[65]
And produce the mongrel children.

To the Christian missionaries the Indians were heathens, and their religions, "by which they have been heretofore misguided and held in bonds to sin," worthy of contempt.[66] They needed only "proper management, discipline, and kindness," to become "excellent servants, trustworthy and faithful to their masters, the planters and proprietors of estates."[67] The missionaries were busy for the most part trying to save the coolies for the next world while closing their eyes to present conditions. Their teaching tried to instil contempt for the Indian past, and it is not surprising that the Indians on the whole resisted a gospel that taught them to love by rejecting as worthless their old religion, prophets, and society.[68] They continued to revere their own religious functionaries, as the following songs illustrate:

I bow to that Brahman, who reads me the Katha
Who teaches me the *puja*, *sandhya*, and *havan*.[69]

And,

Hail to the Brahman who built the temple here,
Who saved us from the exploitation of the missions.

To the Christians, getting the Hindus to eat meat and the Muslims to eat pork were signs of progress. The Indians protested this trend by singing satirical verses like the following:

Listen, oh listen, ladies and gentlemen!
What a pleasure it is in Dem'ra.

Babus and Babas serve chicken.
What a vegetable ! They eat a plateful.
What progress is this !

And in a more serious vein:

Where are you, oh Lord Krishna ?
The pained cows are weeping and calling you.

The nature of the indenture system did little to assimilate Indians into the larger society and they remained foreigners in their own eyes and in the eyes of the European and other populations.[70] They continued to look toward India for cultural inspiration and for political inspiration as well, for India was suffering under foreign domination and had begun the movement for her independence. In India there were revolts, rallies, and shootings. With every shot fired an echo reached British Guiana, and the people sang :

They came to conduct trade,
And they are shooting India now.

With every stir of awakening in India they tried to awaken their fellow-exiles:

From Bengal our countrymen started and went from
village to village;
They awoke every Indian.
Oh foreigner,[71] you too wake up !
This is no time to sleep.

Gandhi's struggle in South Africa against white supremacy and his efforts later in India echoed their own feelings and aspirations. They prayed for his success and the safety of their motherland.

Lord save my motherland.
Lord, let the boat of Mother India sail across safely.
Fill my heart with love for my country.

In more than one song the Indian freedom movement is pictured as a marriage party, in which Gandhi is a bridegroom going to marryedre "Fom." He is surrounded by

the members of his marriage party, those who go to jail for resisting the British. When Gandhi finally succeeded in his efforts to win independence, the British Guianese Indians joined in the rejoicing and flew the tricolor flag over their homes. "Jai Hind" ("Long Live India") became a common greeting among Indians in British Guiana, and when I was recording these songs, it was almost invariably called out by the singers at the end of each number. The following lines are typical of the post-Indian independence songs sung in British Guiana.

Jai, jai, Gandhiji Maharaj !
Your mission is completed !

And :

Free from misery is India today, celebrate who will;
Victory came to Mahatma Gandhi, celebrate who will.

A complete song goes as follows :

A holy message has come from India;
Darling husband, pay attention and listen.
Sometimes travelling by train,
Sometimes travelling by ship,
Sometimes walking on foot,
Going from village to village, from state to state,
They [Indians] sowed the seeds of love.
Eating plain, unseasoned food,
Forsaking their sleep,
Becoming united, forgetting their differences,
They brought peace and pleasure.
They are repairing the age-old wretched situation.
They wandered in the dust in the cause of self-rule,
But they did not leave Gandhi.
Gandhi looks beautiful in his *dhoti*[72]
With a staff in his hand.
For the sake of self-rule he worked,
For the sake of love he died.
Praise to the brave British
Who returned India [to the Indians].

Now their efforts began to turn in earnest toward winning British Guiana's independence. The franchise had been broadened slightly in 1927 to allow almost all men and women who were literate in some language to vote, and in 1953 a new constitution permitted universal adult suffrage. The years between saw an increased political consciousness and the development of a British Guianese national consciousness among the Indians. A multi-racial movement, with the People's Progressive Party as its political manifestation, began to gain support. In the first General Election this party, led by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, of Indian descent, and L. S. F. Burnham, an African lawyer, won a majority of votes. Shortly thereafter the new Constitution was suspended by the British Government and the new Assembly dissolved. Burnham broke away from the People's Progressive Party, taking much of the African popular support with him. Since then the Party has had its major backing in the rural areas and from the Indian population, although it has also been victorious in areas where African support is crucial. In the two elections since 1953 (in 1957 and 1961) Jagan's party has won the majority of the popular votes and he has been Prime Minister of British Guiana since that post was established in 1961. His cabinet is multi-racial and multi-religious.

From the time of his first electoral successes in 1953 the British Government has been concerned with what it feels to be the Marxist orientation of Jagan and with the possibility of Communist subversion of the Government of British Guiana. Whatever may be the merits of these allegations, any criticism of Jagan on this basis has no relevance for his constituents, particularly for his Indian constituents, and there is no evidence whatsoever that the songs they sing about him and in support of his aims and

policies are in any way influenced by Communist doctrines. The vocabulary of the songs has no similarity to that used in modern Hindi leftist writings nor is the tone of modern socialist realist poetry of modern India and British Guiana present. The Indians in British Guiana feel that attempts by the British and other Western governments to dismiss Jagan as a Communist are merely tricks perpetrated by those who oppose British Guiana's independence, and they point out that Nehru and Gandhi were in the past the objects of similar accusations. In fact, in the folksongs Jagan has become increasingly identified with Nehru and Gandhi and has attained almost the quality of a mythical hero, and his movement, by analogy with the Indian independence movement, is felt to be bound to win ultimately. Jagan is given the epithets "Mahatma," "The Nehru of British Guiana," and "Father of the Nation" in folksongs. In one song, the fact that Jagan was jailed for his political activities, as was Gandhi, is alluded to in the lines :

He went to jail for us poor people;
Jagan is the man of the poor.

The fact that Jagan mixes with the people and allows himself to be seen and spoken to as an equal are important to the Indians, who consider him, as in the above song, "a man of the poor." And they consider him responsible for many improvements in their condition during the last ten years. Jagan is the man who brought new land under cultivation, who provided clean drinking water and new settlements for the Indian villagers :

In the mother country there is Jawaharlal;
In British Guiana Minister Jagan is the true son of
the castes.
Bravo, Minister Jagan !
You established Palin City, settled poor people there.
Oh Guianese, listen, try your refrain !

Vote for Dr. Jagan once more again !
Praised are the parents who gave birth to a son like him.
Lord Shiva bless his grace, the savior of the race.

There are literally dozens of songs repeating this and similar themes. Some ask God to make their leader's wishes come true; others urge people to fly the flag of the People's Progressive Party and to fight for independence. The differences between the political parties have become topics for current folk songs. In them the singers condemn the rightist politician D'Aguiar for his support of the colonial power and blame Burnham, who in political philosophy is very close to Jagan, for putting his aspirations for personal power above the nation's welfare. The following are indicative :

D'Aguiar is the fool,
Burnham is the mule,
The man Jagan is born to rule.
Play the mandolin, *bhai*,[73]
Play the mandolin.
All the young girls drink *palmalin*.[74]

And :

Eat what D'Aguiar has to give
Drink the liquor he provides.[75]
But vote for Jagan.

In the folksongs of these Indians in British Guiana there is reflected the history of over a century of servitude in the dominion of King Sugar. The songs retell in many different ways the story of a system which tried, and in some measure succeeded, in taking from the Indians a cultural heritage in order to maximize gain for the sugar planters. The extent to which this heritage did survive the ravages of the indenture system and its aftermath is evident in the preservation of the hundreds of folksongs brought from India and in the

continuation of the folk singing tradition in the new environment. There is every evidence that the protest songs of Indians in British Guiana are not an indigenous phenomenon, but represent an old tradition in India of singing against the oppressors, whether they be the Moguls, the British, or the Indian landlords. Published materials on Indian folksongs bear this out.[76] It would be interesting to compare these songs of British Guiana with the rich fund of pre-independence songs in the various languages of India.

In reaction against the hardships of the indenture period and as a result of the feeling of apartness as a community that this period engendered, the Indians of British Guiana have throughout looked towards India for cultural and later for political inspiration, and have regarded India as their "Motherland". However, the gradual emergence of a national consciousness directed toward British Guiana, so vehemently urged by Dr. Jagan and other foresighted political leaders and encouraged by the post-independence policies of the Indian Government, is apparent among many Indians in British Guiana today. The following song shows that for some such an attitude is beginning to override the preoccupation with India and the identification with India as a ohmeland :

> Oh Guiana, oh Guiana,
> Crown of the world,
> Whose fields give us greenness
> And whose rivers flow free.

With this trend there is at the same time a strong resurgence of interest in Indian culture, language and traditions, and the folk poet still speaks as an Indian when he sings :

> We cut the cane, we make the sugar,
> We raise the building, oh darling mine.

NOTES

1. A shorter version of this paper was read at the Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society in Detroit, Michigan, on December 29, 1963.

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The term "East Indians" is generally used in British Guiana to distinguish migrants from India from the aboriginal American Indians of the country. Here, since the context is clear, the word "Indian" except where otherwise specified, should be taken to mean the immigrants from India and their descendants.

2. A. R. F. Webber, *Centenary History and Handbook of British Guiana* (Georgetown, 1931), 21, 42-44, 56-57, 68-69, 124.

3. *British Guiana* 1961 (London, 1961), 26.

4. Peter Ruhomon, *Centenary History of the East Indians in British Guiana* 1838-1938 (Georgetown, 1946), 8-9.

5. Dwarka Nath, *A History of Indians in British Guiana* (London, 1950), 2. See also Webber, 131.

6. Webber, 180; Nath, 3.

7. Webber, 131-132; Nath, 2.

8. Webber, 166.

9. Nath, 1; Webber, 166.

10. Ruhomon, 9; Webber, 193-194; Nath, 4-5.

11. Nath, 6-7; Ruhomon, 16.

12. Nath, 6; Ruhomon, 17-19.

13. See Burton Benedict, *Indians in a Plural Society* (London 1961) for a description of overseas Indians in the colony of Mauritius.

14. Quoted by Nath, 8.

15. Nath, 11-14.

16. Nath, 22.

17. Nath, 21.

18. Ruhomon, 40-42; Nath, 50.

19. Ruhomon, 65. See also Benedict, Hilda Kuper, *Indians in Natal* (Natal, 1960), and Adrian Mayer, *Indians in Fiji* (London, 1963).

20. Ruhomon, 44-45.

21. Ruhomon, 147-148.

22. See Nath, 173-176 for copies of contracts, and Ruhomon, 286-298, for laws pertaining to immigration and indenture.

23. Nath, 173-176.

24. Ruhomon, 148.

25. Ruhomon, 61-66. See also M. K. Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (New York, 1957), and Louis Fisher, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (New York, 1962).

26. Nath, 123.

27. Ruhomon, 66.

28. Michael Swan, *British Guiana, The Land of Six Peoples* (London, 1957), 46.

29. *British Guiana* 1961, 90-92.

30. R. T. Smith, "Some Social Characteristics of Indian Immigrants to British Guiana", *Population Studies*, XIII, 1959.

31. Compare John Greenway, *American Folksongs of Protest* (New York, 1953 and 1960) and Patrick Galvin, *Irish Songs of Resistance* (New York, [1956], for example.

32. Ruhomon, 98-99, 118-121. See also Kuper, 10 and Mayer, 14.

33. Chandra Shekhar Sharma, *Ishvar ki Santan ko hai Varsa ka Nark aur Sitaharan* (Berbice, 1930), 33.

34. Ruhomon, 93-96.

35. Ascetic.

36. A low, untouchable caste of drummers.

37. A low, untouchable caste of leather workers.

38. A low, untouchable caste of sweepers. The point of these lines is that persons of all castes were made to sleep and eat together, disregarding caste restrictions on social intercourse of this type between them.

39. A term of abuse, literally "brother-in-law".

40. Deeds of a previous life.

41. Nath, 182.

42. Nath, 80, 85, 181; Ruhomon, 122.

43. Ruhomon, 108-109, 128-131.

44. Chandra Jayawardena, *Conflict and Solidarity in a Guianese Plantation* (London, 1963), 18.

45. Jayawardena, 18.

46. Henry Kirke, *Twenty-five Years in British Guiana*, 1872-1897 (Georgetown, 1948).

47. Kirke, 251.

48. Kirke, 251.

49. Kirke, 250.

50. Ruhomon, 134.

51. Kirke, 251.

52. Kirke, 252.

53. Kirke, 252.

54. Nath, 53-56, 212; Ruhomon, 138-139.

55. Nath, 53.

56. Ruhomon, 127.

57. Derogatory term for the laborers, literally "unbelievers" (Muslim origin).

58. Kirke, 139-140, 207.

59. Ruhomon, 261-274; Webber, 280-281; Cheddi Jagan, *Forbidden Freedom* (New York, 1954), 19.

60. Nath 124-126; Ruhomon, 123-125; Kirke, 161-167; H. V. P. Bronkhurst, *The Colony of British Guyana and its Labouring Population* (London, 1883), 136-137.

61. Kirke, 184.

62. Sharma, 32-43.

63. This refers to the customary Indian avoidance by a woman of her husband's father and elder brother.

64. A kind of lentil preparation.

65. "Muskrat" is being used here as a derogatory allusion to an African man. It may be noted that the distaste for such a match is so great that the term " coolie", so resented by Indians, is here used to describe one of their own group who has married out of the community.

66. Bronkhrust, 238.

67. Bronkhurst, 240.

68. See Bronkhurst, 281-299.

69. Different types of Hindu worship.

70. See Vera Rubin, "Culture, Politics, and Race Relations", *Social and Economic Studies*, XI (1962), 439-440.

71. Here referring to Indians in British Guiana.
72. Loincloth.
73. Brother.
74. Palm liquor.
75. D'Aguiar is the owner of a large alcoholic beverage company.
76. See for example, P. C. Joshi, "Some Folk Songs on the First Indian War of Independence", *Folklore Monthly*, IV (1963), 8-14; Sridhar Misra, "Kunvar Singh in Folk Song". *Folklore Monthly*, IV (1963), 15-20; S. B. Pandey "Freedom Struggle in Hindi Folksongs", *Folklore Monthly*, IV (1963), 301-307; Verrier Elwin, *Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh* (London, 1946), 157-172; Shrikrishna Das, *Lokgitō ki Samajik Vyakhya*, (Allahabad, 1956); Suryakaran Parik, *Rajasthani Lokgit* (Allabahad, 1955).

III

PROTEST SONGS OF EAST INDIANS ON THE WEST COAST, U.S.A.[1]

I

IN THE LAST decade of the nineteenth century a small-scale migration began from the Indian sub-continent to the West Coast of the United States and Canada. Consisting of a handful of men in the early years, the stream gradually increased and reached a high point in the years 1906 to 1911 when almost 600 Indians were admitted legally to the United States and an unknown number entered without the government's knowledge. In 1914 and again in 1920 large numbers of these immigrants returned to India with the hope of taking part in a struggle to free India of British rule, and in 1947 when India finally attained independence, many more returned to their homeland. The effect of these periods of migration and of the restructive Immigration Laws of 1917 and 1924 was a net decrease in the Indian population in this country after the First World War. However, the movement of Indians continued throughout the period in both directions, as Indians were able to enter legally on student visas and illegally through Mexico until in 1946 India and later Pakistan as well were included in the quota immigration programme. Although the number of immigrants who enter the United States each year from

[1] This Chapter was jointly written with Sylvia Vatuk.

India and Pakistan and from Indian enclaves in other countries is small, a great proportion of those who do immigrate settle on the West Coast where an Indian community of long standing is in existence. The majority of these are, as in the past, Sikhs, whose ultimate origins are in the Panjabi-speaking area of north-western India. However, other linguistic and religious communities have been represented in small numbers since the earliest years of Indian immigration.

Until 1946 the flow of Indians to this country was almost exclusively masculine. This was due partly to social and economic conditions in India, but between 1917 and 1946 was a result of the legal barriers to Indian immigration imposed by the United States government. Those men who came to the United States had for the most part purely economic motives. The legal immigrants before World War I and the illegal immigrants of the inter-war period were mainly Punjabi peasants. Many had served for a time in the British Indian Army and had occasion to travel within India and to other outposts of the British Empire. They had heard of the opportunities open in the United States for industrious unskilled labourers in lumbering, agriculture, and railroad construction. In the minds of all but a few had the intention of working for a limited period until enough money could be accumulated for a return to their families in India with the means for a more secure future.

Besides this predominantly uneducated or slightly educated population, only a few urban intellectuals came here from India before the First World War. Some of these formed the core of a movement for Indian independence which was formally organized in the San Francisco area in 1913. This organization, the Hindustan Gadar Party,

enjoyed the strong support, both moral and financial, of the mass of the Indian immigrants in this country and had contacts as well in other overseas Indian communities and within India itself. The word *gadar* means rebellion or revolt and refers to the *so-called* "Mutiny of 1857", during which uprising against the British government occurred in various parts of India. The avowed purpose of the party was to renew the spirit of revolt which had been aroused in 1857, to organise and arm Indians in India and abroad, and to undertake a well-planned and complete overthrow of foreign rule. To this end the Gadar Party secretly supplied arms and ammunition to potential revolutionaries within India, attempted to organize overseas Indians for an armed return to the mainland, and published patriotic pamphlets, newspapers and song books. These latter were of two types : those intended to arouse sympathy for the cause of Indian independence in the United States and other European countries, and those which sought support for revolt among Indians at home and in the many overseas Indian communities. Material was printed in many Indian and European languages and distributed throughout the world, wherever Indians gathered ; when possible, the publications of the Hindustan Gadar Party were smuggled into India as well. In this effort it must be realised that the Party was not alone, for during the entire pre-Independence period a large amount of similar material was in circulation, sponsored by similar organizations in various countries and directed toward publicising the evils of colonial rule in India and seeking support for the freedom movement in its various forms.

In 1915 the unveiling of a plot in which the Hindustan Gadar Party was involved with the German government led to the so-called Hindu Conspiracy Trials held in San Francisco in 1917. The Party was accused of breaking

United States Neutrality Laws by initiating in this country armed action against the British in India. This time of crisis brought to a head the growing factionalism within the Party and after the courtroom shooting of the Party's head and of his assassin, many supporters in this country, particularly the non-Sikhs, withdrew active backing from the organization. However, it remained fairly active until 1947, concentrating mainly on the distribution of literature, the provision of scholarship aid for Indian students abroad, and the financial support of schools and other educational activities in India.[2]

The collection of songs on which this paper is based is contained in a number of booklets published in San Francisco by the Gadar Party between 1915 and 1918 and later reissued in 1931.[3] According to one of these volumes the songs have been collected and published in order to "create and intensify patriotism among Indians living abroad."[4] They were circulated with other nationalistic literature by the Party. The songs to which we have had access are in Hindi and Panjabi, although collections in Urdu, Gujarati and Marathi were apparently also printed. We have also consulted a number of the members of the Indian community in the Bay Area, in the Sacramento Valley and in the Imperial Valley who have lived in California since before World War I and who were able to sing some of the more popular songs for us and to describe the occasions on which these songs were typically sung in the years before Indian independence.

The authorship of most of the songs is not given in the booklets, although some have been attributed by our informants to a composer and active member of the Party who came to California approximately 1917. The printed collection are of songs many of which were already current in the

Indian community. They already had patriotic meaning for the singers and their publications served as an aid to memory, a way of spreading songs of general appeal and introducing new ones, and, as far as the Party was concerned, a way of attracting followers to a cause. In this the collections might be compared to collections of American labour songs printed by union groups in the days of intense labour union activity. The traditional definitions of the "folk songs", which use the criteria of exclusively oral transmission, anonymity of authorship and the existence of several variants as evidence of persistence for an appreciable time, do not completely apply to these songs. However, they certainly are such if we accept John Greenway's definition : "a song concerned with the interests of the folk and in the complete possession of the folk."[5]

These songs can usefully be compared with the Irish songs of resistance discussed by Galvin,[6] which have similar themes ("appeals to nationhood and love of liberty"[7]) and even the same adversary (Great Britain). Like the songs in our collection these were transmitted through written texts as well as orally.[8] They Mexican *corridos*, specifically those of what Paredes calls the "*corrido* period" which developed out of an older song tradition as an expression of Mexican nationalism and revolutionary fervour, are also comparable in function, content, and mode of transmission, if not in form.[9] Following Greenway's lead we have thus chosen to beg the question of definition and have used his term "protest songs" as a useful characterization for this seemingly widespread genre.[10]

The protest songs of this collection are not an original phenomenon of the overseas Indian community nor of the particular political cause espoused by the Gadcr Party and

its followers. They belong integrally within what may be called the Indian rural popular tradition. This song tradition should be distinguished both from the urban popular tradition (best represented by Indian film songs) and from those rurally based songs whose intimate connection with life cycle ceremonies, religion, and work and whose exclusively oral transmission testifies to long persistence and conformity to conventional folk song definitions. The songs of this collection do not differ in style or content from similar politically oriented songs sung in India during the pre-Independence period, and many of them no doubt actually originated in India rather than in the overseas community.[11] A collection of folk songs made among Indians in British Guiana in 1961 also includes some protest songs of this type[12] and although no actual data is available concerning the songs of other overseas Indian communities, it is not to be doubted that such songs were current in those communities also if on no other evidence than the known fact of the widespread distribution of the booklets in this collection.

According to our informants the songs were sung in public meetings of the Indian community on the West Coast, both political and social, as well as in gatherings in Indian homes or in the living quarters of Indian made labourers. At meetings the typical mode of presentation would find a particularly talented singer or a group of children coming to the front and performing a song. The audience would join in on the lines that they knew. If the song had repeated refrain, this would be sung by the assembled people after each verse was sung solo by the performer. Most of the Panjabi songs in this collection are written in a characteristic meter called *baint*. In this meter the final word or the final two words of every line is the same, and

the preceding word carries the rhyme. It is a meter ideally suited to this type of group participation.

In an informal group all might sing together, or those present would take turns singing solo those songs they particularly favoured or knew best with others joining in as they liked. This type of group singing is characteristic of both formal and informal gatherings in India.

A small proportion of the songs in this collection are descriptions of particularly significant historical events such as the Revolt of 1857 or the fate of a shipload of Indians who attempted to gain admittance to Canada in 1914. The remainder do not describe specific events but describe conditions in India in general terms and make an appeal for revolution and personal sacrifice. The remaining portion of this paper will attempt to examine the content of these songs with a view to extracting the central themes and their variations and the symbolism in which they are most frequently couched. It would be possible to approach these songs from other points of view. Perhaps the most obvious would be to regard them as a type of historical document, as Greenway and Galvin have treated American and Irish protest songs.[13] However, we are more interested here in the world view of those who found the songs an inspiring means of expression and in the clues that the songs give to an important area of cultural values. Although the revolutionary methods advocated by the Gadar Party and by these songs were not the methods that eventually gained most vocal support in India and which are generally credited with winning India's independence, the views concerning the nature of the British regime, the glories of India's past and the desirability of freedom, as well as the symbolism used to express these views, were shared by advocates of non-violent

methods as well. An understanding of these ideas is indispensible in any study of Indian values, political ideology or historical development.

II

In the following discussion, "the present" will refer to the pre-Independence era i.e. up to August, 1947.

The common thread running through all the songs in this collection is the theme of India, a nation of past glories and great future potentialities, suffering intolerable oppression and exploitation under British colonial rule. All Indians must unite and fight, to the death if need be, for freedom. India's past, coupled invariably with recitation of her present miseries, is described as one of great wealth, flourishing overseas trade, unity among all elements of the population, in short, as a well-ordered, peaceful, moral society ruled by Indians themselves. For example :

> There was a day when this country
> Was the crown on the heads of all countries.
> Unity was in vogue and Indians themselves ruled.[14]

In another song :

> Where is our patriotism ? Where has our unity gone ?
> Where is our virility and our prestige ?
> We who engaged in world-wide trade,
> Having lost that trade must starve.
> In the same India whose cloth once went abroad,
> Foreign clothes are worn today.[15]

And in a song addressed to India herself :

> One day, oh India, your name was great
> Whether you remember or not (Refrain)
> To do your duty was your effort
> Your science was at its peak
> You were chief in the World

Faultless, just polity was yours.
Expert in all-around love
You were most beautiful among the three worlds...[16]

On the other side of the coin is India's present condition, of which are stressed the drain by Great Britain on the Indian economy and the occurrence of famines due to the enforced export of foodstuffs and the mal-distribution of grains within India.

Alas, dear country, to what condition hast thou been reduced!
Your whole shape has become deformed, your downfall is near.
Your whole house has been destroyed and the Goddess of Wealth looted.
Dear Mother, you are continuously robbed by the British.
Every year they take 300 million coins, and your children sleep, engaged in slavery.
Millions are sacrificed in plague and famine, but what does Britain care ?
She has no love for you, she only has to rob you in every way.
Business and science are to thrive only in London.[17]

And in another example :

Weavers, basket-makers, ironsmiths, shoemakers, carpenters and dyers.
All have become jobless, barely living hand to mouth.
From needles to the necessities of life,
All foreign things come and are sold in India.[18]

Another common target of the songs is Great Britain's "divide-and-rule" policy. This attack is often expressed in the phrase "monkey justice", which refers to a folk tale in which a monkey, under the pretext of acting as mediator in a dispute over some bread, manages to eat all the bread himself. The British are also described as deceitful and dishonest, and are accused of indiscriminate murder and molestation of women. The lack of freedom of speech and action within India is also criticized. The following lines are typical :

Where the people are not even free to write and speak,
How can any invention take place there ?
When the police arrest people for having a knife,
How can a steel sword shine there ?[19]

India's place in world opinion is the subject of another constantly reiterated theme, and the thought is expressed that India is an object of ridicule and contempt because of her dependent status :

Some push us around, some curse us.
Where is your spendor and prestige today ?
The whole world calls us black thieves,
The whole world calls us "coolie"
Why doesn't our flag fly anywhere ?
Why do we feel low and humiliated ?
Why is there no respect for us in the whole world ?[20]

The lack of proper educational facilities in India is another complaint in the songs. For example :

Children writhe in agony without education.
Why are not science colleges opened ?[21]

And in these words addressed to India :

The world is making airplanes.
Where are your fast airplanes ?
The savages of yesterday have become learned today.
Why are your scientists discounted ?
Every country respects its learned ones,
But your learned ones live in exile.[22]

In these lines we may note the often reiterated statement that the British were uncivilized until recently, whereas India's civilization is an ancient one. The same thought, combined with a statement of the importance of education as a key to national success, is expressed also in the following lines :

Those who were savages until yesterday are now civilized.
It is knowledge that is the pride of Britain.
The learned men of Europe make new things like trains
with skill and knowledge.

But India's illiterate Brahman lives off donations funeral shrouds.
If there are any Kshatriyas left, they are cowards.
They know nothing of arms, nor have they the strength to fight.
Those whose ancestors were great, brave people
Cannot even cut the ears of a rat.
India's knowledge is in the kitchen ;
Feel the pulse, see if there is any life left.
The life of an uneducated person is useless.
It is much better to die than to live like that.[23]

In this song, as in many others, it is significant that not only are the British objects of attack, but the Indian people themselves are repeatedly blamed for permitting the oppression and division perpetrated by Great Britain. Indians are criticized in the songs for indifference, lack of courage, a tendency to talk about freedom without acting, and outright cooperation with the enemy. Those who are guilty of active support of the foreign ruler are condemned as traitors in the strongest language :

These traitor to the race, these cheap dogs,
They look innocent but have black hearts.
Their nature is that of mules, two-faced snakes,
They bite and kill those who feed them with milk.
They have sold their self-respect; now they sell the dear country to live on.[24]

And in a warning against traitors among those in the overseas Indian community :

The Government has sent, my friends, many Indian traitors.
Beaware of these sinners; they are not friends, they earn deceit.
They never work with their hands; they eat money from the Government.[25]

Thus are the statements of India's condition ; the remaining themes concern the action to be taken, which, with-

out exception in these songs, is armed action. The following lines are typical :

Die yourself or kill others.
Renounce cowardice, be a man, be a warrior.
Establish secret political parties
Together from Bengal to Maharashtra.
First of all take care of the traitors.

Sink the ships of those dirty dogs.
Drink the blood of the Kaffir race, the English.
Drink your fill and be satisfied.
Having overthrown the cheating foreigners.
Be yourself masters of India.[26]

Complementary to the theme of armed revolt is the rejection of religion, prayer, mediation, or non-violence as possible means toward the end of freedom :

If you desire to live happily,
Take up the way of politics.
The deceitful must be killed by deceit.
This as a good way to remove tyranny.
We don't need *paudits* or *mullas*,
We don't want our ship sunk.
The time for prayer is gone ;
It is time to take up the sword.
Empty talk does not serve any purpose.
It is time to engage in a fierce battle.
Only the names of those who long for martyrdom will shine.[27]

A more direct attack on non-violent methods is represented by the following lines :

Peacefulness has made you impotent.
There is no strength left in your youths.
Playing a flute the English charmed Gandhi
And deceitfully they rob India.
India's power has vanished.
The power of the truth of the *Vedas* and the *Kuran* has disappeared.

The wave of Gandhi has done no good.
No self-pride is left in India.[28]

Many songs in the collection are eulogies to the ideal martyr. These are generally in the form of a vow, spoken in the first person, that the singer will sacrifice his all for his country. Others are calls to arms by India to her sons. The following are typical of the first type :

Let this be the quality of my life. If I have a life.
Handcuffs on my hands. fetters on my legs.
The picture of death dancing before me.
The executioner's sword on my neck.
No matter how terrifying my end,
A double-edged dagger in my stomach.

Or an arrow in my heart.
Let the spreading of Gadar be my way of life.
Let me say "I am the humble servant of India,
And if I am to be born again,
I will do my job again," [29]

And :

Let the rascal tyrant cut my hands,
Let him deprive me of pen and ink
Let him sew my mouth with stitches
Let my tongue not work to utter my sentences.
Even then I will send the thundering waves of my heart in every direction.
Saying "I am a servant of the country,
I will die for her." [30]

The second type uses the symbolism of India as mother, the inhabitants of India as her sons. With this is the notion that as sons of one mother all Indians are brothers. All the brothers should unite and free their mother from bondage. They owe her their lives in the struggle for freedom in order to repay the debt for her milk. Those who do not join in the fight are guilty of forgetting their own mother and can only expect spiritual and material destruction :

The child who does not serve his mother well
Or who does not sacrifice his soul and life for the motherland.
He is just like a dead body,
Floating in the boundless sea of the universe.[31]

In the following song, Mother India calls her sons to arms :

My darling sons, come to the battlefield ;
Carrying the power of knowledge in one hand and a sword in the other.
A happy heart, contented mind, healthy body live a lion be yours.
Extinguish the fire of selfishness
By pouring over it the water of patriotism.[32]

Those who have not heeded the call to revolt are chided in these words :

Why are you, wasting time, oh sleepyhead ?
Wake up and see what is happening !
What a sleep you are sleeping !
Think something of the country too ![33]

And those who are still divided by religious and regional differences are reminded of their kinship through a common mother :

Come and embrace, friends, saying "Hail the Mother !"
Serve your mother, saying "Hail the Mother !"
We are all inhabitants of India, offspring of one Mother.
Bengalis, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, you are all Indians.
Unite and bow to the mother by saying "Hail the Mother !"[34]

One of the major needs of a group like that of the Indians living on the West Coast in pre-Indian Independence period is to keep its members reminded of the heroes of the past who have given their lives for their country. The songs in our collection not only describe the lives and times of the revolutionary heroes of India, like Tilak, Ghosh, Bhagat Singh, and others, but also draw heavily on the religious traditions of martyrdom in Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. All such stories are interpreted in terms of continuous

struggle and personal sacrifice in defense of justice and honour. As heirs of such worthy forefathers, the songs say, Indians today must keep burning the torch of martyrdom. Many songs also ask for an alignment with people of other countries who, like the Irish, are suffering under the same tyranny, or, like the Germans, are engaged in war against the same enemy.

Our enemy is trapped in Europe, on bended knees.
The lion Germany has surrounded him.
Only we have been lazy.
This is the time, my lion sons, to strike.
Don't be tardy !
This is the time to revolt, not to scratch your back.
Rob the robbers, collect arms,
Do as you see fit, think and act ![35]

Few of the songs discuss plans for action after freedom has been attained. In most of them liberty itself is the only stated goal. However, some of the songs do speak of the type of society that will be able to flourish after the British have been banished, and the following lines are typical :

Let us run together a new government.
Where there will be no one big or small.
All together will be equal,
Everyone will have the same rights.
Let there be no question of high or low.
Let everyone have a job.
Let the gardener of this garden be clever.
Let no other one put his feet in it.
Let the gardener serve it with love,
So, as before, it may be splendid.[36]

III

The songs in this collection are songs of a people subjugated by another people of different culture and historical background. They are sung by a people conscious of

enslavement and humiliation, who like others in a similar situation, felt bound to fight for their freedom. In the songs the fight becomes a holy war, a just war, when put in terms of saving one's own mother from ignominy. The debate over means and ends was futile to the signers as it has been to others throughout history, and they asked why admirable means should be expected only of the down-trodden. The primary assumption of all the protest songs here discussed is echoed in a Hindi poem by Shri Ram Sharma 'Prem' written just after the trial of the Indian National Army, another revolutionary movement for Indian independence, in 1946.

> Every slave has a right to fight with the master,
> And every subjugated man has the right to overthrow the tyrant.
> The only one who calls them traitors, is the traitor British government itself;
> Whom we have a birthright to overthrow."

REFERENCES

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1. The term "East Indians" is frequently used to distinguish persons of Indian and Pakistan descent from the aboriginal inhabitants of the New World. Since here the context is clear, the term "Indians" will be used throughout.

2. For additional information on the West Coast Indian community and the Gadar Party see : Harold S. Jacoby, "A Half-Century Appraisal of East Indians in the United States", The Sixth Annual College of the Pacific Faculty Research Lecture (1956); Rajani Kanta Das, *Hindustani workers on the Pacific Coast* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1923) ; Gurcharan Singh Sainsra, *Gadar Parti ka Itihas* (Panjabi) (Jalandhar :

Des Bhagat Yadgar Committee, 1961) ; Giles Tyler Brown, *The Hindu Conspiracy and the Neutrality of the United States*, 1914-1917, M.A., Thesis (Berkeley : University of California, 1941) ; John Speciman, "The International Extensions of Political Conspiracy as Illustrated by the Ghadar Party" *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. XXXVII, pp. 23-45 (1959).

An article by Mark Naidis, "Propaganda of the Gadar Party", *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. XX, pp. 251-260 (1961), is interesting as an analysis of the themes in that literature which printed in English was aimed primarily at the American rather than the Indian audience. However, it is unfortunate that he uses "Hindu" throughout, evidently as a synonym for "Indian", despite the fact that the Hindustan Gadar Party was multi-religious in membership (numerically Sikhs, not Hindus, predominated) and made its appeals for and to Indians as a national group never to Hindus as a religious community. His concluding suspicion that ('its energy may have been diverted into the larger stream of international Communism" after the nineteen twenties is entirely without foundation. Some publications of the Hindustan Gadar Party, in addition to its organ *Gadar* are : Surendra Karr, *British Terror in India* (San Francisco : The Hindustan Gadar Party, (1920); William Jennings Bryan, "Die Britische Herrschaft in Indian", Special Reprint from *India* (July 20, 1906) (San Francisco : Hindustan Gadar Party, n. d.); Ram Chandra, *India Against Britain* (San Francisco : Hindustan Gadar Press, 1917) Frederic Mackarness, *Methods of the Indian Police in the 20th Century* (San Francisco : Hindustan Gadar Office, 1915); *A Few Facts About British Rule in India* (San Francisco : The Hindustan Gadar Party Office, 1916).

3. *Desbhakti ke Git* (San Francisco : Hindustan Gadar Press (1916) : *Azadi ki Goonj*, Nos. 12 & 14 (San Francisco : Hindustan Gadar Press, n.d.) ; *Gadar ki Goonj*, Nos. 1-7 (San Francisco : Hindustan Gadar Press : 1st ed. 1915-18).

4. Ram Chandra, "Foreword" to *Desbhakti ke Git, op. cit.*, p. 3.

5. John Greenway, *American Folksongs of Protest* (New York : A. S. Barnes, 1960), p. 9.

6. Patrick Galvin *Irish Songs of Resistance* (New York : The Folklore Press, n. d.).

7. *ibid.*, p. 1.

8. *ibid.*, pp. 12.

9. Americo Paredes, "The Ancestry of Mexico's Corridos: A Matter of Definitions", *Journal of American Folklore,* Vol. 76 (1963) pp, 231-235.

10. Greenway, *op. cit.*

11. See, for example : P. C. Joshi, "Some Folk Songs on the First Indian War of Independence", *Folklore Monthly,* Vol. IV (1963) pp. 8-14; S. B. Pandey, "Freedom Struggle in Hindi Folksongs," *Folklore Monthly,* Vol. IV (1963) pp. 301-307 ; Verrier Elwin, *Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh* (London : Oxford University Press, 1946) pp. 157-172 ; Srikrishna Das, *Lokgito ki Samajik Vyakhya* (Allahabad : Sahitya Bhavan Ltd., 1956); Suryakaran Parik, *Rajasthani Lokgit* (Allahabad, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, 1955).

12. Ved Prakash Vatuk, "Protest Songs of East Indians in British Guiana". *Journal of American Folklore,* Vol. 77 (1964) pp. 220-235.

13. *op. cit.*

14. *Deshbhakti, op. cit.,* p. 12.

15. *ibid.,* p. 8.

16. *ibid.,* p. 21.

17. *ibid.,* p. 5.

18. *ibid.,* p. 22.

19. Personal communication.

20. *Gadar., op. cit.,* No. 1, p. 1.

21. *ibid.,*

22. *ibid.,* p. 2.

23. *Deshbhakti.,* p. 10.

24. *Gadar.,* op. *cit.,* No. 7, p. 3.

25. *ibid.,* No. 3, p. 22.

26. *ibid.,* No. 1, p.

27. ibid.

28. *ibid.,* No. 7, p. 7.

29. *Deshbbhakt. i,* p. 30.

30. *ibid.,* p. 29.

31. *ibid.,* p. 27.

32. *ibid.,* p. 10.

33. *ibid.,* p. 11.

34. *ibid.,* p. 5.

35. *Gadar.,* No. 2, p. 27.

36. *ibid.,* No. 7, p. 10.

IV

THE *BHAJNOPDESHAK* AS AN AGENT OF SOCIAL CHANGE[1]

A COMPLETE CATALOG of the types of folksingers and folksongs current in rural India would require some kind of division of the songs into categories according to types of singers (sex of the singers, whether adult or children, caste membership), time or occasion of singing, whether they are sung solo or in groups, whether they are religious or secular in content, and whether they have an explicit educative or propagandistic function beyond their use as part of the ritual cycle or as entertainment. All of these features are relevant in categorizing the folksong corpus in a given area of India, and are mentioned in order to place the singers and songs discussed here in perspective; however, an analysis of the immense variety and multiplicity of folksong types and folksingers present in this area is beyond the scope of this paper.

The research on which this paper is mainly based was carried out in Western Uttar Pradesh, North India, in the summer of 1965. I have, however, been familiar with and intimately associated with these singing groups and their songs from my early childhood. The singers I will discuss are the *bhajnopdeshaks* or *bhajniks*, professional folk composers and singers who sing in order to encourage social reform, who sing of changing their society, of making a better world in terms of their perceptions and values. Literally *bhajnopdeshak* means "preacher through bhajans".

Their singing groups are called *bhajan mandali*, "bhajan circles". A *bhajan* in its primary meaning is a devotional song, but the word is used to mean any song, regardless of actual subject matter, that is sung in the characteristic style of the devotional *bhajan*; the religious *bhajans* and the cultural role of their singers are discussed, for example, by Milton Singer for the Madras area[2]. However, the *bhajans* described here are very different in subject matter, and their singers, rather than reaffirming the great tradition of Hinduism, use this tradition and others as well to bring about major social change.

As his name implies, the *bhajnopdeshak* is a preacher, a man dissatisfied with certain social or political conditions and who feels that he has a remedy : that through his singing, people may be inspired to change society, to reform social evils, to right injustice. Various problems are attacked by the *bhajnopdeshaks*; not all of the singers have the same message, but their techniques and their moralistic crusading zeal are something all have in common. All are activists; the undeniable entertainment value of their songs is simply a means to an end.

The *bhajnopdeshak* almost always sings in a group, or *mandali*, in which the leader is the most important member. Some *bhajan mandalis* are professional, in the sense that their members make a living by singing. Others are amateur; their members have other sources of income and sing in their spare time. Some *mandalis* are completely independent, although they may perform on occasion for the benefit of recognized social service organizations; other groups are actively affiliated to an organization. In this area a number are avowed representatives of the reform-minded Hindu sect, the Arya Samaj.

In reviewing the personal histories of many *bhajnopdeshaks* one is struck by the fact that most of them came to their calling at an early age, and that they attribute their adoption of this profession to an early urge to fight injustice—political, economic, or social. Some were born into the lowest stratum of society as Untouchables, and felt keenly the discrimination against them because of this accident of birth. Others were affected by the circumstances of oppression under British rule, or felt a desire to improve the pitiable condition of widows in Indian society and to give women the opportunities open to men. Since religious faith is important to all *bhajnopdeshaks*, some of them have followed traditional ideals and have renounced their homes and families to become ascetics, living only for their cause. One famous *bhajnopdeshak* in this area is reputed to have castrated himself so that his sexual cravings would not divert his attention from the fight against social and political injustice.

As this suggests, the training of the *bhajnopdeshak* begins rather early, usually between the ages of ten and fifteen. Active *bhajan mandali* leaders attempt to attract young boys and adolescents to their cause, to incorporate them into the troupe and train them well; when they reach adulthood they are able to compose and sing independently, and eventually may become leaders of their own groups. The ability to sing well is of course a primary concern, second only to the requirement of enthusiasm for the cause being propagated. A young trainee must learn to play several folk instruments, including the harmonium, castanets, drum, tong castanets, tambourine, and others. The control of the leader over the young trainee is complete, and even physical punishment is not considered out of place in his instruction. This control extends also to the personal life of the trainee, since

all members are expected to live up to certain moral standards which are associated with the success of the social movement. For those who represent the Arya Samaj, even the clothes worn by the members are considered an important part of their image. The young people are also prepared ideologically for the struggle toward their goal, and are taught to be fearless before attack or repression of their ideals. In at least one group that I know of, the members were trained in archery, a fighting skill of only symbolic importance in the present age, but important in Indian tradition. The names they adopt—"fearless", "archer"—also contribute to their image.

Bhajnopdeshaks usually perform by invitation, and they may be invited to perform at any type of social occasion at which entertainers would be deemed appropriate. In this way they fit into the whole series of folk entertainers who typically perform at marriages, temple fund-raisings, and private celebrations of various kinds. A *bhajan mandali* may also be invited to perform by persons or organizations who want them to preach a particular message, and in this way they assist many organized causes, including government projects of technological and social change.[3] The most common occasion for the employment of a *bhajnopdeshak* or *bhajan* troupe is a convention, rally, or public meeting. Such meetings may be sponsored by a school, political or social service organization, or a religious organization. If the convention is a large one, lasting several days, the program will include many speakers and several *bhajnopdeshaks* will perform. Some *bhajnopdeshaks* may even come to a large and widely publicized meeting without invitation, and offer their services free of charge or for a nominal fee.

The fee charged by a *bhajnopdeshak* is normally very moderate in comparison to that asked by other folk enter-

tainers such as the *sangis*, popular performers of folk opera.[1] There are, however, some famous *bhajnopdeshaks*, much in demand, who must be paid in advance before they agree to perform. Others may perform always without charge, in the spirit of social service; these may have other sources of income or sing part-time only. In addition to their fee, if any, the *bhajnopdeshaks* must be housed and fed by the people who have invited them to perform. Except in the case of a performance for a private celebration, the fee is paid from contributions made at the time of the meeting, or beforehand, by the assembled audience.

The type of stage used by the *bhajnopdeshaks* depends on the over-all setting of the occasion. It is usually a simple raised platform made of large wooden cots set side by side. In the centre is a table with a tablecloth, behind which the singer stands, his foot on the rail. A harmonium is placed on the table, and the singer accompanies himself; generally each member of the troupe sings in turn, the most junior first, until finally the leader stands to preach.

It may help to make my generalizations about the *bhajnopdeshaks* more meaningful if I describe briefly the membership and organization of three *bhajan* groups, or *bhajan mandalis* as they are called, and give some idea of the cause for which each is fighting and the style of their performances. I met the members of the first, a group called *anjāna mandali*, literally "ignorant circle", at a rally to celebrate Indian Independence Day. The rally, held in a neighbour-hood inhabited mainly by people of the scavenger caste, had been organized at a school run by the Gandhi Memorial Fund, a society dedicated to the spread of Gandhian principles. The audience was made up mostly of Untouchables, but other caste members also attended in large numbers. The members of the *mandali*, eight in all, sang their song in between the

lectures and other performances. They were accompanied by a harmonium, an Indian banjo, drums, and jingling bells. Clapping was also used to accompany the singing.

The leader of the group first introduced the other members. Then he began with songs in a religious theme: a hymn to the goddess of learning for inspiration, voice, and proper rhythm; a song about Lord Krishna, and several others. Then he sang an ode to man, in which he reminded his audience that we have come into this world with a promise to fulfill: human birth is the hardest of all to attain, and we should not forget God while engrossed in the delusions of the world. We come alone and will go alone, responsible only for our actions. He gave his audience examples from the Vedas and other traditional authorities, and quoted other *bhajan* singers. He reminded his audience that the singer has no religion but truth. Finally, he sang some songs about patriotism, reminding the audience of the great dangers being faced by their country and the sacrifices that would have to be made if India were to be made a great nation again. Throughout, the leader began with the refrain of the song, which was picked up by the other *mandali* members and sung in chorus to instrumental accompaniment. Then the leader sang the main verse, and, except at the end of each line when a beat of the drum was heard, the others were quiet. At the conclusion of the verse, the refrain was again picked up by the entire group.

The leader of the *anjāna mandali* started his musical training at the age of ten, at which time he became a member of a dramatic singing group which has since broken up. His experiences in that group enabled him to start his own singing group, which he called *valmiki mandali,* a name associated with the scavenger caste. However, when he first entered

into a singing competition with other *mandalis*, the group members decided not to use this name, which clearly identified their caste membership, and so the name became "ignorant circle", a name indicating modesty and humility. Since its formation the *mandali* has become well known, and the singers have been invited by many organizations with in the city and in the surrounding villages and by wealthy persons in the area. They have attended public meetings such as anti-China rallies and also are invited to private parties and weddings. But they have never become professionals from a financial point of view. They accept money when it is donated during performances, but this is kept for the maintenance of the *mandali* itself, for upkeep of the office and instruments. Nothing is paid to the individual members, who are all employed in their traditional occupation or in unskilled labor by the municipality or other government agencies. The group is proud of its services on behalf of the government, and they offered to entertain the troops at the time of the China crisis.

In terms of their cause, this *mandali* is primarily concerned with the abolition of untouchability. But they maintain that in order to raise the status of the Untouchables it is necessary "to obliterate the bad customs within us." Therefore, they have themselves renounced drinking, smoking, and meat-eating, things which are associated with low status in the Indian value system, and preach these reforms to their caste fellows.[5] They are continuously looking for young people with good voices to train and they direct much effort to teach the children of their community their songs. Although they are themselves semi-literate, they are concerned with the value of education and encourage the children of the neighbourhood to attend school. They are religious in

outlook, but critical of religious habits which allow people "to call themselves religious, sing in the temple, collect the offerings and drink in the broad daylight. We do not want such people [in our group]." They are eager to take part in inter-religious meetings and festivals. The leader explains how he attached himself to his Muslim spiritual teacher, or *guru*. "This *guru* sang of the equality of all religions. He did not drink or smoke. He sang wherever he chose but never made singing his means of livelihood I decided to be his pupil when I heard him at a Muslim fair here, but we only established this relationship by mail."

A second group is led by an Arya Samaj preacher, from the Jat caste, who has been active for the past forty years, since the age of 13. He was inspired and later trained by one of the most prominent blind *bhajnopdeshaks*, who, after preaching for nearly 75 years, died at the age of 100, 20 years ago. His *mandali* consists of four members and he devotes himself full-time to *bhajan* singing, unlike the previously described group. His group is one of the most popular in the area and is invited to all types of rallies and conventions, as well as private social events. His own words illustrate better than anything else his aims and purpose in his chosen career : "There is not a single movement in which I have not participated. I went to jail in Hyderabad satyagraha [the Arya Samaj protest against the Nizam of Hyderabad's oppression of Hindus] and also was jailed in the Hindi satyagraha [the 'Save Hindi' movement of 1957, protesting the suppression of Hindi for Panjabi]. I condemned bad customs in public, I propagate knowledge and education, I condemn the caste system and support the uplift of Untouchables. I think my life has been more than successful, and in the future I want *Ram Rajya*, that is, the rule

of justice and equality. I want to see the whole world Aryan", He makes a distinction between private social affairs like weddings and public meetings : except for the former he charges no fee, but takes only whatever contributions may be given voluntarily. He says, "I feel satisfied with whatever is given during my preaching. In other words, I have been preaching free for the last forty years."

A third group, which I met in Benares, was somewhat different from these two in that it was informally organized and amateur in membership. All the members were workers in the Bhoodan (land-gift) movement who had met during walking trips to gain followers for this movement some years before. They are from various castes, high and low, have different educational backgrounds, and had different occupations before they joined Vinoba Bhave. During most of the year they worked for the movement in their own areas and also travelled with other Bhoodan leaders to preach the message of Bhoodan in poetic form. They all know how to play several instruments and when they get together at the semiannual conventions of the movement, they play these instruments and sing, before, during, and at the end of the meeting.

Since the Bhoodan movement is based on nonviolent change of the social order, the songs sung by this group stress the messages of love, peace, and justice. The organization is prominent in the Indian peace movement and therefore many of their songs are on this theme. They say that the revolution of equality of rich and poor, men and women, rulers and ruled, Untouchables and caste people, labor and bosses is bound to come. They say that they are striving to change the hearts of men to make this a peaceful revolution, before violence takes over and bloody revolution ensues.

Even though all *bhajnopdeshaks* have much in common, each has his unique point of view; each has certain ideals that he stresses more than others. Even those who are affiliated with a particular organization or religious sect, like Bhoodan or the Arya Samaj, have their independent message, though it fits in general terms with the primary message of that organization. The background of the singer is an important determinant of his message: a person who has been ascetic for his whole life may stress morality in his songs more than, for example, a farmer's son turned *bhajanopdeshak,* who will sing of the plight of the village poor. An Untouchable *bhajnopdeshak* will probably be concerned largely with the abolition of Untouchability. The message and the principles on which it is based may be altered slightly to suit the particular occasion: thus a *bhajnopdeshak* who is in theory opposed to the caste system may attend and perform at a convention of his caste members, if he feels that such a performance may achieve other of his ends without requiring him to give up his basic principles. The *Jat bhajnopdeshak,* described above, who as an Arya Samaji was opposed to caste as an institution, nevertheless supported the meetings of his caste association which set a ceiling on expenditures for wedding celebrations. A famous *bhajnopdeshak* preached at a rally of a movement in 1945-1946 to declare blacksmiths *panchāl,* a type of Brahman.[6] There are many examples of their participation in this type of movement. Since their avowed purpose is to raise the status of formerly low-status groups, not even staunch Arya Samaj members object to this kind of participation.

In composing his songs, a good *bhajnopdeshak* makes use of many features of the traditional or classical culture of India, as well as of the folk culture: what anthropologists call

the great and little traditions of his civilization.[7] He must be well versed in the epics, at least in the Hindi epics if not the Sanskrit epics. He must know some Vedic hymns and other Sanskrit *slokas* and be able to quote from the popular folk poets of the area. Throughout his performance the *bhajnopdeshak* makes reference to traditional heroes, folk legends, and proverbs, and to more recent national heroes such as Gandhi and Nehru, in order to buttress his points. For example, an Arya Samaj *bhajnopdeshak* begins his preaching with the recitation of a Vedic hymn in which the almighty impersonal God is invoked. He may then recite a popular *shair,* an Urdu couplet, or a *dohā* or *kavitta* from one of the great Indian poets, known to the folk, or one composed by a popular folk poet. After a prayer in the language of the area, he will begin to preach. Throughout his performance he will tell jokes applicable to the culture of his listeners, retell appropriate tales from the Mahābhārata or Rāmāyaṇa, refer to local myths, and cite proverbs which illustrate his message. These local references encourage the close attention of his audience, and assure their appreciative participation in his performance; through these techniques also he shows his intimacy with the concerns of his audience and bridges any social distance that might otherwise be present between the preacher and his audience.

The *bhajnopdeshak* thus makes use of Indian tradition and identifies his goals with those of the recognized and revered leaders of the Indian nation. However, he is able to draw on these sources and use them to inspire the acceptance of and even the positive desire for radical change. He could perhaps be called an unconscious applied anthropologist !

The success of the *bhajan mandali* in furthering the programs of nonofficial social service and of reform organizations

has not been lost on the government of India. Even in the days of British rule in India, *bhajnopdeshaks* were employed to propagate such causes as recruitment for the army and fighting against Germany.[8] However, most *bhajnopdeshaks* not only disagreed with these causes, but fought vigoroulsy against them. Now these groups are frequently employed to propagandize in favour of programs of agricultural redevelopment and the like. All-India Radio's nightly *dehati* program is a two-hour feature, beamed at the villages, in which *bhajnopdeshak* singers urge the adoption of agricultural improvements and sanitary and health measures. At government-sponsored public meetings in rural or urban areas, a *bhajnopdeshak* has been found to be an effective means of gathering an audience and holding it until the cabinet ministers and other officials have finished their speeches.

The structure of the *bhajans* typically composed by these singers varies, but within a circumscribed pattern. (Limited space will not permit me to discuss fully the question of metrical structure and rhyming here.) The songs consist of four or more stanzas, each containing between two and eight lines, plus a line rhyming with the refrain. The refrain introduces the song and is repeated before each new verse. Most of the lines are original in composition, but frequently lines or whole stanzas may be inserted from the popular epics or folk ballads. For example, in a *bhajan* about Rama, the hero of the Rāmāyaṇa, the *bhajnopdeshak* may begin by singing several stanzas from Tulsīdās or other versions of that epic; if he wishes to illustrate a point by mentioning the truthful King Harishchandra, he may introduce a verse from the poet Girdhar Kavirāya. It must be remembered, however, that all of these lines are familiar to the audience as they have been for centuries part of the traditional literature

that is "in the complete possession of the folk"[9], and have been the sources of songs, folk dramas, and moralistic poetry.

In terms of contents, a structural pattern with two variants can be discerned. In the first, the *bhajnopdeshak* begins with a description of particular conditions he wishes to change. He follows this with a condemnation of these conditions, usually in quite colorful terms, and ends by proposing a remedy. A second variant neglects the condemnation, which is understood, and the proposed remedy follows immediately upon the description of present conditions. The final segment of the song elaborates upon the consequences of not listening to the *bhajnopdeshak's* recommendations, or, alternatively, paints a picture of the rewarding consequences of accepting his remedy.

Although, as I have said, each *bhajan mandali* has a uniquely conceived cause, there are certain dominant themes in the songs of all *bhajnopdeshaks*; these correspond to some of the major social and political issues facing India today, and to some of the more prominent value conflicts that are to be observed in a changing Indian way of life. Basically they all view the issues of modern India in black and white terms. They seem to view the attempts of India to attain economic, social, and political well-being in terms of what might be called a class struggle on several fronts between opposing forces of good and evil. These oppositions can be summarized in the following terms:

1. Between orthodoxy and unorthodoxy, in terms of socio-religious institutions of traditional India. Here the *bhajnopdeshak* preaches justice to the formerly oppressed. He champions a casteless society in opposition to one structured by caste, the abolition of Untouchability, and the

rewarding of individual merit rather than accidents of birth. Likewise, he preaches the equality of the sexes and their equal access to educational opportunities, the abolition of the *purdah* system, and the remarriage of young widows. He preaches reformed religious practices, the access of all to the revelations of religious teaching, and the abolition of meaningless idol worship, as he sees it. In general, on this front, he is waging a battle against what he sees as the unhumanistic aspects of orthodox religion, but not against religion *per se*. His recommendations for change are still deeply rooted in Hindu tradition.

2. Economically, the *bhajnopdeshak* views as his cause an alteration in the traditional relationship between capitalist and labor, between the haves and have nots. Although mostly semi-literate and unschooled in Marxian dialectics, the *bhajnopdeshak* sees the relation of rich and poor, of landed and landless, of money-lender and eternal debtor in essentially Marxian terms. And the remedies he proposes are essentially revolutionary in nature.

3. In political terms, the *bhajnopdeshak* is concerned with the opposition between the rulers and the ruled. Here he concerns himself with corruption in government and with the use of political power for personal gain, on both the national and local levels. During the pre-Independence era, of course, his attack was directed against the British colonial regime, and the remedy was freedom—independence from foreign rule. It is significant that although Gandhi as a national hero is continually utilized in the songs of the *bhajnopdeshak*, his nonviolent methods were never those recommended by these singers. Both before independence, when violent internal revolution and support of Hitler and Mussolini against the British were being urged by the

bhajnopdeshaks, and now, when they encourage their countrymen to fight bravely against the threat of China and to some extent also against Pakistan, these singers are the supporters of active armed resistance to oppression and attack. Since India gained her independence, the opposition between rulers and ruled has remained, except that now the rulers are fellow Indians. The Congress Party has become the principal target of attack, but the smaller parties of the moderate left are viewed simply as splinters of the Congress monolith. This leaves only two : the rightist Hindu parties and the Communists. The rightists usually cannot be supported, bacause their backbone is felt to be the merchant classes of the city, who are being attacked in terms of economic opposition. This leaves the Communists; but the *bhajnopdeshak,* sharing the prevalent conception of the Communist Party as a foreign-dominated evil clique, cannot bring himeslf to advise their support either. He avoids this dilemma by two means : "Indianizing" the symbols of the Communist organization and ideology, for example by identifying the red flag with the ancient Indian monkey god, Hanuman; and by denying the validity of all the trappings of the democratic process, such as elections, parties, courts of law, explicitly or implicitly because of their Western origins.

4. A fourth opposition follows from this : that between the irreligious, immoral and heartless foreigner and the spiritual, humanistic Indian. On this front the *bhajnopdeshaks* reject the many forms of Westernization which are evident in modern social and political life. This opposition is also present in some of the attacks on Communism as an ideology and as a political program. It is implicit in the *bhajnopdeshak's* attacks on meat-eating and the attendant issue of cow slaugh-

ter, in his opposition to drinking and smoking (which, although regarded as indigenous to India, are not approved) and in his advocacy of improved opportunities for women, without the complete adoption of the Western type of relationship between the sexes. It appears in his polemics against the mental slavery of the Western educated Indian, in his suspicion of foreign aid and of any interference by foreign governments in Indian affairs, in his support of technological change and the spread of literacy while insisting that this change and this education should be adapted to Indian conditions. In summary, this opposition reveals the *bhajnopdeshak's* desire to Indianize whatever change he proposes, to develop a new society, but one with a unique Indian stamp, one which owes nothing to the blind adoption of foreign ways.[10]

The *bhajnopdeshak* is religious without being sectarian; he is an advocate of change, radical change, while insisting on the preservation of what he sees as the essentials of Indian traditional values. A study of his message and of the techniques he uses to communicate it to the people is an invaluable guide to the complexities of the course of social change in India. His universal appeal to the Indian folk has been recognized by the Indian government in its attempts to direct this change; his approach can tell us a great deal about what is meaningful to the Indian people, and can lead to a better understanding of their motivation and the prospects for change.

APPENDIX

SEVEN *BHAJAN* TEXTS

ba:vle kisa:ṇ samai ki: ca:l dekhiye	O ignorant peasant, see the tide of time.
koṇ hitaisi: tera: drasṭi ḍa: dekhiye	Look around and see who is your well-wisher.
1. tera: kuṇba: din ra:t kama:tta:	Your family toils day and night,
na: kade ṭha:lli: baiṭṭhan pa:tta:	Never has it a chance to sit idle—
anda:ta: tu: phir bi: 'ai kanga:l dekhiye	O you giver of food, see, you are still poor.
beima:n aṇkarva: ma:la:ma:l dekhiye	And the deceitful, idle people are loaded with money.
2. tere na:m ki: dekai duha:i	In your name
a:ja:di: ki: lari: lara:i:	The struggle for freedom was fought;
pa:i haku:mat pher karya: na: tera: khya:l dekhiye	They received the kingdom, and did not remember you.
taiks barhai, roja:na: naya: kama:l dekhiye	Every day, new taxes are increa sed— see the new wonder—
3. kra:ntika:ri: kya: kamunisṭ	Revolutionaries or Communists,
ka:ngrais or kya: soslisṭ	Congress or Socialists,
isṭ tera: na: koi: naya: ye ja:l dekhiye	No one is your *ist,* see, this new trap.
kisi: se hal nai, hoga: tera: sava:l dekhiye	No one is going to solve your problem.
4. apna: ek sangaṭhan bana: tu:	Make an organization of your own.
kharya: ho bhi:san kra:nti maca: tu:	Get up and start a fierce revolution.
a:ja: pher kyo: ca:hta: hai, tatka:l dekhiye	Why wait then, come and you will see immediately—
thore din ke andar baihtar ha:l dekhiye.	In a few days, your conditionis better.

—Contributed by Atar Singh
at Meerut, June 1965

panchi: lekar a:ya: mere ba:pu: ka: sandeś,
uske paro par likkha: tha:, hai kaisa: apna: deś ?

The bird has come with a message from my Bapu ;*
On his wings is written: How is our country ?

1. ab to videśi: lu:t na hogi:
ghar ghar me vo phu:t na hogi:
chote bare ka: phark na hoga:
pya:r ka: sab par rang hi: hoga:
u:c aur ni:c ka: rog na hoga:
varṇo ka: bhi: viyog na hoga:
pra:nto aur bhasa:o ka: ragra:
jhu:te va:d laṛa:i: jhagra:
dekhke sab kućh a:na: pańchi:
sa:ra: ha:l suna:na: pańchi:
des ne ab tak kya: nahi: bhu:la:
vo a:pas ka: dveś
pańchi: lekar a:ya: mere ba:pu:
ka: sandeś

There must not be foreign exploitation now,
There must not be any division within our own house.,
The difference of big and small must have vanished,
All of the people must be deeply loving each other,
There must not be any sickness of feeling of being high and low,
And there must not be any division among various *varnas*,
Or the problem of provincialism or languages,
Or the fighting over them.
See that all, O bird, and come
And tell me everything you see.
Whether the country has forgotten the hatred from within or not.
The bird has come with a message from my Bapu.

2. carkha: ab bhi: calta: hoga:
ghar ghar kapra: banta: hoga:
jor barha: hoga: kha:di:ka:
śor maca: hoga: kha:di:ka:
khuś hoga: śivaru:p jula:ha:
moti: aur anu:p jula:ha:

Spinning wheel must still be spinning.
Cloth must be prepared in every home,
Khadi must be at its height,
The name of *khadi* must be rampant.
Weaver Shivarup must be happy.
Weavers Gopi and Anup must be happy.

*Bapu = Father, Mr. Gandhi

in sab ko parṇa:m bhi: dena:
meri: taraph se pu:ch bhi: lena:
baćće sabke paṛhte hoge

a: pas me nahi: laṛte hoge
ab to baṛe hue hoge ka:lu: ba:lu: aur mahes
panchi: lekar a:ya: mere ba:pu: ka: sandeś

Give my regards to all of them
And ask their welfare from me,
They must be very much in demand now,

And happily living their lives,
Children of all of them must be in school,
They mustn't be fighting among each other,
Kalu, Balu, and Mahesh, all of them must have grown up by now,
The bird has come with a message from my Bapu.

3. gra:m udyog cala:ne va:le
kaise hai, mere mat•va:le
baṛhai: sya:m luha:r tiva:ri:
gha:ni: va:la: vo girdha:ri:
dhandha: sab ka: calta: hoga:
peṭ maje se palta: hoga:
ab na rahi: hogi: beka:ri:
tan man ki: cinta: beja:ri:
panchi: sab se milke a:na:

How are my happy jolly
Runners of home-industries,
Shyam carpenter, and Tiwari blacksmith ?
And that oilman Girdhari ?
All must be having success in their business,
And must be earning enough to enjoy life,
With hard work to earn their bread,
They must be eating butter and bread well,

mera: sandesa: pachuca:na:
gujri: ra:t vo rone va:li:
jai hai teri: hone va:li:
ab nahī ka:ṭega: vo tumko ka:la: sa:p kaleś
Panchi:lekar mere ba:pu:ka: Sandeś

There mustn't be any unemployment now,
And mental and physical worry,
Bird, come after seeing all of them
And give them my message,
"These nights of crying have become a matter of the past,
Your victory is near,
That black snake of sorrow will not sting you now,"
The bird has come with a message from my Bapu.

4. mere kisa:n hai pya:re kaise ?
halva:he banha:re kaise ?
mehnat khu:b hi: karte hoge
ann se deś ko bharte hōge
des inhi: ka: kha:ta: pi:ta:
inke ji:ne se hai ji:ta:
da:n dhani: ka: ha:th inhi: ka:
ca:hiye deś ko sa:th inhi: ka:
mukta hui: hogi: ab dharti:
kaid rahi: bhi: hai kab dharti:
dharti: ma:ta: sabki: ma:ta:
inki: ma:ta: unki: ma:ta:
ma:ta: ko jo kaid karega:
ant mẽ pa:pi: vo bhugtega:
mere vinoba: ka: ye vaćan hai
vedō ka: bhi: yahi: Kathan hai
panćhi: jaise kućh bhi: rahe na
mere man ki: kah hi: dena:
bhu:pati kaise rah sakte hāī
jab na rahe ye nareś
panchi: lekar a:ya: mere ba:pu:
ka: sandes.

How are my beloved peasants ?
The ploughmen, and cowherds ?
They must be working hard,
And filling the country with grain,
The country eats and drinks what they give,
And lives because they have life,
The donation of rich is made possible only by the work of their hands,
The country needs their help and they need country's.
The land must have become free now,
Has this land really remained the slave of any ?
Earth is mother of all,
Mother of these, mother of those,
Anyone who keeps mother enslaved,
Will have to pay for it, that sinner.
This is the saying of my Vinoba,
And also the saying of the Vedas,
Bird, tell them in clear language,
What I feel in my heart,
"How can the landowners remain, when the kings are gone ?"

5. ā:khō a:khō dekh ke a:na:
harijan: koloni: ka: ṭhika:na:
kaise hai ve mere bha:i:
candu: ćama:r aur na:thu: na:i:
bhola: bhangi: dehli: va:la:
uska: bha:i: ka:ka: la:la:
nirmal ki: vo ra:ju: ra:ni:
ab to ho gai: hogi: saya:ni:
paṛhti: hogi: ga:ti: hogi:
mā:ka: dil bahla:ti: hogi:
ab napharat ka: na:m na hoga:
koi: kisi:ka: gula:m na hoga:

With your eyes see before coming,
How is Harijan Colony ?
How are these brothers of mine ?
Chandu Chamar and barber Nathu,
Bhola scavenger of Delhi ?
And his brother Kaka Lala ?
That Raju Rani, daughter of Nirmal,
Oh, she must be grown up by now,
Must be studying and singing,
Entertaining her mother's heart,
There mustn't be any trace of hate,
No one must be anyone's slave,

bhai: bha:i: banke rahege
hak aur pya:r se hi: bartege
ka:m se u:c aur ni:c hai hota:
ma:nege a:deś
panchi: lekar a:ya: mere ba:pu:
ka: sandeś

All must be living as brothers,
Treating each other with love and giving them the rights they deserve,
High and low are by actions, they would accept this ruling.
The bird has come with a message from my Bapu.

6. kaise hai mere anuya:yi:
maine gaddi: jinko dila:yi:
seva: sabki: karte hoge
janhit kha:tir marte hoge
unke karmca:ri: kaise hai ?
badle bhi: hai ya: vaise hai ?
riśvat aur biga:r na hogi:
julm na hoga: ma:r na hogi:
nya:ya dharma ka: ra:j hi: hoga:
vo sacca: svara:j hi: hoga:
mere un sa:thi: sajnō ne
pya:r kiya: tha: mujh ko jinhōne
mujhse pri:t nibha:i: hogi:
meri: la:j baca:i: hogi:
seva: ka: jo dam bharte hai
mujhko ya:d kiya: karte hai
unko meri: or se kahna:
apne vacan par ka:yam rahna:
bhu:l na ja:ye marte dam tak
jan seva: ka: uddeś
panchi: lekar a:ya: mere ba:pu:
ka: sandeś.

How are my followers,
For whom I have achieved the throne ?
They must be serving every one,
Dying for the good of the people,
How are their bureaucrats,
Are they the same [as in British Government] or changed ?
There mustn't be any bribery or *begar* [forced labor]
There must be the rule of justice and Dharma,
It must be a true *swaraj* [self-government],
The friends of mine,
Who loved me,
Must have fulfilled that love,
And must have saved my name,
Those who boast of serving
And remember me,
Tell them from me,
That they should be true to their words,
Let them never forget the aim of the service of the people till death.
The bird has come with a message of my Bapu.

—A *bhajan* by Dukhayal, sung by Sarvodya Mandli at Benares, September 8, 1965

amar hai tera: na:m *ba:pu*: amar hai tera:na:m

Immortal is your name Bapu, immortal is your name.

1. *ba:pu* mere pya:re *ba:pu* tu:ne hame ji:na: sikhla:ya.
   majbu:ri: ke andhiya:re me a:ja:di: ka: di:p jala:ya:
   tu:ne mar kar hame diya: hai ji:ne ka: paiga:m

Bapu, my beloved Bapu, but you taught us how to live
In the darkness of helplessness, you lit the lamp of freedom;
Having died you have given us the message for life.

2. julm se kucle insa:no ko julm se takra:na: sikhla:ya:
   bhaṭke hue sansa:r ko tu:ne ek naya: rasta: dikhla:ya:
   apne lahu: se tu:ne bhara: hai a:ja:di: ka: ja:m

You taught people crushed by tyranny to charge against tyranny
You showed the lost world, a new path.
With your own blood, you filled the cup of Freedom.

3. har mazhab ki: sacca:i: ko jivan ka: a:darś bana:ya:
   ma:navta: ki: la:j baca:i: a:n pai mar ja:na: sikhla:ya:
   ek naye jivan ka: savera: laiti: hai har śa:m

You made the truth of every religion the ideal of your life;
You saved the name of humanity, and taught us how to die for self-respect,
That "Every evening sings about the morning of a new life."

4. ye duniya: anja:nepan me yuddhake dar va:je pai khari: hai
   thake hue hai, na:pne va:le, du:r hai manjil ra:h kaṛi: hai
   kya: hoga: sacca:i: ke path par calne ka: anja:m

In its ignorance, the world stands on the threshold of war.
(Travellers) are shuddering, they are tired, while the destination is still far off and the path is hard.
What will be the outcome for those who walk on the path of truth ?

5. dekh sako to dekho ba:pu apne deś ki: ha: lat dekho
   a:ja:di: ke la:ne va:le a:ke jara: ek ba:r to dekho
   kisne ka:ti: ka:ṭi:dukh ki: ra:te, kise mila: a:ra:m

If you can, O Bapu, see the condition of your country.
You, who brought freedom, come and see at least for once,
Who has spent the nights of misery, who has gotten comfort.

—Contributed by Shyonath Singh and Atar Singh at Meerut, September 4, 1966

ye ja:lim sarka:r bha:iyo nahi: rakhni:
a:yi: thi: bya:pa:r karan ko
bani: gale ka: ha:r, bhai:yo nahi: rakhni:
gorepan ke jom me a:ke
jaliya: va:le ba:gh me ja:ke
ma:re kai haja:r, bha:iyo nahi rakhni:

This cruel government, O brothers, we will not keep.
They came here to trade
And have become the noose around our neck.
This cruel government, brothers, we will not keep.
In their pride of being white
They went to Jaliyanwala Garden
And killed many thousands.
This cruel government, O brothers, we will not keep.

—Contributed by Bhagirath Singh at Meerut, June 1965

A dialogue between Late Nehru and Indian peasants in heaven.

"mere pya:re bha:ratva:si: kis liye svarg me a:ye ?"
"ham tumhe ḍhu:dhte ca:ca: tamai baṛi muskil tai pa:ye"

"My dear fellow Indians, why have you come so far as to heaven ?"
"We have come here with great difficulty searching for you, O Uncle."

1. "aisi: kya: ba:t hui: hai ? sab ha:l bata:o man ka:
kya: ann ki: kami: des mai, bigṛa: hai ha:l vatan ka: ?
kya: mere des ke ab tak nahi: met sake dukh jan ka: ?"
"unhe thoṛi: milti bha:i: jo baha: pasina: tan ka:"
"acche se bi:j sacmac ke kyo nahi: tyu:vail laga:ye ?"
"sapna: nahi: baṇai ujla: nahi: ja:te pra:ṇ gava:ye."

"Why, what is that matter that brought you here, tell me all that is in your heart ?
Is there a food shortage in the country ? Has the condition of the nation deteriorated ?
Has the misery of my country people not vanished yet ?"
"They get very little who work with their sweat and blood."
"Why have you not used good seed, why have they not built real tube-wells ?"
"Our dream has died, we can't give up our lives."

2. "kya: la:l baha:dur sa:stri: ab soya: kahi: paṛa: hai ?"

"Is that Lal Bahadur sleeping somewhere ?"

"unke to sammukh ca:ca: ek or baba:l aṛa:hai"

"No, but Uncle, he faces a big mountainous calamity."

"kya: tha:re ja:t pa:t ke jhagṛe bha:sa: ka: sava:l ara: hai ?"

"Is it your dispute of castes, or is it the question of languages that blocks him ?"

"nahi pa:kista:n liye phoje si:ma: par a:n khaṛa: hai."

"No, it is Pakistan with its army on our borders."

"ha: bhai: pa:kista:n hama:ra: kyo itne anrath ḍha:ye ?"

"Oh, Pakistan, that brother of ours, why are you doing all terrible things ?"

"kah ka:smi:r mera: hai, tum koṇ kaha: se la:ye ?"

"It says, "Kashmir is ours'; from where did they come with it ?"

3. "in ba:to ka: phal kya: hoga: kya: tumne kiya: kala-pna: ?"

"What will be the result of all that, did you ever think over that ?"

"ab to rah gaya: adhu:ra: ca:ca: ji tha:ra: say:nti sapna."

"Uncle, your dream of peace remained incomplete."

"sab bhagva:n bhali: kar tha:ri: tum om ra:m ko raṭna:"

"God will do good unto you—remember his name Om, always."

"ca:ca: ji: calo bha:rat me le khaḍag sya:nti ab apna:"

"Uncle come back to your country with your sword of peace."

sun kar ye ha:l vatan ka: nehru: kai a:su: a:ye. . . .

Having heard of the condition of the country, tears flowed from Nehru's eyes.

—Contributed by Caman Singh
Fazalpur, Meerut, June 1965

matna: laṛo cuna:v, ab laṛne ka: samaya nahi:

Do not fight [contest] the elections, this is no time for fighting.

apne buzurgo ki: tu: dekhle kholkar bahi:

Open the ledger book and look at the record of your ancestors.

1. neta: subha:s ga:dhi kya: cuna:v laṛe the

1. Did the leader Subhash or Gandhi ever fight elections ?

sri:ra:m aur krisṇa ye sab se hi: baṛe the

And Lord Rama or Krishna ?—they were greatest of all.

nij a:n ma:n marya:da: ka: kya: kuch bhi: dhaya:n nahi:

Don't you have any thought of your own dignity and respect ?

2. seva: tya:g nahi: man me adhika:r ca:hta: hai
mujhe vot do mujhe ra:t din sor maca:ta::hai
hokar ta:kat me andha: a:j kuch neta: karm nahi:

2. You don't want to sacrifice, in your heart you crave for power,
That is why you shout day and night "Vote for me, vote for me."
Blinded by the power, there is no action which is worthy of leaders.

3. larte cuna:v me ter mer ki: dhu:a:dha:r hui:
ja:t pa:t ka: bhed bha:v do ca:r ki: ha:r hui:
a:ge pi:che khaic rahe kuch karte karm nahi:

3. There is too much "mine and thine" in election fights,
The difference of caste and creed brings defeat of a few,
Everyone is pulling his own way, nothing is being accomplished.

4. ab mat laro cuna:v bhala: jo sabka: ca:hte ho
ab band karo ye ka:m pher kyo der laga:te ho
ab sabke hit ki: soco sacca: ma:nava dharam yahi:

4. Don't fight elections, if you want good for *all*,
Stop this act now, why delay ?
Now, think the good for *all* that is the only true human religion.

—Contributed by Atar Singh at Meerut, September 1965

bha:iyo sighra pariva:r-niyojan karo.
ta:ki bha:rat me ka:yam beka:ri: na ho

Brothers, begin family planning soon
So that India will not have so many permanently unemployed,

1. anna au vastra ghar ghar me sabhi: ko mile
a:pki: kasṭamaya jummeda:ri: na ho

1. So that in each home there will be enough clothes and food
And so your responsibility will not be painful.

2. phir bana:ye banegi: nahi: umrabhar
socalo ta:ki ji:van ki: khva:ri: na ho

2. For your whole life you cannot make up for it—
Think it over so that your life is not wasted.

3. pher rahata: hai bha:rat vahi: ham vahi: du:dh ghi: ki: nadi: phirse ja:ṛi:na ho	3. If you don't act India will not advance And prosperity will not be.
4. sarvasikshit sulabh gra:m apana: bane jami:dari hari aur da:ri: na ho	4. Let our village be easy to live in, with all educated people, And let there be no prosperity for landlords and other exploiters.
5. nojava:no kaha: ma:no pya:re rasika ma:naha:ni: hama:ri: tumha:ri: na ho	5. Youth, listen to what Rasik says So that your prestige will not be damaged. —Contributed by Dudhna:th at Benares, Sept. 8, 1965

NOTES

1. This paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the California Folklore Society in April 1966 at Davis, California. I thank all my informants, particularly the members of various *bhajan mandalis*. I am especially indebted to Chaudhari Prathivi Singh 'Bedharak', Dudhnath 'Rasik', Atar Singh, and Parvana. I thank also Shri Jagdish Prasad Sharma of Meerut Gandhi Memorial Fund, and Shri Sunderlal, Secretary of Uttar Pradesh Harijan Sevak Sangh, without whose invaluable help this paper could not have been written. Thanks also go to Sylvia Vatuk for her assistance in the conception and execution of this paper.

2. Milton Singer, "The Great Tradition in a Metropolitan Center-Madras," JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE, LXXI (1958), 347-388.

3. John J. Gumperz, "Religion and Social Communication in Village India," *The Journal of Asian Studies,* XXIII(1964), 95-96.

4. See Ved Prakash Vatuk and Sylvia Jane Vatuk, "The Ethnography of *Sāng,* A North Indian Folk Opera," forth coming in *Asian Folklore Studies.*

5. For a detailed discussion of such changes among the lower castes, see M. N. Srinivas, "A Note on Sanskritization and Westernization," *Far Eastern Quarterly,* XV (1956), 481-496.

6. Henry Orensteing discusses the adoption of the name Pancal by members of Sonar and Lohar castes in the Maharashtrian Village he studied. See *Gaon: Conflict and Cohesion in an Indian Village* (Princeton, 1965), 110, 113.

7. Robert Redfield and Milton Singer, "The Cultural Role of Cities," *Economic Development and Cultural Change,* III (1954), 53-73.

8. Shankar Lal Yadav, *Hariyānā Pradesh kā Lok-Sāhitya* (Allahabad, 1960), 396. Yadav tells of the extremely generous reward given by the British Government of India to Pandit Dip Chand who preached enlistment in the army in order to fight the Germans during World War I. Chaudhari Prathivi Singh 'Bedharak,' in a personal communication, informs me that he was similarly employed during World War II, but resigned this well-paying job during the 1942 "Quit India" movement against the British.

9. John Greenway, *American Folksongs of Protest,* (Philadelphia, 1953), 9.

10. The process of "Indianization" is comparable to similar trends found among East Indians in Guyana, formerly British Guiana, See Ved Prakash Vatuk, "'Protest Songs of East Indians in British Guiana," JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE, LXXVII (1964), 235. Similar in tone also are the songs of East Indians on the West Coast of the United States and Canada, collected in *Gadar ki Gunj,* Vols. 1-15 (1916-1947 [in Panjabi]. For a brief discussion of the themes in these songs, see Ved Prakash Vatuk and Sylvia Jane Vatuk, "Protest Songs of the East Indians on the West Coast," *Folklore,* VIII (1966), 370.