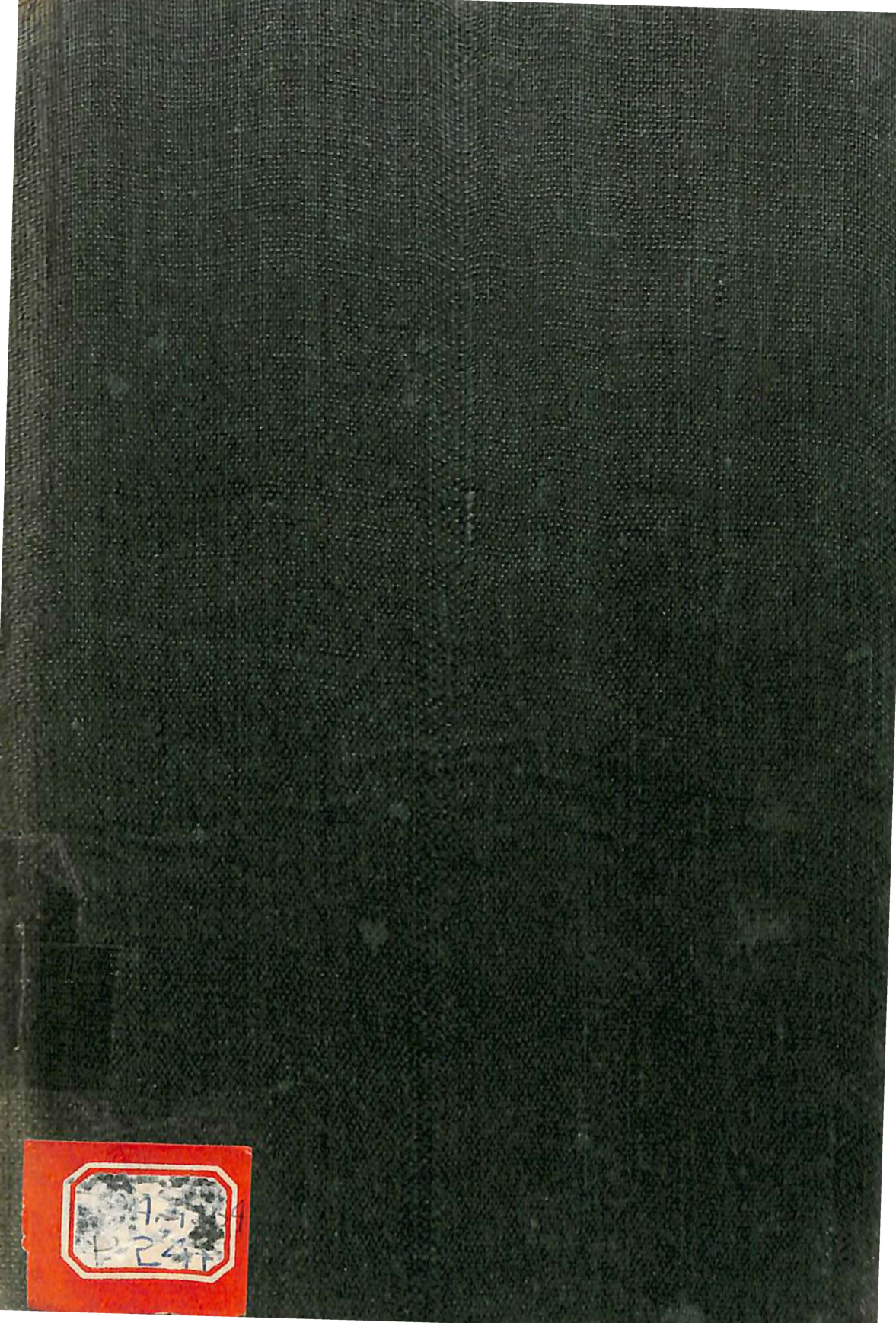

FOLK MUSIC AND MASS MEDIA

Dr. Shyam Parmar is the author of the widely acknowledged title "Traditional Folk Media in India." He has to his credit several important publications on various aspects of folklore and literature. As a Producer of Folk Programmes in AIR he was responsible for discovering many folk forms. He has also functioned as a Consultant to UNESCO Seminar-cum-Workshop on the Integrated Use of Folk Media and Mass Media, held in India. Currently he heads the Department of Traditional Media in the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

FOLK MUSIC AND MASS MEDIA

SHYAM PARMAR

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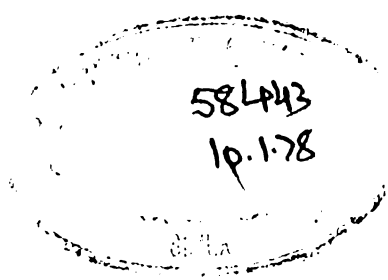

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To
Dinesh and *Rekha*

PREFACE

Folk music constitutes a major part of folklore. Credit goes to those scholars who first studied the subject as a body of antiquarian material and discovered the potentials of oral literature. Systematic investigation of the different aspects of folklore subsequently led many researchers to emphasise on folksongs, the study of which was found incomplete. While texts of various folksongs were collected and documented, the musical aspects of these songs were neglected. Hence the need for an integrated study of the folk music in close relation to other disciplines of folklore was felt.

The advent of mass media affected folk music in many ways. The use of folk music in mass media became a challenging task both for the musicians and the producers. The music linked with rigid practices of religious nature always resisted any change either in content or in form, while other genres of folk music had little or no taboo. A new genre of folk music with heterogenous traits emerged in course of time. It is close to folk music and, at the same time different in texture. Obviously, it is the result of continuity and change. This change in folk music occurred not only due to the socio-economic factors affecting it, but also due to the impact of mass media.

The professional singers, who have been responsible for exchange of ideas between villages and urban centres, had to face the encroachment of radio and film. They had to compromise with the changing situations. While professionally they continued to act as mobile communicators through live performances but, at the same time, they also tried to reach their audiences through mass media.

The secret of successful communication through folk music lies in the social interactions of the occasion, the group of performers and the singing styles. Folk music is a lively device, it is never static. The environmental changes that occurred during the last hundred years encouraged modifications in the singing styles. Innovations by individuals have always been accepted in folk music, but whenever too much of mutations have been done, neither the singers nor the listeners have enjoyed it. Continuity and change go together in folk music. Written texts and recordings help preservation on one hand and sustain the vital musical phrases of folk music on the other. Books containing texts of folksongs, filmi-hits and devotional songs find a good circulation amongst the literates. Literacy has been the great privilege of the ruling class in the past but in the contemporary situation mass media have taken over, and Radio and discs have made folk music infilterate the urban society too.

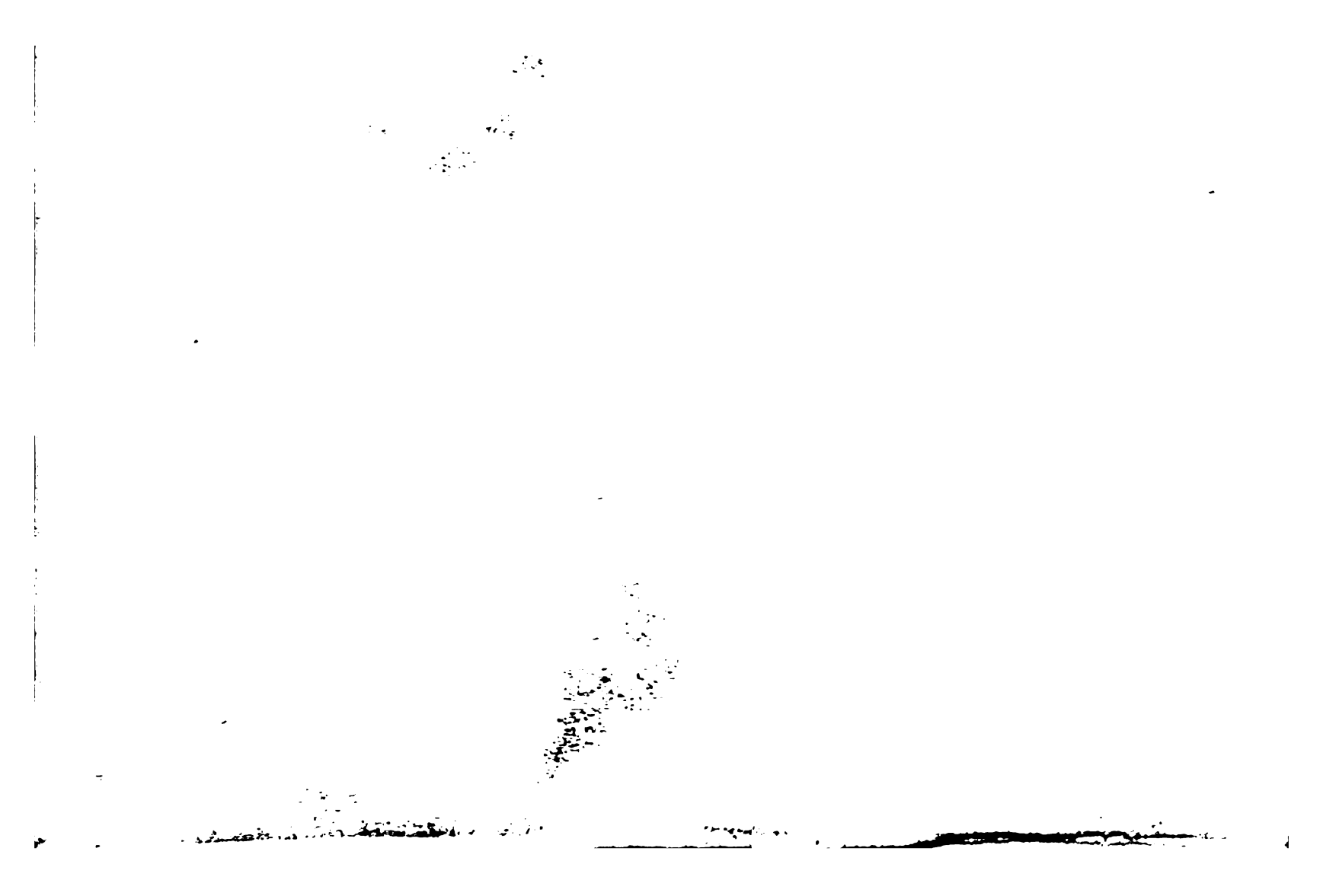
While working on this book I had in my mind to discuss all the above points in details. But due to limitation of pages, I had to restrain my efforts to a few chapters, and as a background I thought it necessary to introduce the works done by some of the reknowned folklorists. In appendices I have reproduced specimen of the folksong texts for the benefit of the general readers. I have also included the text of the memorandum on cataloguing and classification of sound recording of folk music prepared

by the International Folk Music Council, London. However, ultimately it is the readers who will assess how far I have succeeded in my attempts.

I am grateful to Shri Kajal Kumar Das and Shri S.Y. Dhavale for helping me in going through the manuscript. A special word of thanks to Miss S.M. Bajaj for preparing the press copy. And finally, I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Messers Communication Publications and Shri Om Prakash for the pain they took in bringing out this title within a very short period.

Shyam Parmar

New Delhi
October 2, 1977



CONTENTS

1

IT BEGINS WITH FOLKLORE

Ever since the German word *Volkskunde* was translated as 'folklore' by an English antiquarian, William J. Thoms, the multi-hued strata of the people's culture became an inevitable subject of study throughout the world. As a 'lively fossil', folklore has come to mean a branch of cultural ethnology in a short period. It has specified oral narratives, verselets and chants which perpetuate through the characteristic music of the rural folk and crude utterances of the ethnic groups. Folksongs, legends, ballads, rural dramatics and other art forms began to achieve a significant place amongst various aspects of folklore. Being of functional value, these forms have a close affinity with rites and rituals, festive customs and ceremonial practices of the unlettered masses of the rural India. If 'spoken' and 'sung' words are excluded from the realm of folklore, the residue would almost cease to be of any use to a developing society. The textual contents of the traditional songs, sung in various language groups, became important in due course because of their inherent quality of message-dissemination. Scholars tested these songs in different situations and found them genuine in expressing the

emotions of the people. They have been identified as pigments of group behaviour, as also effective channels of interpersonal and socio-ceremonial communication amongst the cultural groups to whom they belong.

In wider context, the ethnographic map of India offers a vast field to folklore scholars. With the cohesion of varied practices of ritualistic nature amongst the people and ever alive influences of diverse religious cults of the past, including the Vedic and non-Vedic traditions, folkloristics has become a more fascinating subject than ever, as it keeps on adding new grounds relating to several traits existing in the villages and in the complex social system of the tribal world.

While studying the folk literature, one is likely to come across seeds of folk ballads in *Narasamsi Gathas* of Vedic origin or sources of aboriginal tales either in Puranic literature or in the *Jatakas* of Buddhaghosa. What a joy of revelation it would bring to a scholar who happens to discover a link between some current rituals and customs on one hand and the precepts of *Atharva Veda* on the other. For instance, some of the Nagamese chants appear to be in consonance with the tonal intervals employed in the system of Vedic recitation. Findings of this sort would mean a pleasant surprise to a scholar of ethnomusicology. "To a wandering musicologist", as Alain Danielou puts, "folklore is a source of constant surprises and interesting discoveries. He finds typical Dravidian musical ornaments in Egypt and Tunisia, North Indian modes in Spain, while he can follow Eastern Indian musical forms through Indonesia up to Japan."

Incidently, the study of folklore in India came into prominence as a branch of Indology. Later, the study of comparative philology and mythological materials established a number of theories. One of them, propounded by

Theodor Benfey, is known as 'Indianist Theory'. It claims India to be the homeland of myths and fables. Investigation into the Sanskrit sources, especially by Maurice Bloomfield, brought forth the recognition of 'Indic School' as one of the three important schools of folklore for studying 'oral literature'. The publication of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* in 1832 followed by another journal, brought out by the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1844, proved useful in the early years to enthuse a sort of interest amongst the then intellectuals for intensive inquiries into ethnology and linguistics. In 1872, James Burgess, the editor of the famous journal *Indian Antiquary*, realised the growing importance of folkloristics as a subject and started distinguishing the oral literature from the antiquarian material. In successive years other research journals namely, the *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay* (1886), the *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Bankipore, Patna (1915), the *Quarterly Journal of Mythic Society*, Bangalore (1909) and many other journals were started. They also added sufficient data on different aspects of folklore. However, for a long time, the interest in folklore remained vague and devoid of any methodical investigation. Despite these shortcomings piecemeal efforts succeeded in encouraging Indian scholars for further collection of relevant material. As for the folksongs, efforts were judiciously made by George Grierson in 1873. He collected a few songs from North Bengal during his compilation work of *The Linguistic Survey of India* (1907). He also collected folksongs of Bhojpuri and Maithili dialects from Bihar. These songs later appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal* and in the *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, but they were not supplemented with musical notations and other

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contextual details. Prior to Grierson's active approach towards the field of folksongs, Charles E. Gover's name should be remembered. His valuable collection—*The Folksongs of Southern India* was first published by Messrs Higginbothams Ltd., Madras, in 1817. The volume contains English translations (in metric arrangement) of 79 folksongs, collected from the major languages of the South, viz. Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Canarese. But mere words, together with translation, can never be satisfactory documentation unless they are accompanied with musical notations and performance descriptions. Audio-visual aids were out of question in those days. But it was really unfortunate that nobody ever thought of writing down the tunes. The still more unfortunate part of the whole effort is the continuous practice of transcribing sung words on paper, which has been in vogue for the last hundred years or more.

While assessing the pioneer works done in this field one has to admit with reverence the enthusiasm of the foreign scholars. Their urge for knowledge led them to touch almost all regions of this vast land. With the help of their local subordinates these scholars took down in writing the scattered pieces from the material orally available with the language groups. Some of them even ventured to live among the tribals to record their age-old songs, legends, beliefs and customs. They prepared voluminous books and monographs on socio-economic life and cultural traits of the people. The efforts of these enthusiasts acted as a great stimulant on local scholars whose incentive was rather more genuine. Unlike their foreign counterparts, whose attempts were to project the folkloristic material with robust romanticism for a different kind of audience, the Indian scholars studied the subject with an objective outlook. With sincere gratitude to experts like James

Abbot, Richard C. Temple, George Grierson, W. Crooke, R. E. Enthoven, Charle E. Gover, W. G. Archer, Verrier Elwin and others, it may be stated that the works of the Indian scholars, which appeared during the last forty years, are comparatively more authentic and useful than the works of their predecessors. The only disadvantage they experienced was that they failed to reach wider readership because a bulk of their contribution was in regional languages.

As a result, most of the earlier efforts of local scholars remained unnoticed outside their regional languages. Collections done by the pioneers like Ram Iqbal Singh 'Rakesh', Ganesh Chaube, Dr. Govind Trigunayat and Durga Shankar Singh of Bihar, Zaverchand Meghani, Narmada Shankar Mehta and Pushkar Chandervaker of Gujarat, Dr. Bansiram Sharma and Ramdayal 'Neeraj' of Himachal Pradesh, Ramnarayan Shastri of J & K, Ramnarayan Upadhyaya and Dr. Chintamani Upadhyaya of Madhya Pradesh, Sane Guruji, Dr. Kamala Bai Deshpande and Dr. Sarojini Babar of Maharashtra, Avatar Singh Daler (Punjab), G. V. Rangaswamy and D. L. Narasihmachar of Karnataka, K. V. Jagannathan, J. N. Subramanyam, N. Vanamamalai, R. Ayyaswamy, Natesh Sastry (Tamil Nadu) and many others could not be made available for want of suitable transcription into English language. Those who have been successful in expressing in English were very few in number. Dr. D.C. Sen of Bengal was the only fortunate folklorist to earn an international reputation. He published his work both in Bengali and English as early as in 1920 and some of his collections were also translated into French. Dr. Praphulladatta Goswami has written many books on Assamese folklore. In English his *Ballads and Tales of Assam* and *Bihu Songs of Assam* have been widely acknow-

ledged. The works of Dr. K.B. Das (Orissa), Dr. Asutosh Bhattacharya and Sankar Sengupta (both from Bengal) present authentic account of their regional oral literature. In *The Field Songs of Chhattisgarh*, Dr. S.C. Dube has discussed the expressive genius of the people of Chhattisgarh. M.S. Randhawa and Devendra Satyarthi contributed monumental works both in Punjabi and English. A.K. Ramanujan (Tamil Nadu) and Dr. Durga Bhagwat (Maharashtra) have published many books in English, and thereby enriched the folkloristic study. It would not be possible to enlist here all the names of the early experts who have contributed to the study of this subject. For further information, *A Bibliography of Indian Folklore and Related Subjects* (Sengupta & Parmar) may be consulted. It is unfortunate that many folklore scholars happened to have confined themselves to their respective regional languages. At least it happened with more than two dozens collectors of folksongs of India and researchers who trod the lonely path of their cultural areas as early explorers. Also the village teachers and social workers, who, out of their own interest in the subject, have collected a huge number of folksongs and other forms of oral literature from the remotest parts of the country, realised afterwards the futility of their efforts. They do not know what to do with the treasure they have collected.

2

POST-INDEPENDENCE EFFORTS

The independence of India in 1947 created a new kind of awareness amongst her people about their rich cultural heritage. A desire for a change was evident, and to that effect things began to move towards the revival of the glorious traditions of arts, culture and literature. Concurrently, the study of oral literature and action-oriented performing arts received a boost. Folklore Societies were formed in some states to encourage preservation and publication of folklore material of their respective regional languages. A sense of creative use of folk arts has also emerged and folklore found a place as an optional subject of study in some universities.

The collections of folksongs brought out by scholars after 1947 remained confined to a limited readership. A close look at the material published so far shows that most of these publications are in regional languages. Rajasthan has contributed considerably in this direction. Old ballads, traditional songs, legends and other forms of folklore have been collected from its various districts with scholarly devotion and presented to the readers in a number of books. Several articles appeared in local journals, namely

Lok Kala, Lok Sahitya, Lok Sanskriti, Maru Bharti, Parampara, Rajasthan Bharti, Rangayan, Rangyog, Shodha Patrika and *Varada*. The Sangeet Natak Akademi of the state has laid stress on the collection of musical varieties of the region on tapes. The Akademi has also carried out a survey of folk musical instruments and professional folk artistes of the region under the guidance of Komal Kothari, ex-Secretary of the Akademi and now a recipient of Nehru Fellowship.

In order to encourage scientific study of folklore and the regional language, the Sadul Rajasthani Research Institute was established at Bikaner in 1946. Earlier, there used to be a Rajasthani Research Society at Calcutta which has published two volumes of Rajasthani folksongs. The Bhartiya Lok Kala Mandal, Udaipur, came into existence in 1952. The institution's main objective was to conduct survey and research work. Writes Dr. Devilal Samar, founder-Director of the Institute, "The devoted workers of the institution had to move from place to place with their recording machines and photo cameras on their shoulders. The traditional artistes who were to be approached got panic-struck in the beginning on account of this extra-ordinary activity on the part of urban people. The singers who always sang for rituals and inspirational occasions sang for them after great persuasion with the belief that the mouth piece of the recording machine would squeeze all the sweetness of voice that they possessed".

It took several years for the institution to complete the initial survey work. Besides this, the institution rendered meritorious service for the revival of the art of folk-dancing and other art forms. All the credit goes to Dr. Samar and his close associate, Dr. Mahendra Bhanawat. Both took keen interest in development of the institution's activities.

In 1960, Rupayan Sansthan, an Institute of Folklore, was established at village Borunda (Jodhpur district) through the efforts of Vijay Dan Detha and Komal Kothari with an objective to collect, preserve and disseminate the oral traditions of Rajasthan. The Institute has brought out a monograph on Langas, a caste of professional folk musicians. The purpose of the monograph was to single out the musical genre of this community. Preparing of discs is one of the important activities of the Institute under the series 'Rajasthan folk legacy'. Two sets of discs, each along with a monograph, have already been cut for circulation. Nearly one thousand folk tales of Rajasthan have been collected by Vijay Dan from a single village and have been published in ten volumes. Also a monthly magazine, called *Lok Sanskriti* is being published by this Institute for the last fourteen years. It covers the entire range of regional folklore.

In other states, the study of folklore no longer remained neglected. In Bihar, for instance, the Bihar Rashtra Bhasha Parishad established a research wing in Patna which has made valuable contributions to the study of folklore. Maithili Loka Sahitya Samiti (Maithili Folklore Committee) came into being to render its services to the growth of regional folk literature. However, in the thirties, Sri Sarat Chandra Roy contributed a lot towards documentation and analysis of tribal folklore of Bihar. Recently, Bhagalpur University has recognised the oral literature of Magahi, Maithili and Bhojpuri as subjects of research projects.

A year before independence, an institute—Lok Varta Parishad was started at Tikamgarh, erstwhile princely state in Madhya Pradesh under the patronage of the then Maharaja of Orachha. For a couple of years this institute published a quarterly journal *Lok Varta* which was edited

by Krishna Nand Gupta. This journal acted as a forum for those interested in the folklore of Bundelkhand. But with the merger of states with Indian Union, the life of the Parishad came to an end and the journal ceased to be published. Later came into existence the Tribal Research Institute at Chhindwara (MP). It has to its credit valuable material collected under the supervision of Dr. T. B. Naik. The institute published verbatim of a couple of tribal narratives like *Panduvani* and *Ramayani* of Gondi dialect in Devnagri. These publications proved to be unique attempts towards documentation of the narratives directly in the style popular among the Pardhan singers of Chhattisgarh.

In 1958, K. D. Upadyaya set up a Folk Culture Research Institute at Allahabad. A museum of folk arts was built up and a bibliography of Indian folklore was under progress. After a few years of functioning, the Institute placed all material, including the half done bibliography at the disposal of Dr. E. C. Kirkland of the Florida University. For the last many years, the Ethnographic and Folk Culture Society, founded by Dr. D. N. Majumdar, at Lucknow has been devoting its attention in creating academic interest in oral traditions and ethnology amongst the scholars of Indian anthropology. The Society has started publishing *Eastern Anthropologist*, a quarterly journal, presently edited by K. S. Mathur. In Uttar Pradesh, the universities at Allahabad, Meerut and Lucknow have recognised folk literature as a subject for post-graduate study. The Kuru Lok Sansthan, Meerut, has collected a lot of material of regional interest and published it for the benefit of the students of folklore. In this connection, mention should be made of the services rendered by the Braj Sahitya Mandal (Mathura) through its quarterly journal *Braj Bharti*. The first annual session of this body

was held in 1953. It was inaugurated by the first President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad. To quote Hari S. Upadhyaya: "As a result of this meeting, an All-India Body was formed to give impetus to the scholars and coordinate their folklore activities. This body, known as Hindi Janpadiya Parishad, was presided over by Acharya Narendra Dev, then vice-chancellor of the Hindu University, Varanasi. Formerly the Parishad published a quarterly journal *Janpad*, under the editorship of several scholars, including Dr. Hajari Prasad Dwivedi. The journal, which met its untimely death due to financial reasons after only four issues, contained many learned articles and furnished a general bibliography of the folklore publications printed in Hindi."

The Government of Maharashtra has constituted a folklore committee, known as Maharashtra Rajya Lok Sahitya Samiti. Having its headquarters at Poona, the committee has to its credit several publications in Marathi. Similarly, the Government of Gujarat has sponsored the Gujarat Lok Sahitya Samiti which has also produced a couple of books. Folklore is a recognised subject for post graduate study in Saurashtra University, Rajkot.

The tribes of Assam have always been a fascinating subject of study. The state has a huge amount of hidden treasure in oral literary tradition and provides unlimited scope for further explorations. The Kamrup Anushilan Samiti and individual scholars like Dr. B. K. Barua, who edited the *Journal of the Assam Research Society* and published a special number on folklore of the region, were busy in this peruse. In Orissa also, the Government has established a State Academy to assist and encourage folkloristic study. However, barring the works of Dr. K. B. Das, nothing worth mention has appeared on the scene.

During the last decade of the Nineteenth century Rabindranath Tagore made an attempt to collect children's rhymes (*Chhadas*) from the villages of Bengal, which he discussed in his article, titled as *Lok Sahitya*. In the beginning, his main concentration was on the literary qualities of the songs and not on the musical aspects. Soon he felt attracted towards the philosophical songs, called *Baul*. He composed lyrics on the dictional and musical pattern of these songs. Tagore's inclination towards folk-literature made the Caluctta University interested, and after 1919 the University undertook the publication work and brought out volumes of folksongs. One of such collections is the *Eastern Bengal Ballads*. Here again the notations were missing. In 1956, *Indian Folklore*, a quarterly appeared from Calcutta and it changed its name to *Folklore*, as bi-monthly in 1960 and again to monthly in 1962. The journal has to its credit a huge amount of folkloristic literature, published from time to time in its pages drawn from different parts of India and outside.

In the South, the situation has not been very encouraging. University of Mysore has, however, introduced folklore as an independent discipline. Besides, the University has also built up a folklore museum, which is on the same pattern as followed by Bhartiya Lok Kala Mandal, Udaipur and Tribal Research Institute of Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh. At the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore, a separate Folklore wing has started functioning under the guidance of Dr. Jawaharlal Handoo. During the last session of the Indian Folklore Congress, held in 1977, the Folklore Fellows of India came into being. The Congress was held in Calcutta and was sponsored by the Central Institute of Indian Languages in collaboration with Akademi of Folklore, Calcutta. In Kerala, the

interest in the promotion of folk arts is being taken by Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi, Trichur.

All these sporadic activities are required to be channelised on national basis, and it should be ensured that the work on folklore scholarship may not turn into a farce in future. The things scattered in journals, memoirs, manuscripts, printed books, museums, regional collections etc. should be compiled in volumes, with suitable indexes and bibliographies in the form of a Dictionary of Indian Folklore. In this connection, mention may be made of the *Encyclopaedia of Bengali Folksongs*, the first part of which has been published by the Calcutta University a few years back. To represent the Hindi speaking area, Nagri Pracharini Sabha, Varanasi had published a separate volume (XVI) on folk-literature under the series entitled, 'The History of Hindi Literature' ten years ago. The work contains a brief account of the folkloristic efforts done in twenty major dialects of North India.

Looking at the chaotic state of affairs in the field of folklore, one feels the need of co-ordinated efforts between institutions and individual workers Scattered enquiries and inconsistent methods of field-work led to a considerable amount of confusion. A musicologist wishing to take up the folk melodies as his subject of study hardly finds any material readily available for reference. Dr. A. Bhattacharya has very righly said: "For more than a last three quarters of a century materials have indiscriminately been published in journals and periodicals. They lie scattered in their pages, slowly awaiting decay and oblivion. They have never been worked out for the study in a systematic and scientific method which is followed now-a-days by other countries. Since the attainment of the independence, a further instalment of fresh material has

also been collected from the field and published here and there, but unless a systematic study of the subject is adopted such indiscriminate collection and aimless preservation will not produce any result."

3

EVALUATING OLD RECORDS

The folklore material collected by the foreign scholars in India is characterised by a marked absence of verbatim transcripts of the original songs and narratives. A major portion of this material is in English translations, and hence, may not be of much use to the researchers who intend to dig out the cultural sensibility and the linguistic expression of the different communities. Even the authenticity of these translations is not free from ambiguity.

Oral songs have always held their sway in their respective language cultures. In English translations and/or transcreations they sound different, simply because translating the folklore material, particularly the folk literature, calls for certain modifications in the inherent emotions and cultural contexts of the regional Indian languages to suit the temperament of the English language. Such modifications may not always produce the intended results, for example, a folksong translated into English does not say "My feelings after being forsaken are like those of a person who has leaned against an apparently trusty tree and then found that it was insecure." Instead it says,

"I leaned my back against an oak
I thought it was a trusty tree
But first it bent and then it broke
My true love has forsaken me."

The difference is too obvious. Similar traits of ambiguity are also discernible in the translations of the tribal poems collected by the English speaking pandits; and even, as the following example will show, attempts to convey through parallel images have not always bore fruitful results:

"Leja, leja, o love, you will
remember your promise,
For as the deer leaves tracks, I have left
an itch in your body,
And I shall learn how to tell the
English ruler about you"

(A Muria song, translated by
W.V. Grigson)

In the surrounding villages of Jagdalpur, the *Leja* song has a significant place. The *Leja* song probably has its origin with the 'send off' ritual to some dear one. Literally the *Leja* means 'take it', which would have been the initial wish of the 'send off' ritual. Many of the *Leja* songs are lengthy. The rhyming lines *Leja, leja, leja* just serve as a relic and could be recited to unfold any song. The recitative line seldom has any affinity with the actual song. It merely helps to enhance the form of the song. These *Leja* songs, in their texts, may be about a bright-eyed girl, a hot summer night, rainy season, harvest grievances, satires of life, loose woman, poverty or police atrocities. Any subject may be the theme of the *Leja*.

"Translation" says Malinowski, "in the correct sense must refer not merely to different linguistic uses but often to the different cultural realities behind the words". The challenge is rather difficult. Many a translators have failed in recreating the Indian sensibility that pervades the indigenous and spontaneous forms of folk literature in their translations. S.C. Roy in his work on Mundas has translated Munda folksongs into English in the same manner the foreign scholars used to do in early days of folkloristic study. The following example, where the original songs as well as its English translation has been quoted, may help those who want to tread the same path but are not aware of the pitfalls:

Naku Nakuja Daromada
Kurid Ko Lapaludia Go
Naku Bakuja Aagamari Ko
Geyon Geyona
Udubakope Jojo Ko Jumblaye
Uduba Kopega
Chundulakopega Uli Ko Ambaranye
Chundulakopega
Kako Sukujan Go
Jo jo ko Jumblaye
Kako Sukujan Go
Uli Ko Ambaranpe

These kites have hither wing'd their way
A thirst for water clear,
The greedy geese with graceful swing,
Thus wend their way up hear.
Oh! Take them there yon tam'rind tope
Don't stand—do take them there;

Point out to them yon mango grove,
O let them there repair
The tam'rind tope they do not like
It does not please them so
Yon mango grove these geese dislike,
Ill pleas'd are they, I throw.

In the above translation, the translator has tried to stretch the meaning, while the original song simply describes a landscape as in the following words:

Look, the kites are welcoming the rains,
swinging their wings,
Look, the geese are flying.
Show them the tamarind trees,
Show them the mango grove.
They did not like the mango grove,
They did not like the tamarind trees.

James Campbell in his *Spirit Basis of Belief and Custom* (1885) discussed a Marathi wedding song, composed in support of ceremonial stealing of the bride which is still practised in rural Maharashtra. The original song as quoted by Campbell is as under:

Dari Hoti Amberai
Tethun Ale Chor Janwai
Chrun Neli Balabai
Dhawa dhawa Dada Vyahi
Jyachya Hati Tyane Neli Balabai

Comments of Dr. Durga Bhagwat on Campbell's interpretation of the above song is worth mentioning. She writes: "Though Campbell has explained the ceremonial

stealing correctly, his interpretation of the last two lines of the song is incorrect. It is because he has taken down the last two lines wrongly; it affects not only the general implication but the very significance of the symbolism of stealing. The symbolism is obvious in the first three lines of the song, and the last two lines are an antithesis of the former symbolism. The contradiction, viz. the thief as the rightful owner of the stolen property is popular in Indian social tradition. The idea is sanctified by custom and belief about the bride being the property of her husband, right from her birth.....As a matter of fact the ritual of the bridgroom stealing the wife's or her mother's ornament is symbolical of the old practice of bride stealing. ...The line which is misquoted by Campbell is:

Jyachi Hati Tyane Neli Balabai.

Even grammatically the line is incorrect. It makes no sense. It should be:

Jyachi Hoti Tyane Neli Balabai.

This means, the girl has been taken away by the man to whom she belonged."

Shankar Ganesh Date, a highly conscientious Marathi folklorist, believes that the bulk of Indian folklore that has been translated into English is, at its best, sketchy and even disjointed. He has emphasised that the preservation of the original text is essential in the collection of folklore and all the literature produced in English translations has, according to him, a place of secondary importance.

So far the most deplorable part of folkloristic study has been the blind craze for mere collections of folksong texts. The researchers, including many folklorists and traditional

media enthusiasts, failed to build up any clear idea about the subject itself. Since various types of folksongs have been handed down to us through the ages, their study has created an archival interest, and as a result the essential meaning of the folksong in terms of poetry and music has eluded the scholars for a long time.

It was Montaigue, the French scholar who declared that a true poem remains poetry even if composed by cannibals. Surprisingly enough, folk poetry is still struggling to be accepted as either a respectable piece of literature or a living piece of music. A popular definition, describing folksong 'as a sort of crude composition, having only a pinch of poetry that could be musically uttered by the people whose literature is perpetuated not by writing and printing but by oral transmission,' merely relates to its 'form' and does not encompass the historical perspective which enabled mankind to evolve this variety of song.

Let us not forget that a folksong collectively belongs to a community. Its meaning, purport, significance of phrasing and the movement of the emotional patterns woven into it—all lend themselves to its 'identification' with the community's rituals and customs. Unlike a lyric composed for a definite purpose, a folksong has ceremonial implications for a society or the community which gives birth to it. It has its own idiom and phrases; its own logic and meaning; its apparent 'meaninglessness', as it were, has a hard core 'relevance' for the community singing it. It has deep roots in the springs of daily life and is interminably linked with the process of living. Here is a living composition where distinction between the creator and the thing created are non-existent. A folksong does not denote any deliberate composition or creation by an individual at any 'point of time'; it is on the other hand, a spontaneous and collective creation of the entire community evolved

through a creative process coloured by the subtle nuances of their ritual and emotional life. "It is a body of poetry and music which has come into existence, without the influence of conscious art, as a spontaneous utterance filled with characteristic expression of the feelings of a people. Such songs are marked by certain peculiarities of rhythm, form and melody which are traceable, more or less clearly, to racial (or national) temperament, modes of life, climatic and political conditions, geographical environment and language." (Henry Edward Krehbieal: *Afro-American Folksongs).*

Grimm says: 'The folksong, truely speaking, composes itself'. This may be so—but only partly—because the distinguishable creator of a folksong is an 'individualised representative' of his community. In its origin, it may have been the utterance of an individual of acute sensibility. But once a song goes off his lips, his identity as its 'creator' gets transfused into that of the 'community'. The individual here merely serves as a passing phenomenon. It is this aspect which distinguishes the folk variety of music from the acquired or cultivated music as an art form. A folksong is a form of expression in which almost every member of the community participates. Collective singing, being an essential mode of 'folksong' presentation, keeps it alive and pulsating with the emotional nuances of the entire community. Even the not-so-outstanding singer of the group remains an active participant in this art form. More so, it provides opportunity for the constant making, remaking and recreating of a song, imbibing all the subtle changes and variations rendered inevitable by the changing social norms of the community. Owing to this active process of change, Phillip Barry has termed it 'communal recreation'. The impact of this process brings about changes in the wordings and revision of rhythmic patterns,

leading to newer and fresh vocal luminosity down the ages. Such changes often lead to several variants and local versions in this form of expression. Hence, it can temporarily be said that a folksong is a concept of perpetual oral tradition of a whole community and not of an individual. But then, what about the folksongs that have been composed by the village poets on themes like Charkha, freedom struggle and Satyagraha movement during the pre-independence period, or, say, on topics like 'Grow More Food' and 'Family Planning' in more recent years? How do we classify them? With the advent of modern technology and its consequent impact on mass media, such questions assume greater significance. Should the folk arts remain static in order to retain their original form and genuineness? Or, should they assimilate the new emotions that arise in a changing society from time to time? Another pertinent question is how can we determine the age of a folksong? By its rhythm which keeps on changing? Or, by its text which also undergoes several changes? Or, say, by its symbols and metaphors which assume newer forms every now and then? A recent phenomenon has added a new dimension to this question, and that is how to classify those songs, which are composed by an individual well conversant in the folksong styles to serve a definite purpose, and then, are migrated from city to village. And what should be our criteria for ascertaining the authenticity of musical and textual contents of these songs?

The recent years have also seen an interesting, but not so encouraging, change in the relationship between the folk-singers and their audience. In a light music song we have a poet, the singer, the music-composer and the listener. In a folksong, these levels are absent so long it is not documented and does not move out of its local setting But, as soon as it is used for mechanical re-production, it

passes through a process of improvisation or embellishment by another group of people. Thus, a distinction is created between a genuine folksong and a 'folklike' song. There are examples where texts of songs have been separated from tunes and set to other musical scores. A folksong has no standing if its own music is lost. That is why a folksong has always been meant for rendering and not reading. Hence, the question arises whether a song composed and yet deliberately designated as 'folksong' can be accepted as a folksong. Merely by adopting rural phrases and folk type of metric arrangement can a poem become a folksong or by just setting it to a traditional tune can it be considered a folksong in the accepted sense of the definition?

These, and many other similar questions have to be answered before we can arrive at a comprehensive and satisfactory definition of the term 'folksong'. Many variants of different folksongs, and sometimes, even of a single folksong, do exist. A scientific method of classifying these songs and their respective variants in a definite time space pattern has to be evolved, since the existing definition of folksong handed downs to us from 19th century has proved to be inadequate long ago. Old traditions are fast getting mixed up with new ones; aesthetic and social values are changing rapidly. The conditions and setting in which a folksong took birth and survived as a living entity are gradually disappearing. In such an atmosphere, much of the vitality and meaning of our folklore may be lost for the future generations unless we solve the problems enumerated above.

4

DOCUMENTATION OF FOLKSONGS

In the past, a sympathetic appreciation of the *Desi* music by the classical musicians had inspired the latter to adopt the folk musical styles like *Chaiti, Kajari, Mand* and *Tappa* into the accomplished *Margi* system of Indian music. Examples of classical maestros like Ustad Faiyaz Khan, Bade Gulam Ali and Atlaf Hussain Khan admiring the virtuosity of folk musical styles are often cited. It is said that Faiyaz Khan used to sing *Garba* song of Gujarat and some marriage songs of different dialects to please his patrons. Bade Gulam Ali mentioned a number of folk tunes during an informal interview recorded by the Delhi Station of All India Radio. And Professor S.K. Saxena recalls an incident from the life of Altaf Hussain Khan in the following words: "He (Altaf Hussain Khan) was proceeding in a tonga towards the railway station (Khurja) to go to Purnea, when the following simple song gently closed upon him:

Too mat kar kaya ka guman, tanak teri jindgani
Is kaya par doob jamegi, kheti karega kisan
Tanak Teri jindgani.

The singer was a grass cutter. He sang as he worked in total oblivion of the world around him. Altaf Khan was overwhelmed by the soulful quality of the song and by telling directness of its theme. The maestro candidly confessed that with all his musical training or perhaps because of it—he never been able to sing so effectively as that simple man had sung." However, these cannot be considered as instances of serious interest shown by the classical musicians towards folk music. After centuries of practice the classical Indian music has reached a stage where it does not seem to bear any close affinity with the folk music of today. The gulf between these two musical styles has steadily widened. The former is learnt through meticulous practice, while the latter is inherited.

So far as the notation system is concerned, musicians of the past had a very little knowledge of it. The system was prevalent only in an underdeveloped form, and was not much in practice. Writing of musical composition in symbolic notes came into vogue in India very late. To be more precise, only after 20's it became possible to standardize the notation system to stabilise the existing forms of musical styles. The credit goes to the two great musicians, Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar and Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, who devised a workable system of notating Indian music. Even then, because of the formal illiteracy that prevailed among many classical musicians, illustrations of folksongs were not systematically rendered to notations until 1960, with a few exceptions like the fortyseven songs, compiled by Dr. S.N. Ratanjankar in the volume *Bharatpur Folksongs*. This volume was published in 1939 by Rural Reconstruction Department of the erstwhile Bharatpur State. A.J. Agarkar's thesis—*Folk Dances of Maharashtra*, published in 1950, also con-

tains nine dance-songs with notations done by L.S. Manohar.

Kumar Gandhrva, an outstanding classical musician, has made notations of hundreds of Malwi folksongs. He was attracted by the elemental charm of the folk melodies. His creative genius gave him a free and independent outlook, entirely different from that of a sophisticated classicist. With a missionary zeal he delved into the depth of the folk rhymes and captured their spirit. He picked up the musical patterns a folksongs, mend them into classical moulds, and thus made an effective breakthrough from the rigidity of classical forms. In 1962, appeared Dr. Karan Singh's collection of poems *Shadow and Sunlight*. It contains thirtyone Dongri-Pahari folksongs, all accompanied with notations in Bhatkhande system. The collection also contains translations of folksongs, both in Hindi and in English. Institutes like Bhartiya Lok Kala Mandal, Udaipur, and Rajasthan Sangeet Natak Akademi have published a number of anthologies of regional folksongs, each supplemented with standard musical notations of the songs. *Rajasthan ka Lok Sangeet* by Samar and Varma, *Geetayan* by Kamala Somani and *Chirmi* by Sudha Rajhans are some of the titles which may be referred to in this connection. While successfully retaining the medieval touch in its melodic texture, the folk music of Rajasthan today presents a variety of tunes. The types of music patronised by the princely states before independence, and the music transmitted through oral traditions later on came to be known as *Gangaur*, *Panihari*, *Hichaki*, *Jala*, *Nihalde*, *Oloo*, *Moomal*, *Kalali* etc. It should be noted here that the folksongs were popular with professional singers in earlier days, slowly got absorbed into the folk music of the rural and semi-urban people of the state. Broadly speaking, the music of this region belongs to a

few ethnic and rural communities; it became popular all over the region through wandering minstrels. *Geetayan* presents a fairly good selection of old and popular folk-songs. In all fifty in number, these songs are traditionally sung in *Dadra, Kaharva* and *Deepchandi* rhythms. Kamla Somani has been quite judicious in rendering the collected songs into Indian notations. With the exception of a few songs, which vary in words and tunes, the collection is quite reliable. The text of the song called *Panihari*, for instance, is slightly different from the text of the same song published in *Rajasthan Swar Lahri* (Part I) on page 48. Of course, such variations cannot be avoided owing to varying geographical traits. For example, the style of singing the *Ghumar* and the *Loor*, popular in Udaipur is different from that of Bikaner. Similarly, a song called *Pipli*, popular around Udaipur is sung in *Drut laya* while the same is rendered in *Vilambit laya* in Bikaner. Despite these variations, it is really remarkable that the thematic base and the tunes of many songs remained unchanged in Rajasthan. The same can be said about the folksongs of Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar and Maharashtra also. *Himachaliya Lok Lahri*, compiled by S.S.S. Thakur in 1971, contains about one hundred thirtyeight songs collected from remote areas of Chamba, Pangi, Kinnaur, Mandi Mahasu and Kulu. Dr. Sarojini Babar's book *Lok Sangeet* includes several folksongs, popular among the women folk of Maharashtra. In *Folksongs of South Gujarat*, Madhubhai Patel has compiled twentyfour songs and presented them along with Western notations. The book carries a valuable preface by Professor R.C. Mehta of the Indian Musicological Society, Baroda. Indian Folklore Society's books *Ethnomusicology in India* and *An Approach to the Study of Indian Music* also contain songs with standard notations.

The process of rendering folksongs in musical notations has its own limitations. Transcribed into cold writing with inadequate symbols, it loses its warmth and charm, and cannot be purposive to the desired extend. Even the Western system of notation, which has invented additional symbols to represent certain rhythmic combinations and tonal complexities of folk music, has often proved inadequate. Hence, tape-recording of the folksongs turns out to be the only method that can give faithful results. The use of tape-recorders as a mean to preserve folk music has come into vogue in India very recently, although it was used for the same purpose in Germany as back as in 1936, when Dr. Fritz A. Bose made a collection of folk music (German Folk Ballads) on tape. In India, persons who had wire-recorders in their possession might have collected some illustrations of folk music, but at present these are not traceable. To our information, a set of records of Indian folk music is available in USA, which has been jointly edited by Danielou and All India Radio. Then, we are also aware of the long playing discs of folksongs of Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Andamans, released through the Bureau of Ethnology in United States. Folklorists might also be aware of the name of Arnald Banke, a great scholar of India Music, who died some years back in London. He went around India with a van equipped with sound recording machines. The equipment was provided to him jointly by the Universities of Oxford, Lyden and Sorbonne for collection of folk musical material.

To make folk music authentic, certain privileges to the folk-singers, which they enjoy during performance in a conditioned milieu, have become obligatory. The sound-patterns of songs retain in their forms the heritage of oral poetry. But such poetry is improvised on-the-spot as the emotional appeal of the words often gives free vent

to the performer's feelings. In fact, no sharp distinction can be made between the music and the text. Music may remain static for centuries while the words may change. The functional utility of the words in a folksong, however, is undeniable, yet for correct analysis, verbatim transcripts are always necessary.

For a long time folksongs were treated as items of light reading. They were not accepted by the academicians as specimens of serious poetry. In addition to this the want of notations and sound-recordings made the study of folksongs in musical terms almost impossible. Those who varified the texts of old songs from the available collections, found that many of them have vanished from the lips of the people. The loss is tremendous, yet the utility of the written part of the folkloristic material cannot be denied. Especially, the text of a folksong may be more useful to a linguist or socio-anthropologist than to a person who wants to investigate the musical modes of the song. The study of the musical side of folksongs, touched upon by a number of scholars in the past, was only superficial.

It is unfortunate but true that whatever reference material is available at present is not supplemented with illustrative sound recordings. The whole approach fails when we try to locate the impact of the folk arts on more sophisticated art forms and the interaction between the mass media and traditional arts. Moreover, the advent of industrialization and the slow but steady process of urbanization that follows it have adversely affected the folk music in more than one way. Firstly, as a result of the continuous influx of migratory labourers from villages into the big cities and the industrial towns, the enchanting folk tunes, the lively ballads, the amorous songs and the ritualistic chants that used to be a part and parcel of the day-to-day life of these labourers in their native places

have undergone a process of ruthless disintegration. Again, the displacement of a big population after independence has caused a great setback to the traditional folk music. As it stands, today the age-old folk arts are facing a serious threat of extinction. Though, even today we sometimes come across groups of people who, while working in the big cities of Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras, have still been able to retain their traditional songs and music, yet what we have lost so far can never be compensated. Only a marked improvement over the existing methods of recording the folksongs can ensure the preservation of what we have not lost as yet, and one feels that it is high time we should start a continuous process of collecting and classifying folkloristic material in a scientific manner.

5

UTILISING FOLK MUSIC IN MASS MEDIA

The variants of traditional music have a rich past. Over the years they have sustained their popularity among the people belonging to various cultural traits. This remarkable durability of these variants and their fragments is but natural, for the folk music, in a broad sense, represents those ideas and emotions which are directly related to the socio-economic background of the people. These ideas and emotions give birth to musical idioms which are so intricately woven into the body of ceremonial and ritual practices of these people that any attempt to dissociate them from their respective cultural milieu would be futile. "When a distinctive and consistant musical style lives in a culture or runs through several cultures," says the well known musicologist Alan Lomax, "one can *posit* the existence of a distinctive set of emotional needs or drives that are somehow satisfied or evoked by this muisc."

Out of more than three hundred perceptible folk-musical styles prevalent in India, the predominant regional styles like *Burrakatha* (Andhra Pradesh), *Baul* and *Bhatiali* (Bangal) *Bidapad* and *Bidesia* (Bihar) *Garba* and *Ras*

(Gujarat), *Gi-Gi Pad* (Karnataka), *Kolkali Pattu* (Kerela), *Ruf* and *Chhakari* (Kashmir), *Sua* and *Saire* (Madhya Pradesh), *Powada* and *Lavani* (Maharashtra), *Heer* and *Giddha* (Punjab), *Dasskathia* and *Palla* (Orissa), *Maand, Panihari* and *Ghumar* (Rajasthan), *Chaiti* and *Kajari* (Uttar Pradesh), and *Dhalo* and *Dakani* (Goa), could easily be identified as major patterns since they have been able to retain the pristine purity of their original musical forms. Their sharp features lend them a kind of durability which is not to be found even in their respective languages they belong to.

It has been noted that from time to time new stanzas are being composed by village musicians, wandering minstrels, bards, women-folk and others, and even traditional lyrics are improvised, but never they drift away from the inherent characteristics of their melodic structures. In fact, the bridle of conventions and age-old practices of different social strata prevent them from doing so.

Before proceeding furter let us classify the folk musical material of the country into three broad groups:

The first being the group of songs that has a close link with the classical styles of singing. The vast concourse of songs related to *bhakti* cult draws their themes from the Hindu mythology. The songs of this category have a devotional flavour and some of them even admit embellishment and, to some extent, *tanas* and *alaps* in their stylized crudeness.

The second group comprises of the wide range of musical styles that prevail in the countryside. *Inter alia* it includes legendary narratives like *Puran Bhagat* (Punjab) and *Pandwani* (Madhya Pradesh). Other varieties in this category are the ceremonial songs, ballads, seasonal songs, work songs, the rituals songs and the love songs. This group of songs has a thick layer of mixed influences. Its music

as a whole survives in cross-cultural traits of social life. Its structural shades vary from caste to caste and region to region. In this lot we find a melody, prevalent in Kutch among the cattle grazers, which sounds akin to *Sindi Bhairavi*, the notes of which may again be found in the *Heer* of Punjab, or we get songs resembling *Kafi* or *Chaiti*, the calendaric songs of Uttar Pradesh, using the *swaras* of *Kamod* and *Jhijhoti* in *Chachar tal* or *Charchari* as mentioned in the works of Bhasa and Kalidas, the folk version of which can also be traced in the *Jajara* compositions of Telugu. In this group of songs, the tune patterns of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu area mostly fall within the format of *Pahadi* raga of *Bilawal that*. They resemble *Bhupali* and, to a lesser degree, *Durga*. The *Led* of Bundelkhand takes the shade of *Yaman*, while *Chaneni* of Awadhi speaking area gives us a glimpse of *Pilu* and *Desh*. The *Mirza Saheba* of Punjab has the notes of *Sarang* in *Kahrawa tal* while the other styles of singing of the same song has the melodic impressions of *Tilang*.

The music of this category surprises many when it reveals *raga tatva*. It has attracted musicologist like Alain Danielou who found Ahirs of North India using scales with twelve semitones. Experts have realised the indebtedness of this fund to classical musical styles like *Tappa*, *Mand*, *Purvi* and *Kajari*. *Kafi*, which were originally congregational, have an important place in the music of upper parts of India.

The third group covers the tribal music. Unlike the first and the second categories, tribal music sounds different to them who are acquainted with cultivated music only. But persons who understand the scope of further variations of twelve notes into microtones can recognise the hidden properties of the Adivasi songs. They have been amazed to find these simple and unsophisticated birds of the forests

using unfamiliar notes, while repeating the refrains of their songs. It reminds us of their peculiar method of harmonisation. For instance, in *Bhakhan*, a popular song of the hilly tract of the north, the leader of the group keeps the base while other members provide the refrain on different notes to create harmony. Further more, in tribal music we come across a kind of universal congeniality at certain levels. As a result of which their music sometimes sounds akin to certain musical phrases belonging to distant countries. On hearing some Mexican rhymes and Georgian tunes, Pandit Ravi Shankar was astonished to notice a remarkable similarity of the former with some folk musical rhymes of Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. Similarly, the melodies of Gonds and Santhals reminded Danielou of the musical forms found in Papua, Africa and Central Formosa. To quote his words, he discovered, "that some ancient people of Himalayas, the Shilpkars in particular, have kept something to the Vedic scale defined in ancient Shikshas which the high caste priests of North India seem to have forgotten". He also came across the musical forms popular among some of the tribal communities of Himalayan region which resemble those of the Ameriindians.

As a good deal of repository of old traditions and rituals, the bulk of folk music of Madhya Pradesh comes from the tribal areas. Bastar, the land of the famous Muria and the Sing Maria tribes, is known for its haunting melodies. While touring with Dr. Elwin in Bastar in 1941, Walter Kaufmann, the composer of AIR's signature tune, noted down many of the dance-songs and drum rhythms of the Muria Gonds. In the music of the Muria, he found a sort of 'purity and integrity'. To him, the tunes were 'straight, delightful, impressive and very old'. He also noticed in the Muria music Mongolian affinities, and 'the curious yodel of the *Relo* chorus reminded him

of Tibetan songs and even of those of the Pacific Islands'. Dr. Verrier Elwin states: "The Muria seems to distinguish tunes and songs mainly by the different rhythms of their choruses. When the songs are sung antiphonally, one party keeps the tune going and the other sings the words. 'One ploughs the tune; the other follows sowing the seed'. Sometimes the Muria called the theme of a song the *lekna* and the chorus, which is generally a variation of the word *Relo*, is called the *roche* or *tek*. The *Relo* chorus, for all its apparent verbal monotony, is capable of much subtle variation in tune and rhythm".

The music of the Hill Maria and Bhils is full of short scales. Crooning is not rare in the music of the Abujhmar tribe. The Murias of the north Bastar generally sing with full throated voice, and sometimes use five to six notes. It is evident that the music and dance are interdependent among these tribes. Surprisingly enough, the Murias, the Sing Marias, the Bhils and the Korkus do not share the common traits of their traditional music, with the exception that the Sing Marias, the Bhils and the Korkus, have layers overlapping with the Murias. They have melodies of short ambitus with occasional move to the octave.

Socio-anthropologists believe that the dominant characteristics of folk music of any country persist, they never die. But in the process of their transmission from one generation to another, most of their thematic contents get blurred and sometimes even their stylized forms fail to sustain their rubrics. Broadly, we identify these forms as regional styles of folk music, as mentioned earlier. So long as the contents satisfy socio-functional and ritual needs, regional styles of folk music are carried forward by the people themselves. If the stylized forms continue to be vital enough to survive against the onslaughts of modern age, as also of the alien and urbanised contents

of mass media, people on their own make provision to inject new themes into them. All such stylized folk musical forms have to identify their educational and entertainment worthiness in the light of innovations, and, that too, in close collaboration with the accepted norms of their respective cultures.

Once the utility of the folk music forms as expressive channels of communication is proved, their capability to convey new ideas also become evident. For example, *Alha* (Uttar Pradesh) and *Burrakatha* (Andhra Pradesh), both popular ballad forms, while retaining their traditional formats as well as the age-old themes, have successfully incorporated many new ideas relevant in the present context. Being aware of the rapport of these styles with their language audiences, many folk poets have been supplying them with new compositions. Even the political parties and sales promotion agencies employ the *Alha* and *Burrakatha* singers to propagate their messages. Radio, television and film media also cannot afford to ignore these forms. This sort of utilisation of folk media on electronic media has added more effectiveness and communicability, not only to *Alha* and *Burrakatha*, but also to several other regional folk forms. Wedding of folk music with mass media techniques thus made many popular folk musical styles known outside their respective language areas. If *Lavani* and *Powada* of Maharashtra are appreciated by Maharashtrians, they are likely to be appreciated by other language groups living in Maharashtra. Similarly, *Garba* of Gujarat and *Jugani* of Punjab make their impact felt on multi-lingual audiences. Mass media have created a new interest in folk music, not only among the musicians and elites, but also among the common people. Constant realisation of the hidden beauty and expressive idioms of folk tunes impelled many a classical musician to sing

Chaiti, *Kajari*, *Pahadi*, *Rasiya*, etc. Bade Gulam Ali's *Kohari Kalyan* is an examplary experiment in this direction. It is an elaboration of a hilly folk tune called *Kohari* in which the famous love song of *Sassi Punno* is sung by the villagers of Sindh area.

The most lucent and scintillating folk rhymes came from the backward regions of the country. Music of the Mundas, Murias, Oraons, Santhals and the tribes of the North-Eastern region often made the sensitive listeners aware of the unexplored wealth of the tribal music. They discover an amazing similarity and closeness of musical phrases weaved into various patterns of folk music. This also helps them to realise the contribution of the harmonious blending of different rhythms to the growth of Indian music. And no doubt, it is the mass media network, particularly radio in the beginning and later film and television, has been the chief means of exposing them to all sorts of cultural diversity and language audiences in India.

With the constant exposure to urban influences through mass media, a change in the folk musical styles has taken place. Also many tunes have survived against the contrariety of time. Their properties are yet to be evaluated for educational purposes. Although, many classical compositions have been drawn directly from folk styles and some of the highly recognized *ragas* have evolved out of the basic notes found in regional melodies, yet the musicologists have not considered them worthy of musical training. The indebtedness is very clear and the similarities are noticeable because of the 'unilinear evolution' theory, whereby music goes upward from the lower level through folk music to elite music. But the point is that this co-relation between the folk art and cultivated art has not been properly exploited. Like oral literature, folk music seems to have no codified grammer. Despite this short-

coming, from our point of view, the folk singers have distinct terms and phrases for identifying their musical styles and rhythms. For example, *Rag Dong, Lujhari, Rag Karma, Rag Domkuch, Rag Angnai, Rag Gena*, etc. or rhythms like *Surmaan, Jaitmaan, Heench and Tiyamaan* are such terms which are unknown to the students of classical music. Folk singers follow their own conventions and set of norms. They never attempt to sing a *Bhatiali* song in *Lavani* style, or a *Kajri* in different notes. Neither the *Heer* of Punjab is ever sung in the way *Mopla pattu* of Kerala is rendered, nor a *Baul* of Bengal is presented in *Teratali* form of Rajasthan.

A question arises as to what makes the racial temper of the masses so much adherent to these traditional singing styles. Perhaps it is the nostalgic attachment with the tune patterns which have deepened through their constant use for the last so many generations. It has also been claimed that with folk musical styles the rural audience feel at home. Or, it may be so that the appeal lies in the elemental simplicity of the musical styles which involves the people in group activities. Though, this kind of music matters very little in the life of people brought up in elitist atmosphere, but in tribal societies, or in other non-urbane societies, folk music plays a vital role in the day-to-day life. Almost all the important activities of the members of these societies revolve round the rituals and festivities associated with their traditional music. Singing styles help establishing their cultural and linguistic identity. The musical modes of the Muria tribe of Bastar, for instance, distinguish them from the Oraons of Chhotanagpur or Gadabas of Orissa. The folk musical nuances of Himachal Pradesh differ from that of Uttar Pradesh.

Music, like language, serves as an important means of social communication. Like spoken language, a song

and its singing style jointly communicate the meaning intended in the song, particularly to the members of the community in which the song is traditionally nurtured. But to others, belonging to different language groups, it makes no sense if the cultural gap is too wide.

With the extension of mass media many things have changed. We came to know about many things related to folk arts and traditions of this vast country. To some extent, especially during the last two decades, we also became aware of the folk music of the major tribes and rural communities. Informal studies have shown that unlike tribal music, the regional patterns of folk music have a tendency to spread around, and these patterns have enough potentiality to survive against all kinds of odd influences. The ever-increasing popularity of *Lavani*, *Garba*, *Bhatiali* and many other regional styles is an obvious evidence. Besides their direct performances among local audience, they can also be heard on radio and available on discs.

In the last century many songs were composed in folk styles by regional poets and village singers for making the people rise against the British Raj. The National movement led by Mahatma Gandhi also left its imprints on hundreds of folksongs. History shows us that in times of war and political upsurge, the popular musical styles have been used to convey purposeful messages. The folksong styles have also been creatively used by the leftists in India. The flexibility of their formats and the simplicity of their styles have always inspired innovative composers to use traditional folk music for communication and other purposes. Starting from various Government agencies down to political parties, and even individual poet-singers, everybody has used folk musical styles to convey his or her message. As a result, has emerged a new bred of folk-

songs. However, this has not been the case with the tribal music, mainly because of the rigidity of their styles and, to some extent, due to their non-accessibility to outsiders.

In this kind of usage, both the form (style or structure) and content are required to arrive at a mutual compromise to make the impact effective; and the significance of the musical styles as message carriers is subjected to the justifiability of the social cause for which the urgency to use folk forms is felt by the poet-singer at initial stages. If the cause is justified 'the aptness of his (the poet's) imagery and its intelligibility in its tradition will transmit the feeling to his audience.'

In the process of exploiting the folk musical styles as channels of communication we come across many new songs of unknown authorship. The tunes as formats are handed down to the singers by oral transmission. They are perpetuated through constant use, while the words get changed in course of time to make them meaningful in the contemporary context. Let me refer to one of my experiences: I happened to listen to a song about late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, sung by a group of Adi (Gallong) folk dancers of Arunachal Pradesh, who were in Delhi to participate in the Republic Day Folk Dance Festival in 1961. When I asked them the name of the composer, they said: "We don't know. We have learned it from another group". But another party from Maharashtra was able to give me the necessary information regarding a song about *Indiraji* (Mrs. Indira Gandhi), which they also allowed me to record in their camp at Tal Katora ground in 1970. The main lines were composed by their leader and later they improvised the song collectively by adding many stanzas. This again shows, as Y.M. Sokolov believes, that the names of the authors are not always known because

when they compose the songs, they do it without writing and disseminate them by 'word-of-mouth' only.

The use of folk music in mass media is not a simple task; at the same time it is most challenging for the producers and singers of non-folk type. It is simple, if directed towards on-the-spot recording of live performance and used in radio broadcasts and television programmes as illustrations. Judicious use of folk music in mass media needs handling of tunes and textual contents with great care. In a society, ceremonial occasions, ritual observances and age-old institutions continue to enhance the folk music. The musical modes, associated with different occasions, have always been considered as means of social control and at the same time used to reflect the interaction of the economic and political situations. The act of documenting them through tape-recorder and film make them freeze to a certain time. In ritual music, whether recorded or not and used in mass media, innovations have never been noticed. The music linked with rigid practices of religious nature always resisted change both in formats and contents. Religious and ritual rites often tended to freeze certain musical fragments to the extent of forbidding them to be used in any situation different than the situations related with them. Folk music of the social type has no taboos. It is not static, and therefore with the advance of mass media the relationship between the rural musicians and the audience has taken a different turn in the last two decades. This problem has to be studied in the context of film songs based on folk tunes.

Folk music has distinct cultural traits which are typically local in content. Even today the advent of mass media has failed to segregate them from their culture and language. In direct performance they are still alive and should not be confused with the technology-based modern music.

While the latter caters to a sophisticated audience, the folk music caters to ethno-rural communities.

The audience of folk music are not diverse in cultural fabric like the audience of mass media. Although, in wider dissemination process of mass media, audiences associated with folk music do not get sliced out of the vast number of mass media beneficiaries. The folk music on the other hand help further dissemination of certain messages emitted by electronic channels. Being the product of modern technology, mass media provide channels through which cultural traits are transformed. Therefore, the judicious use of folk music makes the total perspective of mass media an altogether different experience.

It would not be out of place to mention that for many urban-oriented media experts, the folk music is just 'non conventional' in character conjuring up an image of rural and tribal people with rigid practices. Mass media being the new concept, developed first in the West along with the use of conventional tools like newspaper, radio and television, the existing channels of communication in the society seemed to have been neglected. But in the present context, wedding of mass media with the existing modes of folk music has become relevant. For the urban people the broadcast of folk music over radio may be of little significance, but for the rural and tribal societies it is quite meaningful. Folk media, as some of the studies show, gear the messages or give them treatment according to the culture and language of the audience. Shaping of communication contents, therefore, in the mass media for different kinds of audience, make them more meaningful for a greater number of people than intended. We cannot leave aside the folk music in this context.

The use of folk music in mass media leads to a process of interaction between the two sets of media. The electro-

nic media seldom replace the folk media. Each new mode of communication superimposes its qualities on the other. In this process it takes over certain functions of the existing mode. But the basic functions are retained by the former mode because of its local characteristics and association with social functions. The interaction and act of superimposition make the communication complete.

To quote the strategy, prepared for the expert group meeting, held in London in 1972, it may be seen "that the effectiveness of the traditional forms did not vanish because of their inability to face up to the competition of the mass media, and that these media did not lose their impact as soon as the novelty of their use wore out. A practical approach to this multiple problem lies in marrying of the two types of media. After all, both are simply two different points on the same continuum. As the puppet, the *vintage* folk form of today was yesterday's innovation, so the film, today's innovation is likely to be tomorrow's vintage medium."

Studies have stressed that no mass media can exist in a cultural vacuum. After all, communication is fully realised when it passes through the attitudes and behavioural patterns of the people. It is shaped by cultural heritage and common ties of mutual existence of the people. That is why, it is said that mass communication in India is largely communication through non mass media such as folk music, dramatic forms of entertainment, situations and socially sanctioned institutions.

However, to hasten the change and educate the people through *sung communication*, folk singers are required to be supported and encouraged with honour. Radio, television and film may also contribute more in this respect by popularising regional tunes and their new contents. Most appropriate action would be the efforts made to

create repertoire of community songs. At the present juncture this would be one of the practical way of promoting the folk music. While community singing is an important national factor in many countries, in India, however, it has not been given due importance both at the planning and presentation level; though in villages and amongst the tribal groups, where the traditional community sense prevail, it is alive.

The efforts in this direction may probably bear good results. The more the educated Indians and field workers would get to realise the potentials of folk music and its use, the more socialistic concept would develop in the textual contents of the folksongs. However, care should be taken to avoid conscious enforcement of urban values on both their words and music. Let alone the musical styles absorb what is relevant for contemporary use. A catalyst's role here should not be of an imposer of one's ideas. He should work in mutual state of learning and subsequently leading to creative output.

In conclusion, I would like to add that

(a) there is a great need for a integrated study of folk music, starting from its folkloristic identification to other disciplines;

(b) the use of folk music should be based on organising principle, rather than keeping on justifying it's crudeness;

(c) the folk music should be encouraged in the mass media through careful planning and production efforts in addition to what is being done these days in radio and films;

(d) good old songs should be made available more and more on discs as has been done by Rupayan Sansthan, Borunda (Rajasthan); and

(e) the efforts should also be made to include a selection of good folksongs in text books to educate the new ones of the poetic beauty of the oral literature. Folk musical styles should also be introduced as a part of music teaching.

If the folk music is included in the music curriculum and studied properly, I am sure, it will give us valid results. The structural forms and folk musical patterns are bound to enrich our musical possessions and also provide ample material for new treatise on music.

The communication revolution in this country is certainly changing our life pattern. But it will take a long time as it has to go along with educational facilities and changing dimensions of aesthetics. In case of innovations, mass media as channels of communication and entertainment—which the technology has to forge—may put the folk music to effective or ineffective use. "Wherever one turns, this dilemma is in evidence. The only corrective influence will be the culture, discernment and mental attitude of the people at large. It is to be hoped that the tools and the media of communication fashioned by science, tempered by restrained use at the national level and operated in a spirit of goodwill and mutual co-operation at the international level, will guarantee the welfare and promote the happiness of the human race as a whole."

6

URBAN FOLKLORE AND FOLK MUSIC

The tribal and rural communities of India have, for a long time, nurtured a vast body of folklore as colourful and as diverse in nature as their creators are. At the same time the heterogeneous population of the urban centres and industrial towns have created an altogether different genre of folklore which, though not free from regional traits, carries a distinct imprint of an urban mind and thereby can be distinguished from the former one. A highly varied range of occupations, linguistic diversities, multi-facet social and cultural activities and the changing political situations—all these, apart from having their direct impact on urban life, have also contributed to the growth of this genre of folklore in many ways. Analysis of the scattered material will show us that this urban folklore, if we may call them so, have freely drawn upon several overlapping versions of regional folklore.

Let us take, for example, the vast repository of jokes, anecdotes and rumours that travel from person to person, from region to region and from country to country, but seldom appear in black and white. One is surprised by their numerousness and the wide range of subjects

they embrace. Starting from social and political satires down to private lives of public figures, local rumours and personal anecdotes—nothing is spared and people from all walks of life have their share in the creation of these jokes. Humour, as we all know, is an integral part of all communication, and it is this inborn tendency of human beings to see black in white, to draw a synthesis of laughter and pathos that serves as the *leitmotif* behind the creation and circulation of these innumerable jokes and anecdotes.

Using the term 'joke' in wider sense which will include anecdotes, rumours and the like, we can think of three broad categories of jokes: political and social jokes, jokes that have morals in them, and erotic jokes. And there are also the joke-cycles where jokes revolve around a single character. For instance, as counterparts of the famous Poldy of Switzerland, we, in India, have Sheikh Chilli of Bihar, Gopal Bhand of Bengal, Birbal of North India and many others. There are two distinct types of these joke-cycles: either the central charater is a fool (like Sheikh Chilli) to whom many funny things happen or he is so intelligent (like Birbal) that he is able to outwit all and sundry. Sometimes even contemporary public figures become the centre of these joke-cycles and important incidents, may they be political or social, give birth to a series of jokes. Here we shall also find examples of old wine being served in a new bottle *i.e.* anecdotes from ancient folklore and mythologies are reshaped to reflect contemporary situations.

One will often come across several local and regional versions of a single joke. For example, instead of saying *Carrying coal to New Castle*, we, in India, shall say *Ulte Bans Bareli Ke* (carrying bamboo to Bareli), while a Russian will say *Carrying Samover to Tula*. This simultaneous exis-

tence of different versions is explained through the nomadic nature of these jokes. Public and private gatherings, offices, college-campuses, restaurants and tea-shops provide the occasions when these jokes are created and within no time they start travelling from one place to another. In this journey through various language-cultures they are further improvised and embellished with local details. As a result they frequently reflect revealing behaviourial details of the particular community through which they have passed. And thus, we are able to distinguish a rural joke from an urban one, or a North Indian joke from a South Indian one. However, despite these disparities in minor details, jokes have an universal appeal not to be found in other genres of folklore.

There is no good reason why these jokes shouldn't be considered a part of our folklore since they, besides serving the same purpose as other genres of folklore, have certain advantages over the latter. In the words of Richard M. Dorson, the eminent folklorist, "The folk can on occasion feed the mass media, and equally the media can feed back into the oral lore, but a selective process is at work on both sides; folk and mass culture co-exist peaceably and on friendly terms. The joke one tells at a party is much more frequently a good one the teller has heard than one he has read; he remembers the gestures, intonations, delivery of the previous reconteur along with the punch line, but all these personal touches are lacking in print, invisible on radio, and contrived on television."

Similarly, with the growth of mass media, a new genre of folk music has emerged in the cities. This music, unlike other genres of music which are associated with ceremonial and ritual practices of the countryside, has hardly any functional use. Nor it has any bearing of the various trends of music sung by professional rural singers. This

new genre has evolved from the interaction of rural and urban musical forms. The technological growth and modern sensibility together with all kinds of influences have given a boost to this music. Rural musicians who came and settled down in towns for livelihood also contributed to the emergence of this new genre. In urban settlements these musicians were forced to mend their original style. They had to strike a balance between the traditional patterns of singing and the contemporary styles of film music to cater to the taste of the city folk. Without abandoning the basic characteristics of their original styles, they were required to evolve a new type of musical discipline especially when they came into contact with radio, television and film. Composite programmes, both live and recorded, began to include this music as popular item. The radio version of folk music or rendering of folksongs in films and television has a texture which is more urbane and less rural. At the same time they are not devoid of the inherent simplicity of style, spontaneity of expression and warmth of human feelings that characterise a typical folksong.

The dissemination of this variety of folk music through various channels of mass media like radio, film, television and discs, has made it popular as well as impersonal. The songs composed by the poet-laureate Rabindranath Tagore in the traditional *Baul* style of Bengal or the numerous film songs that have been composed by blending rural and urban music testify the growing popularity of this new genre of folk music.

It has been often advocated and over emphasised that the folklore of the different language-cultures is fast vanishing and it should be documented before it is lost. This view was taken as early as in 1846 by William John Thoms and perhaps even earlier by others. In 1905, Hornbostel

had strongly endorsed this view. Prior to him, in 1878, a Folklore Society was formed in London which started publishing a journal called *Folklore* to popularise the compilation and study of folkloristic material. We are aware that the dominant features which make the communication feasible through folklore and the regional folk music have been always alive in the changing situations. The fundamental elements which make the act of transmission of ideas and emotions easier never try to disassociate from the creative process inherent in the folklore. Although, X may produce some kind of corresponding change in Y or Y may invariably influence Z and X's ingredients may correspond a little with Z's components, yet this kind of change is not a major factor which should worry the folklorists. Continuity and change are two different phases of evolution and one cannot be realised without understanding the other. In the process of transmission some elements are always discarded as obsolete. The social interaction help folklore revive, and as a result of which some of the crystalised forms began to live in the behavioural modes of the society. The super-structural changes constantly influence folklore; and it is therefore, folklore persists in some form or other in its own right. Its rubrics never get blurred. Hence, the work of collecting folklore materials may be taken up at any time in any period when means are available.

Scholars have realised that the folk music should be recorded and studied as it plays a significant role in representing the folklore of any society. We may appreciate this view because of the following reasons:

— the folk music covers the entire range of folklore, and in a broader sense it touches almost all the types of folk media used for communication;

— it never loses the continuity which is one of the fundamental characteristics of the regional musical forms;
— the musical traits of popular folksongs together with their thematic contents make maximum sense to the people to whom they belong;
— it is the only category of folklore/folk media which has been widely accepted as the most potent channel for communication of ideas; and
— the efforts to revive and popularise folk music/folk-songs help fostering mutual understanding between regional and to some extent interregional values.

Until recently the folk musical forms in India have not been studied in the light of folk-urban continuum of folk music. The need for methodical survey of folk melodies has become imperative. An elaborate plan for intensive enquiry into the structural pattern of folksongs and the newly composed urban folk rhymes can be made by grouping this material into tune families and melodic contours. Tunes and phrases vitally inter-woven with the expressions of the elemental urges and emotions would survive the test of the time.

7

FOLK MUSIC AND ALL INDIA RADIO

Although broadcast of folk music over All India Radio covers a wide range of variety, it does not represent adequate percentage in the total transmission. The folk music amounts to 3 per cent of the broadcast of musical items, which share about 40 per cent of the overall programme output. The duration of the broadcast of folk and tribal music in percentage may be little less or more at different stations. For instance, folk music gets priority over the classical music at stations located in the North-Eastern region. Stations like Cuttack, Dharwar, Jaipur, Rajkot and Raipur emphasize on the folk music of their respective zones. As a policy matter, all the broadcasting stations are supposed to encourage local variety of musical traditions. Thirty channels of Vividh Bharti, too, are not lagging behind in following this policy, but they depend more on film songs.

All India Radio is first to make special efforts to draw upon the available fund of folk tunes. In its effort to include folk music for diffusion of developmental activities, All India Radio had introduced a programme of inviting folk musicians from all parts of the country to present

their songs before the audience in the Capital. In these programmes, folk artistes used to give lyrical exposition of the new strides which India was making at that time. The songs used to be sung in the traditional singing styles typical of their respective regions. It was an unique experiment. For the folk artistes such occasions proved of immense worth in as much as these occasions unfolded before them a vast treasure of dance and music of this land. The folk artistes have been provided with opportunities to come out of their isolation and to know better what the elites in the Capital think about them.

For the first time when a group of folk artistes/dancers arrived in the Capital to perform on the occasion of the Republic Day in 1958, they represented the basic unity of the people. They were dressed in colourful costumes and equipped with quaint musical instruments. It was for the first time Akashvani had a chance to handle such a large number of artistes in a single programme outside studios. This was followed by periodical concerts of the folk music of different regions in the National hook-up. Different stations were encouraged to include in their daily broadcasts folk musical items of their respective regions. To this effect regional stations enjoyed a great privilege in the past. They made efforts to explore all kinds of folk songs, then in vogue, and brought them to light. Selection of suitable groups of folk singers for the annual visit to Delhi was also a prestigious issue both for the artistes and the selectors.

A scheme was proposed to set up folk music units. These units were supposed to undertake tours in the countryside in mobile vans fitted with recording equipments and document authentic folk music with a view to broadcast it from different radio stations. The scheme did not materialise because of several urban-oriented reasons. Music critics in the Capital were of the view that folk

music should be presented in a polished manner. Music producers attached to different stations at that time were of mixed opinion. Many of them had undergone their initial training in classical and light music. The concept of folk music was not clear to them. They had no ear for ethno-musical rhymes and folk melodies. Of course, some of them were prepared to make experiment because they had their links with the community life. They were nostalgic about the folk music, but at the same time they had nurtured a sort of fascination for modern music. Some of them were of the view that a simple folk and devotional item, if presented in its natural grandeur, is a treat in itself. Any further attempt to tamper or embellish would defeat the very purpose of folk music broadcast. It has been a sad experience of the Central Music Unit of the Directorate of All India Radio, while inviting folk songs, associated with occupations, wedding and harvest season, 10 per cent of the folksongs pulled-in at the Central Unit were genuine, while the rest were full of studio effects.

Producers of music were expected to produce something of the nature which should sound like a folksong. For concert purposes, they were supposed to depend upon professional singers. It was a hard task to get folk artistes for participation in such programmes. They had also been obsessed of the comments very often flunged at them by music critics and connoisseurs of music. As a result they used to contribute folk-like songs and continued to recommend such singers for the concerts who were able to present themselves in the manner which could be considered effective before invited gatherings. Some of the reports which appeared earlier in newspapers were discouraging and had clearly reflected the critics' ignorance about folk music. Of course, exceptions were there; for instance, here is an excerpt from a report about a folk

music concert held some years ago. Amita Malik reported ".... Some people in the hall described it (concert) as 'phoney'. This arose from the choice of singers as well as music. Both Nirmalendu Choudhury of Bengal and Mr. Rati Vyas of Gujarat are now virtually city singers who practise folk music. Both, one is sad to relate, have slicked up their folk music to the point of folksiness and both now play quite blatantly to the gallery and have an element of gimmickry in their singing, their dress and their gestures which leave one feeling very uncomfortable indeed." About the folk artistes, the critic mentioned: "The three folk singers from Karnatak (and again they were studio exponents of folk music) were even worse. They were anaemic in manner and had all too obviously touched up their folksongs with *filmi geet* trimmings ... Several people in the hall told this critic, that a wealth of marvellous authentic folk singers from every corner of India and with AIR in active touch with them, it was a pity that this sort of jaded folksy fare was brought all the way for an annual concert planned so seriously and at such a great expense."

With the change of times, most of the ambitious programmes of folk music were curtailed by All India Radio. The first blow came from the Capital. The popular programme called 'Songs of the Nation Builders', which used to feature folk singers from all over the country was totally dropped after thirteen years of its glorious tradition in 1971. As a result many stations reduced the duration of folk music broadcast in their general programmes.

When we think of the types of music traditionally popular in the country, our attention is focussed on the devotional and classical music. India is equally rich in folk music as it is in classical music. The growth of both the types of music is naturally interdependent. In folk music

we have several patterns that appear new to the society when they are revealed of their existence. Studies indicate that national and ethnic individuality can be observed in folk music. Regional music offers the touch of back home with which one can relate oneself or identify one's person with the community.

Folk music, therefore, is always associated with culture, community and language. To a listener of a different language-culture perhaps folk music of other language-culture may fail to make an impact. It may appeal to the people of close-by cultures, but not to the people of far off places having entirely different socio-linguistic norms. The chant like songs of the Nagas or the tribal songs whose refrains are repeated number of times may appear to be monotonous to a listener in Punjab or Himachal Pradesh. The long narratives of Kumaon Hills may surely go flat in the South. Even a very popular *Heer* of of Punjab would fail to make an appeal in distant Maharashtra or in the coastal districts of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu. Music of the Lamas perhaps may not be appreciated by the listeners who are totally unaware of the language and the Buddhist culture of the North-East region. The notion that music has a universal language seems to be wrong if we assess its relevance in view of the folk music. Communication through folk music depends upon understanding and receiptivity to meaning contained in the songs. Hence, the appreciation of folk music relates to the types of audiences catered to by the music.

To a sophisticated listener folk music conveys the simplest form of singing. He is obliged to appreciate the folk music not because of the 'native touch' it perpetuates, but for the freshness of which he is completely ignorant. His appreciation is found to be tinged with the sense of inquisitiveness about the variety of folk patterns. He knows

that the music he listens to is the music of the rural and tribal masses, and that it is surviving amongst them. The music is also perpetuating in different rhythmic forms in the changing situations.

The course of evolution in folk music, in some form or other, shows that a change in its style is inevitable because of the impact of mass media. Mass media are even affecting the communities living in the remotest parts of the country. As an important factor in understanding different cultures and the modes of behavioural expressions, the process of continuity and change has been recently recognized and termed as 'acculturation' by socio-anthropologists. Scientific studies explain that changes also occur in cross-cultural conflicts. Learning accelerates cultural changes.

Sometimes it becomes difficult to explain how a folk tune travels and diffuses in other language groups. It should be noted that changes do take place, but only effective changes matter more in the total process. A thread of continuity keeps up the change in a linked fashion.

Folk music particularly in contact-situations expresses interactions. Radio and discs have affected the music of many countries. The influence of the European music can be seen in highly ritual-bound African countries, in Pacific islands and many other regions. This sort of impact has produced strange novelties in musical practices. The oral traditions of musical inter-change has been largely intensified by recordings and broadcasts of musical miscellany. This has further complicted the already 'tangled skeins of cultural traditions' and the musical genre of every developing country. As an example, the popularly known 'Spanish records', which are very much liked in Nigeria are basically Afro-Cuban. In the recent years the West

African heritage has gained popularity. The records prepared in Europe and America derived African music through Cuba and introduced again in Africa. It has resulted into a third change in form of re-Africanisation of the same music through local musicians. This type of continuity and change can be noted elsewhere, as it can also be experienced in Indian music of the lighter category. The records being produced in India, for instance, do bring about the regional variety of folk music, but at the same time expose the singers to urban values. However, the cultivated voices of many a radio-fame light music artistes like Surinder Kaur and Asha Singh Mastana have contributed to the growth of modern folk music and added to the continuity of basic folk tunes.

The broadcast of folk music plays an important role in the programme policy of All India Radio. But it is very difficult to retain its genuine form in the process of collection and later presenting it to the listeners. We agree that folk traditions are fully alive in rural India, but the impact of world-wide tendency towards urbanization is unavoidable. Broadcasts of folk music are generally biased with urban norms.

The folk music programme has to undergo many changes to make it fully Indian in character. It calls for a suitable blending of the music and the traditional institutions by the producers. When the folk music goes on air, it should be supplemented with detail explanation for the benefit of the heterogeneous listeners. This practise is necessary not only in home-service broadcasts but also in overseas transmissions. When folk music is put up on external channels, programme producers are required to provide with every detail of the items scheduled. They should also be able to select proper items, keeping in mind the types of listeners they are supposed to cater.

We are aware that India has a complex phenomenon of ethnological groupings, and their songs and musical phrases have evolved several variants and sub-variants. Many songs appear to be crude and sound like primitive utterances. Although the crudeness of a tribal song may be of no interest to an average listener, but it may be of interest to certain listeners due to their simplicity of expression. Eventually, most of the overseas broadcasts depend on home service programmes. The policy directive for giving correct weightage to the items of home service was found irritating to the listeners in African and Asian countries. Whatever is suitable for home consumption is not necessarily suitable for the overseas audiences. There may be some folksongs which may sound interesting to the listeners in Nepal because of common cultural ties. The same principle cannot be followed in case of broadcasting folk music for listeners of the Arab countries and the African world. The folk musical items should, therefore, be tailored according to the tastes of the different target audiences both in home service and overseas broadcasts.

AIR has developed certain norms of presenting folk music, which range from featurised and documentary type of presentation to artistic improvisation of folk melodies. The latter kind often excels the folk music of traditional nature. In that case it neither represents a folksong nor it comes out as a good light music item. It has been noticed that a folksong, slightly arranged and sung by light music artistes do retain some traces of its original verve.

The archive of All India Radio has a rich variety of recorded folk music at its disposal. These varieties have been collected through the efforts of regional stations and direct field recordings. As compared to the folk music

items prepared with studio effects, outdoor recordings of folk music have been found more useful. In the past the programme producers have shown more interest in collecting folksongs in this manner, but nowadays this interest seems to have been lost, as we do not come accross new songs drawn from outdoor recording. For the last many years off and on we have been listening to the same old material. It is being repeated every now and then in local and special broadcasts. Listeners seem to have lost interest in them, and they expect something new.

I am aware of the practical difficulties in this kind of venture. All India Radio's scheme of recording units had been fizzled out long ago. However, if field recording has to be done, a little care in handling the material can always be taken. In rural areas, very often a recording unit has to face unforeseen problems. To convince a folk artiste or a group of village singers for giving their best and genuine is a challenging task. The urban consciousness is rapidly affecting the behaviour of the villagers. Problems arise where professional singers try to impress upon the recording unit by presenting material of the kind which is neither genuine nor polished. Perhaps their behaviour shows the fear of being artless, simple and out of date. The desire for keeping up with the time leads them to tune up with new type of music other than their own. In such a situation the recording can only be done if ideal opportunity is available.

One who goes out for recording should at least be fully aware of the musical properties of the area or else he should seek help of knowledgeable persons to achieve better results. Merely by persuading a folk singer or a party of singers, chances of getting good material are dim. There are songs which can be recorded only at the time of festivals and ceremonial occassions. There are songs

which can be recorded any time of the year. There are songs which are rare and difficult to get on the tape. There are songs which are strictly identified with rituals. Many of the songs can only be taped in proper settings. But songs like *Maran geet* (funeral rhymes, wailing cries, lamenting songs) and the songs associated with *Sati* or the songs belonging to identical category cannot be easily obtained. They cannot be collected easily from the folk parties. Persons on field recording assignments would fall into trouble if they try to create ideal situation to get this rare material. If by chance they happen to come across a natural situation, would they dare to go among the singers with a microphone. Hence, they have to leave aside certain categories of folksongs. They should be able to decide on-the-spot why certain folk items should be rejected and why some be accepted. There are examples where women songs (marriage songs, lullabies, etc.) are sung by male singers. It should be taken care of during the field work that women songs should not be recorded for broadcast if sung by male singers or children's songs sung by adults.

Emphasis should be given on collection of variety of tunes. Some songs may be vulgar in text but rich in music. They may be recorded for their tune's sake. Rare songs, if available, may also be recorded for reference purposes. With all these tips, I would like to emphasise that preservation and cataloguing of the folk music material is as essential as broadcasting it. International Folk Music Council has prepared a proforma for this purpose long back. It may be followed with certain amendment in Indian context. The transcription service of the All India Radio had earlier started the cataloguing of folk songs along this line, but failed to continue the practice for want of details of each item. The text of the catalogue has been

reproduced at the end in appendices. Better late than never. Organisations like All India Radio, Sangeet Natak Akademi and State level Academies should take necessary steps in this direction.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I (A)

CENTRAL INDIA TRIBALS' POETIC TRADITIONS

A written song has been described in a Gond riddle as a black seed sown in a white field. In contrast to this, an unwritten song for a peasant of Bundelkhand is like a long thread, one end of which is tied to the heart.

No song of the latter kind was ever written and none was recited as a composed item. This is because oral poetry and traditional folksongs have always remained conditioned to music and dance. Some of the folksongs are really excellent in spirit and text as compared to written poetry.

The tribal poetry of Central India excels in beauty and symbolism. Even the simple folksongs of the rural communities are unmatched in their passionate delineation and in direct image technique. This store of poetry cannot be overlooked as mere songs of unsophisticated people. Dr. Verrier Elwin advocated for this treasure a "great future" if it continues to grow. He writes: "When I first went to live in a tribal village in Madhya Pradesh twenty-seven years ago, I expected to meet with poverty, with disease

and with ignorance. I certainly never thought that I would be inspired and delighted through all these years by revelations of poetic spirit.

I had studied English literature at Oxford and all my life I had a passion for poetry, and it was a wonderful thing to find even among the so-called—and so-wrongly called—backward people, a kind of poetry that in its simplicity, charm and subtlety was worthy to be included in the poetic tradition of the world."

It matters little whether folk poetry should be considered worthy of literature or not. The important thing is that it has remained a continuous process that retains the human values. This element alone gives folk poetry more liveliness and warmth than anything else.

It is through the words of folksongs that we can picture the minds of a society which has kept centuries-old milieu alive through motifs and sentiments of the folkloristic sphere. Though conscious of the fast-changing world around, this society is in a way more rigid in the inner folds of its thought process. Changes do occur only in respect of values affecting economic life, but not in the very roots of human emotions that are knitted with ritualistic and traditional things. The stylistic behaviour and the elements of the interdependent relationships in folklore can hardly vanish unless there occurs a large-scale devastation of any civilisation, or at least a large number of human habitants merge into a population of a different setting.

Symbolism is a striking factor in oral poetry. The first menstruation is described in the poetry of the tribals as a 'red blossom'. At love's demand 'bed-bugs' bite a girl and her body 'aches'. She is a 'bird' or a 'diamond' to her lover; to a father, if unmarried, she is 'millet in his house'. Without ornaments she is a like a 'rice-pounder' or a 'tree

without leaves'. For the people of Chhattisgarh, a diamond is something rare and beautiful. It is a precious stone for the people of Rewa and Panna districts. In their songs, it appears frequently as a symbol of beauty.

In the love songs of Malwa, however, the diamond image has a very little place. A woman's beauty lies in her perfect figure. She should be like a finished statue (a *murat*)—a doll (*putli*). Her voice should have the cooing of the cuckoo. Her hair should hang down profusely to her knees.

She should dazzle like a flame among the people. Her eyes should be black and large. She should look pretty and be decked with all sorts of ornaments.

A woman's colour should usually be light. But the rich golden brown of many Gond women is considered equally attractive.

Motherhood adds to a woman's beauty more than any other thing. An Indian woman prefers to be graceful as she performs her various duties as a daughter, a beloved, a wife and a mother.

The following synonyms reveal the image of an Indian woman in folk songs. She has been mentioned as *maruni* (bewitching), *sugani* (well-mannered), *kamani* (ensnarer), *suhagan* (happily married and whose husband is alive), *rang bhini* (colourful), *nakharali* (coquettish) *moyani* (infatuating), *dabar naini* (lake-eyed), *manetan* (self-conscious), *mithboli* (sweet-tongued) and *raat-rizavan* (night's spriter).

If she happens to be a Malwi woman, she looks charming in *lugada* (unstitched piece of a cloth used as coverlet) or *odani* (wimple). With a *choli* (bodice or blouse) over her breasts and a *ghagra* (a pleated skirt touching her toes) nicely tied to her slender waist, she becomes attractive.

She aspires to have long and curly hair in contrast to her golden-brown complexion and captivating eyes which have been compared to halved slices of a mango.

With all these qualities she is not considered perfect unless she possesses a chiselled figure full of *joban* (youth: T.S. Eliot's word 'Jovescence, conveys the exact meaning of this word).

A woman carrying a child demands special attention. She needs tender treatment. Folksongs relating various aspects of pregnancy rites contain some interesting symbolism.

The Satnamis of Chhattisgarh sing chant-like songs to avert the danger of miscarriage. A good number of songs describe a pregnant woman's mind. After conception, she is 'pure' till the first month is over. She desires her husband more often in the second month. The third month reveals her craving and in the fourth month she looks forward to the *sindauri* rite (confined to Chhattisgarh) in which she is ceremonically fed in a close gathering of friends and near relatives. The fifth month refers to her inquisitiveness and in the sixth and seventh months the expectant mother begins to think about the sex of the child. There is a common superstition that if a snake happens to see a pregnant woman during the eighth month, she goes blind. The ninth month is always critical. A delivery song from Chhattisgarh illustrates the situation :

Moon of the ninth month casts its shadow
How weary is the life within
When it sees its dark prison.
It struggles to be free and make
its camp on earth.

Songs associated with the time of delivery usually des-

cribe the anxiety and restlessness of a woman. To ensure a safe delivery some country methods are used in the villages to comfort the woman. But superstitions are obviously unavoidable. Dr. Elwin mentions the humorous incident: "A Brahmin gave a Gond woman a railway ticket, telling her to wash it and drink the water, whereupon she would be delivered with the speed of a train."

Then, there are songs which provide graphic descriptions of how the labor pains start and the husband is asked to fetch a midwife.

Father-in-law is asleep in the yard
Mother-in-law is asleep in the verandah
My little dewar is in his coloured palace
Wake, wake sister-in-law
There is pain in my belly
Send for the midwife.

Under these circumstances, a midwife is the most important person in a village. But now the old midwife's methods are gradually vanishing. Only the songs bear images of the past and particularly, in this connection, the extreme desire is for a male child.

If a woman gives birth to a female child the music and jubilation disappear. It is an exception that in Chhattisgarh the birth of a female child—*dauki*—is not considered bad. In one of the folksongs the mixed feelings of parents are expressed in these words:

I would bear a son
Outside, the house sounds a drum inside cries the girl
Worry not my lord
Bud of the sunflower shall be her name.

The series of marriage songs starts with invocation to Ganpati or Vinayak, the elephant-headed god. In these songs His arrival at the bride or bridegroom's house is described. He comes to view the activity in the vicinity. Then follows the set of songs that refers to the manner of invitation. One of the rituals is the erecting of a wedding pavilion, if it is at a bride's house.

The arrival of the bridegroom and his party is an important moment. They are ceremonially greeted and a number of songs are sung at that time.

During the wedding various other songs are rendered narrating the beauty of the bride and the bridegroom. Lastly, departure songs are sung and the atmosphere is filled with sadness.

Before the actual wedding ceremony begins, both the bride and the groom are annointed with oil and rubbed with *haldi* (turmeric) at their respective places. Whenever this ritual is performed, songs are sung at both the houses. *Mehndi* (henna) paste is also applied to their hands and feet in Rajasthan. It is said that the deep red of the henna signifies the love between the to-be-married couple. Some songs related to this rite express the emotional feelings of the women.

A peculiar ritual known as *kaman* is still current in the rural parts of Central India. The word seems to have been derived from Kama, the Hindu God of love. Songs concerning this rite are sung when the bridegroom enters the bride's house for the marriage. The fund of wedding songs is very old and has been retained by agricultural communities for generations.

The tribals of this region have also preserved this treasure. The wedding songs of the Kamar tribe are short and often addressed to the trumpeter. The Gond and Bhumia songs are usually rhymed. Rich in content are the

songs of the tribes living in Bastar. The wedding songs of Bundelkhand and Uttar Pradesh are meaningful.

The wedding ceremony among the Muria tribe is an elaborate process. The ceremonial 'fetching of the bride' by the bridegroom is an essential practice found in most tribes, with minor differences.

You will find below translations of some of the wedding songs drawn from different groups of people living in Central India.

When you cut down a tree
New shoots appear
That pretty girl
Is making signs to me.

(*Kamar song*)

It is a cart, if you know how to drive, boy.
It is food, if you know how to eat, boy.
It is a path, if you know how to walk, boy.
It is a horse, if you know how to ride, boy.

(*Muria song*)

The evening is pleasant.
Like a petal of *keora* flower
The fair bride shines over the wooden seat.
Let us go and fix the wedding.
The fair bride shines over the seat.

(*Song from Central India Plateau*)

The bridegroom sits after his bath on a coloured seat.
He neither asks for a moon-necklace nor does he desire to have a swift horse.

He wishes to marry the neighbour's daughter,
His heart is snared by her beauty.

(*Malwi song*)

The bridegroom will come from a distant land
He will scatter the tiles of my palace
He will smash the wits of my father.

(*Nimadi song*)

Why did you strike the drum, O my young love?
The drum roars
And my palace resounds with music:
It echoes in the balcony
It sounds in the attic
It thunders in my private apartment

(*Malwi song*)

O my bridegroom, tarry your mare a while.
Let me say good-bye to my mother, O love.
What have you to do with the mother now,
my bride.
Come away and harken to your duties.
Near the big house are the tents of your daughter.
She goes to another land.
If you are prosperous, do bring me back my father.
O, my daughter, the wealth is less and more are the battles.
But to be sure, we will bring you back.

(*Rajasthani song*)

APPENDIX I (B)

FOLK MUSIC OF BIHAR

At the confluence of the Ganga and the Gandak, in the famous Sonepur fair, I happened to witness for the first time a performance of *Bidesia*—the popular dance-theatre of Bihar. Thereafter, in a couple of villages along the river Kosi in north Bihar I also saw *Bidapat* and *Ramkhelia* both typical dance-theatre of the outer Himalayan ranges bordering the State. I must say, what I saw and heard then has not lost its appeal even after two decades of social and political change. The melodic grandeur of the traditional folk music of Bihar and its rural dramatic forms, including tribal mimes, still hold their rustic charm to this day when performed in their own locale.

The tribal music of Bihar is full of patternistic modes of singing. Tunes like *matha*, *lujhri* and *jhumar* have throughout remained unpolluted. The influence of modern rhymes could hardly distort their associate rituals and the functional use. Music that particularly goes with their spectacular dances continues to sustain its pristine beauty.

Some of the 29 tribes of various sizes living in Bihar whose singing styles have helped perpetuate the Adivasi culture of the State are the Santhal, the Oraon, the Munda,

the Ho, the Bhumia, the Kharia and the Sauria Paharia. All these tribes observe a common festival called *Karma*. Originally, *Karma* belonged to the Oraon Adivasis of Chhotanagpur. For a large number of tribals, it is a kind of fecundity festival celebrated to mark the period of relaxation between hard work of transplanting paddy and rigours of the harvest. Songs sung during the performance of *Karma* dances express the moods and sentiments of these tribes. References to their contemporary problems, incidents and patriotic feelings often occur in these songs. One can easily notice instances of newly composed *Karmas* sung to the rhythmic beats of the old tunes.

The *Jatra* of the Adivasis is another institution which promotes inter-village communication through dances organised many times a year. These are considered as 'socials' and provide a forum to the village youths for meeting, singing and dancing. Songs connected with the *Jatras* are many, and they sing of love and beauty of the changing seasons. *Sarhul Jatra*, for example, which occur between March and June and *Karam Jatra* between September and November are held at different places. Sharat Chandra Roy gives the following account: "It was at these *Jatras* that the young men of the tribes came to choose their mates from amongst the girls of clans other than their own...and it was then that the customary dances and songs of the outgoing season were formally exchanged for the dances and songs appropriate to the incoming season. And to this day it is at these *Jatras* that new dances and songs are similarly taken up."

It should be noted that the subjects mentioned in Oraon songs need not always synchronise with the form of the dance, nor do the dance with contents of the songs. "A slow dance, for instance," writes W.G. Archer in his book *The Blue* Grove about Oraon poems," is not always coupled

with a grave poem; and death by accident, which is the Oraon equivalent of tragedy, is not debarred from association with brisk dance. This is made possible by the Oraon method of singing, which is always 'natural' concerned only with the tune and rhythm and strictly indifferent to the words."

Next to the Oraon Adivasis, the Santhals have a distinct culture, the Hos have a developed language and love for music, while the Mundas are supposed to be an important dancing tribe. The musical quality of these simple folk of the proto-Australoid stock can be compared to the Ghotul Muria of Bastar. Their dances have an intricate foot-work. Their songs have a unique cohesiveness. Influenced by the neighbouring Hindus in some respect, the Bihar tribes still maintain an attachment to their dance and musical traditions. The Kharia and the Birhor also contribute to the music of the State though in a more modest way.

Interestingly, a large number of tribals in Bihar speak Hindi or one of the dialects such as Maithili, Magahi or Bhojpuri in addition to their own dialects. Their folklore, handed down through the generations by word-of-mouth is now being documented in the Roman or Devnagri scripts. The performing arts helped in mapping out the cultural strains of the State.

A powerful theatre form, called *Bidesia*, by folk poet Bhikhari Thakur came into prominence in the early 20s, while the theatre like *Jatra* of Bengal had found a crude expression in Bihar and the folk music of the region, mixed with Bhojpuri, Magahi and Maithili variants, gave a different fabric to *Bidesia*. In western Bihar, in the districts of Saran, Champaran and Shabad where Bhojpuri is widely spoken, *Nach* parties are often seen performing at fairs and on festive occasions. They present witty dialogue and a pot-pourri of dance sequences and earthy

songs. Through these performances Bhikhari Thakur developed *Bidesia* combining all the ingredients into a vital theatre form with the capacity to withstand onslaughts of modern media. Its forte is regional music and the techniques of on-the-spot improvisation of the 'story in action'.

Culturally, Mithila, one of the three dialectic regions of Bihar, abounds in folklore. Bounded by the Himalayan ranges in the north and the Ganga in south, Mithila's culture is exposed between the river Kosi in the north and the Santhal Pargana in the east. Besides having her own literary history, in folk arts, from *Madhubani* art of scroll painting, *Aipan*—the floor drawings and colourful masks of the Saraikella *Chhau* dance to the rendering of lilting folk songs like *Nachari*, *Samdaun*, *Tirhuti*, *Malar*, *Maheshvani* and *Jhumar*, Mithila is fertile in verbal and creative folk traditions. Among the action-oriented media *Bidapt* dance, *Jat-Jatni*, *Shyam Chakewa* and love lyrics of Vidyapati are quite well known. Ballads like *Kuwar Vijayi*, *Naika Banjara*, and others which are also sung in other language-areas of the State are equally popular in this region. Jaidev (12th Century), the author of *Geet Govind*, appears to have influenced the musical traditions of Mithila in its initial stages. In theatre, though Mithila has no claim yet, *Domkach*, *Vanshi-leela*, *Nag-leela* and dances called *Mahara* and *Jharni* offer a great scope to meet the emotional needs of the masses. It is in this part of Bihar that we find a close interaction between the folk music and the cultivated music. For instance, *Jhumar*, the type of song which belongs to tribal music, travelled through several societal levels to the sophisticated upper crust and assumed a different form akin to *Kirtan*.

In Patna and north of Gaya we come across the folklore of Magahi. Magahi serves as the medium of musical

utterances and an instrument of communication between the common people in the east of Munghyr and Bhagalpur. Here we find wandering minstrels reciting legendary songs in captivating tunes, the popular among them are *Lorikayan* and *Gopichand*. The ceremonial songs of their womenfolk constitute the bulk of the music of the Magahi culture. Magahi has a peculiar folk drama, called *Baguli*, confined to its womenfolk. *Baguli* presents many humourous situations from present day living.

The dialect of Bhojpuri has an equal number of expressive folksongs and narratives. Numerous folksongs of this dialect of Bihar have attracted both composers and folklorists. With its sub-dialects, Bhojpuri is most flexible in accommodating new themes.

In the last century many songs were composed in folk styles by the regional poets and rural singers to incite the masses rise against the foreign rule. Those who had ventured into raising arms against the British Raj were honoured by these folk musicians. The case of Birsa Munda, who organised the tribal rebellion in Chhotanagpur during 1897-1900, can be cited as a live example. Kuwar Singh's sacrifice to the cause of his country is again a glorious instance which has become the theme of many folksongs in Bhojpuri. The National movement led by the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi also left its imprints on hundreds of folksongs in Bihar. Around 1942, the folk music had been the vigourous creative expression. During Indo-Pak war and Chinese aggression, popular folk tunes of Bihar were exploited fully both by the singers and rural poets to emphasise the unity of the country. Bhojpuri is comparatively rich in folk expressions and is often used in Hindi films.

The growth of education made the tribals and rural-talent of Bihar conscious of their heritage of dance and

APPENDIX II

MEMORANDUM ON CATALOGUING AND CLASSIFICATION OF SOUND RECORDING OF FOLK MUSIC

The following scheme for the cataloguing and classification of sound recordings of folk music has been prepared by the Radio Committee of the IFMC. It is an attempt to assemble in a systematic and practical way the most important requirements in the documentation of folk-music recordings.

The scheme is intended primarily for the use of radio organizations, but it can be expanded to serve the purpose of more specialized institutions.

In drawing up the scheme the Committee has taken into account the proposals of the Committee of Folk-music experts which met in Freiburg i. Br. in March, 1953, and the documentation called for in the Manual for Folk-music Collectors (published by the IFMC in 1951). The Committee has also studied a number of cards (fiches) submitted by some of the folk music libraries which are co-operating with the Council.

It is not intended that the scheme shall replace existing

general rules for the cataloguing of sound recordings nor is it expected that folk music record libraries will be able to adopt the scheme without modifications. It is, however hoped that it may provide a basis on which librarians can evolve a system which meets their own particular requirements.

It will be seen that four main sections are proposed, *i.e.* :

A Main entries
B Performers' entries
C Geographical (and ethnic) classification
D Subject classification

This general plan can be implemented in a number of ways. For instance, cards for sections B, C and D can be made *ad hoc*, or can be abridged from the cards in section A, or if the resources of the library permit, several copies of each card can be made at the outset and assembled in the various sections. It is suggested that cards of different colours might be used for each of the sections, or for the purpose of cross reference.

Again, the plan could be operated by means of a visible index system, with full cards for section A and a strip index system for the other arrangements or it could be adopted to a perforated card system.

Each library will choose the system which best meets its own requirements and fits in best with its existing methods. The data called for will not in the case of every recording be available, but it is hoped nevertheless that this memorandum will serve as a guide in the collection and recording of data and will lead to greater uniformity in the treatment of folk material.

SECTION A : MAIN ENTRIES
(See Note 1)

1 Archive reference number
2(a) Title with alternative titles from which cross reference should be made (see notes 2 and 3 on choice and language of title)
(b) First line of song (see Note 3 on language)
(c) Incipient tune(s)
. Name of performer(s)
4 Language (and dialect)
5 Ethnic group (see No. 2 of Sections C)
6 Category of item (see Section D)
7 Medium of performance :
e.g. Vocal solo or vocal ensemble (male, female, mixed, children)
Un-accompanied or with instrumental accompaniment (names of instruments)
Instrumental solo or instrumental ensemble (names of instruments)
8 General remarks, *e.g.* description of dances and customs, notes on style of singing or playing, etc.
9 Name of collector
10 Date of recording
11 Place of recording
12 Place where normally performed, if different from No. 11
13(a) State whether performed for a particular occasion or at a particular season
(b) If so, was it recorded on its proper occasion?
14 Reference to file containing further documentation, photographs, etc.
15 Bibliographical notes and references

16 Publisher or owner of record and Identification Number, *e.g.* published catalogue number, etc.
17 Condition of use of record (copy right, etc.)
18 Type and speed of record (*i.e.* technical description, whether on tape. film, disc, processed disc, long-playing record, etc.)
19 Duration of item
20 Technical quality
21 Other items on record

NOTES TO SECTION 'A'

(1) *Order*: The data are here set out as far as possible in logical sequence. Individual libraries, especially those using any form of 'visible' system may wish to vary the order, for example to bring items required for quick reference to the top or edge of the card.

(2) *Choice of titles* : Variants of the same songs or tune frequently appear with different titles. To bring these together, one 'common' title should be selected (preferably) that is most frequent in published collections, but this should be followed by other known forms of the title, including that given by the singer or locally current, and cross references should be made from all these.

(3) *Language of title*: Where possible, the language used should be that of the recorded performance. This should be followed by a translation in the language of the catalogue (*i.e.* normally the language of the country where it is being made). The same rule should be adopted for the first line of songs. Where use of the language of the recording is impossible or deemed inadvisable, the title (or a descriptive

title, failing an authentic title) should be given in the language of the catalogue.

SECTION B : PERFORMER'S ENTRIES

In the case of individual performers

1 Surname
2 First name (if a married woman, also husband's name)
3 Address
4 Age, or approximate age
5 Sex
6 Married, single or widowed
7 Place of birth
8 Occupations : present and previous
9 Education
10 Travel
11 General
12 List of Items performed : title(s) and reference number(s) according to Main Index

In the case of ensembles

1 Name of ensemble
2 Surname of leader
3 First name of leader
4 Address of leader
5 Names of other members of ensemble (if desire, bearing in mind that there may be changes in personnel, the name of the ensemble remaining the same.)
6 Notes on personnel and history of ensemble

7 List of items performed : title(s) and reference number(s) according to Main Index

SECTION C : GEOGRAPHICAL (AND ETHNIC) CLASSIFICATION

1 *Geographical*
(a) Continent
(b) Country
Also, if desire
(c) Region, province or country
(d) District, town or village
2 *Ethnic*
Nationality or race (*i.e.* people)
Tribe or group
3 *Linguistic*
Language
Dialect

Note :

Although three principles of classification overlap to a considerable extent, they do not necessarily coincide. Individual libraries must decide according to their own conditions and needs whether to adopt Nos. 2 and 3 as separate additional classifications, or whether they can be applied under 'country' as alternatives to Nos 1(c) and 1(d)

SECTION D : SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION (BY TYPE, FUNCTION, INSTRUMENT, ETC.)

Items should be classified under one or more of the following suggested categories with further sub-divisions as may be required :

1 *Songs*
(a) General, including narrative songs and lyrics
(b) Ceremonial and ritual
  (i) Calendar and seasonal
  (ii) Others
(c) Religions, other than those included in previous category
(d) Dance song
(e) Occupational
(f) Lullaby
(g) Game songs
(h) Children's songs, other than included in categories (f) and (g)
(i) Cries and calls
(j) Other categories according to needs

2 *Instrumental*
(a) Dance tunes, with division into types of dance
(b) Other categories according to needs

3 Ceremonies and customs giving cross-references to Nos. 1 and 2 where required
(a) Calendar and seasonal
(b) Connected with occupations
(c) Rites of transition (rites de passage) *e.g.* birth, initiation, marriage, death, etc.
(d) Other categories

4 Instruments, by name or type of instrument, using a systematic classification if required.

APPENDIX III

A SELECTION OF INDIAN FOLKSONGS

WHY I LAUGH
(A Canarese song)

One night I saw a man
Kissing a harlot's lips.
Next morn to bathe he ran,
And prayed on finger tips!

Oh, how I laugh ! I laugh out loud.
It makes me laugh to see the crowd,
Such tricks they do. I oft have vowed,
I'd laugh no more : with it I'am bowed.

A woman left her house
And joined a man as mean
She made a thousand vows
And washed at holy stream !

Oh, how I laugh.....

I saw one live in lust,
His gentle words were few,

He fed upon a crust,
And thought upon Vishnu.

Oh, how I laugh.....

(Charles E. Gover : *The Folksongs of Southern India, 1871*)

SOLE MENTOR
(A Munda song)

O ! none of your ugly matchmakers I need ;
Do send them away with your *kerketa* and crow.
For a bride I shall look where affection will bid,
My wishes alone the sole mentor I know,
O ! none of your gaudy *chaudols* will I need,
No clanking musicians behind me will go !
For a bride I shall seek where affection will lead,
My wishes alone the sole guide that I know,
No sprinkling of water with mango-twigs, I'll need,
Nor mark of vermilion over my brow,
For a bride I shall look where affection will bid,
My wishes alone the sole mentor I know.

(S.C. Roy : *Mundas and their Country, 1912*)

KARAM
(A Oraon dance-songs)

The captive birds, the animal, the creatures
Write with their lips
The British rule
The court's judicial order
Write as they wish.

Look at Ranchi town
Filling with soldiers
I see I see the white
Soldiers fill the streets.

Buy a drum, Lalu brother
You will feel as if you have a wife
If the drum gets broken, Lalu brother
You will feel as if your wife has left you.

(W.G. Archer : *The Blue Grove*, 1940)

CHHATTISGARHI FOLKSONGS

The three songs quoted below have been claimed by the collector and translator as 'untutored reaction of pre-literate people to current topics.'

Gandhi Mahraj

Aho Gandhi Mahraj, through the world your name is spread
In some places you give lectures, in some you have the flag
Cloth is cheap now and grain goes for a rupee *khandi*
In all the world your name is known.
Now cows are sold, and buffaloes. Our bullocks are all taken
There is the German-English war and Gandhi's gone to jail
Now two hands of cloth cost a rupee and a hand-and-a-half of homespun
Now we cannot get even a bellyful of food

All mankind is ruined
Your name is famous throughout the world.
Bring back your rule again.

The war of 1939-45

Eh hey hai the German-English war
From Jubbulpore the lorries run
From Bombay come the cars
The railway comes from Delhi
From Raipur runs the wire
As I was selling sweets
In the Raipur bazar
The English troops came running
The planes flew overhead.

Famine 1940

In '40 there was a great famine
Fence the gardens, keep a hole in the wall
The children of the house are begging for bread
Hail has taken away the wheat
The oil-seed has dried
The children of the house have died of hunger

Even the rats have run away
Even the cats are gone.

(Verrier Elwin : *Folksongs of Chhattisgarh, 1946*)

MANDO
(A Konkani love-song)

By the wave of the sea,
By the light of the moon,
By this braid of my hair,
I pledge you my love before God.
Come to me love, look at me,
Caress me with eyes of love.

Like the Sun and the stars you shine,
O angel of my love,
Because you are beautiful, my jewel,
I kneel in worship to you.
Come to me, angel of my heart,
Let me kiss you but once.

DAKNI
(The song of the dancing girls from Goa)

There is a ring in your nose, O dancing girl,
And tinkling anklets on your feet.
I'll give you the anklets on my feet
I'll give you the ring in my nose.
I'll show you the way
The way you must go.
I'll give you the bangles from my hand
I'll give you the necklace round my neck.
I'll show you the way
The way you must go.
Hear the music of my anklets
Of the bangles on my hands.
Look at me, folks, watch my steps
As I dance the *dakni*.

Look at this profusion, O dancing girl,
This rich profusion of chrysanthemums and mogras.
Chrysanthemums and mogras, how cheap they be
I have no use for them: no, I will not have them

(Lucio Rodrigues: *Journal of the University of Bombay, 1954*)

BIHU

"Abducation and elopements occur at the *Bihu* season; the pairing is regularised by the payment of a sum to the parents and respective *khels* or local units and by marriage. Some cases of abducation came to the courts also, as noted by B.C. Allen in 1905 (*District Gazetter* for Lakhimpur)."

Reference to this practice has occurred in many folksongs of Assam. Here follows an illustration :

I would dance the whole day, O friend,
I would dance the whole day,
Only do not carry me off while I dance
For heavily you have to pay.

(P. Goswami : *Bihu Songs of Assam*, 1957)

JARU
(A Khondh song from Orissa)

On the hill-top stands a *jaru* tree,
Flowers blossom on the *jaru* tree;
One flower for you, darling,
One flower for me.

On the hill-top stands a mango tree,
The pollen appears on the mango tree;
One blossom for you, my boy,
One blossom for me.

On the hill-top stands a *mahua* tree,
Flowers blossom on the *mahua* tree;
One flower for you, darling,
One flower for me.

(M.S. Randhawa: *Beautiful Trees and Gardens*, 1960)

AKASHA
(A *Baul* song of Bengal)

Who but a fool will shout
at the one who is by his side.
Does a person in whose heart
the one he seeks is at home,
wastes his time telling beads?
Alone within himself he
enjoys that Person's company.
You go out of your way
to make others' acquaintance
though you know nothing
of your own home.
One who knows Him as He is
lives in quiet solitude
keeping to himself.

(Lila Ray: *Journal of the Indian Musicological Society*, 1971)

CHARKHO
(A Rajasthani song)

Spin, spin, O spinning wheel
with the grace
I cover my body
With the grace
I run my household
Spin, spin O spinning wheel,

Colourful is my spinning wheel
It is like my brother
And I his sister
But so jealous is my neighbour
From door to door she went
To malign us
Spin, spin, O spinning wheel.

From your savings, O spinning wheel
With much pomp
I married my sister-in-law
From your savings, O spinning wheel
With a necklace
Was I blessed
Spin, spin, O spinning wheel.

Look at my luckless husband
After twelve long years he returns
With the princely treasure
Of a single rupee coin
But that too turns out
To be a counterfeit coin
Spin, spin, O spinning wheel.

And let's see
How fares my brother-in-law
After fifteen long years
Has he returned
As poor as ever
Mounching gram
And the same old pipe!
Spin, spin, O spinning wheel.

Made of fragrant sandalwood
This precious spinning wheel
Spins sparkling threads
And one who has resolved to spin
Has spun for eternity
Spin, spin, O spinning wheel.

(Komal Kothari: *Monograph on Langas*, 1972)

GARDEN OF YOUTH
(A Kanjar song)

The garden of my youth has blosomed
Come, collect pollen and petal.
O love, you have brought me as a child
from the fields of battle;
But now my limbs have a shape
And my dark hair has a curl.

Are not we beautifully balanced?
Don't you see, how nice the scales are?
So plunge into the rich sea
And bring out the pearl.
You are so close to me
That I hold you in my nails.

THE BRIBE
(A Malwi song)

The *munshi* asks for a five rupee note
The *thanedar* asks for a tenner
But the *kotwal* with blood on fire
Lures me for my youth entire
Like a cock that approaches the hen.

RASTURAVAN
(A Banjara song)

Break the rope and run away, my bullock!
As you are deprived of your caravan
So am I of my parents.
Run away, run away, my bullock!
I will get your horns gold plated
And for your legs ornaments of silver coins.
When you will move wagging your tail
The horns will shine
And the ornaments will glitter.
Run away, my bullock, run away.

(Shyam Parmar: *Folklore of Madhya Pradesh*, 1972)

GARBA
(A dance song from Gujarat)

Dark is the month of *Ashadh*
And the rain is pouring in a soft drizzle,
I am drenched here,
And far away my husband
is also drenched with the same drizzle.

ABAVANI
(A boatman's song)

O young men pull as you can
Hayee samal hobelan
Hands at length, use your strength, *Hayee....*
O the group, all the troupe, *Hayee...*
Sing a song, carry along, *Hayee...*
Hand to hand, arm to arm, *Hayee...*
Raise the weight, lift the gate, *Hayee...*
Break the fort on the port, *Hayee...*
O young men use your strength, *Hayee...*
If you can't you are impotent *Hayee...*
And your wife shall cast you off,
Hayee samal hobelan.

(Madhubhai Patel: *Folksongs of South Gujarat*, 1974)

BIRHA
(Bhojpuri dialect)

The *koel* sings, on the branch of the mango tree
The peacock dances in the forest;
I sing my *Birha* on the river bank,
Its melody pierces the heart.
Your legs and mine are of the length, O Mangri
Why not come to the gram field with me?
I shall give you plenty of green gram to fill your belly,
I shall sing the unheard *Birha.*
I sing the *Birha* roaring like a tiger,
As though the clouds thunder;
The fair one rushes out as she bears it,
The words of *Birha* bend down suddenly.
Since the railway train appeared,

Forest and hills are levelled,
The money I had, I gave to my legs,
The bones of back I gave to my back.
I have lost my *Birha* song because of hunger
I have lost the melodies of *Kajari* and *Kabir*;
As I look at my fair ones rising breast,
Desire no more rises in my heart.
You will not win, O English man, in Gandhi's fight,
You may do your best;
Many luxuries you had in this land,
Now your bunglows shall be sold.

(Devendra Satyarthi: *Weekly Round Table*, 1974)

JHAPAN
(A Snake-charmers' song of Radh)

The merchant's daughter drifts and drifts away,
She has no place to stay
She has no house, no home, nor even has she,
The shelter of a tree.
Lokhindor, her husband, he is dead,
Her tearful eyes are red.
Lokhindor, he died of snake-bite, burning,
And, poor wretch, for ever she is mourning.

(Maniklal Sinha: *Folk Music and Folklore-Vol. I*)

ALLO NEREDALLO
(A puberty song from Andhra Pradesh)

The marriage of Sita went on beautifully.
If a girl attains puberty on Sunday,
She will become a poor woman.

If a girl attains puberty on Monday,
She will become a chaste woman.
If a girl attains puberty on Tuesday,
She will become a barren tree.
If a girl attains puberty on Wednesday,
She will bring forth sons.
If a girl attains puberty on Thursday,
She will receive prosperity.
If a girl attains puberty on Friday,
She will have enjoyment.
If a girl attains puberty on Saturday,
She will become a sick woman.

(*The Journal of Cultural Studies 3*, Japan, 1976)

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