Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam

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

surīnāma-sarit-tīrē gāyaṁ jana-janārdana
gītār etās tava śrutvā tubhyam eva samarpaye
Acknowledgments

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Chapter one
Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Many songs similar to those in our study are found in the above collections. Out of a total of a hundred songs printed in this thesis, eight are found in Avadhī variants, twenty in a mixture of Avadhī and Bhojpūrī - even though the authors on Bhojpūrī folksongs
do not acknowledge their Avadhi mixture - and sixteen have their variants in more than two dialects including Brajbhāṣā, Kanāujī etc. There are negligibly few which are handed down only in a single one of these, latter, dialects. Some individual lines or groups of lines from our songs, as well as many phrases are also found in different versions in other contexts. Reference to these is made in the notes to the texts of our songs.

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

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

Many types of songs known in India have been lost in Surinam because of a difference of conditions, for example the bārahmāsā songs, which describe the weather and attitudes towards the twelve months of the year, have not been heard in Surinam because the weather in Surinam is not divided into seasons. Gradually some of the ritual is being lost with the consequence that the songs of Janēu, for instance, are now known to few. For some inexplicable reason only two lines of a song to Saṣṭhī (see p. 15) were heard. The general change in social, caste and family conditions has also contributed to reduce the popularity of several types of songs, for example there are now very few songs dealing with the woes of an infertile woman, bājih. As the professions of water-carriers, kahārs, or clay-potters, kumhārs, are dying out, their songs also are slowly becoming extinct. The introduction of ready-milled flour and modern agricultural machines has caused the women's titillā songs to become less known than before.
Other causes of loss are the influence of modern education whereby the younger people are taught to disregard non-European forms of culture as backward and primitive, the introduction of modern Hindi through literature, films, the modern reform movements such as Ārya-samāj, and religious missionaries and cultural workers from India. This has generated a feeling of inferiority and often an apologetic attitude among those who speak or sing in the dialect forms.

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

Delivery of the Songs

Although solo singing of religious songs is popular, most of the ceremonial singing is by groups. There are some organised groups of men devoted to singing who come together at particular social and religious occasions either for a fee or for the simple enjoyment of the singing. Women's groups function separately from those of men and are of two types. In the villages there are older women whose repertoire is relied upon by the younger women. The singing is spontaneous, with not much musical ornamentation. Then there are also organised societies either independent or in some way connected with various religious organisations, for example the Lakṣmī Samāj in Paramaribo connected with the central body of Hinduism, the Sanātana Dharma Sabha of Surinam. The singing by such organised groups often helps to collect funds at social and religious occasions. The members of these organised groups have better training in singing picked up from senior members and their singing is more ornate. In all group singing usually a senior lady leads and others repeat after her.
Sometimes the singers add words like güiyă or sakhı, bahin or bahinī (sister), bhaiyă or bhayavā (brother), jorā or sanghari (companion) as mutual vocatives to create a feeling of camaraderie and enthusiasm in the company while singing. Similar expressions of enthusiasm, exclamation or address to fellow singers, dismissed by Grierson as ‘unmeaning phrases’ (J.R.A.S. 1884: 199) perhaps because they cannot be exactly translated even though they convey an intensity of shared feeling among the singers, are e, ye, o, ho, re, ri (feminine), are, bhalā, bhale, hā, aba, to, na, aur etc. The same purpose is served, but in a devotional way, by adding the name of a God-Incarnate, almost as an exclamation, seeking, as it were, His blessing upon the song or on the sentiment expressed. Some of these expressions are rām, rāmā, rāmjī, rāmjū, he rām, ho rām, siyārām, śyām, hare etc. Entire strophes, whose meaning is not directly connected with the content of the song, are also found as stobhas (vide p. 31).

Tunes

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

Prosody and Rhyme

The songs do not as a rule follow any definite system of metrical arrangement3. The singers rely mainly upon the beats of the drum to maintain the rhythm. The lines in different types of songs are of varying length, for example the sohar has longer lines than the ulārā, but the exact length cannot be determined, the number of morae in one line of the same song not being identical with others. To maintain the rhythm according to the drumbeat the singers employ various phonetic devices. Short vowels are lengthened;

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1 As there is no English word to express the ‘woman friend of a woman’, the word sakhı is retained untranslated throughout.
2 Some discussion on the topic may be found in D.P. Sirhiha (‘44: 3, 15 ff.), K. Gandharva (S.P. ‘51: 311 ff.), K. Upādhyāya (‘60: 341, 375-376), V. Prasād (‘62: 51-53 intr.).
3 But see V.P. Vatuk (‘66, 155-166).
long vowels are shortened. Two short vowels may share a single mora to keep up with the druta beat. Even the traditionally long phonemes like e, ai, o, au are often pronounced as ē, āi, ō, āu. Vowels are elided and sometimes a stop substituted with almost an inaudible remnant of the elided vowel, e.g., jamunā > jam.nā. The interconsonantal or final a may or may not be discounted, e.g., dūba maratī = dūb martī. The short vowels before joint consonants which are treated as guru in ordinary Hindi may here be treated as laghu. An intervocalic h may be inarticulate, the vowels may be assimilated and, if long, shortened, e.g., naḥī + hai = nahiya. Other forms of euphony or assimilation may be resorted to, e.g., bhayo + ādhān > bhayavādhān > bhavyādhān.

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

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

This type of metrical regularity is often found in the songs in which the same phraseology may be repeated from stanza to stanza; (vide, e.g., song No. 8). There are also songs in which a line or a part thereof, perhaps a quarter (carana), may be identical with the refrain (vide, e.g., song No. 6) either moraically or syllabically. Rhyming is often irregular. Usually an exclamation or a stobha serves as a rhyme. In shorter songs of a lyrical nature such as ulārās, catnis and bhajans as well as in some longer songs a full use of rhyming is made.

Language

The speakers of various dialects (vide p. 1) in India were mostly separate, each in their own region. Even though they often mixed in market places and perhaps at sacred baths and on pilgrimages, their coming together to live in a single community, as happened on their arrival in Surinam, was unprecedented. In Surinam there was an inevitable exchange of dialects. It must also be borne in
mind that all these dialects are inter-related and a large number of forms are identical in many; furthermore, the same dialect may have many forms. The people of the *pachāh* were soon absorbed into the eastern group which was the majority. Now, slowly, there is developing what has been termed the *Sarnāmī* dialect of Hindi (Adhin 1964), through an intermingling of dialects, Hindi and the local Surinam influences.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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¹ See also Dr. J.H. Adhin: 1964.

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The Musical Instruments

The main musical instruments are as follows:

The Drums

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Nagāṛā**: this deserves to be mentioned in greater detail than
Plate I

Fig. 1 Dholak

Fig. 2 Hūrkā
Plate II

Fig. 3 Dhap

Fig. 4 Khajřī
Plate III

Fig. 5 Ḍamru

Fig. 6 Tāssā

Fig. 7 Nagārā

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Plate IV

Fig. 8 Majīrā

Fig. 9 Daṇḍ-tāl
Fig. 10 Kartāl

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Plate V

Fig. 11 Tānpūrā

Fig. 12 Sārangī

Fig. 13 The cauk of Šaṣṭhī and silphahanā

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

Fig. 15 Māṛo kā Cauk
Fig. 16 A basic kohbar design. The lines are drawn in various colours
Plate VIII

Fig. 17 Sitājī kī rasōī

Fig. 18 A basic kohbar design. Colours are to fill the blank spaces
the other instruments. This is a pair of drums, one small and one large; the large one is placed on its side, the small one facing up. These are beaten with two sticks, the longer stick is called dankā, and the shorter one cob. All nagāṛā playing, analogous to birahā singing (see p. 29), has three movements: it starts with caltā, analogous to sumiran or the remembrance of the deity, then comes thekā, the main subject matter analogous to alcāři, and then chapkā, the finale analogous to jācanī or bisarjan. These movements are called the hands, hāṯh, of the nagāṛā. The playing may go on for hours or all night on festive occasions such as weddings. It is the special instrument of Ahīrs and their related clans, the Kurmīs. Long epics as well as short birahās and other songs may be sung to the accompaniment of the nagāṛā. The beat is very powerful and heard at great distances as befitting an ancient battle drum (S. dundubhi). It is played by professional players who also have a small troupe, sometimes even of one man, of dancing partners called jorā (companion). These companions sing and punctuate the singing with the Ahīr dances such as pharavā. There is now only one nagāṛā player in the Nickerie province but neither he nor his jorā is an Ahīr, both having learnt the art from Ahīr masters who have died. There is an excellent party of genuine nagāṛā players and singers led by a proficient Ahīr at Meerzorg near Paramaribo, always much in demand. Some other groups try to imitate. (fig. 7).

Brass and Bronze
(Accompaniments to the Drums)


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

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

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

Kartāl: two pairs of rectangular wooden pieces, ten and a half inches long and two and a half inches wide, with brass discs fixed inside two holes, together with a separate hole for the thumb in one piece of the pair and a larger hole for the four fingers in the
other piece; thus one pair is held in one hand and the second pair in the other hand. The two pieces of each pair are struck together so that the brass discs make the sound. (fig. 10).

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

String Instruments
(Now Rare)

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

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

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

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

The Songs and their Function

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

A. Songs inherited from India
1. The ritual songs and folksongs without a written text. These are the main subject of the present study.
2. The traditional songs from printed books:
   i) songs of a religious character by authors such as Tulasidāsa, Sūradāsa, Kabir and other saint-poets (not included here),
   ii) songs of a less religious nature, the epics and ballads of Gopīcand, Ālhā etc.; of these The Ālhā is almost as popular as Tulasidāsa's work is in the religious context (n. incl.).
3. Relatively modern songs of devotion, such as various collections of bhajans published in India (n. incl.).
4. The songs of the Ārya-samāj movement, used by the followers of the same among whom they replace all other categories of song almost completely\(^1\) (n. incl.).

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

**The Ritual and the Song**

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

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1 These are mostly from books published in India with the exception that some Ārya-samāj songs have been locally composed in the traditional folk tunes such as birahā and cautāl. In fact the only authentic Aḥir nagārā player (vide p. 9) of Surinam is a member of the Ārya-samāj movement and his group sometimes sings these Ārya-samāj birahās and cautāls. As the members of this movement observe only the Vedic ritual, the ritual song in vernacular languages associated with the folk ritual has been totally rejected.

2 The Sanskrit formulae for (1) (a) and (b) have been adequately recorded and translated by de Klerk. The ceremonial under (b) are chiefly these: (i) some of the stages of the janēūŘ ceremony (d.Kl. ‘51: 101-119); (ii) in the wedding, silpohanā (see p. 108) kanyā-dāna (d.Kl. ‘51: 163), lājā-homa and parikrama also called bhāvar (Ibid: 169) and perhaps sindūra-dāna (Ibid: 177) which does not always include a Sanskrit mantra.

3 Few instances of this type of ritual are described in the earliest Sanskrit works on domestic ritual, the gṛhyasūtras, for example, in taking the bride, after the main wedding ceremony, to a private chamber, ‘anuguptāgāre’ (PGS. 1.8.10) now known as kohbar (vide de Klerk ‘51: 140 etc.).

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

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

These songs, like any other sacred formulae, serve to enhance the meaning of the ritual in several ways. Where they are sung while the priest is chanting the Sanskrit formulae [(1) (b) above] they are expressive of the thoughts and feelings of the women singers which are not the same as those of the officiating priest. For example, in the janēū ceremony, it must be a moment of a particular sentiment for a mother to see her son for the first time begging for alms (de Klerk '51: 114), of which song No. 13 is an adequate expression and for which no appropriate Sanskrit formula exists. Similarly the Sanskrit formulae for giving away the bride (de Klerk '51: 164 ff.) are statements of the sacred intention and the declaration of giving, but song No. 37 describes the heartfelt emotion of the father at that occasion, the trembling of hands, and the final reconciliation of the mind to a duty to which he is bound by the rules of dharma. Even more striking is the occasion of bhāvar (de Klerk '51: 169); song No. 38 expresses the thoughts of a bride while she is going around the fire - which every singing woman must remember from the day of her own marriage - her affection for her own relatives and the old relationships finally sundered as she declares in the song with the seventh round, 'now I belong to another'. It is thus clear that without the songs, important thoughts of a large segment of the participants in a ceremony would remain mute; the singing by women and chanting by the priest together complete the ritual. The songs cannot be
dismissed as ritual formulae on the grounds that they express human emotions instead of a religious sentiment; much of the wedding ritual in Sanskrit also expresses human emotions, for example the touching of the heart (de Klerk ‘51: 176) of the bride; for these occasions there has been no need to develop women's song formulae in the vernacular.

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

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

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

That to the folk mind many of these songs in the spoken languages are indeed equivalent to mantras, as stated above, is not
debatable. Some of the magical ceremonial such as jādū ṭonā (Song No. 65) is also known as jantar-mantar (S. yantra, a ritualistic design; mantra, a sacred formula). To cure a malady by the application of such formulae is called chū- mantar karnā, from the exclamation chū (a syllable similar to the tantric biñas without a lexicographical meaning) at the end of the incantation; although we translate it there as ‘touch’!, it is not always applicable.

The Cauk

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

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

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

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

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

2 In popular terminology they are not called maṇḍala but only cauk. The closest we come to the term maṇḍala is in māṛo (song Nos. 24, 26, 40; cf. de Klerk ’51: 140, 146 etc.). The connection seems obvious: maṇḍapa, the temporary canopy for a ritual (also the hall of a temple), [mandira (temple)], maṇḍala, a sanctifying and decorative design such as the ground plan of a māṛo, mani, a jewel, that which decorates. Song No. 26 says that the māṛo has been inlaid with the designs made in jewels.
abide with the worshippers until given a visarjana, bidden leave. They also sanctify the ground, converting it into a sacred place for the duration of the ceremony.

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

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

ii) The silpohanā song is sung after the design (fig. 13)² has been drawn. The offerings for the spirits are placed in the design.

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

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¹ For other designs of Ṣaṣṭhī, see Briggs (’20: figs. 1 and 2, opp. P. 66), Fuchs (’50: 109); and a different representation of Ṣaṣṭhī, Sūryavarnśī (’62: 90), Mookerjee (’46: plate XVII).
² These designs are now very rare; a few older women were able to draw these for us, full of complaint against the ‘ignorant younger generation’.
The designs are drawn with white flour with the following exceptions: The *kunđa sarvatobhadra vedi* and the *navagrahas* have appropriate colours filled in with coloured rice grains. The *kohbar* basic design is drawn in red or yellow; there are no rules about the colours of the pictographs inside.

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

**Songs as Ritual Formulae**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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1 For these classical designs the reader is referred to *Sarvadeva-pratiṣṭhā prakāśa* of Caturthilāla Gauḍa and the ritual text books listed by de Klerk (*51: 126*).
a ritual. For example the swing, *jhūlā* (song Nos. 55, 56), was of great importance in some rituals¹ (Gonda, ‘43: 348 ff.), it is now only a form of frolic and sport. The *cautāls* also seem to be connected with the *vasanta rāga* songs sung at the worship of Rati and Kāma in ancient times (see Varṣakṛtyadīpaka: 288-289). Because these songs are sung at those festivals, which are of religious importance, with fixed rituals, in the annual cycle of life, they may be safely called ritual songs for all practical purposes.

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

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

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

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

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¹ Kosambi (‘62: 80) says; ‘At Athens, the Vintage Festival was marked by girls swinging from the branches of Erigone’s pine tree on rope swings; this should explain how Urvaśī appeared to Purūravas as *antarikṣa-prā* (RV. x.95.17) just before the end. Her swinging high through the air was as much part of the ritual fertility sacrifice as the chant and the dance’.
they have a fixed place at certain stages of the ritual. Also, in the view of anthropologists such songs in other cultures not only serve the purpose of cementing kinship (Greenway, ’64: 61)-appropriate for the occasion of a marriage - but their singing is also a form of fertility rite (Gonda, ’43: 351-352; Kosambi ’62: 10).

Date and Authorship

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

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

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1 For details, see Gonda: Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung und Wesen des indischen Dramas.
2 Note 509 on Bāla Kāṇḍa I.17.10 in the Baroda edition.

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

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

The Types of the Ritual Song

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

The Songs of the Life Cycle

The sohars: sung by women at childbirth. When a birth is announced in the community the women come round in groups and start singing as they approach within the earshot of the house.
The ritual on that occasion (de Klerk pp. 98-100) and the drawing of the chaṭṭhī kā cauk (vide p. 15 above) is invariably accompanied by singing. The sohar tells a story of, or describes a situation generally with a theme woven around, Rāma, Krṣṇa, Śiva, Gaṅgā etc., or a divining of an auspicious dream, or some other legendary or supernatural subject. Together with thanksgiving to the deity concerned, there is often a description of how the child is obtained through the grace of a god or a goddess, or through the observance of some form of ritual, worship, fast or ascetic practice. The singing goes on up to the sixth or, in some families, the twelfth day after the birth.

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

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

Mūran (S. muṇdana): the women start singing as they come near the place of the ceremony of shaving a child’s first hair which is often done at home but sometimes by a river or by the sea. The singing continues while the barber shaves the child’s head. 1

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


**The Wedding Songs**

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

**The Death Songs**

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

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

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1. *O hamār bhayavā, tu ham ke chori ke kāhe cal gayelo. Ab ham ke kai itana pyār kaṛ. Hamār larikan ab ke kai apan māmū kahi kai pukāṛi.*
2. Cremation is not practised among the Surinam Hindus.
3. Their theme is not necessarily confined to the subjects of the Hindi saguṇa literature; they are, in fact, difficult to define.

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

The Songs of the Annual Cycle

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

Special mention must be made of the kabīrs (not related to the saint-poet of that name), which are short two-line pieces, sometimes even dohās borrowed from literary authors like Tulasidāsa, in-
introduced with a singing shout of *suna lo merī kabīr* (Hear my kabīr!) and closed with *jai bolo ramaiyā bābā kī* (Shout ‘victory’ to Rāma!).

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

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

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

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

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¹ For further details see Pelly (1879).
² Not only does the similarity of the *jharrā* with *daṇḍa-rāsaka* show a Hindu influence but a comparison of the songs with some of the Hindu songs also confirms this, for example, see notes on song Nos. 59A and 60A. It would appear that some Hindus converted to Islam adjusted the Hindu motif to the context of their new religion. The homage paid to the *pīrs* (Muslim saints and *paigambars* (prophets)) in *sumirans* (song Nos. 80G, 99A) is another example of mutual exchange between the two religions.
Other Ritual Songs

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

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

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

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

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

¹ He seems to be connected with the Persian dehāt. See also Crooke (1894: 88). It is said that not even wind may pass in and out of the village without his permission.
fortnight after Rāma-navamī, the birthday of Rāma, but the rite may also be performed at the times of plague, cholera, smallpox, floods etc. An area under a tree, preferably a pīpal, by the road leading into the village is cleared. A square raised spot, cautrā (S. catvara) is plastered with cowdung and mud. Four red, triangular flags are placed in the four corners and a white canopy is tied to the flagpoles. Under the canopy a swing or a hammock is tied symbolising the seat or the chariot of the deity. Since Ďih is said to have no form, there are no images. The person acting as a priest or a priestess prays like this: ‘Oh Ďih Bābā, may there be no suffering accruing to the people of this village. Be gracious unto us and guard and protect us. Keep watch over this village.’ Then the worshippers, led by the ojhā beat the ḍholak and sing pacrā songs while offering lapsī, milk, betel nut, betel leaf, nutmeg, flowers, rum or other intoxicants, eggs etc. A cock, a pig or a he-goat - but never a female animal - may also be sacrificed. After the worship the four flags are taken and made to fly on the four corners of the village to ward off the malevolent forces and spirits.

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

1 According to our informants the names of these, a little different from those enumerated by de Klerk (‘51: 87), are: Śītalā, Chuṭkī or Khelnī Kūdnī, Phūmatī, Dhamsā, Ākāsgāminī or Jogjatī, Masānī and Koṛhiniyā. It is said that a king had seven daughters who suffered from these forms of afflictions and were deified.

2 We were informed by an ojhā that some years ago when it was suggested that a pumpkin may be cut instead of an animal there was a great deal of opposition to the suggestion.
he-goat, is sacrificed. While the dancer dances, the four singers lead the worshippers in singing pacrā, and beat the dholak. The ojhā falls into an hypnotic trance, and is now said to be possessed by the goddess. He throws his limbs about, shakes his head, dances, jumps and shouts. When the singing has thus shown its effect, that is to say, the goddess has arrived in response to the worshippers' invitation, it stops and those present gather around the ojhā who sits down and serves as an oracle, answering questions and granting wishes. Slowly the effect wears off. The meat is shared among the devotees.

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

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

The godnā or tattoo song comes into a special category. Strictly a work song of the manihār or natuā who used to go around the village shouting the offer of his services, it is connected with a marriage ritual. Almost all the women singers, especially the older ones, had tattoo designs on their arms, and sometimes chest, as well as little spots on the cheeks or the forehead etc. It was stated that in their young days, no one in the husband's home would receive food or water from their hands if they were not tattooed. After the marriage, the bride accompanies her husband only for a few days and then returns to the parental home. It is then that the bride's mother took her on to her lap and had a design tattooed on her right arm; on her return to the husband's home the tattoo was done on the left arm. It was believed that if the mother has her daughter thus tattooed in her lap they would meet again in heaven. There are many kinds of tattoo designs, such as the elephant with a howdā, a crown, and so forth but the most ceremonial one is known as Sitāji ki rasoī, Sitā's kitchen (fig. 18). Perhaps this design
symbolises a woman's role in the home although why the design as such (see fig. 6) is given this name is not clear unless it has some connection with Śītājī kā cauk (vide p. 15), meaning to express that the purpose for which the mother goddess had been invited in the form of the earth at the beginning of the wedding ceremonials has now been fulfilled and that she now leaves her stamp on the newly married woman. The songs sung while tattooing are of several types; some are gālīs, perhaps as an aid to the newly wed woman's fertility while others (see song No. 75) tell a story the theme of which is the irrevocability of a marriage at any price, which makes the tattoo, again, something like a stamp of marriage, to sanctify her womanhood so that food and water may be accepted from her hand in the husband's home.

The Caste Songs and Work Songs

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

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

1 The folk tunes of cowherds and cultivators were recognised, collected and tabulated by authors like Mātārīga (Bṛhad-desī 1.2) who incorporated them into the classical music under the title of desī.

2 By the time of Sūradāsa, Kṛṣṇa had been commonly called an Ahīr and the gopīs are Ahīrī (Sūrasāgara, 10th skandha, 1922, 1925, 2596, 3063, 3156 etc.; Bhramaragīta songs 58, 118, 234 etc.).
they are par excellence the dairy-keeping caste.\(^1\) Among the four shiploads of immigrants studied by de Klerk (‘53: 99), out of 599 persons of what he calls the higher middle castes, 400 were Ahīrs and of related clans as follows: Ahīr proper - 209, Goālā or Gwālā - 31, Gūjar - 4, Kurmī - 156. The Ahīrs seem to have created the Indian birahā which was for long particularly their form of song but has now become the vehicle of creative poetry for all the Hindus of Surinam (vide p. 29). Song No. 88 is also a fair example of their Kṛṣṇa lore.

The Work Songs

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

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

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

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

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

5. The Women’s Work songs are called titilās. They almost

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1 For further details on the Ahīrs, see Bhagwānsingh Sūryavarāhī (cf. p. 173).
invariably tell a story with a theme of the woes and tragedies of a woman's life, for example ill-treatment by the in-laws as in song No 77. They are usually long, sung to the rhythm of the work. They may (as in song Nos. 76, 77) or may not (as in song No. 78) refer to the work. The following two types of titilās have been recorded.

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

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

Other Songs

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

A birahā is divided into three parts: firstly, Dohā or sumiran, which may be a verse from Kabīr, Tulasidāsa or any other celebrated author, but most often it is a folk composition, commemorating God, a favourite deity or many deities, one's own parents, husband, or guru, Sarasvatī, the goddess of speech, whose blessing is sought in the difficult undertaking of an instant composition or the rendering of the song, asking them to grace the singer with inspiration and, in the case of Sarasvatī, to abide in his throat.
or on his tongue. It may also be only a reminder of a moral precept. Faster in beat is the second part known as lacārī or alcārī, the main composition on any topic. The finale, variously referred to as jācanī or bisarjan, rounds off the song by (a) referring back to, or thanking one or more of, the deities of the sumiran, even repeating a line or two of the same, (b) giving another moral precept in a dohā, or (c) by the singer introducing himself.

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

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

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

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

The modern songs on socio-political themes have been composed in several of the styles listed above, such as birahā (song Nos. 97, 99), bhajan (song Nos. 96, 98, 100) etc. In the earlier period the singers were more concerned with their migration, for example song No. 97A gives caste oppression in India as the reason for it. Then came the question of whether or not to return to India as in song No. 97B. Later the singers were concerned with the need for social reform both in India and, inspired by its success there, in Surinam, together with the Indian struggle for independence (song Nos. 96, 98). But slowly Bhārat, that is India, was replaced by Su-
rinam and the singers sang of the problems of the Surinam Indian community as in song No. 100 which is the most popular song on this theme; several versions of this song have been recorded. The conflict of loyalties divided between India and Surinam has been resolved by the modern singer by paying homage to the Indian deities in religious terms and to the land of Surinam in patriotic terms (song No. 99) and by adapting Hindu ideas to a Surinam geo-political context, for example 'mukti (spiritual salvation) by bathing in Cola Creek'. There are also songs in praise of various Indian political parties of Surinam and their leaders - not included here - together with appeals for unity between the Hindus and Muslims of Surinam (song No. 98) also in order to keep them from becoming converts to Christianity.

The Literary Background

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

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

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

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

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

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1 Vide also Kosambi (’62: 10): ‘...the Upanishadic riddles which display so much mysticism and philosophy are only a step above the deadly riddles asked by yakṣas of strangers at sacred springs. The wrong answer in the earlier days meant ritual sacrifice of the intruder.’
No. 36 seems to have taken its inspiration from Vidyāpati (pp. 310-311 etc.) describing Menā’s horror at seeing Śiva, wrapped in snakes, as the prospective bridegroom for her daughter, and her refusal to wed Pārvatī to such a personage. The songs of Kabir’s nirguna tradition require no special discussion; their influence on the themes of our songs is all too evident. The songs of Sūradāsa, rather than Tulasidāsa, seem to have made a considerable impact on the folk-singers because Tulasidāsa did not use the muktaka form as Sūradāsa did. When the former did compose any muktakas they were in a linguistic style less comprehensible to the masses than that of the latter. Some of Sūradāsa’s lines, if not complete songs, seem to have been borrowed or copied by our singers. Some examples of these can be given here.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{caraṇa dhōi caranodaka ñinhau...} & : & 1.239 & (Cp. song No. 41) \\
\text{tuma to tīnī loka ke thākura} & : & 1.239 & (Cp. song No. 41) \\
\text{bhakti binu baila birānā hvaiho} & : & 1.331 & (Cp. song No. 66) \\
\text{motini cauka purāye} & : & 9.24 & (Cp. song No. 23) \\
\text{tapasī dōu bhāī} & : & 9.140 & (Cp. song No. 69) \\
\text{kahana lāge mohana maiyā maiyā...} & & & \\
\text{dūri khelana jani jāhu} & : & 10.155 & (Cp. song No. 9)
\end{align*}
\]

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹ There Bali is referred to by the name Bāṣkali. For other references see Dīkṣitar's Purāṇa Index, vol. II, pp. 469-471.
These are in fact metaphors to describe ideal human relationships by referring to the legendary figures related to various God-Incarnates. The concept of the ideal aunt, the ideal guest or the ideal city alone is meant to be conveyed. ‘Rāma’ even becomes the title of honour for any person in the expression ‘kavan rāmā’ (e.g. song No. 33) where, in actual singing, kavan, i.e. ‘which, ‘who’ or ‘some (person)’ is replaced by the name of the person who may be involved in any capacity in the ceremonial or other observance; he becomes ‘N.N. the Rāma’.

**Religion and Social Conditions**

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

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

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1 For further details on the identity of Sītā and Kālī, see Bulke ('62: 98). On Sītā as the deity of agriculture ibid. 12 ff. On the identification of Rāma and Śiva ibid. 736 etc.
motif of a red flag, seems to have been identified as an aspect of Pārvatī; she has a platform, cautrā (S. catvara), for her worship at Dhaulgiri, one of the highest Himalayan peaks. Perhaps the singer had in mind the nearby peak of Gaurī-Saṅkara or Kailāsa, for Dhaulgiri itself has no traditional connection with Pārvatī. On the other hand, the kumharavā song No. 71 states that the forehead is Dhaulgiri in the human body. In that case it may be called the cautrā of Devī, the vital energy, in accordance with the yoga tradition, as well as the seat of Sarasvati, wisdom.

The term Gaṅgājī kā cauk (vide p. 15) at the maṭkor also suggests the oneness of Gaṅgā with other aspects of the mother goddess, Sitā, Pārvatī, or mother earth. The song (No. 18) sung by women in procession towards the maṭkor spot confirms this view as it alludes to a journey towards Gaṅgā. An ojhā informant, asked about pacrās, stated that once in a dream he had received a pacrā from Durgā who wished to be worshipped as Gaṅgā. She gave him only one line of a song: karo millī ārati saba gaṅgā maiyā kī (Everyone, join together and perform ārati of mother Gaṅgā).

Not only that all waters of Surinam, as of any other place,¹ are Gaṅgā in the general belief of the singers but they are representatives of the mother goddess. The singer of song No. 85 places her foot in the water and begs the mother goddess of the water, whom she calls Kālī, to let a crocodile grab her old husband; in return the singer would sacrifice to her a goat as a thanks-offering. In that song and in song No. 57 she is malevolent. There we see a worship through fear, and then from an object of terror she becomes a saviour, a giver of life, and in song No. 3 she is also perhaps a fertility goddess, giving a child. Vide also Kosambi’s discussion (’62: 59) on Gaṅgā killing her seven sons, and then as the mother of Devavrata Bhīṣma see MB., Ādiparvan, Ch. 91 ff.

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

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

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

The sound of trumpets as an indication of the presence of the goddess is also mentioned by Whitehead (’21: 20) as well as the use of the skin of the sacrificial animal, offered to the goddess, for making a drum to be beaten at her worship (ibid. 75).
There are also minor cults, apart from those already mentioned (vide Ḍīh, p. 25), such as that of Bhūiyā or Bhūmiyā and Thaiyā (song Nos. 21, 80E) the godlings of village land and of a spot. ¹ Deified persons like Lonā Camārin² are also invoked in a magic context (song No. 65).

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

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

1 Sohar i [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
Wishes fulfilled through religious observances

I. pahāli magana sītā maṅge javana bidhi purave ho
   [pahāli magana sītā (māgāile) javana bidhi (puravāile) ho]
   [pahāli magana sītā maṅge javana bidhi (puraveli) ho]

II. sītā maṅgele ajodyā ke rāja sarajū jī ke darasana ho
   [sītā maṅgele ajodyā ke rāja sarajū jī ke (daraśana) ho]

III. dusarī magana sītā maṅge javana bidhi purave ho
    [dusarī magana sītā (māgāile) javana bidhi (puravāile) ho]
    [dusarī magana sītā maṅge javana bidhi (puraveli) ho]

IV. sītā maṅgele kosillā aiśi sāśa sasura rājā dasaratha ho
    [sītā (maṅge) (kausilyā) aiśi (sāśi) sasura rājā dasaratha ho]

V. tisarī magana sītā maṅge javana bidhi purave ho
   [tisarī magana sītā maṅge javana bidhi (puraveli) ho]

VI. sītā maṅgele purusa bhagavāna devara bābū lachamana ho
    [sītā maṅgele purusa bhagavāna devara bābū (lachimana) ho]

VII. cauthī magana sītā maṅge javana bidhi purave ho

VIII. sītā maṅge goda ke baiakavā agana bharā khelāḥ ho

IX. milahu na sakhiyā sahelaṁi jili julā ho
   [sītā kauna bidhi kara leyau rāma bara pāyāu ho]

X. māghāi māsa nahānī agana nāhi tāpe agina nāhi tāpāi ho

XI. sakhi barata rahyaṁ parāivā rāma bara pāyāu ho

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1 This is the most popular sohar; four versions have been recorded. The words in the brackets in the first six lines are given to show the variants (see p. 3) used by different singers in the same group. This system will not be followed in the balance of the text. Cp. R. Tripāṭhi (’29: 142).
XIII. milahu na sakhiyā sahelaṁ mili juli calāu hoof

XIV. sitā kauna kavana tapa kara leyau rāma bara pāyāu hoof

XV. barata rahaṛat ekādasī aur duvādasī auro duvādasī hoof

XVI. sakhi tulasī ke diyanā jalāyau rāma bara pāyāu hoof

XVII. je yahi mangala gāve aura gāya ke sunāve, aura gāya ke sunāvāi hoof

XVIII. sakhi tulasidāsa bhali āsa amara phala pāvāi hoof

I. Sitā makes (her) first wish - (if) God¹ may fulfil it;

II. Sitā wishes² that she may see in the kingdom of Ayodhyā the venerable (river) Sarayū.

III. Sitā makes (her) second wish - (if) God may fulfil it;

IV. Sitā wishes that she may have a mother-in-law like Kauśalyā and a father-in-law like Daśaratha.

V. Sitā makes (her) third wish - (if) God may fulfil it;

VI. Sitā wishes that she may have a husband like the Lord (i.e. Rāma) and that she may have his brother Lakṣmaṇa as her devar.³

VII. Sitā makes (her) fourth wish - (if) God may fulfil it;

VIII. Sitā wishes that a child of her (own) lap may play about all over the courtyard.

IX. - Gather up, sakhis,⁴ gather up and come along (to ask),

X. What observances did Sitā perform (that she) obtained Rāma as (her) husband.

XI. - Bathing in the very (cold) month of māgha (January-February) (I) did not warm (myself) by a fire; (I) did not warm (myself) by a fire.

XII. Sakhi, I kept fast on the first day of the (lunar) fortnight and obtained Rāma as (my) husband.

XIII. - Come on, sakhis, gather up and let us go (to ask),

XIV. What and what (kind) of austerities did Sitā undertake (that she) obtained Rāma as (her) husband.

XV. - I kept fast on the eleventh day of the fortnight and on the twelfth; again, on the twelfth,

¹ Bidhi (S. Vidhi), the god of fate, or god Brahmā.
² ‘māganamāge’ - she asks for the wish to be fulfilled.
³ Devar, husband’s younger brother.
⁴ See note 1 on p. 5.
XVI. *Sakhi*, I offered a light\(^1\) to the holy basil (plant)\(^2\) and obtained Rāma as (my) husband.

XVII. Whoever sings this auspicious song and makes it heard (by others),

XVIII. *Sakhi*, (says) Tulasidāsa, (there is) a good hope that (she) attains the fruit of immortality.

2 Sohar ii [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
Śiva and Pārvatā\(^3\)

I. bhaṅiyā ke matī mahādeva ho bhaṅiyā bhaṅiyā kare, bhaṅiyā bhaṅiyā kare ho
II. gāurā bhaṅiyā ghotata alasāni to chana ta bikala bhāile ho
III. tū to mahādeva bhaṅaṛī are bhaṅiyā bhaṅiyā kare, bhaṅiyā bhaṅiyā kare ho
IV. sivavā hamare to bhāile haj ganapati bhūiyā pari lotāj ho
V. itanā bacana sivavā sunale sunahį nåhį pāve, sunahį nåhį pāvįj ho
VI. sivavā īne bayala asavār dhūdhana cale dhagarina ho
VII. pūche läge rahiyā bātchiyā se kūiyā panihārinī ho
VIII. dhana hama ka tū dagārā bātāvatēu kahā re base dhagarina ho
 IX. bole läge rahiyā bātchiyā kūiyā panihārinī, kūiyā panihārinī ho
X. sivavā aliypura pāṭana huā re base dhagarina ho
 XI. ke more ūṭiyā khuṛkāve banhana sarakāve, banhana sarakāvēle ho

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1 Literally, 'kindled a *diyā*. *Diya* (S. *dīpaka*) is a clay lamp filled with oil in which a cotton wick is dipped. A common household object, it is also used as an offering of light to a deity.
2 *Tulasī* plant. This is worshipped as a manifestation of *Lakṣmi*, the consort of *Viṣṇu*. See *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* (Prakṛti khaṇḍa) 7.45-47; 21.1-103 and *Padma Purāṇa* 58.109-145; 59.1-42 re. the legend of *Vṛndā* incarnating as *Tulasī*, and her worship. *Vide* also Viennot (‘54: 17).
XII. rāma kavane raniyavā ke pūta adhiyā rāti āvāj ho
XIII. dhagarina more ghara dhaniyā biyākula ta tumha kā bulāvahī (ho)1
XIV. jāū to sivavā ai jāvāu ho sīva ho mahādeva hama bāti dhagarina ho
XV. sivavā to̐rī dhana hathavā kā sākari mūha ke phūhara to hama nāhī jāvāi ho
XVI. je yahī marīgala gāi ke sunāvāile, gāi ke sunāvāi ho
XVII. tulasī de amara phala (incomplete)

I. Mahādeva (is) addicted2 to hemp and calls repeatedly ‘hemp’, ‘hemp’.
II. Pārvatī, grinding the hemp, felt languid, a moment, and then (she) became helpless (with pain).
III. - You, O Mahādeva, are addicted to hemp and call ‘hemp’, ‘hemp’;
IV. While, O Śiva, to me Ganeśa is (nearly) born and (would be) lying on the ground.
V. Śiva heard just this statement and could not even hear (it complete)-
VI. (He) Śivatook an ox3 as (his) mount and started out to search for a midwife.
VII. He began to ask the traveller on the road and the woman fetching water on the well;
VIII. - Dear, would that you would tell me the way4 to where a midwife lives.
IX. The traveller on the road and the woman fetching water on the well began to tell (him);
X. - Oh Śiva, (there is a) city called Alīpur;5 there a midwife lives.
XI. - Who is knocking (at) my screen and loosening the ties;6 has loosened the ties?

1 Added by the translator for uniformity’s sake.
2 Or, ‘he who gets intoxicated on’.
3 Presumably, Śiva’s mythical bull, Nandi.
4 A polite idiom for ‘please tell me the way’.
5 Perhaps, Alipur.
6 Tattī and banhan: the screens made of thatch material and tied together to form the walls and rooms.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
XII. The son of which queen\(^1\) comes in the middle of the night?

XIII. - Oh midwife, at my home (my) precious one is helpless (with pain or with imminent childbirth), so (she) calls for you.

XIV. - Go then, Śiva; Śiva, go (away). Mahādeva, I am a midwife;

XV. Śiva, (if) your precious one is tight of hand\(^2\) and unrefined of mouth, then I shall not go.

XVI. Whoever sings this auspicious song and lets it be heard (by others);

XVII. Tulasī gives the fruit of immortality (incomplete)\(^3\)

3 Sohar iii [Paramaribo, 1967]
Gaṅgā as the goddess of fertility
thanksgiving to Gaṅgā\(^4\)

I. jamunā ka ūcā kararavā tiriya vā ika rove, tiriya vā ika rovai ho
II. gaṅgā māi dehū tu apanī laharīyā to hama ķubi marabāi ho
III. kiyā tora sāsū sasura dukha kiyā nāihara dūri base ho, ki nāihara dūri base re
IV. tiriya ki tora kantā paradesa kavana dukha ķubi maro ho
V. nahi more sāsū sasura dukha nahi nāihara dūri base
VI. gaṅgā māi nahi mora kantā paradesa kokhiyā dukha ķubi marabāi ho

\(^1\) Though it appears to be a respectable way of speaking, it is actually a euphemism for a curse, 'son of so and so'.
\(^2\) Not generous in giving the fees.
\(^3\) It is customary to leave a final portion incomplete where the content can be guessed by everybody.
\(^4\) Cp. R. Tripāṭhī (‘29; 4,5); D. Satyārthī (Dhīre Baho Gangā: 6,7); Satyendra (‘49: 124, 125); K. Upādhyāya (‘54: 111); S. Anila (‘57: 72, 73). Lines III–VI and XI–XIII, repeated in many of our recorded songs and in other collections. Lines XV, XVII ‘more pichavaravā‘ - motif is repeated in many songs.
VII. gangā mā̈ī ikā re santati (bina) jaga sūnā to hama dūbi marabāi ho
VIII. ta jāū tiriyaṅvā ta ghara apame ta apame mandila bhitara, apame mandila bhitara ho
IX. tiriya āthau mahinā nau lāgihāj to horilā janamihāj ho
X. āthau mahinā nau lagalai to horilā janama bhāilai, babūā janama bhāihe ho
XI. sakhiyā bājai lāge anandan badhaiyā uthe lāgai sohara ho
XII. sakhiyā nanda ghara bajala badhaiyā uthana lāge sohara ho
XIII. dhīre dhīre bāje badhaiyā au rasai mē uthe sohara, rasai mē uthe sohara ho
XIV. sakhi satarag bājāe sahanaiyā sasura dvāre nāubati ho
XV. more pichavaravā sunaravā begai cali āvo, begai cali āvāu ho
XVI. are sonarā sone rūpe gārhāu kalasavā maj gangā māi carhāibāi ho
XVII. more pichavaravā rāgarajavā begai cali āvo, begai cali āvāu ho
XVIII. rāgarjavā rāgi lāo cātakī piyarīyā maj gangā māi carhāibāi ho
XIX. jamunā ka ucčā kararavā tiriyaṅvā jaba āvai, tiriyaṅvā ika āvāi ho
XX. gangā mā āthu tu apanī lahariyā maj kalasā carhāibāi ho
XXI. hā gangā māi dehū tu apanī lahariyā maj piyarī carhāibāi ho
XXII. jāo tiriyaṅvā ghara apame to apame mandila bhitara, to apame mandila bhitara ho
XXIII. tiriya āthu apanī nandalāla tu kalasā carhāye ho, tu (bārhe)
piyari carhāye ho
XXIV. tiriya āthu apanī bārhe ahiyātu kalasā carhāye ho, tu piyarī carhāye ho

I. On a high dune of the (river) Yamunā a woman cries, a woman cries:

1  Bina: this is our interpolation without which the meaning would not be clear.
2  In the Hindu tradition all rivers or bodies of water may be referred to as Gaṅgā. See also de Klerk ('51: 215-217).

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
II. - Oh mother Gaṅgā, (if) you (would) give me your one wave I (would) drown and kill myself.

III. - Do you have trouble from father-in-law and mother-in-law, or, (is it that) your parental family dwells far?

IV. Or (is it that) your beloved one (has gone) to a foreign land? Because of what sorrow (would) you drown and kill yourself?

V. - I have no trouble with father-in-law and mother-in-law, nor (it is that) my parental family dwells far,

VI. Mother Gaṅgā, nor has my beloved (gone to a) foreign land (but) for the pain of (the infertility of my) womb would I drown and kill myself.

VII. Mother Gaṅgā, without a single progeny the world is empty so I would drown and kill myself.

VIII. - Now, go, woman; now, go to your home;

   go inside your residence

   - inside your residence.

IX. Woman, it will take eight or nine months and then a baby boy will be born.

X. It took eight or nine months and then a baby boy was born, a good little baby boy was born.

XI. *Sakhi*, congratulatory music began to be played joyfully; (the sound of) sohar (singing) began to rise.

XII. *Sakhi*, at the home of Nanda the congratulatory music was played; (the sound of) sohar (singing) began to rise;

XIII. The congratulatory music plays (ever so) softly; (the sound of) sohar (singing) rises with sweetness.

XIV. *Sakhi*, (there) is played a seven-coloured šahnā̈ī, and a music of welcome at the doors of the father-in-law’s (home).

XV. - O goldsmith (residing) behind (my) home, come in haste, come in haste.

XVI. O goldsmith, chisel a pitcher of gold and silver (of which) I will make an offering to the mother Gaṅgā.

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

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

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

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

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

Usharbudh Arya, *Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam*
XVII. - O dyer (residing) behind my (home), come in haste; come in haste.

XVIII. O dyer, dye and bring me a brilliant (ly dyed) yellow headscarf (which) I will make an offering to mother¹ Gaṅgā.

XIX. When the woman comes to the high dunes of Yamunā² - a woman comes (and says);

XX. - O mother Gaṅgā, give (me) your one wave; I will make an offering of the pitcher.

XXI. Yes, mother Gaṅgā, give (me) your wave; I will make an offering of the yellow headscarf.

XXII. - Go, woman, to your home - indeed, inside your residence; indeed, inside your residence.

XXIII. Woman, may Nandalāla³ live⁴ for many aeons (since) you have made an offering of the pitcher; you have made the offering of the yellow headscarf.

XXIV. Woman, may (your) marital good luck⁵ increase for aeons (since) you have made an offering of the pitcher, you have made an offering of the yellow headscarf.

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4 Sohar iv [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

Yaśodā offers her child to Devakī⁶

I. bhitarā, se nisari jasodā rānī subha dina sāvana
   subha dina sāvana ho

II. lalanā jamunā ke niramala nīra kalasa bhari lāiya ho

III. kāhe ke ghayalā ghayalariyā kāhe sūta ḍorī lāge
   kāhe sūta ḍorī lāge ho

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1 See note 5 page 44.
2 See note 2 page 43.
3 Son of Nanda, Kṛṣṇa.
4 Variant: barhe; may increase, prosper.
5 Ahivāt (S. avidhavātvā) synonymous in the dialect with suhāg (S. saubhāgya), the marital auspiciousness, a woman's state of marital happiness and luck whereby her husband may live long and her womb be fruitful.
6 The song gives a new twist to the legend. According to the literary tradition, Vasudeva and Devaki were imprisoned by Kamsa in Mathurā and their seven children were killed, one after the other, by the tyrant because of a forecast that one of their children would destroy him. Nanda, however, saved the eighth child, Kṛṣṇa, by bringing his new born baby daughter and taking back the boy across the Yamunā to his village, Gokula. In the song, however, Yaśodā, Nanda's wife, goes to fetch water from the river, hears Devaki crying on the opposite shore, crosses over and promises to give her own child to be killed to save Devaki's eighth child. Several versions have been recorded. Also cp. S. Avasthī (S.P. '50: 157) and Kumārī Saroja (Ibid: 297); R. Tripāṭhi ('29: 445); V. Prasāda ('62: 47, 48).
IV. lalanā kehi sakhi pānī ke jāye to sata paça sangha liye ho
V. sonan ke ghaylā ghaylariyā resama sūta dôrī læge
   resama sūta dôrī læge ho
VI. lalanā jasomati pānī ke jāye to sata paça sangha liye ho
VII. kōi sakhi hatha mūha dhove re kōi sakhi ghayalā bhare kōi sakhi ghayalā bhare ho
VIII. lalanā kōi sakhi pāra nihare tiriyā ika rovāi ho
IX. nāhī jahā nāva navariyā nāhī re ghata varavā ho
X. lalanā kehi bidhi pāra utarabe tiriyā mana bodhaha ho
XI. aṅga ke basani kachautā bādhe sakhi saba sangha liye
   sakhi saba sangha liye ho
XII. lalanā ghayalā je chāti uthagājī jamunā dha pāra bhaye ho
XIII. kiyā tore sāsū saṃsara dukha kiyā nāiharā atī dūri base
      kiyā nāiharā atī dūri base ho
XIV. lalanā kiyā tore hari paradesa kavana dukha rovāu ho
XV. nāhī more sāsū saṃsara dukha nāhī nāiharā atī dūri base
    nāhī nāiharā atī dūri base ho
XVI. lalanā nāhī more hari paradesa kokhiyā dukha rovāi ho.
XVII. sātahī pūta rāma dihale sātahū kansa harale
      sātahū kansa haralāi ho
XVIII. lalanā athavahī garabha janāye to una kara bharosā nāhī ho
XIX. cupī raho devaki cupī raho ārū tu cupī raho
XX. lalanā apana hi bālaka badhāibe to tūharo jīyāya debe ho
XXI. nunavā to milale udharavā au tela saba pāyaca
    au tela saba pāyaca ho
XXII. lalanā kokhiyā ke kavana udhāra māgalau nāhī milai ho
XXIII. sākhi rahe cāna suruju sākhi rahe gangā māi
      sākhi rahe gangā māi ho
I. The queen Yaśodā emerged from inside; (it is a) good day of the śrāvana\(^1\) month\(^2\).

II. Let us (go), fill the pitchers with the clear water of (the river) Yamunā (and) fetch (them back).

III. - Of what (are made the) pitchers\(^4\) and of what kind of thread are the strings attached (to them)?

IV. Which Sakhi goes to (fetch) water that (there are) five or seven\(^5\) companions?

V. - The pitchers are (made) of gold and the strings (made) of silk\(^6\) are attached.

VI. Yaśoda goes to (fetch) water so that there are five or seven\(^5\) companions.

VII. One sakhi washes (her) hands and face and another sakhi fills the pitcher;

VIII. Another sakhi looks across (the river and finds that) a woman is crying.

IX. (There is) no boat\(^7\) nor a good stelling (to go across) here.

X. In what way shall I get across and know the woman's mind?

XI. She tied the garments around her body as kachautā\(^8\) (and) took all the sakhis along;

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1 July-August.
2 The second half of each odd-numbered line is repeated by the singers; the repetition is not translated.
3 Each even-numbered line begins with lalanā, a stobha-vocative meaning ‘dear young one’, as if the story is told to some such person.
4 Ghayalā ghaylariyā, ‘the pitchers and so on’; a twin-word or ‘Reimbildung’.
5 An expression meaning ‘some’, ‘a number of’.
6 A string is often tied around the neck of a pitcher to dip the pitcher into a well or any deep water.
7 Nāva navariyā, ‘a boat or any such thing’.
8 Tying the upper garment around the waist; gathering the ends of the lower garment such as a sari, passing between the legs and tucking it into the waist at the back.
XII. (They) braced the pitchers against (their) chests and got across the pool of Yamunā.

XIII. - Do you have some trouble from your father-in-law and mother-in-law? Or, (is it that) your parental family dwells very far?

XIV. Or (is it that) your husband¹ (has gone to a) foreign land? For what sorrow are you crying?

XV. - I have neither any trouble from father-in-law and mother-in-law nor does my parental family dwell very far;

XVI. Nor has my husband¹ (gone to a) foreign land - I cry for the sorrow of (my) womb.

XVII. Rāma gave (me) seven sons and Kaṁsa took away all seven;

XVIII. (Now there) appears the eighth pregnancy but there is no assurance (of this one’s safety).

XIX. - Be silent, Devakī, be silent.² Again, (I say) be silent;

XX. I shall have my own child killed and (I) shall have life given to you own.

XXI. - The salt can be had on loan and all the oil (one needs may be had) on account,

XXII. (But) how can there be a loan of the womb (and its fruit) - (that) cannot be had even if one begs (for it).

XXIII. - The sun and the moon remain (as my) witnesses; Gaṅgā remains (my) witness;

XXIV. The dharma³ of (my) home remains (my) witness and, Devakī, I myself am here.

XXV. Whoever sings this auspicious song and makes it heard (by others);

XXVI. He goes to Vaikuṇṭha⁴ and attains the fruit of immortality.⁵

¹ Hari, God as Viṣṇu; such terms are often used by Hindu women to address their husbands or to refer to them.
² Sc. ‘Do not speak such inauspicious words’.
³ The supreme and natural law and personal virtue; here personified.
⁴ Viṣṇu’s or Kṛṣṇa’s heaven.
⁵ In another version of the song this line is: sūra śyāma balī āsa, ‘(says) Sūra(dāsa), (by the grace of) Śyāma (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) there is powerful hope that she attains...’. 
5 Sohar v [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
(I) Pregnancy-inducing drug
(II) An astrological forecast of Rāma's future
(III) Against a woman's infertility

I. maciyahibālthi kausilyā rāṇī sīhāsana rājā dasaratha ho
II. rājā hamare murāiyā ke sādhra murāiyā hama khāiba ho
III. haṣrau nagara ke luniyā begai cali āvau
IV. baṇa pāithi khodo baṇa-murāi kausilyā rāṇi hokhara ho
V. haṣrau nagara ke nauvā begai cali āvau
VI. rağı rağı pīsa bana-murāi kausilyā rāṇi hokhara ho
VII. ika ghūṭa pīyāi kausilyā rāṇi dusare sumitrā rāṇi ho
VIII. sakhi sil dhoy pīyāi kakahī rāṇi to tināhgu garabha se ho
IX. kausilyā ke janame haj rām sumitrā kē lachamana
X. sakhi kekahī ke bharata bhuvāla tināhgu ghara sohara ho
XI. haṣaran nagara ke pāṇḍit begai cali āvau
XII. bāltho na canana pīrhiyā to pothiyā bicārāu ho
XIII. kauni ghare bhaye siri ramacandr kaune ghari lachiman
XIV. kauni ghare bharata bhuvāla kinahū ghare sohara ho
XV. akchaya ghari bhaye siri rāmacandra akchay ghari lachimana
XVI. akchaya ghari bharata bhuvāla tināhgu ghara sohara ho
XVII. akchaya ghari bhaye rājā rāmacandar bahut sukha karihaj
XVIII. barahē barasa rāmā hōihaj to ban ke sidharhaj
XIX. itanā bacan rājā sunalaj to sunahū na pālīaj
XX. rājā gore mūre tānalē cadariyā sovahī dhaurāhara ho

1 This is a new version of the story of Rāma's birth. It may be summarised in these words: Daśaratha's senior wife, Kauśalyā, feels a desire to eat wild radish which is sent for. The three queens share it and conceive. The four princes are born and an astrologer forecasts their future including that Rāma would be exiled to a forest at the age of twelve. At this Daśaratha is much perturbed but Kauśalyā consoles him by saying that she is satisfied as she, at least, no longer has to bear the stigma of infertility and, in any case, wherever Rāma would go he would be honoured by all.
I. The queen Kauśalyā is sitting on a seat¹ and king Daśaratha on a throne;
II. - King, I have a wish for (eating) a radish; I would eat a radish.
III. - Oh cutter² of Hāṣraucity,³ come speedily;
IV. Having entered (deep into) the forest, dig out wild radish, (for) the queen Kauśalyā is
    feeling a craving (for it).⁴
V. - Oh barber⁵ of the Hāṣraucity, come speedily;
VI. Crushing it repeatedly, grind the wild radish, (for) Kauśalyā is feeling a craving (for it).
VII. The queen Kauśalyā drinks one sip, the queen Sumitrā (sips) the second time;
VIII. Sakhi, Kaikeyī washes the grindstone and drinks - (and) then all three get pregnant.
IX. To Kauśalyā is born Rāma (and) to Sumitrā (is born) Lakṣmaṇa;

¹ Mañca, a raised seat made of wood or metal, like a platform.
² Luniyā from S. īu, to cut. The singers, however, apply the term to a particular caste group
    employed for making mud huts. It is probable that they may have also been used for odd jobs
    or for cutting wood in the forests for planks etc. of the house.
³ This city cannot be identified. It may refer to a village where the sohar was first composed or
    where an incident similar to the one described in the song might have taken place.
    The singers stated that a nagara in the dialect means a small village with few houses. In
    Sanskrit nagara is a city.
⁴ Hokhar, the singers said that this is a special term for women's craving for a certain food in
    certain physical conditions including pregnancy. Here the craving is without pregnancy.
⁵ A nāū (S. nāpita), a man of the barber caste also employed to carry messages and otherwise
    assist at ceremonial occasions. See p. 20.
X. *Sakhi*, to Kaikeyī are born Bharata and Śatrughna and *sohar* (is sung) in all the three houses.

XI. - O *Paṇḍit* of Ḥaśraucity, come speedily;

XII. Won't you sit on the sandalwood seat, and (now) consider the book?

XIII. In which house is born the glorious Rāma? at what hour is born Lakṣmaṇa?

XIV. In which house are born Bharata and Śatrughna - in whose house is the (singing of) *sohar* (befitting)?

XV. - The glorious Rāma is born at the *akṣaya* hour, and Lakṣmaṇa is born at the *akṣaya* hour.

XVI. Bharata and Śatrughna are born at an *akṣaya* hour, at all the three houses is (the singing of) *sohar* befitting.

XVII. The king Rāmacandra is born at an *akṣaya* hour; he will cause much happiness;

XVIII. When Rāma will be in the twelfth year he will depart to the forest.

XIX. The king heard just this much statement; he had hardly heard it -

XX. He covered (himself) with a sheet from head to feet and lay in the private chamber.

XXI. The queen Kauśalyā sits and awakens (him): - get up, King Daśaratha!

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

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

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

4 *Piṛhäī*, a small, low seat.

5 Make calculations from an astrological guidebook or almanac.

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

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

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

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

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

Usharbudh Arya, *Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam*
Won't you wash (your) hands and mouth, and do the rinsing and brushing\(^1\) (the teeth)?

Oh King, the name ‘bājī’\(^2\) has been terminated, (now) it does not matter that Rāma will go to the forest.

In whichever (persons’) street Rāma will walk (the persons) will wash his garment\(^3\).

They will bathe in the river Gaṅgā and all the people of the city will be redeemed\(^4\).

Whoever sings this auspicious song and makes it heard by others,

(Says) Tulasidāsa, there is a strong hope that he will attain the auspicious fruit.

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6 Sohar Ulārā i [Paramaribo, 1962]

Duties of some castes and professions

I. jasodrā ke bhaye nandalāla bajāo re gvāliniyā
II. mālin lāye phūl tamolin cūnariyā
III. bhalā āisan resamavā cīr le āye paṭahāriniyā
djasodrā ke...
IV. bhalā màlin lāye phūlā tamolin bīrauva
V. bhalā āise āise bandha lagāy ke le āve paṭahāriniyā
djasodrā ke...
VI. bhalā màlin kai rag rage tamolin kaise călī
VII. bhalā juga juga jiye tore lāla kahata paṭahāriniyā
djasodrā ke...

---

\(^1\) Datūn (H. dātun), about eight inches long sticks of various woods the ends of which are chewed to form a brush for the teeth every morning. They are still used in Surinam.

\(^2\) ‘Bājī’, an infertile woman. This state left a woman totally insecure in society and in the family for she could not fulfill the function of her sex for which she was married.

\(^3\) Dhoti, a sheet-like garment approximately five yards in length, tied round the loins, with one end passed between the legs and tucked in at the back. That this people would wash Rāma’s garment shows the great respect they would have for him. The next line expresses it more clearly - his presence would be regarded by this people like a bath in the sacred river Ganges, a dip in which is believed to redeem a person from all sins.

\(^4\) Lit. ‘will swim across’ - a term commonly used for redemption, the allusion is to swimming across the ‘bhava-sāgara’, the ocean of worldly existence.
I. To Yaśodā is born Kṛṣṇa; play (the musical instruments), cowherdess!
II. The mālini brings the flowers and the tamolī brings cūnā;3
III. And,4 oh, such silken garments does the paṭahāriniyāḥ bring along. To Yaśodā...
IV. Ah, the mālin brings flowers and the tamolī the bīrā;3
V. And, oh4 the paṭahāriniyā has sewed on such (beautiful) flowery pieces and brings them along.
To Yaśodā...
VI. Well,4 in how many colours is coloured the mālin, and how does the tamolī walk?
VII. May the darling child live for many aeons - says the paṭahāriniyā.
To Yaśodā...

7 Sohar Ulārā ii [Paramaribo, 1962]
Celebrations at Kṛṣṇa's birth7

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

1 A gardener's wife or a lady gardener.
2 A woman tamolī or a tamolī's wife. Tamolīs deal with betel-leaf and such other mouth-fresheners. Tamolins in India often carried out their trade in association with courtesans, serving the customers and often acting as go-betweens. Their coquettish walk is proverbial.
3 Bīrā, a wrapped up betel-leaf with many spices and mouth-fresheners inside; one of these is cūnā, edible white lime.
4 We have included bhalā as an example, but it cannot be accurately translated. See p. 5.
5 Wife of a paṭahār, or a woman of such profession. They deal in colourful flowery and other objects and small pieces including of clothing for children.
6 Throughout it may be translated as 'has brought along.' In these songs a general tense is often used to denote past, present or future according to the context.
IV. mathurā kanhaiyā tore janama bhaye haj
V. gokulā bāje badhaiyā lála hama... ...
VI. candā bhi āye surajū bhi āye
VII. are āye nau lakha tārā lála hama... ...
VIII. jalase mē nāce sukuvāri majyā
     [jalase mē nāce (sukuvāra dāiyā)]
IX. gokulā mē nāce kanhaiyā lala hama... ...

I. At Nanda’s home congratulatory music is being played;¹
   I have just heard and come, dear!
    At Nanda’s home...
II. Where has your birth taken place, O Kṛṣṇa?²
III. Where is the congratulatory music being played?
    I have heard...
IV. In Mathurā has your birth taken place, Oh Kṛṣṇa,³
V. In Gokula the congratulatory music is being played.
    I have heard...
VI. The moon came and the sun also came;⁴
VII. O, nine hundred thousand stars came.
    I have heard...
VIII. In the session the tender-limbed mother is dancing;
IX. (And) in Gokula dances Kṛṣṇa.
    I have heard...

¹ Here there may be some confusion as to which is the refrain, ‘at Nanda’s home...’ or ‘I have heard...’. In fact it is customary in singing to take either half first, and so the lines may be sung in this way also: ‘ham suṇi ke āye - Nanda ghara bāje badhaiyā, lāla ham suṇi ke āye’.
² This is also the case with many other songs.
³ Kanhaiyā, colloquial, diminutive form of Kṛṣṇa.
⁴ This is obviously a reference to Kṛṣṇa’s birth in a prison in Mathurā and his being taken away immediately to be brought up with the foster-father Nanda in Gokula. This also makes it possible for the foster-mother in Gokula to be dancing in the celebration of the child’s birth. In the variant ‘sukuvāra dāiyā’, however, the meaning is ‘in the session the tender-limbed father is dancing’. See line VIII.
⁴ As deities.
8 Sohar Ulārā iii [Kwatta, 1962]
Sītā's lament

I. kharī kharī siyā pachitāye lava kuśa bana mē bhaye
II. jo gharā mē hote sasūrā rājā dasaratha
III. dete ajodhyā lutāy
    lava kuśa...
IV. jo gharā mē hote sāsū kausilyā
V. detṛ harauvā pahirāy
    lava kuśa...
VI. jo gharā mē hote nanoḍī subhadṛā
VII. detṛ kaganā pahirāy
    lava kuśa
VIII. jo gharā mē hote devarā bhaiyā lachimana
IX. dete aṇghithiā pahirāy
    lava kuśa...

I. Sītā stands\(^2\) and broods: - Lava and Kuśa are born in the jungle.
II. Were they born at home, king Daśaratha the father-in-law
III. Would have given (the whole city of) Ayodhyā away (but) Lava and Kuśa are born in
    the jungle.
IV. Were they born at home, Kauśalyā the mother-in-law
    Lava and Kuśa...
V. Would have put on a necklace (round my neck) (but)
    Lava and Kuśa...
VI. Were they born at home, Subhadrā the nanoḍ\(^3\)
    Lava and Kuśa...
VII. Would have put a bracelet on (my wrist) (but)
    Lava and Kuśa...
VIII. Were they born at home, brother Laksmana the devar
    Lava and Kuśa...
IX. Would have put a finger-ring on (my finger) (but)
    Lava and Kuśa...

---

2 i.e., ‘Sītā keeps standing (as if lost in her thoughts) and broods’.
3 Husband's sister.
9 Sohar Ulārā iv [Paramaribo, 1962]
Anticipating the child's growth

I. kahana lāge raghubara maiyā maiyā
   -kahana lāge raghubara
II. rājā dasaratha ji ke pitā hi pitā -kahana...
III. bharata satrughana bhaiyā re bhaiyā - kahana...
IV. phūā subhadra ke phūā hi phūā - kahana...
V. dūri khelana mati jāiho ho lalanā
VI. are khelo ghara āganiyā - kahana...

I. The best of the Raghus (i.e. Rāma) has begun to call ‘mother’, ‘mother’.
II. To king Daśaratha, ‘father’, ‘father’ -
III. To Bharata and Śatrughna, ‘brother’, ‘brother’ -
IV. To phūā Subhadra, ‘phūā’, ‘phūā’ - (he has begun to call).
V. Dear one, you must not go far to play;
VI. Play (right here) in the courtyard of the house.

10 Sohar Caṭnī [van Drimmelanpolder, Nickerie, 1967]

I. ²calo tūr lāi rājā mehaniyā ke dār
II. sone ke thārī mē jevanā parosyauç

1 Phūā: father's sister.
2 The song is expressive of a woman’s longing for her beloved who is absent and without whom all her food, water and bed etc. are meaningless. Perhaps to lessen her boredom she invites her friends to come along to pick məhađ leaves.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
I. Come, let us (go), pick and bring a limb of mehadi,\(^1\) O\(^2\) king.

II. I dressed the meal in a gold plate -\(^3\)

III. He who should eat the meal is dwelling across the (river) Ganges.

IV. (In the) gold pitcher (I filled) the water, the (sacred) water\(^4\) of the Ganges -

V. He who should drink from the pitcher is dwelling across the (river) Ganges.

VI. Just five betel leaves (made into) five bīṛās -

VII. He who should chew the bīṛā is dwelling across the (river) Ganges.

VIII. After (carefully) brushing (repeatedly) I made the bed with flowers -\(^5\)

IX. He who should sleep on the bed is dwelling across the (river) Ganges.

---

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

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

3 Thālī. An Indian metal plate with upturned corners.

4 'Gangā jai pānī'. The Hindi word 'pānî' is simply water but to express sanctity the Sanskrit term 'jala' is often used.

5 It used to be customary to spread flowers on the marital bed; often the flowers had to be examined carefully for fear of worms etc.
11 Mūran i [Paramaribo, 1967]

The right conditions for the ceremony

I. jala bharī le hilorī hilora resama ke ḍorī
II. resama kī ḍorīyā jabai nika lagai
III. jaba sone ghāilavā hoy
     resama kī ḍorī jala bharī...
IV. sone ghāilavā jabai nika lāge
V. jaba pātara tiriyavā hoy,
     resama kī ḍorī jala bharī...
VI. pātara tiriyavā jabai nika lāge
VII. jaba goda horilavā hoy,
     resama kī ḍorī jala bharī...
VIII. gode horilavā jabai nika lāge
IX. jaba kāsī mē munḍana hoy,
     resama kī ḍorī jala bharī...
X. kāsī mē munḍana jabai nika lāgai
XI. jaba lāurī nanadīyā hoy,
     resama kī ḍorī jala bharī...
XII. lāurī nanadīyā jabai nika lāgai
XIII. jaba gāṭhī rupaiyā hoy,
      resama kī ḍorī jala bharī

I. Fill the water with heaving movements² (with the aid of a) string of silk³.
II. The silken string looks well only then -

---

1 Cp. Archer and Prasād ('43: 169). We have recorded three versions.
2 Hilor is the movement of billows; in this case the to and fro movement of the persons drawing
   water from a well as they drop the pitcher into the well and draw it back with a string tied
   around the pitcher’s neck.
3 The reference to drawing water in this refrain may on one hand be merely an indication of
   the gossip among the ladies at a village well, on the other hand it may refer to the custom of
   performing the shaving ceremony near a sheet of water. It is also possible that the silken
   string also obliquely refers to the hair itself as it is wetted with water during the ceremony prior
   to being shaved.
III. When there is a pitcher (made of) gold.  
IV. The pitcher of gold looks well only then -  
V. When the woman (fetching it) is slim.  
VI. The slim woman looks well only then -  
VII. When (there) is a sweet little baby boy in (her) lap.  
VIII. The child in the lap looks well only then -  
IX. When (his) muṇḍana (i.e. the shaving ceremony) takes place in the (the city of) Kāśī.  
X. The muṇḍana in Kāśī looks well only then -  
XI. When the little nanad is (present there).  
XII. The (presence of the) little nanad looks well only then -  
XIII. When there is money in the knot.  

12 Mūṛan ii [Uitvlugt, 1962]

I. siragobhuvārebāraluā,  
II. īlaluākhelajcakarībhāvariyā  
III. ājīājākegodalulüā  
   sira gabhuvāre...

I. (This) child (has) on (his) head the pre-natal hair.  
II. This child plays cakrī bhāvar,  
III. (Sitting) in lap of (this) grandmother and grandfather.

---

1 The refrain is not translated with each repetition.  
2 Dr. V. Agravāl ('62: 86) translates pātar as tīkṣṇa (sharp) but whether in features or in nature is not clear.  
3 The knot in the corner of a dholī (men's lower garment), sārī, or orhani (women's headscarf) in which the money is tied; idiomatically, a purse.  
4 The same lines are repeated for a time to last through the ceremony, changing ājī (paternal grandmother) and ājī (paternal grandmother) to bappā (father) maiyā (mother), phupphā (husband of father's sister), phūā (father's sister) and other relatives.  
5 Gobhuvāre or gabhuvāre (from S. garbha, foetus). This first hair is regarded as being full of impurities from the foetal stage.  
6 This is made of a small disc with two holes through which two strings pass. The player holds the strings on both sides and spins the disc till the strings get tight, then releasing it to spin back.  
7 It is customary that the child sits in someone's lap during the ceremony.
The songs of the sacred thread are sung at these stages of the ceremony:

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

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

13 Janëū i [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

I. caitahi barūā teja cale bāsākhā me paḥucāi ho
II. bhikṣā déo e maiyāḥ bhikṣā déo maj to barūā barāhmana ho
III. jau maj jānatyu ai barūā hamare ghares āhāu ho
IV. osara maj jutai ke ghana motiyā bovāvatiḥ ho
V. motiyana thāra bharāi ke maj barūā ke detiyāḥ ho

I. The boy candidate² walks fast in (the month of) caitra³ and arrives in (the month of) vaiśākha³ (and begs on the way).

---

1 The song continues while the initiate is going round the gathering receiving alms. The same lines are repeated, replacing the word maiyā (mother) with other lady relatives, e.g. dādī (paternal grandmother), nānī (maternal grandmother) etc.
2 Barūā (S. vaṭu), a young boy who has not yet been initiated into the study of the Veda.
3 Caitra: February-March. Vaiśākha: March-April. The two months of the spring season are the time enjoined for the upanayana ceremony of a Brāhmaṇa child. Vasante brāhmaṇam upanayita (ApDS. 1.1.19).
II. - Give alms, O mother;\(^1\) give alms. I am but a young Brāhmaṇa candidate.

III. - If I had known, O young candidate, that you would come to my home,

IV. I would have ploughed the top storey of my home\(^2\) and would have got a thick (crop of) pearls sown.

V. I would have (then) filled a plate\(^3\) with the pearls and given to (you), the young candidate.

14 Janëū ii [Corentijnpolder, Nickerie, 1967]

I. more ājā\(^4\) ke kathina karejā to bana ke pathāvāj ho
II. more ājā hi gharahī vidyāmān to bana ke pathāvāj ho
III. more bāraha barasa ke umiriyā daradi nahī lāgāi ho
IV. more ājā ke kathina karejā daradi nahī lāgāi ho
V. more bāraha barasa ke umiriyā to bana ke pathāvāj daradi nahī lāgāi ho
VI. ghumi calo ai ghumi calo avaro se ghumi calāu (ho)\(^5\)
VII. beṭā bāraha barisa ke umiriyā tu bana ke sidhārēu ho
VIII. tore ājā ke kathina karejā to bana ke pathāvāj ho

I. - My paternal grandfather's heart is hard, so he is sending (me away) to the forest.\(^6\)
II. My paternal grandfather is himself a learned person right (here) at home, still he is sending (me away) to the forest.
III. My age is (only tender) twelve years - (my paternal grandfather) feels no sympathy.\(^7\)

---

\(^1\) Not necessarily one's own mother. Any lady may be addressed in this way.
\(^2\) Perhaps she means that she would have ploughed down even the land where her house stands.
\(^3\) Thālī. A variant is kañcana thārā: a plate made of gold.
\(^4\) The song continues very long by repetitions and in each repetition the women singers replace the word ājā (paternal grandfather) by terms for other male relatives.
\(^5\) Added by the translator to maintain uniformity.
\(^6\) To the āśrama, the hermitage of a preceptor.
\(^7\) Literally, 'there comes no (feeling of) pain (or pity) (in his heart)'.

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

The wedding songs

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

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

1. Placing sagun, various auspicious and religious objects in a thālī, metal plate. The song includes fish among these, which may be due to some Mithilā influence since this is not actually used in the ceremonies in Surinam. The song also may declare the ancestry of both sides.

2. General preparation of the cauk, prayers and offerings including a homa (fire-sacrifice), kindling a clay-lamp and the reading of scriptures.

3. The bride-to-be of the bridegroom sits down for the tilak ceremony and is blessed by the relatives, while receiving the tilak mark on the forehead.

4. Giving gifts, because of which the ceremony has become known as tilak carhānā (making an offering of the tilak gifts) or tilak denā (giving the tilak gifts). This song is printed here.

5. Departure of the visiting party.
15 Tilak [Paramaribo, 1967]

Fixing the marriage, the amount of Tilak gift and the dowry.¹

I. purubahidesavāāyenauvābrāhmanaho
II. ṭhāṛhabhäilerājākeduvāreho
III. kiyā tuhū brāhmana bhicchā levāu ho
VI. kiyā piyabo ṭhandā pānī ho
V. nāhį maj rājā ho bhicchā lebai ho
VI. nāhį o piyabe ṭhandā pānī ho
VII. tore ghare he rājā rāma kuvāre haį
VIII. more ghare sītā kuvārī ho
IX. kahū to he rājā tilaka carhāvau ho
X. nāhį re ghumari ghara jāų ho
XI. dvāre se rājā mahali bhiṭara gāile ho
XII. rānį rājā eka mati kīnha ho
XIII. kāi lakha he brāhmaṇa tilaka carhāiba ho
XIV. kāi lakha daheja deba ho
XV. nau lakha he rājā tilaka carhāibe ho
XVI. dasa lakha daheja debai ho

I. The barber (and the) Brāhmaṇa² came to the eastern country,
II. (They) stood at the king’s gates.
III. - O Brāhmaṇa, do you (wish to) take alms or -
IV. would you drink cool water?
V. - O king, I would take neither alms -
VI. Nor would I drink cool water.
VII. O king in your home (there) is Rāma (who is) unmarried;
VIII. In my home (there) is Sītā³ (who also is) unmarried.

² Or the barber brāhmaṇa (vide note on p. 20).
³ Not necessarily the legendary person but the title of any marriageable girl. The same applies to other figures in the wedding songs (see p. 35).
IX. If you say, O king, (then) I would make the tilak offering;
X. If not, I would return and go home.
XI. The king went inside from the gates;
XII. The queen and the king (consulted and) became of one mind.¹
XIII. - O Brāhmaṇa, how many hundred thousands would you make as the tilak offering,
XIV. How many hundred thousands would you give as the dowry?
XV. - O king, I shall make nine hundred thousand the tilak offering;
XVI. I shall give ten hundred thousand (i.e. a million) as the dowry.

16 Telvān² [Paramaribo, 1967]

I. ke na more bovale rāī sarasōiyā ke na ho perāve karavā tela ho
II. kekare kakahiyyā maj māga sāvāraṣ kekare sēdure suhāg
III. bābā more bovale rāī sarasōiyā mātā perāve karavā tela ho
IV. bhāujī kakahiyyā maj māga savāraṣ harījī ke sēdure suhāga.
(prabhūjī ke...)

I. Who (among)³ my (relatives) sowed the rāī⁴ mustard and who presses the bitter⁵ oil?
II. With whose comb shall I part my hair (and) through whose vermillion the suhāg⁶ (shall come to me)?

¹ That is, agreed between themselves.
² De Klerk mentions the telvān only in connection with harā and cumāvan (‘51: 145) of the bride. He has missed the ceremony before the worship of the drum (p. 138) in which the nāunī oils and parts the hair of the mother of the bride or the bridegroom and places vermillion (sindūr) in the parting. In the absence of the nāunī, a woman relative may perform the action. The same may also be done at the matkor spot (d.Kl. p. 139).
³ na in the text appears to be only metri causa.
⁴ A sort of black mustard.
⁵ Karvā tel, the usual term for mustard oil.
⁶ The marital auspiciousness and good luck. The vermillion in the parting of the hair is the symbol of suhāg.
III. My father sowed the rāṭī mustard and mother has the oil pressed.

IV. I shall part my hair with (my) bhāujī's\(^1\) comb, and through glorious harī's\(^2\) vermilion the suhāg (shall come to me).

17 Mādar-Pūja\(^3\) [Saramacca, 1962]

I. kekare duvāre mādara pūjahī
II. kekare duvāre mādara bājāi ho
III. kekare duvāre pūjata suhāvana ho
IV. kekare duvāre mādara bājahī bājata suhāvana ho

I. At whose door are they worshipping the mādar?
II. At whose door is the mādar sounding?
III. At whose door the worship being performed seems glorious?
IV. At whose door is the mādar sounding and, sounding, seems glorious?

---

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

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

3 De Klerk has placed a question mark after 'manar pūjā' in the note (51: 138) on the worship of the drum, not realising that this worship is referred to as mādar-pūjā. Concerning the relationship of the drum with the mother goddess see p. 36.
18 Maṭkor procession [Clarapolder, Nickerie, 1962]
The procession walking towards the Maṭkor spot

I. rāmnagara ke rahiya batāy deyo
   rahiya batāy deyo, dagariya batāy deyo
II. jaune ghāta more sasurū¹ nahayē
III. taune ghāta morī dōliyā utār deyo
   rāmnagara ke...

I. Tell me the way towards Rāmnagar;² tell me the way, tell me the path.
II. The ‘stelling’³ at which my father-in-law bathes,
III. Put down my ḍolf⁴ on that very ‘stelling’.

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

I. pahile maj sumiraū rām phira se bhūiyā bhavānī
t-II. sone ke thārī me jēunā parosyaṅ
III. pahile jevaj rām phira se bhūiyā bhavānī
   pahile maj...

---
1 The song is repeated with sasurū (father-in-law) replaced by other terms such as bhasurū (husband’s elder brother), deorā (devar: husband’s younger brother) and in the final repetition, samiyā (svāmī, master, husband).
2 A state and a city across the river Gaṅgā from Vārāṇasī (Banāras). The song indicates that the walk is towards Gaṅgā¹ (see discussion on p. 36). It may also be symbolic of the transition, crossing over, to the marital status.
3 Ghāṭ: an area for bathing with steps going down into the river; or a point of crossing over.
4 ḍolf: a type of palanquin.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
IV. jhājhara gaṛūgā gaṅgā jala pānī
V. pahile ghūṭe rām phira se bhūiyā bhavānī
pahile maī...
VI. laug ilāyci ke bīrā jurāyaṛ
VII. pahile kūcāj rām phira se bhūiyā bhavānī
VIII. phūla nivāṛi ke seja bichāyaṛ
IX. pahile sovaj rām phira se bhūiyā bhavānī
pahile maī...

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

20 Maṭkor ii [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
Worship of Śiva and Pārvatī

I. lāḷī dhujā phiharānī bhavānī tore sevā na jāṇu, lāḷī dhujā...
II. kahavā ṣe āve siva sankara jogī, kahavā ṣe āve mahādeva, bhavānī tore sevā...
III. kahavā ṣe āve devī duragā, kahavā ṣe āve pāravatī, bhavānī tore sevā...

¹ Four inches wide strips of specially prepared cotton which come in rolls. Beds are then woven out of these. Not known in Surinam.
IV. kahavā baithū siva sankara jogī, kahavā baithū mahādeva,  
bhavānī tore sevā...
V. bediyā baithū siva sankara jogī, bediyā baithū bhagavān,  
bhavānī tore sevā...
VI. kāūcaṛ hā siva sankara jogī, kāūcaṛ bhagavān,  
bhavānī tore sevā...
VII. dudhavā carhā siva sankara jogī, homiyā karū bhagavān,  
bhavānī tore sevā...

I. O Pārvatī (you who have a) red flag fluttering, I do not know (the right way of) serving  
you.
II. From where comes the yogī Śiva Śaṅkara? From where comes Mahādeva?
III. From where comes the goddess Durgā? From where comes Pārvatī?
IV. Where shall I make the yogī Śiva Śaṅkara sit? Where shall I make the lord sit?
V. I shall make the yogī Śiva Śaṅkara sit on the altar. I shall make the lord sit on the altar.
VI. What offering shall I make to the yogī Śiva Śaṅkara?  
What offering shall I make to the lord?
VII. I would make an offering of milk to the yogī Śiva Śaṅkara.

I would have a homa performed unto the lord.

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

I. ðhaiyā manāva maj bhūyā manāva ðhaiyā bhūyā dharama tuhār  
II. tuhare sarana maj jaga thānyau jo jaga pūrana har  
ðhaiyā manāva...
III. tuhare sarana purakhe maj jaga ropyau jo jaga pūrana hār thaiyā manāvać...
IV. tuhare sarana kālī maj jaga ropyau jo re jaga pūrana hār thaiyā manāvać...
V. tuhare sarana sāyar maj jaga ropyau jo re jaga pūrana hār thaiyā manāvać...
VI. tuhare sarana dīhavā maj jaga ropyau more jaga pūrana hār thaiyā manāvać...

I. I please¹ Thaiyā² and Bhūiyā;³ Thaiyā and Bhūiyā, it is your nature (to accept worship and be pleased).
II. I have undertaken the sacrifice⁴ by taking refuge⁵ with you who are the fulfillers⁶ of the sacrifice.
III. I have undertaken the sacrifice, O ancestor, taking refuge with you who are the fuller of the sacrifice.
IV. I have undertaken the sacrifice, O mother Kālī, taking refuge with you who are the fuller of the sacrifice.
V. I have undertaken the sacrifice, O Sāī⁷, taking refuge with you who are the fuller of the sacrifice.
VI. I have undertaken the sacrifice, O Dīh,⁸ taking refuge with you who are the fuller of the sacrifice.

¹ Manānā: to please with conciliatory gestures someone who has been, or is liable to become, angered. In the case of a deity, it is to win his pleasure, grace and benevolence.
² See p. 37.
³ See p. 37.
⁴ Yajña.
⁵ In other words, ‘I have done it on your strength, not mine’.
⁶ i.e., ‘You are capable of seeing it to completion’.
⁷ Tombs of old saints, especially Muslim, worshipped by Hindus also.
⁸ See p. 24.
22 Maṭkor iv [Leiding 8A, 1962]
Placing vermilion marks on the cauk remembering Gaurī and Gaṇeśa together with minor deities

I. ṭīkāų maį gāurī gaṇesā re ṭīkāų dharaṭi maiyā māga tuhāra re
II. ṭīkāų maį gāurī gaṇesā re ṭīkāų ḍyuḥare bābā māṭha tuhāra re
III. ṭīkāų maį gāurī gaṇesā re ṭīkāų kāliyā maiyā māṭha tuhāra re
IV. ṭīkāų maį gāurī gaṇesā re ṭīkāų sāṭahu bahanī māṭha tuhāra re
V. ṭīkāų maį gāurī gaṇesā re ṭīkāų yahi re pānī māṭha tuhāra re

I. I mark Gaurī and Gaṇeśa with the ṭīkā;¹ O mother earth,
   I mark the parting of your hair with the ṭīkā.
II. I mark Gaurī and Gaṇeśa with the ṭīkā; Ḍīhbābā, I mark your forehead with the ṭīkā.
III-V. Respectively for mother Kālī, seven sisters, and ‘this water’.²
   [That is to say, the lines are repeated with variation].

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¹ Ṭīkā: the vermilion mark placed on the forehead or in the parting of a woman’s hair. Here it refers to the seven spots of vermilion and oil placed in the cauk. Cp. de Klerk (‘51: 138).
23 Māṛo cauk i [Saramacca, 1962]
The cauk of the wedding canopy I

I. surahini gaiyā ke gobarā se ḍaganā lipāve, are ḍaganā lipāve sunaho siva sankara ho
II. motiyana cauka purāvāi sunaho siva sankara ho
III. sone ke kalasā dhara vahī mānīka diyanā barāvāj ho sunaho siva sankara ho

I. One has the courtyard smeared with the dung of the heavenly cow;² yes, the courtyard is smeared - hear, oh Śiva Śaṅkara!³
II. One has the cauk filled in with pearls⁴ - hear, oh Śiva Śaṅkara!
III. One has the pitcher (made of) gold placed and has the jewel-lamp kindled - hear, oh Śiva Śaṅkara!

24 Māṛo cauk ii [Uitvlugt, 1962]
The cauk of the wedding canopy II

I. aba rāma janakapura āye sakhi mila ke maṅgala gāvē
II. kāhinā ke tore khambhā garā hai kāhina māro chavāye, sakhi re...
IIa. mangala gāyē sakhi dhauḷā macāvē, rāma janakapura...
III. kāsana ke more khambhā garā hai aba kāsana māro chavāye, sakhi re...

1 Cp. Archer and Prasād (’43: 73); Satyendra (’49: 79).
2 S. surabhi: used here as a hyperbole.
3 This refrain is a stobha.
4 Actually, white flour.
I. Now Rāma has come to the city of Janaka; all sakhis having gathered, sing auspicious songs.

II. - Of what are your posts (made which are) dug in? With what (kind of canopy) is your māro shaded? All...

IIa. They sing auspicious songs and have a jolly time; Rāma has come...

III. - Of bronze are my posts (made which are) dug in; now, with bronze is the māro shaded. All...

IV. - With what has your cauk been inlaid? With what is the pitcher filled? All...

V. - With gold (pieces?) has my cauk been inlaid; with pearls is the pitcher filled. They sing auspicious songs (and) all have a jolly time. Rāma has come...

25 Silpohanā¹ [Paramaribo, 1967]
Calling the spirits

I. silā pohe bālīṭḥī janaka dēī, ādhā barā lihaḷī curāī
marauvā morā jūṭh bhāīle

---

¹ Not mentioned by de Klerk by this title but the ritual, starting from the use of the sil and lōṛhā ('51:144, line 19 ff.), has been described under Pitṛ-pūjā.
Our singer seems to have made some confusion in this song. Line I appears to be part of a gālī, a parody of a silpohanā song, which has been wrongly inserted here. The author was informed by another singer that line VI is also part of another song, sung after this one, in which the ancestors are called by respective names, replacing the phrase kavanarāma; this second song could not be recorded completely.
II. pāca pāna nau narīvara; jai sarage bātyau dēutā pittara
   purukhī purukhā
   ājī ājā
tuharau devatā īnu loka jaga purayau

III. pāca pāna nau narīvara; jai sarage bātyau sārī sarahaj
   bahū samete
   īnu loka jaga purayau

IV. pāca pāna nau narīvara; jai bhūlala cūkala
   isarala bisarala
dēuta pittara
   ājī ājā
tuharau devatā īnu loka jaga purayau

V. pāca pāna nau narīvara; jai havā bayār
   ādhī bavaṇḍar
   sāpa gojar
   kīṛī bicchī
tuharau devatā īnu loka jaga purayau

VI. pāca pāna nau narīvara; sarage jo bāṭhe kavana rāmā
toharo nevattā hai āja

I. Janaka Devī sat to grind (on the) grindstone; (she) stole half a barā.
   My māro became jūṭhā.

II. Five betel leaves and nine coconuts; you who are in heaven, gods and ancestors,
   male ancestors and female ancestors,
   paternal grandfather and maternal grandmother for you, O deities, (the world
   with all) three realms has been filled with sacrifice.

---

1 A hypothetical name; or, perhaps the singer was thinking of someone at whose home the
song was previously sung on some occasion.
2 A savoury part of the offering made from the gram ground on the grindstone.
3 Jūṭhā: that which remains after one has eaten from food; thus polluted and not fit for offering
to men or gods. If one eats in a sacred or ceremonial place, the place also becomes polluted.
4 Part of the offering.
5 Pitar (S. pitṛ), the ancestors who have attained a certain place in the higher realm of the dead.
   The terms purkhā and purkhī denote male and female ancestors in a profane sense.
6 Yajña.
III. Five betel leaves and nine coconuts; you who are in heaven, sālīs and salhajs, to
together with the daughter-in-law,
(the world with all) three realms has been filled with sacrifice.
IV. Five betel leaves and nine coconuts; those who have been forgotten and have slipped
from memory,
lost and scattered, gods and ancestors,
paternal grandfather and maternal grandmother, for you, O deities, (the world
with all) three realms has been filled with sacrifice.
V. Five betel leaves and nine coconuts; those (which are)
air and breeze,
gale and storm,
snakes and worms,
insects and scorpions,
for you, O deities, (the world with all) three realms has been filled with sacrifice.
VI. Five betel leaves and nine coconuts; you N.N. Rāma who are today sitting in heaven,
today (this) invitation (is extended) to you.

26 Kalsā Goṭhāī [Paramaribo, 1965]

I. ādhemaṛauvāmęnagacuneādhemenaginicunere 
II. tabahųnamaṛavāsuhāvanaekrenanadabināre 
III. ādhemaṛauvāmęgotabäiṭheādhemęgotinibäiṭhere 
IV. aretabahųna maravā suhāvana eka re nanada binā re

1 Sālī, wife’s sister. Salhaj, Wife’s brother’s wife.
2 A twin-word, isaral-bisaral, meaning in general, ‘forgotten and so on’.
3 The idea seems to be ‘those spirits who have become rulers of, or have taken abode in, the
   airs and breezes, gales and storms, or those who have become re-incarnated as snakes etc.’.
4 A kind of poisonous worm.
5 Or, ants.
V. bāhār se bhaiyābhītar bhaile bhauji se mati karē re
VI. dhana āvata bāţī bābā ke dulāṛi ghara bhajini boleō re
VII. āvo na nanadhī gotāiṇa more ṭhakurāin re
VIII. nanada bāītho na mājhe marāuvā kalasa hamare gotha re
IX. bhauji kalasa gothāunī kāhū dehihu kalasa tohare gūthaba re
X. devai maj hāthe ke munariyā are gale bhara tilariyā ho re
XI. nanadōiyā ke carhane ke ghuravā carha usi gharavā jāiho re

I. Under half the wedding tent jewels are inlaid and under the other half semi-precious stones are inlaid;
II. Even then, without (that) one, the nanad, the māṛo does not appear attractive.
III. Under half the wedding tent are sitting the kinsmen and under the other half are sitting the kinswomen;
IV. Even then without (that) one, the nanad, the māṛo does not appear attractive.
V. The brother (of the bride) went inside from outside and is discussing with the bhauji.
VI. The precious darling of (her) father is just coming - said the bhauji in the house.
VII. - Come (won't you?), oh nanad, (my) kinswoman, my duchess!
VIII. Nanad, sit (won't you?), in the centre of the māro and tie up my pitcher.
IX. - Bhauji, what would you pay me (as the fees) for the kalasā gothaunt?¹ (Tell me and) I will tie your pitcher.
X. - I shall give (you) a finger-ring (for your) hand and a three-string necklace to (adorn² your) neck.
XI. For the nanadōī³ I will give a horse to ride which you will mount (with him and) go to his home.

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

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
27 Hardī and Cumāvan¹ [Leiding 8A, 1962]

A²

I. kōrini kōrini tūha bāri rāṇī re, kahavā ke haradī
II. sācāreyu āju re kahavā ke haradī
III. hamare duhahini bhāi āisi sākuvāra re
IV. haradī ke jhāra sahā nāhī jāī re, haradī ke jhāra
V. hamaṛi dulahini bhāi āisi sākuvāra re
VI. telavā ke jhāra sahā nāhī jāī re, telavā ke jhāra

B²

I. kahavā ke haradī, kahā re sācārī re kahavā ke haradī
II. kōrini kōrini tūha bāri rāṇī re, kahavā ke haradī
III. ³ jaune duhahā rāmā khelata dekhyāu re
IV. tavane duhahā rāmā cauke jo bālthe re
V. cūmanā bālti jāgha sunnāṛ bappavā kavana rāmā dhe
VI. ika bārā cumaṛi dulahini mukha bhara dehu asīs
VII. cūmanā bālti jāgha sunnare mappavā kavana rāmā re
VIII. ika bārā cumaṛi dulahina dēī mukha bhara dehu asīs

A

I. O oilwoman,⁴ oilwoman, you are a great queen; from where is the turmeric?
II. The turmeric from which place has been gathered (here) today?
III. Our bride has grown so tender -
IV. The smell⁵ of the turmeric cannot be borne (by her).⁶
V. Our bride has grown so tender -
VI. The smell of the oil cannot be borne (by her).

¹ Lines I and II ‘...... telini rāṇī, kahavā kā telu sācārī ā।’ (H.S.B.I. Avadhī: 216).
² The A is for haradī; B is for cumāvan.
³ The lines III and IV are for the bridegroom's ceremony, and V and VI are for the bride's.
⁴ Kōrīn, the wife of a man who is kōlī by caste - one of whose professions is to press oil.
⁵ The smell of its vapour; jhār.
⁶ Is unbearable for her.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
B

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

28 Lāvā [Livorno, 1962]
Roasting the Lāvā

A

I. kāhina kī toṛī culiyā kāhina lagalēu caukone
II. kavanesaharavā ke bhujāinī lāvā jo bhūjāi
III. sonana ke toṛī culiyā rūpe lagalēu caukone
IV. diliyā saharavā ke bhujāinī lāvā je bhūjāi
V. ⁵ kajarī bana lakaṛī komharā ghara ke khapparā
VI. diliyā saharvā ke bhujāinī lāvā jo bhūjāi

---

1 Caukā, a wooden seat only a few inches from the ground, also known as cauki.
2 This has been translated here too literally. For the details of the cumāvan ceremony see de Klerk (‘51: 145).
3 This line may be wrong; it should probably refer to the bridegroom; ika bāra cumale dulahe rāmā mukha bhara dehu asis. The singers often make such mistakes while singing.
4 The term mappavā is new; it may mean mother and father. The singers stated it to mean only mother.
5 After line IV, there may be two question lines analogous to the lines I and II, to which V and VI should be the answer.
[Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
Mixing the lāvā¹

**B**

I. mora lāvā tora lāvā ekai mē milāy deyo
e bhujāiniyā, e bhujāiniyā
II. tora bahini mora bhaiyā ekai mē sutāy deyo
III. tore khete boyo maj borā
e bhujāiniyā, e bhujāiniyā

**A**

I. Of what is your fire-pit (made) and of what are the four corner supports (which have been) fixed?²
II. Of which city is the bhujāini³ who is roasting the lāvā⁴?
III. Your fire-pit is (made) of gold (and) the four corner supports are (made) of silver.
IV. The bhujāini who is roasting the lāvā is of the city (of) Delhi.
V. The wood is from the kajarī⁵ forest (and) the tiles⁶ (are) from a potter's house.
VI. The bhujāini who is roasting the lāvā is of the city of Delhi.

**B**

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

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¹ The ladies take the roasted paddy to a friend's house; two heaps of lāvā are mixed together several times by two ladies who have a marital family relationship with each other, for example a nanad and a bhaujā. This represents the union of two families and, as the grain being mixed also represents fertility, it is an occasion for lascivious gālis.
² Four corner pieces of iron placed under the roasting pot on the fire-pit.
³ The wife of a man of bharbhujā caste or profession who usually roasts the grains.
⁴ The paddy is soaked and then roasted; the roasted form, like popcorn, is called lāvā or lāvā (S. lājā).
⁵ Any thick forest where elephants roam.
⁶ Khappar, clay tiles used to cover the coals to adjust the heat.
29 Imlī Ghọṭāī [Paramaribo, 1965]

I. bahinī cāuke bāithī bhāiyā palāgā bāithe nā
II. bhāiyā kholi deyo dāna ke gathariyā to imalī ghōtāvāo nā
III. dahine hāthe lelai loṭāvā bāye re hāthe patāiyāī nā
IV. sāta pheki kāṭe bhāyanāvā to māmā imalī ghōṭāvaye nā
V. kıyā tuḥh bahinī jurāilo ki aba hā jurāilī nā
VI. bahinī jo kucha bace more kāmāiyā yahi re hama lāin nā

I. The sister is sitting on the board1 (and) the brother is on the bed.
II. Brother, open up (won't you?) the bundle of gift and have the leaves crushed.
III. (He) took the water-vessel2 in the right hand and the leaves in the left,
IV. The bhayani3 cut (the leaves with her teeth) seven times and so the māmā4 has the leaves crushed.
V. Are you, sister, satisfied? Yes, I am now satisfied.
VI. Sister, whatever (could be) saved from my use - (all of) that I have brought to you (as a gift).

30 Dressing the bridegroom [Uitvlugt, 1962]

I. baṛī dhūma se sājo larkā haj amīrō ke
II. jorā uma kar āye pacāsō ke, jāmā lākha kar āye - larkā haj...
III. pagiyā uma kar āye hajārō ke, maurā lākha kar āye - larkā haj...

1 See note 1 on song No. 27, p. 77.
2 Loṭā, a small pitcher.
3 Sister’s daughter.
4 Mother’s brother.
IV. mojā una kar āye hajārō ke, panahī lākha kar āye - lārikā haj...

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

31 Barāts departure [Paramaribo, 1965]
Preparations of the wedding party (barāt) for departure to bride's home

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

I. See, how well is the barāt of my dear one adorned today.
II. Our bridegroom is amazingly adorned, is amazingly adorned,
III. See, like the light of the sun; today...
IV. The bridegroom's paternal grandfather is amazingly adorned, is amazingly adorned.
V. See, like the kings and emperors; today...
VI. The bridegroom’s maternal grandfather is amazingly adorned, is amazingly adorned,
VII. Like the king of Russia;¹ today...
VIII. The bridegroom’s brother is amazingly adorned, is amazingly adorned,
IX. See, (he is the) rider mounted on the horse; today...
X. The bridegroom’s māmā is amazingly adorned, is amazingly adorned,
XI. Like the king of America;¹ today...

32 Nechū² [Utvlugt, 1962]

I. ghara ghara ghumaīī nāunīyā to gotīν bulāvāi
II. janaka dulārī ke nechū sabahī kōī āvahī
III. kōī dāre cuṭakī munariyā kōī re dāre rūpara
IV. kōī dāre ratanā padāratha bhāri gāile sūpara
V. kausilyā dāre cuṭuki munariyā sumitrā dāre rūpara
VI. kekahī dāre ratanā padāratha bhāri gāile sūpara

I. The nāunī has walked from home to home; the nāunī invites the kinswomen;
II. May each and everyone come to the nechū of the darling daughter of Janaka.
III. One throws³ in a little finger-ring, another throws silver (coins?).
IV. One throws in the jewel things (and) the sūp⁴ is filled.
V. Kauśalyā throws in the little finger-ring, Sumitrā throws the silver.
VI. Kaikeyī throws the jewel things (and) the sūp is filled.

¹ See p. 3.
³ The gifts thrown in the sūp at this occasion belong to the nāunī.
⁴ A kind of winnowing tray made of wicker work.
The barāt's arrival at the bride's home

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

1. The arrival of the barāt, and waiting to be received by the bride's guardians and other relatives.

2. The bride's male relatives and guardians go out of the māro and receive the guests: this is known as agavānī.

3. Dvāra-pūjā, welcoming the guests in a worshipful manner, and then (gale milanā) embracing.

4. Parchan (S. prārcana) of the bridegroom done by the ladies after the barāt has been led into the māro.

5. Giving a light refreshment to the bridegroom, consisting of sweetened water etc.

The bridegroom's bahanōī (sister's husband) or some other relative keeps a close watch to detect any tricks of mixing some magically 'medicated' stuffs which might be given to the bridegroom to bring him under the power of his would-be bride or to weaken him in some other way. Because of the auspicious nature of this refreshment it is referred to as sagunī.

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

33 [Uitvlugt, 1962]
Welcoming the barāt

1. e to dala utara āye, āvē ye militar, āvē ye militar
2. kiya re kadama juri chāhā re
3. e to dala utara āye kavana rāmā duvariya
4. jehi gharā kāinā kuvāra re
5. āgana doriyā bahoro kavana rāmā
6. tohare āile dularā damāda re
I. Oh, these parties have arrived (and) alighted; here come these friends.  
II. Is the shade under the kadam tree satisfactory?  
III. Oh, these parties have arrived and alighted at the door of N.N. Rāma.  
IV. At whose home (there) is a virgin daughter.  
V. Sweep clean the courtyard and the gateway, N.N. Rāma.  
VI. The dear (would-be) son-in-law has come at your (doorsteps).

34 Parchan [Paramaribo, 1962]

I. parachannikarīhaįkavanarānīgharase  
II. dasasakhiagavą̄dasasakhipachavą̄  
III. dasasakhiguhane laga āj re  
IV. apane rāmā maj apane parichabe  
V. aura jani kōi pariche more rāmā re  
VI. dekho ī janī jāisana basana kara lerūā  
VII. khuli gāile açarā cataki gāile lerūā  
abā ataki gāile lerūā  
VIII. khū khū khū hāsāle damāda re

I. The queen N.N. has emerged from the house to do the adoration;  
II. Ten sakhis in front, ten sakhis at the back,  
III. Ten sakhis have attached (themselves to her) sides.  
IV. - I shall adore my Rāma myself;  
V. And someone (fem.) (else also) should adore my Rāma.

1 Militar, perhaps from S. mitra, friend; or, perhaps acquaintances, those whom one meets.  
2 In another version the name of the woman is given as queen Mandodari, Rāvaṇa’s wife, the reason for which is not clear.  
3 Parchan.  
4 The bridegroom.  
5 Whoever is nearby is addressed.
VI. See, this person (fem.⁴), how is this string of the clothing;
VII. The åca⁵ has opened up, the string burst, now, the string got stuck!
VIII. ³ The son-in-law laughed out - ho ho ho ho!

General marriage songs I

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

35 [Paramaribo, 1965]
The qualifications of a girl in an arranged marriage⁴

I. sūtala rahilyaų maj bābā phulavariyā re
II. dhā̈ī bakhariyā ke jāu re
III. kekare duvāre maiyā bājana bājā
IV. kekara maiyā racalyau biyāha re
V. sūtala rahila beṭī bābā phulavariyā re
VI. dhā̈ī bakhariyā ke jāu re
VII. bābā duvarių beṭi bājana baje re
VIII. tuharo beṭi racalyaų biyāha re
IX. na sikhalaų e maiyā lipana potana
X. nahi sikhalaų sijhahi rasōi re
XI. sāsū nanada mili bābā gariyāihāj
   [sāsū nanada mili (bhaiyā) gariyāihāj]
XII. more būte sahā i na jāi re
XIII. sikhilehu e beṭi lipana potana
XIV. sikhilehu sijhahi rasōi re

¹ See page 83 note 5.
² The upper portion of the sari or the orhani, especially the part covering the bosom.
³ The lines VI-VIII have a gālī element.
I. I was asleep in father's flower garden;
II. I run and go towards (his) storeroom.
III. - Mother, at whose door are the musical instruments being played?
IV. Mother, whose wedding have you arranged?
V. - Daughter, You lay asleep in (your) father's flower garden
VI. And ran to go towards (his) store-room.
VII. Daughter, (it is) at (your) father's door (that) the musical instruments are being played;
VIII. Daughter, (it is) your wedding (that) I have arranged.
IX. - Mother, I have not learnt plastering and smearing (the floor),
X. Nor have I learnt to cook meals.
XI. The mother-in-law and nanad will join together and curse my father¹;
XII. This will be unbearable for me.
XIII. - Daughter, learn to plaster and smear (the floor),
XIV. Learn to cook the meals.
XV. (Your) mother-in-law and nanad will join together and curse your father.²
XVI. (Then), you should spread the aṅcal and take (the curses quietly).

36 General marriage songs II [Paramaribo, 1965]
Śiva’s marriage

I. calalaįmahādevagäurābiyāhana
II. suravana chatra dhara āin re

¹ Variant: brother.
I. Mahādeva proceeded to marry Pārvatī.
II. The gods came holding parasols,¹
III. (Śiva, however) put on a crown of scorpions and such things,²
IV. (And) wore a sacred thread (consisting) of snakes.
V. The mother-in-law, Menā, came out to perform the adoration;³
VI. The snakes began to move with hisses.
VII. The mother-in-law threw the sūp under the good tree of bilva.⁴
VIII. (And) stumbled (backwards) after that.
IX. - I shall not wed Pārvatī to such a bridegroom -
X. Rather that she should stay a virgin.
XI. - Would that, oh Śiva, you would change your dress a little;
XII. The world-rulers⁵ (belonging to my) parental home have come (to attend the wedding;
what would they say?).

¹ Symbols of royal power and authority. ‘Holding parasols (over their heads)’.
² A twin-word, bichiyana-kuchiyanaka.
³ The parchan.
⁴ A tree traditionally associated with Śiva; its leaves form an important offering to Śiva in the
ritual of his worship.
⁵ Loka-pati; the guardian-gods of various realms including the four quarters.
XIII. Śiva took the form of a fly and came;  
XIV. He came hiding around (Pārvatī's) shoulder.  
XV. - I shall take Pārvatī and flee.¹  
XVI. I shall take Pārvatī and enjoy (together with her).  
XVII. I shall take Pārvatī and flee to the underworld.²

Kanyā-dāna

At the stage of kanyā-dāna, there are several little ceremonial steps for which the songs are sung:
1. Preparatory to the ceremony.  
2. Giving the bride's hand to the bridegroom.  
3. Pouring water over the löī, the ball of flour dough containing some gifts.  
4. As an epilogue to the kanyā-dāna.  
Here a song combining (2) and (3) is recorded.

37 [Leiding 8A, 1962]

Giving away the bride³

I. kāpajā hāthā garuṣā o are kāpaj kusā kāi dārī  
II. maraṃye mē kāpaj kavana rāmā kāise deve kāinā maṅj dāna re
III. The water-vessel trembles in the hand; O, the blade of 
  *kuśa* (grass) trembles; 
IV. N.N. Rāma trembles - “how shall I give the girl away?” 
III. - How would you tremble now, oh father; the hour of duty has arrived. 
IV. Rain, rain, oh father, like the water drops. 
V. - Gather, gather, oh *samadhi* Rāma, as a snail (gathers) the waterweeds.

38 Bhāvar¹ [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

I. bābā hī bābā pukārāile bābā na bolāij ho 
II. bābā pahaḷi bhāvariya ke ghumale abahį maj bābā ke ho 
III. dādā hī dādā pukārāile dādā na bolāij ho 
IV. dādā dusari bhāvariya ke ghumale abahį maj dādā ke ho 
V. nānā hī nānā pukārāile nānā na bolāij ho 
VI. nānā tisari bhāvariya ke ghumale abahį maj nānā ke ho 
VII. bhaiyā hī bhaiyā pukārāile bhaiyā na bolāij ho 
VIII. bhaiyā cāuthi bhāvariya ke ghumale abahį maj bhaiyā ke ho

1 *Dharma.*
2 The sentiment expressed is also most appropriate as the water is being poured into the joined hands. Rain: give freely like the waterdrops falling when it rains.
3 The bride’s father and the bridegroom’s father are *samadhis* to each other. The bridegroom’s father is addressed in this line.
4 Since ‘walking round the fire, the bhāvar, is the Hindu wedding *par excellence*, the importance of this song cannot be overemphasized. H.S.B.I. alone gives versions in seven North Indian languages and dialects: Avadhī (p. 219); Baghelī (p. 255), Bundelī (p. 341), Braj (p. 378), Garhvālī (p. 612), a shorter version in Cambīālī (p. 721), and a Rājasthānī version (p. 445) with only four circumambulations because in Rājasthān that is the customary number instead of the seven which are usual elsewhere.

Usharbudh Arya, *Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam*
I. I call only ‘father’ ‘father’, but father does not answer.
II. Father, having made the first circumambulation I am still father's own.
III-XII
I. I call only ‘māmā’ ‘māmā’, but māmā does not answer.
II. Having made the seventh circumambulation I have now become another's.

39 Sindūra-Dāna² [Paramaribo, 1967] (Gālī)
I. bābā bābā pukārāi bābā na jānāj
II. delaichinārī pūta sēdura jagata saba jānāi

I. She calls ‘father’ ‘father’;³ father does not know -
II. A son of an adulteress has given the vermilion; the whole world knows.

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

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

3 The lines may be repeated, replacing ‘father’ by other male relatives.
40 Kohbar\(^1\) [*Uitvlugt, 1962*]

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

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

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

2 See fig. 7.
The song may be summarised as follows: Kṛṣṇa (here, perhaps, any bridegroom) arrives with his party and all the guests sit to dine together. At the same time the singing of gālīs begins and the singers cast aspersions on Kṛṣṇa’s relatives. His sister Subhadra had eloped with Arjuna by his permission. His father’s sister, Kunḍi, had seven lovers or husbands: her first child, Karn, was born from Sūrya, the sun-god, while she was an unmarried girl, then she was married to Pāṇḍu, from whom she had no son but her three sons were born through intercourse with three gods. This makes five the number of her lovers. As Pāṇḍu’s other wife, Mādri, had two sons from intercourse with two gods, they may indirectly be referred to as Kunḍi’s men also. Thus the number reaches seven. Upon hearing these remarks Kṛṣṇa, or the bridegroom, becomes annoyed and goes back to his mother but she pursues him to return to his susrāl, where he finally accepts the gālīs in good humour, forgetting his pride of being a ‘duke of the three worlds’.

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

1 Each even numbered line begins with the stobha, rāmjū, in the recording.

2 Hā sitārām se bani is a stobha, not translated repeatedly.

3 In another recorded version [Leiden 8A, 1962] there are additional lines, being given here for reference to p. 33:

- III. nāva navarā gopiya carhe aye ho krṣṇa garul carhi aye
- IV. utari pare jamunā ke nikaṇa para bārina pāva pakhāre
- V. caraṇa dhōi caraṇāmṛta line ho dhani dhani bāgya hamāre. etc.
- III. The gopis came sitting in the boats and such; Kṛṣṇa came mounted on Garuḍa (Viṣṇu’s mythical bird).
- IV. They (all) alighted near (the river) Yamunā and washed the feet with water.
- V. (The hosts) washed (the guests’ feet) and took the caraṇāmṛta (a sip from the water used for washing the feet).
VI. sajana bālthe jagha jorī, hā sitiā...
VII. mevā au pakavāna mithāī ho
VIII. aba rasa khira banāī, hā sitiā...
IX. jevana bālthe haj krisna kanhāī
X. deta sakhiyā saba gārī, hā sitiā...
XI. bahini to tuharī rahāī subhadrā deī
tahān khe nahi.
XII. arajuna sanga sidhārī, hā sitiā...
XIII. phūā to tuharī rahāī kunte deī
tahān khe nahi.
XIV. unahī to rahī sata bhataṛī, hā sitiā...
XV. ātha lukutiyā kānhe kamāriyā ho
XVI. au krisna calina risīyāī, hā sitiā...
XVII. gokula se mathurā calī āye ho
XVIII. jahavā jasomati māī, hā sitiā...
XIX. ḫaṣi ḫaṣi pūchele māṭā jasodrā ho
XX. kahāū lalana sasurāṛī, hā sitiā...
XXI. ko kahū maiyā āisa sasurāṛī ho
XXII. are nita re bhojana nita gārī, hā sitiā...
XXIII. rāmā duhāī rājā dasaratha kiryā ho
XXIV. aba näh jābe sasurāṛī, hā sitiā...
XXV. barhe lalana tore sāre sasurīyā ho
XXVI. nita re bhojana nita gārī, hā sitiā...
XXVII. hama to hūāī tina loka ke tākurā
XXVIII. hamare una ke kauna gārī, hā sitiā...
XXIX. jau tuhū hao tina loka ke tākurā
XXX. kāhe ke gayau sasurāṛī, hā sitiā...
XXXI. dehu na dehu sakhina saba gārī ho
XXXII. aba hama lebe pāṭkā pasārī, hā sitiā...

I. The city (of) Mathurā is situated in a high and low (terrain);
II. The river Yamunā¹ has come flowing downwards; yes, it has become so with (the grace of) Sītā and Rāma.
III. (The guests) alighted at (a spot) near Yamunā,
IV. displaying² nine or ten tilakas.³

¹ Another variant has sarayū which is, in fact, the river flowing by the city of Ayodhyā, not Mathurā.
² Ramānā, literally, to affix with a great interest.
³ Tilakas, in this case, marks not only on the forehead, but various religious marks on other parts of the body also. This indicates that the guests assembled are very religious and pious.
V. the leaves\(^1\) (for serving the meals) have been spread out.

VI. The gentlemen have sat down with (their) thighs close to each other.\(^2\)

VII. (There are) dried fruits and nuts,\(^3\) savouries and sweetmeats,

VIII. Now, the tasty rice pudding has been made.

IX. Kṛṣṇa\(^4\) has sat down to dine -

X. (And) all the sakhis are giving (i.e. articulating) gālīs.

XI. - As to your sister, she was lady Subhadrā -

XII. (Who) went away with Arjuna.

XIII. As to your phüā, she was lady Kunī.

XIV. It was she who was the (wife of) seven husbands.

XV. A stick in the hands, and a shawl on the shoulders -

XVI. (Thus) Kṛṣṇa started out (as he got) displeased.

XVII. He came away from Gokula to Mathurā -

XVIII. Where (there is the) mother Yaśodā.

XIX. With repeated laughs mother Yaśodā asks -

XX. - Dear boy, tell (me of your) marital home.

XXI. - What shall I tell (you), mother? The marital home is such (that)-

XXII. There is ever dining and ever cursing.

XXIII. (I say it) in the name of Rāma, and (I swear in the name of) Daśaratha -

XXIV. Now I shall not (at all) go to the marital home.

XXV. - May your entire marital home\(^5\) prosper, dear boy -

XXVI. (So you may) ever (have) dining and ever the curses.\(^7\)

XXVII. - We are the dukes of the three worlds -

XXVIII. How can (there be a) gālī (relationship) between us and them?

XXIX. - If you are the duke of the three worlds -

XXX. Why did you (need to) go to the marital home?

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1 Even now, lotus and banana leaves are used for plates.
2 This indicates that there are so many guests that there is not sufficient space.
3 Mevā is the common noun for dried fruits and nuts.
4 Kṛṣṇa kanhāi, the twin name is a colloquial form.
5 This must be 'from Mathurā to Gokula', as he is leaving the dinner party which is in Mathurā.
6 Sāre sasurīyā: perhaps, the sālās (wife’s brothers) and sasur (father-in-law).
7 Gālī.
XXXI. - Sakhis, all, give (i.e. articulate) the curses.

XXXII. I shall spread out (a corner of my) garment and receive (the curses in a corner thereof).

42 Vidāi and Gaunā [Paramaribo, 1965]
(The bride’s farewell)

I. kahe rājā rāmacandar suno janaka rājā
II. bidā tu kara do dulārī ke
III. ke more gangā se jala bhāri lāihi
IV. ke more śīče phulavārī, janaka rājā...
   kahe rājā rāma...
V. ke more girijā ke pūjā karana jāihaį
VI. ke more citavai atārī se, janaka rājā...
   kahe rājā rāma...

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

43 The arrival at bridegroom’s home [Paramaribo, 1965]
The arrival at bridegroom’s home

I. hāsamukha pūche dulahā ke māįį kā pāyo,
II. beṭā sasurār kā pāyo.

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1 See for note 1 page 91.
2 Paṭukā: a length of cloth worn on the shoulder.
3 The song may continue very long by repetition, in each repetition 'mother' is replaced by terms for other lady relatives such as mā́nī (wife of mother’s brother), bhaujā́ (brother’s wife) etc.
III. hama to pāye maiyā₁ carhane ke ghuravā
IV. mora dhaniyā nava lakhavā ke hār
V. ghuravā to maiyā desa apanāibe
VI. mora dhaniyā hoihaj dāsi tūhār

I. With a smiling face the bridegroom’s mother¹ asks: what did you get (as gifts)?
II. Son, what did you get (as gifts) in the susrāñ?
III. - I got, mother,¹ a horse for mounting (and riding) -
IV. And my precious one (got) a necklace worth nine hundred thousand.
V. Mother, I shall have the horse incorporated into the estate,
VI. And my precious one will be your maid servant.

44 Kaṅgan-sirāi² [Paramaribo, 1967]
I. tor khicariya mor khicariya ekāi mē milā̈ore
II. tor dādā³ mor dīdī³ ekāi lag sutāo re

I. Your khicri (rice mess) and my khicri - mix these in one.
II. Your (elder)³ brother and my (elder) sister³ - make them sleep together.

Death songs
45 Nirgun [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
I. teři do dina kī hai jindagānī re, garavai mati dekhi javānī
II. māyā kāyā kā dara chāyā, kyq mūrakha mana mē ḍaraṇāyā
III. rahe ānī jānī, garavai mati...
     teři do...

¹ See note 3 page 94.
² See de Klerk on kaṅganmokṣan (‘51: 185). When, after spending a few days the bride returns to her parental home, the ceremonial bangles (de Klerk, ‘51: 143) which were tied around her wrists are loosened, also the māro is broken, the deities and the ancestral spirits are given leave, visarjana.
³ The song continues long by repetition, the words dādā (elder brother) and dīdī (elder sister) replaced by other relations. Cp. this song with 28B.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
IV. gāi javānī āyā burhāpā, kāpana lāgati kāyā
V. ghara ke loga mukha se nahī bolē, rovana lage re bānī
VI. bhare naina se pānī, garavai...
   terī do...
VII. yaha kāyā māṭī mē mirī jāye, ūpara giri jāy pānī
VIII. isa dehī para dūba jamegī, cari gāī gāū dīvānī
garavai...
   terī do...
IX. liyā diyā tere saṅga calegā, amara rahata nisānī
terī do...
X. natthidāsa ne yaha samajhāyā, raha gāī amara nisānī

I. Your life is for two days (only); do not be proud seeing (your) youth.
II. The fear for the body ('s survival), an illusion, overshadows the people; why is the fool frightened in the mind?
III. (It is all) coming and going (i.e. transient); do not be proud...
   Your life is...
IV. Youth passed, old age came; the body starts to shake.
V. The people of the family do not speak (to the person any more); the speech begins to cry.
VI. The eye is filled with water;¹ do not be proud...
   Your life is...
VII. This body (finally) mingles with earth and water falls on top (of it).
VIII. The düb grass will grow on this body -and a crazy cow grazed and went away. Do not be proud...
   Your life...
IX. (What you have) taken and given, (that) will go with you - that mark (of your life) remains immortal.
X. Natthidāsa² has admonished thus - (and) his mark (this song) remains immortal.

¹ The composition is faulty; this is the approximate translation.
² In this case the singer himself was the composer.
46 Caubolā [Party from Meerzorg, 1967]

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

A

I. rovatī tārā dēī rānī sune putra kā khabar
II. de de māre sīsa dharanī para, more nikase nā prānī
   aba sune putra... rovatī tārā...
III. nainō bahatā nirdayī jai, bāgō kī kahānī
   sune putra...
   rovatī...
IV. chāū lihin lagāy rote mē, rovana lāgī rānī
   sune putra...
   rovatī...
V. bidhanā terī kahā bigārī, kahana lagī rānī
   sune putra...
   rovatī...

B

I. sira se cunarī utāri ke(rānī) gatharī lihina sābhār
II. sira para rakha ke ca kal dāi maraghatā ke majhadhār
III. gathariyā sira se utāri maraghatā ke majhadhār.
IV. āge lāi lakariyā tora karī aba agini kī laiyārī
V. ikalī karārī hai kām naḥī hai dūjā nara nārī
VI. aba āya khare haj bhūta dela rānī ko gārī

A

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

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

III. Water flows from the eyes pitiless(ly) (in this) story of the² gardens.
   As she hears...
   The lady...

IV. In (the course of the) crying (she) embraced (the child) to her bosom; she began to cry
    (even more?).
   As she hears...
   The lady...

V. Oh Fate,³ what wrong did (I do) to you? - (so) the queen began to say.
   As she hears...
   The lady...

B

I. The queen removed the headscarf from (her) head and upheld the bundle;⁴
II. Having placed (it) on her head she started off (towards the) centre of the cremation
    ground.
III. (She) took off the bundle from her head in the centre of the cremation ground.
IV. (She) broke the wood and brought (it) forward (and) has (sic) now made preparations
    to (set) fire.
V. She is doing (all) the work alone; (there) is no second man or woman (to help).
VI. Now the ghosts have come (round) (and) are standing; they curse⁵ the queen.

¹ The meaning conveyed is: she wishes to kill herself, but with repeated hitting of her head on the ground her breath is still not passing away. The singer has used the word prāṇī, for rhyme, instead of prāṇa.
² It was in a garden that Tārā's son had been bitten when she was sold as a slave to a master.
³ Bidhanā (S. Vidhi, vidhāna), Brahmā, the master of fate.
⁴ Sābhāranā: to take charge, uphold. Here, perhaps, to prepare or to make. She wrapped the boy's body in a bundle made with her headscarf.
⁵ Lit. 'give (i.e. articulate) curses to the queen'. Cremation grounds are well known as haunts of ghosts.
47 Sargun [*Nieuw Nickerie, 1967*]

I. mālika siṁ bhagavān to soca mana kāhe kū kare
II. jangala biča ika hiranī hiranā byādha lagāye phāṣ
III. hiranī kūda bagala bhāṛī hāṛī hiranā ke gāla phāṣ 
      mālika siṁ...
IV. bolī hai hiranī suniya hiranā mānau merī bāṭ
V. badhikā ke ghara kharacī nā ai beci khāye tor māṣ 
     mālika siṁ...
VI. itanī suna lāī jaba badhikā ne kāṭa diye gala phāṣ
VII. ye tīnō baikuṇṭha sīdhāre gāvata tulasīyadās

I. The glorious Lord is the master;¹ then, O mind, why do you brood?²
II. (There were) a deer and a doe³ in the jungle; the hunter fixed his trap.
III. The doe jumped clear and stood to one side, but (there was) a net around the deer's 
    neck.
IV. The doe has said to the deer: listen and believe what I say;
V. There isn't (money for) expenses in the killer's home; he will sell your meat and (buy 
    something to) eat.
VI. When the killer heard this much, he cut the net off from the neck.
VII. All these three went to *Vaikuṇṭha:*⁴ Tulasīdāsa sings.

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1 Or, protector.
2 Worry, or grieve.
3 The singer stated that the song was a parable referring to the relationship of *Puruṣa* (soul) 
   and *Prakṛti* (matter).
4 *Viṣṇu's* heaven.

_Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam_
48 Parāti [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

I. gaila ko baṭohi cāle pañchī cāle cuṅanā
II. uttho re lalana mere uttho re krīśna aba
III. uttho jasomati ke lalanā
gaila ko...
IV. ḍāri ḍāri pañchī bole kāgā bole kāre
V. gokula mē dhūma mace uttho re dulāre
VI. jāgo jī jāgo lālā nanda ke dulāre
gaila ko...

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

The annual cycle
The songs of the Phagwā festival
49 Phagwā i [Party from Meerzorg, 1967]>

A. Cautāl

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

IV. kansa ke māra bidhansa karaṣu sakhī suna lau hāra hamāra
V. hamahū ṛāra karaba jamunā para tumhē dekhāba ākha ughārī
dhare more sārī
VI. ranga bhare madamātala gāvīna bole bacana samhārī
VII. duragāprāśāda carana raghubara kī dāi ke dāna caḷī brijanārī
dhare more sārī

B Jhūmar
I. mati jāhū kanta paradesa basanta nirāne
II. lage āma baurana madhukara kunja dikhāne
III. birchā bhaye patidhāra ṭesa mana māhī phulāne
IV. biṭaga payāna karata apane para
V. dina dina yaha adhika tapāne
VI. raho bhavana diladāra bāta itanī suna kāṅhe
VII. tuma bina sorahū sīgāra kavana hamaraũ dukha jāne
VIII. hama birahina khelaba kikare sanga
IX. piyā tana ko daradiyaũ nahi jāne

C Ulārā
I. giradhārī ho lālā chora deyo bahiyā miruka jāihaj
II. sone ravārdār kāgana cūrī lāge anamol
III. dhara bahiyā jhakajhoraj cūrī lāgana phūṭa
IV. jauna bāta tuma tākyau vā se nāhī bhēṭa
crori deyo bahiyā...

A
I. Kṛṣṇa smilingly teases’ (me and) takes hold of my sārī.
II. - You are the boy of Nanda, the dear one; I am the darling daughter of Vṛṣabhānu.
III. On the bank of Yamunā it costs (him) nothing² and lord (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) commits the robbery.³
   Takes hold...
IV. (He says:) I (can) kill and destroy Kaṁsa; Sakhi, listen to my statement;

---

1 Here gārī can be translated only in this way.
2 ‘There is no restriction’.
3 ‘Lawlessness’, ‘lawless behaviour’, in this context.
V. (He says:) I shall keep noise on the Yamunā bank (and) I shall look at you with open eyes.

   Takes hold...

VI. The cowherdess full of colour and the frenzy of youth says (this with her) words (chosen) carefully;

VII. Durgāprasad (says:) (I take) refuge at the feet of the best of Raghus (i.e. Rāma); the woman of Vraja gave a gift and (then) went (her way).

B

I. Beloved, do not go abroad; the spring (season) has come close.

II. The mango (trees) have begun to blossom, the bumblebees are seen in the groves.

III. The trees have become leafy (and the) ṭesū flowers are blooming (in their) minds.

IV. The birds are starting out on (their) journeys on the wing -

V. (And) these days are getting warmer daily.

VI. Oh Kṛṣṇa, listen to just this request; O thou with (a generous) heart, stay home;

VII. Without you (my) sixteen adornments (are futile); who (can) know my suffering?

VIII. With whom shall I play (when) in separation?

IX. (My) beloved knows not at all the pains of (my) body.

C

I. Oh darling Giridhārī, let go (of) my arms; they will get sprained.

---

1. 'I shall make trouble', 'quarrel'.
2. The composer of this song.
4. Gift of her youth.
5. Pardes, any place far away.
6. Perhaps, not yet in full bloom.
8. Birahin (S. virahiṇī), a woman in the state of separation from her lover.
9. He who holds up (or, held up) a mountain; a reference to Kṛṣṇa's having lifted the Govardhana mountain. Perhaps the epithet is intentionally chosen to compare the softness of the arms with the hardness of the mountains; i.e., 'this is not a mountain but tender arms; do not hold them so tight'.
II. (My) bracelets are (made) with gold finery (and) the bangles look invaluable; 
III. You hold¹ and shake my arms (and the) bangles begin to break. 
IV. The matter you are (actually) after would not come to fruition.² Let go (of) my arms.

50 Phagwā ii [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
Dhamār

I. kita le gayo yāra pahārana mē kita le gayo
II. rastā chora kurastā lāyo, lahaqā phaṭa gayo jhārana mē kita le...
III. sāro dina jangal mē bītyau, pālai pari gyau qavārana mē kita le...
IV. sājha bhāī dina gayo bhavana ko, bhēṭa bhāī diladārana mē kita le...

I. Into what mountains has the lover taken me (astray); 
   into what...
II. Abandoning the (right) way, he brought (me) to the wrong path; (my) skirt was torn up 
   in the bushes - 
   into what...
III. The whole day passed in the forest; I got involved with³ the (uncultured) rustics - 
   into what...
IV. The evening came - the day (had) passed - (then I proceeded) to the home (and) a 
   meeting took place among the (people) of good hearts. 
   Into what...

¹ Literally, the third person (‘he holds’) has been used which does not fit.
² Literally, ‘you will not come across it’ or ‘it will not be presented to you’.
³ Lit., ‘there was involvement with...’.
51 Phagwā iii [Party from Meerzorg, 1967]
Cāitā¹

I. rājā gaye kauna desa kūliyā kūhūkata bana mē
II. ika to kūliyā (hāy) dusare savatīyā
III. tisare piyā ho paradesa -
    kūliyā kūhūkata... rājā gaye...
IV. ākhiyā ke kājara dhumila hōi gāile
V. jobana ubhare bāra jor -
    rājā gaye...
VI. yāda karau mohi bhūlo to nāhī̄
VII. nayana bahāve (dekho) nīra -
    rājā gaye...
VIII. dayā karo jagadīsā more svāmī
IX. tuhį̄ to dharāiho mohe dhīra -
    rājā gaye...

I. To what land has (my) king² gone? The koyal³ bird sings in the woods.
II. On the one hand the (singing of) koil, on the other a co-wife;
III. Third, the beloved (being) abroad -
    The koil... To what land...
IV. The collyrium in the eyes has gone faint;
V. The (signs of) youth⁴ are swollen with great force -
    To what land...
VI. Remember me; do not forget me (would you?)
VII. (See! how) the water flows from (my) eyes⁵ -
    To what land...
VIII. Have mercy, ruler of the world, my master;
IX. You alone will (be able to) console me.⁶

² One of the usual epithets of the beloved, used by women.
³ A black bird in India known for singing in the spring. Not seen in Surinam.
⁴ Jobanā, the breasts, as the signs of youth.
⁵ Lit. ‘the eyes make the waters flow’.
⁶ ‘Give me patience’.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
52 Phagwā iv [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
Rājpūtī

I. de dai pāco bāna sahodrā maiyā, dharakā de ratha ko pahiyā
II. cakra byūha ropya kairo ne, dala me kōi jānat nāy, sahodrā maiyā
III. jaba maj rahyau udra ke bhītara, pitā kahi kathā sāmājhay, sahodrā maiyā
IV. bāri baras umara ko choṭo, rana dekhyau ita nāy, sahodrā maiyā
V. chau daravāje tora bahāva, satavā jānata nāy, sahodrā maiyā

I. Give me the five\(^1\) arrows, mother Subhadrā\(^2\); give a push to the chariot's wheel.
II. The Kaurava has arranged the wheel formation, (the way of entering which) no one in (our) group knows, mother Subhadrā.
III. When I was inside (your) womb, father had told the story\(^3\) with an explanation, mother Subhadrā.
IV. Twelve years old, young in age, (I) have not yet seen a battle, mother Subhadrā.
V. I can break and throw away six (of the) gates (but) I do not know (the way to break) the seventh, mother Subhadrā.

---

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

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
53 Phagwā v [Nieuw Nickerie, van Drimmelanpolder, and party from Meerzorg, 1967]

Kabir

A

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

B

III. tulasī khare bajāra mě ki saba kī rākhaj khair
IV. nā kāhū se dosaṭī nā kāhū se bair

C

III. citrakūṭa ke ghāṭa pai bhāi santana kī bhīr.
IV. tulasidāsa candana ragaraį tilaka deta raghubīr

D

III. calaṭī cakkī dekhī ke diya kabīrā roy
IV. do pāṭana ke bīca mě sābita rahe na koy

E

III. maj āī kachu aura kū au hyā hai gaī kachu aur
IV. lahagā phāṭyaū gāṭha ko dekha cafī pahagaur

A

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

¹ Ramaiya bābā, a colloquial lighthearted diminutive for Rāma, something like ‘uncle Johnny’.
B

III. Tulasidasa, standing in the market-place, wishes for the welfare of all;
IV. Neither friendship with anyone nor enmity with anyone!

C

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

D

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

E

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

54 Phagwā vi [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

Jogīṛā

A

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

B

I. jogirā sa ra ra ra
II. ek gali mē āū jāā ēk gali mē rahnā

1 This verse is usually attributed to Kabīr, not to Tulasidasa.
III. aurgalīmę maj nahį jāũ tere lāge nainā
IV. calī cal nāle nāle calī cal khāle khāle
       jogīra sa ra ra ra

C
I. jogīi sa ra ra ra
II. rāma nāma se kū āle masakhariyo se gārį
III. calī cal nāle nāle calī cal khāle khāle
       jogīii sa ra ra ra

D
I. jogījii sa ra ra ra
II. mai āi kucha aur ko hyā hai gāī kucha aur
III. lahagā phātyau gātha ko dekha calī pahāgaur
       jogīi sa ra ra ra
       calī cal nāle nāle calī cal khāle khāle
       jogīii sa ra ra ra

A
II. 'We) had come from an (identical) place and disembarked at the same harbour;
III. The wind of the world touched (us) (and) we became totally separate.²

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

C
II. The well is kept moving by the name of Rāma, and the cart with jokes⁴ -
III. Keep moving... (as in B. IV above).

1 The untranslated lines are simply jubilations 'jogījii sa ra ra ra' etc.
2 Bārah bāṭ; twelve weights, all separate.
3 An invitation to elope, by a man to a woman.
4 The singer explained: the fields in India are watered by a bull who keeps turning the watering wheel of a well; he manages to remain on the monotonous job only by silent repetition of the name of Rāma. When people travel together on carts, the long and slow journey passes better with mutual jokes and teasing.
II-III. Identical with Kabir E III-IV.

55 Kajarī and Sāvan Kā Jhūlā [Ansoe, 1967]
The occasion for a woman's visit to her parental home

I. jamunā bica parale hjdolavā, kaho sāsū jhūlana jābe hjdolavā
II. jau re bāuhara tore jhulanavā ke sadhavā, nāihare se biranā bulāva -
   hjdolavā nāihare se biranā bulāva
III. nāihara nāihara jī na karo sāsū nāihara basāilai barī dūr -
   hjdolavā nāihara basāile barī dūr
IV. more pichavaravā suganā bhaiyā mitavā nāihara khabari janāvo -
   hjdolavā nāihara khabari janāvo
V. sugavā ke debo maǐ dūdha bhāta khoravā jau bhaiyā āvahį āja -
   hjdolavā jau bhaiyā āvahį āja
VI. jhūlane baithhe sāsū baṅhāltina hjdolavā, suno sāsū binaţi hamār -
    hjdolavā suno sāsū binaţi hamār
VII. ekai cunariyā hamaį detrə sāsū nāihara nevatā hama jābe -
    hjdolavā nāihara nevatā hama jābe

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

Line V.: dūdha bhāta khoravā to parrot - Fraser (J.A.S.B. 1883: 7-8); to a crow - D. Sinha ('58: 92); K. Upādhyāya, ('60: 354).
By the river Yamunā a swing has been fixed; say, mother-in-law, (if I have your permission) I would go to swing on the swing.

Daughter-in-law, if you have a wish to swing, call (your) brother from (your) parental home.

The swing, from the parental home...

(Please, honoured one), do not keep repeating naihar, naihar; (my) naihar is settled very far.

The swing, (my) naihar...

(The daughter-in-law says:) Oh parrot living behind (the home), brother, friend, make the news known in (my) naihar.

The swing, the news...

I shall give milk, rice and khoyā if (my) brother arrives today.

The swing, if brother...

The honoured mother-in-law sat to swing in the swing; (the daughter-in-law says:) mother-in-law, listen to my request.

The swing, listen to...

Would that you would give just one headscarf (to travel with); I would (like to) go (accepting an) invitation (to visit) the naihar.

The swing, (to visit) the naihar...

If, daughter-in-law, you have a wish to go, ask to have (the headscarf) sent from the naihar.

The swing, from the naihar...

1 Literally, ‘in the middle of the river’, but that is only a lakṣaṇā, a figure of speech.
2 Hįḍolā, a cradle-like swing with comfortable pillows etc.
3 Unlike most songs, the refrain here is variable, adding ‘the swing’, and taking the last part of the line. It is not possible to translate these lines literally without violence to the language.
4 Dehydrated milk.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
The brother (has arrived and) is opening the turban from (his) head (to give to his sister as her headscarf); the mother-in-law had to contain her frustration. The swing, the mother-in-law...

56 Kṛṣṇa's cradle\(^1\) [Ansoe, 1962]

I. jhūle jhūle kanhaiyā jī ke pālānā
II. kahavā kanhaiyā tore janama bhaye haj
III. kahavā ki nāra ye lāravā
   jhūle jhūle...
IV. gokula kanhaiyā tora janama bhaye haj
V. mathurā ki nāra ye lāravā
   jhūlo jhūlo...
VI. e kāhina ke tore pālanā banī hai
VII. kāhina lāge phūlanā
   jhūlo jhūlo...
VIII. resama ke more pālanā banī hai
IX. motiyana lāge phūlanā
   jhūlo jhūlo...
X. ke more lalanā ke pālanā jhulāve
XI. debe maj hātha ke kāganā
   jhūlo jhūlo...
XII. mātā jasodrā pālanā jhulāve
XIII. debe maj hātha ke kāganā
   jhūlo jhūlo...

I. There rocks, rocks, little Kṛṣṇa's cradle.
II. Where has your birth taken place, Kṛṣṇa?
III. And where is this loving lady?
   Rocks, rocks, little... ...
IV. In Gokula\(^2\) has your birth taken place, Oh Kṛṣṇa,

---

1 Sung for children. See p. 23.
2 Here, there seems some confusion in the singers' minds. According to the popular legend Kṛṣṇa was born in Mathurā and then taken to Gokula. The lines here should be reversed as follows: 'In Mathurā has your birth taken place and this loving lady is of Gokula'.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
V. And this loving lady is of Mathurā.
   Rock, rock, little... ...

VI. Of what is your cradle made?

VII. Of what are the floral decorations (that are) attached?
   Rock, rock, little... ...

VIII. My cradle is made of silk,
IX. And the floral decorations (that) are fixed (are of) pearls.
   Rock, rock, little... ...

X. Who would rock my dear child's cradle?
XI. (To him/her) would I give the bangle of my hand.
   Rock, rock, little... ...

XII. Mother Yaśodā rocks the cradle -
XIII. (To her) I shall give the bangle of my hand.
   Rock, rock, little... ...

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

I. gaṅgā jamunavā ke lahariyā dékhī nā; maïyā jiya-ra ḍarāile
lahariyā dékhi nā
II. sāvana bhadauvā ke umarala nadiyā; lahariyā dékhi nā
III. panavā hi phulavā ke bojhala naiyā;
lahariyā...
IV. ghare sāsū risiyāhaje ṭuṣṭe pahāriyā bhaye
V. ghare prabhu risiyāhaj jevanāra binā
VI. ghara bālaka rovaj dūdha binā
VII. gaṅgā māi deyo na bidāiyā gharavā jāū apane

I. Seeing the wave of Gangā and Yamunā,² mother, (my) heart is afraid
   Seeing the wave...

---

1 Phulnā or phundnā, various colourful embellishments tied around the cradles etc. of a child.
2 Nā in the song seems to be only a stobha.
II. The river is flooded (as it is the time) of śrāvaṇa and bhāḍrapada.\(^1\)

Seeing the wave...

III. The boat is heavy with (the burden of) only leaves and flowers.

Seeing the wave...

IV. At home the mother-in-law will be annoyed when it is midday.

V. At home (my) lord will be annoyed without (his) meal.

VI. At home the children will cry without milk.

VII. Mother Gaṅgā, allow (me) leave (won't you?) (so that) I may return to my home.

Other ritual songs

58 Gaṅgā Snāna [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

Call to Gaṅgā-Snāna

I. parabī āī nhāna cało jamunā
II. kāhe ko nhāna karyau kairo pāndavā; kāhe ko nhāna karyau saba duniyā - parabī āī...
III. punya ko nhāna karyau kairo pāndavā; māvasa nhāna karyau re duniyā - parabī āī...
IV. kāhe ko dāna karyau kairo pāndavā; kāhe ko dāna karyau saba duniyā -
V. sonā ko dāna karyau kairo pāndavā; anna ko dāna karyau duniyā - parabī āī...

I. The sacred day\(^2\) has come; come along to bathe in the Yamunā.\(^3\)
II. For what occasion did the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas take a (sacred) bath? For what occasion has the whole world taken a (sacred) bath?

---

\(^1\) Śrāvaṇa: July-August; bhāḍrapada: August-September.

\(^2\) (S. Parvan).

\(^3\) See note 2 p. 43.

Usharbudh Arya, *Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam*
III. The Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas took the (sacred) bath for the occasion of full moon; the whole world has taken a (sacred) bath for the occasion of new moon.

IV. What was the gift made by the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas? What is the gift made by the whole world?

V. The gift of gold was made by the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas. The gift of food (grains) has been made by the whole world.

59 Marsiyā [Paramaribo, 1967]

A

I. 2kahavā hasana tore janama bhaye kahavā chināyo nāravā
II. kahavā hasana tūḥ gena khelyo kahavā gavāyo jānava
III. makkā madinā more janama bhaye dharafi chināyo nāravā
IV. cauke para maj to gena khelyo karabal gavāyo jānavā

B

I. cārǫ tarafa diyanā jale bicavā bajhiniyā caukī bhare
II. he allā mero goda bhari de chūte bajhiniyā ke nāma re, ĥāy ĥāy

A

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

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

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
B

I. On all four sides clay lamps burn and in the centre (thereof) an infertile woman fills (i.e. draws) the cauk (designs).¹

II. (She prays:) O God, fill my lap (with a child) (so that my) title of a bājh² may be removed; oh, oh.

60 Jharrā [Paramaribo, 1967]

A³

I. aba choṭi moṭi khirakī candana chiṛakī jhimi jhimi āī bayariyā re āy

II. kēi biricha tale bhijata hōihaj hasana husain dono bhaiyā re āy

B

I. nadiyā kināre eka semal maiyā lagāye phulavariyā

II. e maiyā tore desa ke suganā phūla hare liye jātu hāj

III. phūla ke īpara khūna ṭapakai is bakhata hamare kōi nahī

A

I. Now, in a little window, sprinkled with the sandal (essence) (is there); (then) there came a little breeze with a drizzle, oh!

II. Under which tree must the two brothers, Hasan and Husain, be getting wet, oh?!

¹ On cauk see pp. 14 ff. Any designs made at the tāziā are not known.
² Cp. song No. 5, line XXIII.
³ Cp. ‘rimajhima rimajhima meha barisale pavana bahe puravāī, kavane biricha tare bhijata hoihaj rāma lakhana düno bhāī on the brothers Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa: D. Siṁha (‘44: 469).

See also p. 23 and note on song No. 59.A.
1

I. On the bank of the river there is a *semal* tree (where) a gardener is cultivating a flower garden.

II. Oh gardener, the parrots of your country are robbing and taking away the flowers.

III. On the flower (there) drips blood;¹ at this time no one is² ours.

---

61 Pacrā i [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

To Durgā

I. dharamai dharama bināq tuhe mātā nā jāne devi kauna rūpa haj

II. sonavā ke duragā motī lāye aģiyā rūpana jhālara lāgī

III. kahā devī tuha bādhalī cāuriyā kahā lihai autāra

IV. hjgalāja devī jahana bhaye haj kamarū lihau autāra

V. bindvāvana mē bānī hah cāuriyā mathavā navāye sansār

I. Totally according to duty³ do I pray to you, mother; it is not known⁴ what form the goddess has.

II. Durgā has brought⁵ gold or pearls (and there) is a lace of silver attached to (her) blouse.

III. Goddess, where have you (had) your altar⁶ built and where have⁷ you incarnated?

---

¹ The *semal* flowers are red.
² That is, ‘we have no one to save or help us’.
³ Another meaning suggests itself to the mind: ‘I pray to the goddess in each object because it is not known what is her real form’.
⁴ Idiomatically translated, ‘who knows’.
⁵ Perhaps, *lagāye*, ‘has it affixed’ (knit together, interwoven, embroidered).
⁶ S. *catvāra*, a raised platform, *sthānīlīlā*; see p. 25.
⁷ In the original, actually, third person future, ‘shall incarnate’.

Usharbudh Arya, *Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam*
IV. The goddess has taken birth at Hiṅgalāj and (her) incarnation (has taken place) in Kāmarūpa.

V. The altar has been built in Vindyāvana; the (whole) world bows the head.

62 Pacrā ii [Ansoe, 1967]
To Pārvatī as Mahāmāyā

I. sumaraṭ ādibhavānī maha re māyā
II. pahale maį sumiraṭ rāmā se lachamana, siṁ guhane laga jāū
     are mahā re māyā
III. ādhe ke nadiyā nīra bahatu hai ādhe gaṅgā jala nhāy
     are mahā re māyā
IV. ādhārā ke akhiyā dāiho korhiyā ke kāyā
     are mahā re māyā
V. bajhani ke pūta dīho khilāve mahā māyā
     are mahā re māyā

---

1 Satyendra ('49: 377), explaining ‘hingalāj ki īsuri’ (the goddess of Hinglāj) in a song, states: ‘Hingulaj is in Bilochistan (West Pakistan: author), about twenty miles from the sea shore at the bank of the river Aghor or Hingul or Hingulā, in a corner of a mountain called ‘Hingulā’. It is one of the pīṭhas of Devī. Here the brahma-randhra (fontanelle) of the ‘Satī’ had fallen. Here Durgā is known as the Mahāmāyā or Koṭṭarī’. For a long time now this famous shrine is maintained by the Muslims as a sacred place of their Pīrs. See also the song about the worship of Hinglāj by Emperor Akbar (H.S.B.I. Chattīsgaṛhī: 289).

2 Perhaps Kāmāksa temple, the centre of the tantric worship and an important pīṭha of Śakti in Assam.

3 It is not clear whether this is Vṛndāvana or Vindhyāvana. If Vṛndāvana, it is not certain which temple is meant, unless it is the pedestal of Tulasī (see p. 40), which is also called Vṛndāvana (vide Kosambi ’62: 56). On the other hand there is an important pīṭha of Śakti in the Vindhya hills near Mirzapur which seems more likely to have been meant here as it is in the homeland of the immigrants.

I. I remember the Pārvatī of the Origin, the Great Māyā.

II. First I remember Rāma (and) then Laksmana; I attach (myself) to Sītā's side - O, the Great Māyā.

III. In one half of the river (just ordinary) water flows (and in the other) half (one) bathes in the (sacred) water of (the river) Gaṅgā - O, the Great Māyā.

IV. You would give eyes to the blind and (a wholesome) body to the leper - O, the Great Māyā.

V. You would give a son to the infertile woman. (It is the) Great Māyā that causes (one to) play -

O, the Great Māyā.

63 Pacrā iii [Paramaribo, 1967]
To pārvatī as Śītalā

I. jau maj jānatyā bhavānī maiyā yahi bāte āihāi ho
[jau maj jānatyā (sītā lā) maiyā yahi bāte āihāi ho]

II. maiyā rahiyāṃ sagra khanāvatyā daphaiyā māratī āvatyu ho

III. jau maj jānatyā sitala maiyā yahi bāte āihāi ho

IV. maiyā rahiyai maiyā bagiyā lagāvatiyā jūre jūre āvatyu ho

V. jau hama jānatyā sitala maiyā yahi bāte āihāi ho

VI. maiyā rahiyāṃ baniyā basāvatyā lavaniyā lai carhāvatiyā ho

VII. jau hama jānatyā sitala maiyā, are ho bhavānī maiyā āihāu ho

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

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

VIII. maiyā rahiyā mē ahirā basāvatyū ḍaheriyā lai ke carḥāvatiyūḥ ho
IX. jau hama jānatyū sātaū maiyā yahi bāte āihāu ho
X. maiyā rahiyā mē ahelāvā basāvatyūḥ badhaiyā lai bajāvatiyūḥ ho
XI. jau hama jānatyū bhavānī maiyā, are ho sitala maiyā, ehi bāte āihāu ho
XII. maiyā rahiyā mē pasiyavā basāvatyūḥ chavanavā lai carḥāvatiyūḥ ho

I. Had I known, mother Pārvatī (Śītālā), that you would come by this route—
II. Mother, I would have had a pond dug on the way (so that) you would have come taking
dips (in it).
III. Had I known, mother Śītālā, that you would come by this route—
IV. Mother, I would have had a garden grown on the way so you would have come in the
cool (shades).
V. Had I known, mother Śītālā, that you would come by this route—
VI. Mother, I would have settled a shopkeeper on the way and taking cloves (from him) I
would have made an offering (thereof to you).
VII. Had I known, mother Śītālā, O mother Pārvatī, that you would come—
VIII. Mother, I would have settled a cowherd on the way and taking yoghurt (from him) I
would have made an offering (thereof to you).
IX. Had I known, all seven mothers,1 you would come by this route—
X. I would have settled a hunter2 on the way and taking the killed (creature from him) I
would have made an offering (thereof to you).

1 For the seven deities of small-pox, the seven Śītalā sisters, see p. 25.
2 Badhaiyā bajāvatiyū (I would have made congratulatory music played) seems to have no
connection with the presence of an aheliyā, a hunter. Hence, badhaiyā (from S. vadha) must
mean the killed creature, and perhaps the singer meant badhaiyā carḥāvatiyū (I would have
made an offering of the killed creature) or, bachāvatiyū.
XI. Had I known, mother Pārvatī, O mother Śitalā, that you would come by this route -
XII. I would have settled a pāsi on the way and taking a thatch (from him) I would have made an offering (thereof to you).

64 Pacrā iv [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
To Ḍīh

A

I. ratha sājo ḍīha ratha sājo; rathavā sājata bhāī der
II. purabāi disā se cale haj ḍīh rājā, dharatī badaravā akulāy
III. kāhāi ke dharatī badaravā akulālai, ham jāve sevak guhār

B

I. ḍīhavā làgau sahāy; dharam sevakavā tuhaj binai kare
II. kaunahį phulavā ḍīhavā lobhāy gāilai; kahavā lagāyo itanī der

A

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

1 A low caste. They often worked as labourers to thatch huts etc.
2 It should probably be chavanavā lai chavāvatiyų (I would have caused a thatch to be made).
3 These songs are reminiscent of the āvāhana in classical ritual. See also Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1886: 220) and K. Upādhyāya (’54: 443).
I. Đīh, be (our) company as a helper - the dutiful servant prays to you.
II. By what flower (on the way) has Đīh been tempted? Where has he (been) delayed so long?

65 Ēonā (Incantations) [The Hague in the Netherlands, 1966, Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
To brush off the effects of the evil eye from a person

I. pipre kā pāt bargade kā ēonā
II. 1 ... jhāre apanā ēonā
III. dohāī lonā camārīn kī
IV. dohāī bajaran gālī kī
V. dohāī mahādev jī kī
VI. dohāī gaurī pārvatī kī
VII. dohāī pāco pāṇḍavā kī
VIII. dohāī pāco paṅca kī
IX. dohāī guru paramesvār kī -
   chū2

I. The leaf of pipal, the (magical) influence of vata.
II. Such and such1 brushes off his (magical) influence.
III. In the name of Lonā camārīn.3
IV. In the name of the steel-limbed,4 strong one.
V. In the name of Mahādeva.5
VI. In the name of Gaurī Pārvatī.

1 The name of the person concerned.
2 At this the ojhā brushes the person. (See p. 14). There are different methods for different
   problems or diseases.
3 See p. 37
4 Hanumān who has the limbs of vajra, steel or diamond, the motif of strength.
5 Śiva.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
VII. In the name of the five Pāṇḍavas.
VIII. In the name of the five jurymen. ¹
IX. In the name of the Guru, the Supreme Lord.
   Touch! ²

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

I. bhajana binā baila birānā höiho
II. dhobī ke ghara gadahā höiho ladīyana lāda ladāiho
III. hota bhinasāra ḍande khāiho hippo hippo karata pahučāiho
   bhajana binā...
IV. natavā ke ghara bādara höiho nāka kāna chidavāiho
V. bīca sabhā mē khīsa nipořiho apanā bharama gavāiho
   bhajana binā

I. Without devotion you will be (born) a crazy bull.
II. You will be (born) a donkey in the house of a washerman; you will be loaded with loads
   (of laundry);
III. At the coming of morning you will be beaten with sticks and you will carry the burden
   to destination with many a bray.
   Without devotion...
IV. You will be (born) a monkey in the house of a showman³ and you will have (your) nose
   and ears pierced;
V. In the middle of a gathering you will show your teeth⁴ and lose your illusions.⁵
   Without devotion...

---
¹ Pañc, the five members of a council which arbitrates and dispenses justice.
² See page 121, note 2.
³ Nata, a caste of showmen. Some of them also give shows with trained animals, including
   monkeys, on the roadside. The nose and ears of the monkeys are pierced for ornaments.
⁴ In a semblance of laughter or annoyance, as demonstrated by these show monkeys.
⁵ “You will be thoroughly disillusioned”.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
67 Bhajan ii [Ansoe, 1962]

A (Sumiran: dohā)

I. satya bacan aura dinatā para tiya māta samān
II. itane mē hari nā mile tulasī hai jhūtha jabān

B (The Bhajan)

I. basau tu hamare hiday meś sāradā māī
tero kirāti maiyā tīṅa jaga ṭhāī
II. sursāti more hiday basihaī bhūlā gīṅa batāī
III. dhaulāgiri para banala cautārā tero kirāti maiyā tīṅa jaga ṭhāī
IV. devi ke ḍhāna pipar sohaį bața sohaį pachavāre
V. sone ke chantārā bhavana par sohaį īlā dhujā mē...¹ phahārāī
basau tu...

A

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

B

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

Abide in my heart...

---

1 The words are not clear in our tape.
2 If one says that he practised all these and yet did not find God, he is speaking untruth somewhere.
3 Here, Sarasvatī is identified with the general mother goddess. The prayer is to Sarasvatī, the goddess of wisdom, but the description given in the song applies to Devī, the general mother goddess.
4 See p. 36.
IV. In the courtyard of the goddess the pīpal trees appear beautiful (and) at the back (of the shrine) the vata trees appear beautiful.

V. The gold parasols appear beautiful on the building, and on the red flag flutter...¹

Abide in my heart...

On myths and legends

68 The romantic aspect of kṛṣṇa² [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

I. rādhe jī kī ungārī mē ḍasa liyo kāliya nāg
II. bābā nanda ji ke bāga mē jhūlā jhūle jāū, māj to jhūlā jhūla rahī nāga ḍanka ḍasakāye rādhe jī kī...
III. nāga ḍanka ungārin mē māryo girī dharana dhaharāy
IV. aiso rādhā parī dharana par tana kī khābāra ita nāy rādhe jī kī...
V. eka sakhi ika nārī dekhī dújjī kara rahī byār
VI. tījj sakhi ika jala bharā lāi cauthī baida gharā jāy rādhe jī kī
VII. bare nanda gharā bare bāyagi unahī ke baida bulāva
VIII. āya baida āgana bhayo tharo ghūghāta mē musakāy rādhe jī kī...
IX. sūra sāma bali āṣa carana kī hari caranana dhara dhyān
X. krisna mile to rādhā jīvai nā tana tajata pirān rādhe jī kī

I. The Kāliya³ snake bit Rādhājī's finger.

¹ The words are not clear in our tape.
² In the song Rādhā plays a trick to meet Kṛṣṇa whom she is, probably, forbidden to meet. She pretends that she has been bitten by a snake. One of her friends helps her by suggesting that there is a good physician in Nanda's home; who else but Kṛṣṇa? He arrives disguised as a physician and saves Rādhā's life, who would die if she did not see her lover.
³ In the classical myths, Kṛṣṇa danced on the head of the Kāliya and subdued him.
II. - I am going (with the intention) to swing on a swing in father Nanda's garden;¹ I am swinging on the swing and the snake bites (with its) fang.

Rādhājī's finger...

III. The snake bit in the finger with the fang; She fell on the ground with a dizziness;

IV. Rādhā so fell on the ground that (she has) no consciousness of (the state of her) body.

Rādhājī's finger...

V. One sakhi examines a vein, another fans the breeze;

VI. The third sakhi filled and fetched some water, (and) the fourth goes to the house of a physician.

Rādhājī's finger...

VII. - In the home of big Nanda there is a great expert, call him alone as a physician;

VIII. The physician came and stood in the courtyard, (and Rādhā) smiles inside the veil.

Rādhājī's finger...

IX. (Says) Sūradāsa (regarding) Kṛṣṇa, there is great hope of (finding refuge at his) feet (by) meditating on the feet of Hari.

X. If Kṛṣṇa is met (only) then Rādhā would survive; (if) not, (then) her body (would) give up the breath.

69 Conversation between Sītā and Mandodarī² [Ansoe, 1962]

I. siyā jī ke milane mādodara āyo re, siyā jī ke milane

II. ke kara tū ho baṛī dulārī ke kara suta byauhārī re

III. nāma tumhāre kāhū kekare purusa sanga āyo

siyā jī ke...

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

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
I. Mandodari came to meet Sītāji; to meet Sītāji.
II. - Whose very darling daughter are you (and) married to whose son?
III. What is your name and with whose man have you come (here)?
IV. - (I am the) very darling daughter of the king Janaka, married to the son of Daśaratha.
V. My name is mother Jānakī (and I) have come to see your widowhood.
VI. - Ours is a son like Kumbhakarna¹ (and) a brother like Bharata;¹
VII. Having ten heads (Rāvaṇa) is our warrior; what will the two ascetic brothers do (before them)?
VIII. - Mine is a devar like prince Laksmana, (who has) a brother like brave Bharata;
IX. Ours² is a leader like Hanumān; Lāṅkā will burn to ashes in a moment -
X. (Says) Tulasidāsa, worship God Hari, fixing the mind on (His) feet -
XI. Who destroys Lāṅkā and goes (back) to Ayodhyyā.

¹ There must be some confusion in the singers' mind. According to the epic, Kumbhakarna was Rāvaṇa's brother and Bharata was Rāma’s brother.
² 'Ours' and 'mine' are often interchangeable in the language of these songs.
70 On Bali and Viṣṇu in Vāmana incarnation¹ [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

I. rājā mata de dāna janī ko
II. yā hī ne harinākūsa māryo duniyā desa dhunī ko
III. yā bāmhana kū choṭo mati jāne ā to chaliyā desa duniā ko
IV. yā hī ne haricanda chalyau hai nīra bharyo bhangī ko
V. yā hī ne moradhvaja chalyo hai lāye sera banī ko
VI. yā hī ne rājā rāvana māryo jodhā lankapuri ko
   rājā mata de...

I. King, do not make a gift of the land.
II. This very one killed Hiranyaakaśipu: (when) the (whole) world was a country of that
dedicated one.²
III. Do not take this Brāhmaṇa (to be) little; he is a (well-known) crook of the country (and)
the world.
IV. This very one has cheated Hariścandra³ who (had to) fetch water for a sweeper.
V. This very one has cheated Mayūradhvaja⁴ (having) brought a lion of the forest.
VI. This very one killed the king Rāvaṇa, the warrior of the city of Laṅkā.
   King, do not make...

1 See p. 35. During the Vāmanā incarnation Viṣṇu, in the form of a dwarf brahmin, begged Bali,
the powerful demon king, for the amount of land he would cover in three steps. Śukra, the
guru of the rākṣasas, advised Bali not to make the gift. See VP. I. 19.52 also.
2 Hiranyaakaśipu, the father of Prahlāda, was killed by Viṣṇu in the nṛsiṃha (man-lion) incarnation.
It appears that the singer has confused his lines; the second half of the line V should be here.
For Prahlāda and Hiranyaakaśipu, see VP. I. chapters 16 ff.
3 See on song No. 46.
4 ‘He whose flag bears the sign of a peacock’, a name of Bāṇa. Bānāsura's daughter, Uṣā, fell
in love with Aniruddha, Kṛṣṇa's grandson, whom the girl's father tried to kill, which resulted
in a war and the destruction of Bāṇa's kingdom.
The caste songs and worksongs
71 i. Kųharavā (of the potters) [Parapasi, 1967]
On a religious theme

I. kevala mukha hari bhajane kaĩ diyā
II. goravā kahe hama duniyā me bharamab; dātavā kahe ham anāra ke biyā
   kevala mukha...
III. hathavā kahe ham dāna jo debai; dātavā...
   kevala mukha...
IV. oṭhavā kahe ham panavā jo kucabai; dātavā...
   kevala mukha...
V. nakunā kahe ham sugavā ke ṭhravā; dātavā...
   kevala mukha...
VI. ąkhiyā kahe ham duniyā mē dekhab; dātavā...
   kevala mukha...
VII. māthavā kahe ham dhaulagiri paharavā; dātavā...
   kevala mukha...
VIII. sūra syāma bali āsa carana ke; unhāī carana cita lāyā
   kevala mukha...

I. Only the mouth is given to worship God
II. The foot¹ says: I shall wander through the whole world; the tooth says: I am a
   pomegranate seed;
   Only the mouth...
III. The hand says: I shall give what (is known as) gift; the tooth...
   Only the mouth...

¹ The other kųharavās (or, kumharavās) recorded include (1) a song in which, while turning his
   wheel, the potter remembers his beloved's beauty, (2) one dealing with the story of Śravaṇa
   Kumāra with a version requiring the making of a special type of pot, and (3) a curious song
   with borrowed dohās plus a refrain.
² Or, leg.
IV. The lip says: I shall chew the betel leaf; the tooth...
      Only the mouth...
V. The nose says: I am a parrot's beak; the tooth...
      Only the mouth...
VI. The eye says: I shall see (everything) in the world; the tooth...
      Only the mouth...
VII. The forehead says: I am the Dhaulgiri\(^1\) mountain; the tooth...
      Only the mouth...
VIII. (Says) Sūradāsa, regarding Krṣṇa, there is great hope of (His) feet; (He) brought His mind only to His feet.
      Only the mouth...

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

I. jala bhara ke jānakī lāvata hai
II. kethuvana ke terī gagarī ghālīlavā, kethuvana ke deharī bajāvata hai - jala bhara ke...
III. sonana ke more gagarī ghālīlavā, raghuvara ke dehrī bajāvata hai - jala bhara ke...

I. Sītā fills and fetches water.
II. - Of what are your pitcher and vessel\(^2\) (made) (and) at whose doorstep do they keep sound?\(^3\)?
III. - Of gold are my pitcher and the vessel; they keep sound at the doorstep of the best of Raghus (i.e. Rāma).

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1 See p. 36.
2 Gagarī is a metal pitcher, gharā is made of clay.
3 Bajānā idiomatically also means to have one's presence registered in the course of a duty.
   "At whose doorstep do you carry out the duty of fetching water?"
73 iii. Dhobiyā Birahā¹ [Paramaribo, 1967]

I. moṭī moṭī rotīyā poyau baraithin, bhinaḥ jābai dhobi ghāṭa
II. tīnā cīja mata bhulihau baraiṭhin, hukkā tamākhu āga
III. dhobiyā calā reḥa kā, pāncō; āile badariyā gher
IV. ʊcavā se dhobina pukāre; lāvau gadahavā pher

I. You should bake thick rotīs², good lady; I shall go to the washerman's ghāṭ early in the morning.
II. You must not forget three things, good lady, huqqā³, tobacco and fire.
III. Jurymen, the washerman started out on (his) way; the cloud came hovering.
IV. The washerwoman calls from high; turn the donkey (and) bring (it) back.

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

I. sūmini sūmase byāha bhaye; chaṭākaī dhāna ke dāre haj sukhuva
II. jaba giddhana ke ghara halla ʊthe; jaba kauvana ke ghara bāje badhauva
III. māi dullē pūta barātai; siyāra bajāvata dhūdhuka thaiyā
IV. aba sūmini māra pasāya rahī; jahā, būri mare sārhe cāra sau kauva

¹ Line II: cp. K. Upādhyāya ('60: 213).
² Flat, thin bread like a pancake cooked without oil.
³ The Indian smoking vessel.
I. A miser woman got married to a miser man; they have thrown only a few ounces\(^1\) of paddy for comfort (as an excuse for a gift).

II. When sounds (of celebrations) rise in the home of vultures, when congratulatory music plays in the home of crows;

III. (When) mother is the bridegroom and the son the wedding party\(^2\) (and) jackals play the rhythms of the instruments.\(^3\)

IV. Now the miser woman is giving away rice-water into which four and a half hundred crows were drowned and died.

75 The tattoo song\(^4\) [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

I. galiyā ke galiyā phirale natovavā; kohi sāvara godanā godāihaj re sāvaliyā

II. apanemahaliyā senanadī puku; more bhauji godanā godāihaj re sāvaliyā

III. kiyā liho natūavā sauvā kodauvā; kiyā liho nanadī hamāra re sāvaliyā

IV. agiyya lagāvaq sāvara sauvā kodauvā; hama lebai nanadī tuhāra re sāvaliyā

V. hara joti āile kudariyā gori āile; baihele mathavā nivāy re sāvaliyā

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

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

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

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

Cp. Archer and Prasād ('43: 208) with the stobha-refrain: **more hari ke lāl**, also our recording from Guyana.
VI. maiyā maj dekhyau dhaniyā maj dekhyau; nāhīj dekhyau re bahini hamāra re sāvaliyā
VII. tohare bahini prabhu natuvā ke bhūkhala; ū to gāile natuvā ke sātha re sāvaliyā
VIII. lāvo na dhaniyā re hāthe ke chariyavā; bahini khojana hama jāba re sāvaliyā
IX. eka bana gāile dusara bana gāile; tisare me netuvā bhūtāna re sāvaliyā
X. levo na natū re dāla bhari sonavā; chori devo bahini hamāra re sāvaliyā
XI. agīyā lagaō tore dala bhari sonavā; ī to bāṭi biyāhi hamāra re sāvaliyā
XII. tore dhaniyā re godanā godāile hama to leff goldanā ke dāna re sāvaliyā

I. The nata1 made (his) round (from) street to street (shouting:) is there a beautiful one2 who would have a design tattooed?3
II. A nanad calls from her palace: my bhauji will have a design tattooed.
III. - Would you take, O nata, (some) sauvā or kodq5 or would you (rather) take my nanād6 (as your fee)?
IV. - Beautiful one, I would put fire to sauvā and kodq; I would take your nanad.6
V. (The man of the house) returned after ploughing (with a) plough; he returned after digging (with a) shovel; he sat down with his forehead bowed.
VI. - I have seen mother, I have seen (my) precious one; I have not seen my sister.
VII. - Your sister, lord, was hungry for a nata; she has gone with the nata.
VIII. - Bring (me, won’t you?) the stick (which I carry in my) hand; I shall go to search for (my) sister.

1 Natuā, a caste who do tattooing by going round the villages and towns.
2 Sāvar (S. śyāmā), a young beauty.
3 Sāvaliyā at the end of the line is merely a stobha or an aid to rhyme, addressing the listener as ‘beloved’.
4 A coarse grain (S. śyāmāka).
5 A coarse grain.
6 In another version: nanādī javān (youthful nanad).

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
IX. He went (through) one wilderness\(^1\) (and) went through the second wilderness; in the third the \textit{nata} was met.

X. - Take, oh \textit{nata}, a basketful of gold; leave my sister (and) give (her back to me).

XI. - I would set fire to your basketful of gold; she is my wedded one.

XII. Your precious one had a design tattooed and I took (your sister as) (my) fees.\(^2\)

[Other songs] Titillāś

\textit{76 Pisaunī} [\textit{Paramaribo, 1965}]

\textbf{An unwanted pregnancy}\(^3\)

I. jhīne jhīne gehūğa re bāse kēi ċelāriyā ho

II. nanadī bhāujī gohūğa pisāj ho rām

III. nāhī pare khikiyā nāhī re nikase pisanā ho

IV. nanadī bhāujiyā muṭhiyā thāmāj ho rām

V. maj to se pūchā meṛi mainā are nanadiyā re

VI. kāhe tori muḥavā hai piyāra ho rām

VII. are bābā ke bakhariyā bhāujī haradī piṣāṭi rahya qu

VIII. haradī chitakiya muḥavā piyara ho rām

IX. maj to se pūchā more mainā are nanadiyā re

X. kāhe tore chatiyā hai sāvāra ho rām

XI. are bābā ke bakhariyā bhāujī baṭhulī mājāṭi rahyā qu

XII. baṭhulī chitakiya chatiyā sāvāra ho rām

XIII. maj to se pūchā more mainā are nanadiyā re

XIV. kāhe tora peṭavā phūlala ho rām

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\(^1\) \textit{Ban}, in the folksongs, a wilderness between two villages. S. \textit{vana} means simply a forest.

\(^2\) \textit{Dān}, in this case not a donation.

\(^3\) Cp. D. Simha (’44: 150-152); K. Upādhyāya (’60: 194, 274). Line I: Cp. R. Tīpāṭhī (’29: 264);

D. Simha (’44: 132, 170 etc.).
V. bābā ke bakhariyā bhāujī rotīyā povatī rahyaṛ
VI. rotīyā mahakiya pēlavā phulala ho ῥāṃ.

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

Titillā II
77 Pisaunī ii [Paramaribo, 1965]
The suicide of a maltreated daughter-in-law³

I. sera bhargohuvā dihina hamare sāsū ho nā
II. bāuhara calahu nā pīse pisanavā ho nā

¹ Ho ῥāṃ, a stobha and an aid to rhyme.
² A name. There are other songs regarding a person of this name e.g. Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 237-238).
III. kuṭipī jaṇa pisanā liyāvāi ho nā

IV. sāsū tāulo na apane pisanavā ho nā

V. sāsū dhārer seravā nanada dūi seravā ho nā

VI. rāmā ho āpu prabhu dharē pūrā seravā ho nā

VII. sāsū māre ucavā nanada nīce girāva ho nā

VIII. rāmā ho āpu prabhu devaj taravariyā ho nā

IX. ehi re biragavā dhana ghāilā utāvāi ho nā

X. rāmā ho paniyā ke gāile sāgara talavā ho nā

XI. ghāilā to bhari bhari dhare haj jagatiyā ho nā

XII. rāmā ho cira chorī pāiīte nāhāi ho nā

XIII. ika būra burale dusara būra burale ho nā

XIV. rāmā ho tisare mē gāile tāra būrāva ho nā

I. My mother-in-law gave (me) a full kilo of wheat:

II. - Daughter-in-law, come on (won’t you?) (to) grind (the wheat into) flour.

III. After grinding when I bring the flour (I say):

IV. Mother-in-law, weigh up (won’t you?) your flour.

V. The mother-in-law places the kilo (weight) and the nanad two kilos

VI. (And) the lord himself places a complete kilo.

VII. The mother-in-law pushes upwards, the nanad pushes downwards.

VIII. The lord himself gives (a hit with a) sword.

IX. In this very mood of disenchantment the precious one took up (her) pitcher;

X. (And) (she) went away to (fetch) water (from the) lake or the pond.

XI. Having filled the pitchers (she) placed them on the platform -

XII. (She) took off (her) clothes and took a dip, bathing.

XIII. (She) took one dip, took the second dip -

XIV. In the third (dip) she drowned (herself) in the pond.

1 Ho nā and rāmā ho, stobhas.
2 Kuṭi pīṣi, a twin-word; after crushing, grinding and so on.
3 That is, inaccurate weights.
4 These are in the present tense in the text.
The story in the song needs to be summarised. Brother Jaisal's glance falls on the body of his sister as he helps her to lift up her pitcher of water. His mother and bhaujā, always a devar's confidante, fail to dissuade him from his resolve to marry his own sister; he just lies there on a bed and refuses to get up till his demand is acceded to. Finally, Runvali, the sister, agrees to marry him. He makes arrangements for her bridal apparel etc. and finally carries her away in a bridal palanquin. As she passes her father's garden and the pond, she asks the palanquin-carriers to stop so that she may visit her father's garden and the pool for the last time. However, she goes to the pond and drowns herself. The last lines of the song seem to convey an indirect meaning: even her dead body cannot be caught in Jaisal's net; only her father, happy at the way the family's honour has been saved, finally manages to fish her out. The brother is left with repentance. Cp. Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1886: 249-250) where the brother's name is Hansarāj. Other authors record a song very similar to this one but without an incestuous suggestion [also recorded by us in Nieuw Nickerie and Guyana] in which one Mirzā tries to kidnap the girl and her brother tries to save her. Brother's name as Horil Singh: Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 239); Jay Singh: R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 334-339; 368-380 several versions from various districts); the girl's name Kusumā and the brother's name Gangārām: B. Upādhyāya ('54: 50-51). Another version on Mirzā (H.S.B.I. Avadhī: 195).

Line X motif in many of our recordings; cp. also R. Tripāṭhī ('29: 17).
Lines XXXI-XXXIV motif in many of our recordings; also Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 240).
Lines XXXV-XXXVIII, re. ban, vide song No. 75 and many of our recordings; Cp. S. Anila ('57: 248).
Usharbudh Arya, *Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam*
II. nīkaraḷe ruṇavaḷi bahinīyā ho rām
L. jaumā jáṇatyau ṛuṇavaḷa āīsa chala kariho re
LI. nāhī ṇaikāṭaḷ āiyavā ho rām

I. Of seven brothers (there is one) sister (named) Runavali.
II. This very Runavali became a water-fetcher (i.e., went to fetch water).
III. Runavali filled the pitchers and placed them one by one on the platform.
IV. - May someone (help to) lift my pitchers (onto my head).
V. Brother Jaisal is coming mounted on a horse,
VI. (It is he (who)) would (help to) lift my pitchers.
VII. While lifting up the pitchers, my āncala slipped off,
VIII. (and) the brother’s glance fell (on me).
IX. The brother tied the pitcher up with a rope which ties the horse -
X. (and) lay down having covered his face with a sheet.
XI. The mother (tries to) wake (him), with water and toothbrush1 held (in her hand):
XII. - Get up, son, and wash your mouth.2
XIII. - How shall I wash my mouth (so)?
XIV. Arrange (first) my marriage with Runavali.
XV. - Is your intelligence just like you,3 Jaisar?
XVI. Is (she) from daughter going to be my daughter-in-law?
XVII. The bhāujī (tries to) wake (him) with water and toothbrush1 held (in her hand):
XVIII. - Get up, bābū,4 and wash your mouth.2
XIX. - How shall I wash my mouth (so)?
XX. Arrange (first) my marriage with Runavali.
XXI. - Is your intelligence just like you, Jaisar?
XXII. Is (she) from nanad going to be my devarānī?5
XXIII. Runavali (tries to) wake (him) with water and toothbrush held (in her hand):

1 See n. 1, p. 52.
2 Vide note 1, p. 52.
3 There seems to be an attempt at punning here: Jaisar is the name and tuhū jaisī would mean ‘like you’.
4 A vocative of respectful endearment.
5 Wife of devar, the husband’s younger brother.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
XXIV. - Get up, brother, and wash your mouth.

XXV. - How shall I wash my mouth (so)?

XXVI. Arrange (first) my marriage with yourself.

XXVII. - If, brother, you are tempted with me -

XXVIII. (Arrange to) have jewellery made (for me) from head to foot.

XXIX. If, brother, you are tempted with me -

XXX. Soon, quickly, (arrange to) buy (suitable) clothing (for my wedding).

XXXI. With repeated laughter (of happiness) does Jaisar (arrange to) have the jewellery made;

XXXII. Sister Runavali wears (it) constantly crying.

XXXIII. With repeated laughter (of happiness) Jaisar (helps her to) mount the palanquin;

XXXIV. Sister Runavali (climbs in and) sits constantly crying.

XXXV. (She) passed through one wilderness, (and) passed through the second wilderness;

XXXVI. In the third one (there is) father's garden.

XXXVII. (She) passed through one wilderness, (and) passed through the second wilderness;

XXXVIII. In the third one (there is) father's lake.¹

XXXIX. - Brother kahārs,² stop the palanquin just for a moment;

XL. Let (me) see father's lake (before departure).

XLI. - Come on along, Runavali; come on along, precious one;

XLII. I will have a garden planted (immediately) upon arrival.³

XLIII. I will have a lake dug (immediately) upon arrival.³

XLIV. - Your lake, brother, I will see regularly upon getting up (every morning);

XLV. Father's lake will be difficult to get (to see).

XLVI. With repeated cries Jaisar has the net thrown in (to the lake);

XLVII. (There) emerge (only) snails and moss.

XLVIII. With repeated laughter father has the net thrown in to the lake;

IL. (And) sister Runavali ('s dead body) came out.

¹ Sāgara, a pond or a lake. S. sāgara: ocean.
² The palanquin-bearers, in this case; by caste, the water-fetchers.
³ Calalai, Bhojpurī; calate or calatai, Avadhī.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
L. Had I known, Runavali, that you would deceive (me) so;
LI. I would not have undertaken (this) marriage.

79 Birahās i [The Hague in the Netherlands, party from Meerzorg,
and Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]
The definition of a Birahā

I. nā birahā ke kheṭī bāṛī (re jorā)
II. nā birahā lage dār
   [nā birahā (phare) dār]
   [nā birahā (phale) dār]
III. birahā hai ika desa ke bhaṇvarā
IV. jina ke kanṭha bālīthā jāta
   (jisa ke kanṭha basī jāy)
   (kōī birahā ke na pāye pāṛ)
   (nā birahā ke pāṛ)
   (nā kōī pāve pāṛ)

I. There is no cultivation (or) gardening of (a) birahā;
II. Nor (does) the birahā grow (fructify) on a branch.
III. The birahā is a bumblebee of some country,
IV. On the throat of whomsoever it sits
   [On the throat of (whomsoever) it sits]
   (No one finds the limit of a birahā).
   (There is no end to the birahā).
   (No one finds the limit (thereof)).

1 The variants of the song itself provide an example of the changeability of the birahā. Other versions: Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1886: 235); K. Upādhyāya (‘54: 93) identical with Grierson; (H.S.B.I. Kanāuji: 415 with reference to the songs of washermen, the dhobiś).
2 Plural.
3 Singular.
4 Literally, the other shore.
80 Birahās ii [Various sources]
Some Sumirans

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

B
I. bīrā bakhānaṅg mahābīrā ke jo parabata para dāra kinhā
II. siyā khojana ke kärana sangharī lankā dahana kara dinha
III. to niścaya prema pratīta se binaya ham kariya sanamāna
IV. tina ke kārāja sakala subha ū to siddha karata hanumāna

C
I. svara bina mile na surasatī abā gura bina milata na gyāna
II. are hansa bina motī nā mile more bhavavā cāhe lākhọ tu karahe payāna

D
I. pahale guru ke hama gāye jina guru racata jahāna
II. sāre sriṣṭi racāya ke bhāi phir sab mē rahe bāsa

E
I. pahile maj sumirāq onkāra bhagavāṅ javana racale haj sakala jahāna
II. taba sumirāq maj dharati mātā ke suno bābū ho, jin ke thaiyā bhūiyyā sārani hamār
III. taba sumirāq maj mātā pitā ke suno srotā gana
IV. javana posa kara karale sayān

F
I. sumirāq surasatī ke nām pūrana kar deyo merā kām
II. devā jībhiyo pai kariyo mukām, cārudatta jībhiyo pai a kariyo mukām
G
I. bäithe ā kara diyava digambara pīr paigambar more mātā
II. aba rakhinya re lāja hamār
III. hai toto sarana mātā gāva birahavā mātā baravā na vākya hamār
IV. aur surasatī hä sumirana karaṇ terā
V. bäithe more kaṇṭha dhujā pai karo ḍerā

H
I. pahile maj sumiraṣ apane guru kā, apane guru kā
II. ai mātā aba jina guru racyau jahāna
III. are pānī se guru binda racata hāj o bhaiyā
IV. aba racā alakhapuriyā nirabān

A
I. (One) remembers¹ and sings of Rāma, and remembers (and sings of) Laksmana, too.
II. (One)² remembers and sings (of) the whole world - yes, O brother, (one) remembers and sings of the whole world.
III. First³ I remember my mother and father, O brother,
IV. (From) whose womb (I) have taken incarnation.⁴

B
I. I narrate (about) Hanumān the brave⁵ who did dippings⁶ on the mountain.
II. (And) who, for the purpose of searching for Sītā, O companion, burnt down (the city of) Lankā.
III. Certainly,² with a feeling of love I make (humble) request (and pay) my respects - (to Sītā) for whom I did all the pious deeds,

1 Remembering, here, connotes paying homage.
2 The terms ki, to, aba, are are used as stobhas. In A. III, however, to emphasizes ‘first’.
3 Literally, ‘one’, not ‘first’.
4 Birth, which is a form of incarnation for the soul.
5 Or, I term Hanumān brave.
6 Daṇḍ karnā: to do exercise; perhaps the reference is either to his realisation of strength before jumping across the ocean to Lankā or to his bringing a peak of the Himālayas with the curative herbs.
IV. (I) all whose good undertakings may Hanumān (thus pleased) fulfil.

C

I. Sarasvatī\(^1\) cannot be obtained without (good) tune\(^2\) (and), now,\(^3\) knowledge cannot be had without a guru.\(^4\)

II. Without a swan pearls cannot be had,\(^5\) my brother, even if you make a hundred thousand advances.\(^6\)

D

I. First I sing of the Guru\(^7\) - the Guru who has created the world;

II. (He Who) after creating the whole creation remains pervading in all.

E

I. First I remember the God, \(Oṁ\)^,\(^8\) who has created the entire world.

II. Then I remember the mother earth, - listen, O friend,\(^9\) whose (aspects of) Ṭhaiyā and Bhūiyā are my refuge.

III. Then I remember (my) mother and father, - listen, O groups of listeners, -

IV. (The mother and father) who nourished (me) and made (me grow into an) adult.

F

I. I remember the name of Sarasvatī. Fulfil (O Sarasvatī) my undertaking.

II. God(dess), make (your) abode on (my) tongue; (asks) Cārudatta.\(^10\) make (your) abode on (my) tongue.

---

1 It may be translated here as knowledge, eloquence and poetic ability.
2 Perhaps the singer has, metri causa, confused the order of words and really means: ‘The tune (or poetic and musical ability) cannot be obtained without (the grace of the goddess) Sarasvatī’.
3 See page 142, note 2.
4 Preceptor.
5 Perhaps the reference is to the legend that swans eat pearls.
6 Or (S. prayatna), efforts.
7 God, the Preceptor.
8 The sacred syllable as the name of God.
9 Bābū, used as a term of respectful familiarity.
10 The name of the composer.
G

I. The gods, the sky-clad ones, pīrs and prophets, (and) my mother (goddess),
II. (I pray to you all:) keep my honour.
III. (It) is by taking refuge with you (that) I sing the birahā; mother, do not confuse my sentence(s).
IV. And, oh Sarasavatī, I do remembrance to you -
V. Sit, make your camp on the flag of my throat.

H

I. First I remember my Guru, my Guru -
II. Oh mother (goddess), the Guru who has created the world.
III. The guru creates bindu out of water, O brother;
IV. (And he) has created the nirvāṇa of the imperceptible city.

81 Birahās iii [Paramaribo, 1962]
The mother goddess in the drum

A Sumiran

I. aba asa bhajana bājāo bhajaniyā ho
II. aba tumhē devē guru sudha bhāi

1 Perhaps Śiva or the Jaina Tīrthankaras of the Digambara school, although the latter seems unlikely.
2 The Muslim term paigambar is used.
3 In the text, the genetive case is used.
4 See page 142, note 1.
5 The tongue, probably.
6 Reference to the hathayoga doctrine according to which a yogi creates the drop (bindu) of amṛta (nectar of immortality) through a process of absorbing the seminal fluids into the system. These doctrines have come to the folk singers through a tradition of Gorakhnāth and Kabīr etc.
7 See page 142, note 2.
8 Alakh (S. alaksya: the Imperceptible God) is the call of some sects of sādhus. It is also possible that the term here is a corruption of alakāpurī, the city of heaven.
B (Competition; riddles)

I. kāhe kī torī nagārā banī hai
II. are kāhe lāgī abā khāl
III. kaunasa okara bhītara bole
IV. aba uthe chatisāq rāg
V. candana kā gathī banī nagārā e bhainī
VI. bhalā bakare ke lāge khāl
VII. are kālī bhavānī oke bhītara bole
VIII. aba uthe chatisāq rāg

A

I. Now, play¹ such a song, O brother songster,
II. (In which) the guru may give you inspiration, brother.

B

I. Of what is your nagārā made?
II. The skin of which (animal) is affixed (thereto)?
III. Which one (i.e. who) speaks therein -
IV. So that (all the) thirty-six tunes² arise (out of it)?
V. - Carved of sandal, (thus) is made the nagārā, oh sister,
VI. (And) the skin of a he-goat is affixed (thereto).
VII. Kālī, (an aspect of) Pārvatī, speaks therein.³
VIII. (So that), (all the) thirty-six tunes arise.

82 Birahās iv [Saramacca, 1962]
Competition; riddles: the year as a cow

I. ke gaiyā ke bāraḥ thanavā o bhaiyā, aba cuciyā tin sau sāṭh
II. jo more birahā ke aratha lagāve o bhayavā, te gāve hamāre sāṭh

¹ Bajānā, to play an instrument.
² The thirty-six rāgas and rāginīs of Indian music.
³ See p. 35 f.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
III. eka barasavā mē bārah mahinnā, aba dinavā tin sau sāth
IV. maj tore birahā ke aratha lagāũ e sakhiyā, tuma gāvo hamāre sāth

I. Which cow has twelve udders, oh brother, and three hundred and sixty nipples?
II. Whoever explains the meaning of my birahā, brother, he may sing with me.
III. -(There are) twelve months in a year and three hundred and sixty days.
IV. I explain the meaning of your birahā, sakhī, and (now) you sing with me.

83 Birahās v [Saramacca, 1962; party from Meerzorg, 1967]
Alcārī: Kṛṣṇa as Rāma’s guest

I. rāma tore bāge mē sītā ke phulavārā
II. lachaman devare bāḷīhe rakhavārī
III. tūr tūr nebulā paṭhāvē susurārī
IV. ohī nebulā ke baṅī hai tarakārī
V. jevana bāīthāj kṛīṇa murārī
VI. aura sītā cāvar ḍulāy

I. Rāma, in your garden (is) Sītā’s flower-bed -
II. (Where) (her) devar, Lakṣmaṇa, sits keeping guard.
III. He picks and picks lemons and sends them to susrāl;
IV. Of these very lemons, the curry is made.
V. Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Murā, has sat to dine -
VI. And Sītā fans (with a) whisk.

1 Aba, stobha.
84 Birahās vi [Paramaribo, 1965]

Alcārī: the woman with a roving eye avoiding the Gaunā

I. mora mūrāvā nā bāñho nāuniyā, e bhāiyā
II. aba hama gāune na jāb
III. are gavane ke laṇḍūs savere kōi khāiḥaj, alabelā
IV. aba cīrāi dāiḥaj hamār
V. are cāli jāta gōrī hirī phirī cita mē, alabelā
VI. aba naynā milegā roy
VII. naynā bāṛā kharābā, ai bhāiyā
VIII. aba sāba se karata pīrīt
IX. are eka chori ke hājār karatu hai, alabelā
X. aba yahi mūrūkha kā rīt

I. Oh nāuni, tie not the (hair on) my head, oh brother.¹
II. Now, I shall not go (to my marital home in the) gaunā.²
III. Somebody else will eat³ the laṇḍūs (of the occasion of) gaunā.
IV. (They) will give my (portion) to the birds.
V. - Go (along), fair one, with (some) turn of the mind;⁴ (won't you?).³
VI. (If I go), the eye will meet a cry;⁵ oh brother,¹
VII. The eye is very bad -
VIII. (It) falls in love with (any and) all.
IX. It leaves one and makes (with a) thousand -
X. This is the custom of a fool.

¹ Only a stobha.
² The bride's final farewell to the parental home to go to her husband's house, after she has been there once for a short while and returned to the parents' home. Cp. de Klerk (51: 182) and under Dongā (ibid.: 186).
³ Alabelā, a swain; here, a stobha.
⁴ Hirī phirī cita mē: after turning the matter this way and that in (your) mind.
⁵ The wording in the text is rather free; naynā milegā roy: ' (?) the eye will cry out'.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
85 Birahās vii [Paramaribo, 1965]
Alcārī: water as Kālī. a woman praying for her husband's death

I. ąguri au gor maiyā dharati maj sumirau more mātā
II. aba cauro cauro dyāuhār
III. are kālī maiyā tuhare bharosavā more mātā
IV. maj to aba dāro jalāuvā me gora
V. kālī kalakattā me gārai dhini jhanḍā
VI. jina ke pūj na ihini angarej
VII. kālī maiyā tohare maj khasiyā carrhāiho more mātā
VIII. kahj burhavā ke dhare ghariyāl
IX. are burhava bhatār more jiyā ke javān bāte more mātā
X. u to tikuli de ke jari jāy

I. (Bowing to you, touching you with my) knees and fingers, I remember you, my mother

II. (And I remember) the Ḍīh of every platform.

III. (My) dependence (is only) on you, mother Kālī;

IV. (And) I have now placed (my) foot in the water.

V. Kālī has dug in her flag in Calcutta -

VI. (Kālī) whom (even the) Englishmen have worshipped (there).

VII. Mother Kālī, I shall make to you the offering of a goat, my mother -

VIII. (If) somewhere a crocodile takes hold (of) the old man.

IX. O, (my) husband is old; (the state of) my heart is young, my mother -

X. Whereas he gets burnt (merely) by placing a mark (on my forehead).

---

1 The mother goddess.
2 Identification of jala-mātṛ or Gaṅgā, see note 2 on song No. 22.
3 Jiyā (S. Jīva) may be translated here as life: my life is still young.
86 Birahās viii [Paramaribo, 1962]
Alcārī: the penalties for a gambling husband

I. saiyā mora juvāri jūā khele sārī ratiyā
II. bājū hāre bandā hāre hāri gaye nathiyā
III. solahō singāra svāmī kara dāle kuvātiyā
IV. are matiyā khudāy ke saraka pītāvāvē re
V. aba saraka ke ēpar rel dāurāyē - saiyā mora juvāri
VI. jāy ke tab gorakhpur mē kar de ham nalisīyā
VII. gorakhpur se ēy gaye do caparasiyā
VIII. hathavā mē bērī dāle goravā jajiriyā
IX. āge āge saiyā cāle pāche caparasīyā
X. kanhavā kudāra dhare mūravā pai ḥaṣiyā
XI. are dhīre dhīre kātau jahalakhānāvā ke matiyā
XII. kidhaū svāmī bēt laqē kidhaū lāge laṭhiyā

I. My master is a gambler; he gambles the whole night (through).
II. (He) lost the arm and the armband 1 (and) lost away (my) nose-ring;
III. All (my) sixteen adornments (has) the master made alien.2
IV. (There are those who) get the earth dug and have a roadway beaten -
V. (And) on that rail (way a train) runs. My husband is a gambler.
VI. So, then I went and made a report at the Gorakhpur (district police station).
VII. Two policemen came from Gorakhpur.
VIII. They place handcuffs 3 on the hands and chains on the feet;
IX. (My) master walks in front and the policemen walk behind.
X. (He had to) place a shovel on (his) shoulder and a sickle on (his) head -

1 Idiomatic: ‘He lost the arm and the band’.
2 Kuvātiyā, the meaning is not clear.
3 Beṛī is actually the chain placed around the ankles; here reversed.
XI. (Now,) dig the prison earth\(^1\) slowly:
XII. Where (on my) master (‘s body) the cane gives a lash and where a stick!

87 Birahās ix [Livorno, 1962]
Long Birahā: Jaṭāyu attempts to rescue Sītā\(^2\)

A Sumiran

I. guru hamāre haj bāniyā sahaj karē ho byaupār
II. bina dhāri bina pālarā taulata saba sansār
III. guru ke chabi kā baranau
IV. bhaiyā, guru hamare prāna adhār

B Alcārī

I. brahma vesa jaba dharai nisācara bijaśa māgane āi
II. hai rāṇī sītā ke mālana māhj āna ke alakha jagāi
III. ratha para nirakhaṭa jāta jatāi
IV. lai bhikaśa nikaśi rāṇī ratha para leta bīthāi
   ratha para...
V. lai ke ratha jaba calā nisācara sarana sarana guharāi
VI. ratha para byākula bhaye jānaki sarana sarana guharāi
VII. are hoy kōi jodhā rāma ke dala mē ratha se leta churāi
   ratha para...
VIII. itane bacana jaba sune jatāi ratha gāile nagacāi
IX. nāri kaun ki nāma tumarau kyā kauna harala lai lai jāi
   ratha para...
X. sarajū ke tire ajodhyā nagaṅi dasaratha suta raghurāi

---

\(^1\) Perhaps, dig the earth while imprisoned with hard labour. Slowly, for it is a long sentence.
\(^2\) The episode of the song is well known in the Rāma story. Rāvaṇa, the demonic king of Larikā disguises himself as a begging mendicant and thus luring Sītā out of her hut in the forest kidnaps her. Jaṭāyu, a vulture, who is said to be Garuda’s son, attempts to rescue her and is knocked down in the fight.


Usharbudh Arya, *Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam*
XI. hai nārī rāma ki nāma aur sītā hara nisācara lai lai jāī
  ratha para...
XII. itane bacan jaba sunai jatāi ure pankha phaharāi
XIII. hai çoçana māra mahājuddhi karlē ratha se ho leta churāi
  ratha para...
XIV. hai agini bāna jaba chorai nisācar çoça pankha jala jāī
XV. gendā hoya bhūiyā gira gàile rāma hāya rāma guharāī
  ratha para...
XVI. parai parai khaqapati guharāvaj suno jānaki māī
XVII. jo para hamare kațe pare haj una ko tu deyo lagāī
  ratha para...
XVIII. mana mana sītā dihai asīsā prāna rahaj ghaṭa māhī
XIX. ye rahiya raghuvara cali āihaj kahiyo kathā tu duharāī
  ratha para...

A

I. My guru is a tradesman (who) does the business easily:
II. Without weights\(^1\) and without scales (he) weighs the entire world.
III. How shall I describe the guru’s visage;
IV. Brother, the guru is the (very) basis of my life.

B

I. When the night-prowler\(^2\) took the guise of a brahmin (and) came begging for alms;
II. He announced ‘alakh’\(^3\) in the garden of the queen Sītā -
III. (At that time) Jaṭāyu is going on (his) chariot, watching.
IV. When the queen emerged, with the alms (to be given) held (in her hands), (the
  night-prowler) forced her to sit in his (own) chariot.
V. When the night-prowler started out with the chariot, (Sītā) cried out, ‘refuge, refuge’.
  Jaṭāyu...
VI. The daughter of Janaka became helpless on the chariot, crying out ‘refuge, refuge’.

---

1. *Dharī*, approximately five kilograms.
2. *S. Niśācara*, a rākṣasa or demonic person.
3. See note 8, p. 144.
VII. O, would there be a warrior in Rāma's party who may have (me) released from the chariot?
   Jaṭāyu...

VIII. When Jaṭāyu heard just these words, he came near to the chariot;
IX. Whose woman (are you and) what is your name? Who is kidnapping (and) taking you away?
   Jaṭāyu...
X. (There is a) city (by the name of) Ayodhya at the bank of (the river) Sarayū (where) the son of Daśaratha is the king of the Rāghus.
XI. I am the woman of (that) Rāma and (my) name is Sītā; the night prowler is kidnapping (and) taking me away.
   Jaṭāyu...
XII. When Jaṭāyu heard just these words (he) flew up, fluttering (his) wings;
XIII. He made a great war, hitting with the beak, (and he) would have had her freed from the chariot.
   Jaṭāyu...
XIV. When the night prowler shot a fire-missile, (Jaṭāyu's) beak and the wings are burnt;
XV. (He) became a ball and fell on the ground; (he cries out:) Rāma, oh Rāma.
   Jaṭāyu...
XVI. Lying there, the king of the birds cries out; hear, oh mother Sītā;
XVII. My wings which are lying cut off, do fix them back (again on me).
   Jaṭāyu...
XVIII. In (her) mind (silently) Sītā has given a blessing; may life remain in (his) vessel.¹
XIX. On this very path the best of the Rāghus will come walking, you should repeat and tell him the episode.
   Jaṭāyu...

¹ The vessel of the body, i.e., 'May he live on'.
88 Birahās x [Leiding 8A, 1962]
Long Birahā: Kṛṣṇa’s adventure into Pātāla; an Ahīr narrative

I. janame kanhāi gokulā mahārājā
II. bābā ghara nanda bhayā sārā
III. gēda ke khōl kara dābā liye haj gāl mā
IV. hīci hīci gēdā māre kadama ke ḫāra mā
V. ucharinī geyanā ginī jamunā mā
VI. kariyā ke betā pahiya nagicānā
VII. tabla kūda parini sin kriśna kanhāī
VIII. o māre budhukiyā pātāla cali jāī
ing. jahā nāga sovē nāginā beniyā dulāī
X. o tahā gāini siri kriśna kanhāī
XI. o dekhe nāginī sīhīr hōī jāī
XII. o janam manukh havāī hamare kahā, āī
XIII. o bhāgo bhāgo tu siri kriśna kanhāī
XIV. o uṭhi nāga chorehāi phupukārā
XV. tabla gore kanhaiyā sāvare hōī jāī
XVI. tab uṇa dāṭe kanhaiyā re bhāī
XVII. aur tore nāga ke nāgin ham nā dārāī
XVIII. aṭhāna mār nāgin nāgāu jagāī
XIX. au uṭhe nāga chorini phupukārā
XX. tab gore kanhaiyā sāvar hōī jāī
XXI. cōṭe cōṭe būdā ke dāg pari jāī
XXII. o bānsī phūki garura guharāī
XXIII. tab to garura calīnī hāi āī
XXIV. tab garula jhapāte nāgini gāi dābakāī
XXV. o nāgana ke murchāna bhayo re
XXVI. o kusa ukhārā kānhā nagāq ke bānhe
XXVII. o nāga nāthi gokula ke lēi jāī
XXVIII. o saba bāhar phūla o dīhīnī lagāī
XXIX. ghara ghara kanhaiyā dhūma macāī


Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
I. Kṛṣṇa is born the king of Gokula.

II. The whole house of father Nanda became happy.

III. He (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) released the ball and hid it in his cheek.

IV. With full force, repeatedly he threw the ball against the kadam tree.

V. The ball bounced and fell in the (river) Yamunā.

VI. The son of Kāliya first came near.

VII. (So) Śrī Kṛṣṇa jumped down (into the river).

VIII. Diving down (he) reached the underworld.

IX. Where the nāgas sleep and the nāginīs fan them with the fans -

X. There went Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

XI. The nāginīs see him and bristle up.

XII. - Being of human birth where (fore) have (you) come (down) here?

XIII. Run, run away, Śrī Kṛṣṇa!

XIV. The nāgas will wake and give out hisses (on you) -

XV. (And) then the fair Kṛṣṇa will go dark.

XVI. Then, oh brother, Kṛṣṇa scolded them.

XVII. - And, oh nāginīs, I fear not your nāgas.

XVIII. The nāginīs goaded the nāgas with (their) thumbs (and) woke (them) up.

XIX. And the nāgas woke and gave out hisses.

XX. Then the fair Kṛṣṇa (began to) go dark.

XXI. Tiny little drop-like spots appeared (on him).

XXII. He blew (his) flute and called Garuḍa.

---

1 The word seems to have been used with a double meaning; as the name of Nanda, and as a shortened form of ānanda, happiness. Otherwise the sentence makes no sense.

2 Perhaps, he got the ball from somewhere; released it from a hiding place.

3 The snake-folk.

4 The female snake-folk.

5 Siharnā: to experience a tremble of excitement, fear or emotion, coupled with the hair standing on edge.

6 Guharānā: translated differently in the last song, according to the context.

7 Viṣṇu's vehicle, a mythical bird, a sworn enemy of the nāgas.
XXIII. Then Garuda travelled and (has)\(^1\) arrived.

XXIV. Then Garuda pounced (and) nāginīs cringed.

XXV. The nāgas fainted away.\(^2\)

XXVI. Kṛṣṇa dug up (some) kuśa (grass) and tied the nāgas up.

XXVII. He bound the nāgas and carried them to Gokula.

XXVIII. All (the people) placed flowers outside (their homes, to welcome him).

XXIX. In every home Kṛṣṇa caused (a happy) uproar.

XXX. He broke someone’s pitcher; he broke someone’s water-jug,

XXXI. (and) some sakhis sing swaying (with frenzy).

89 Birahās xi [Various Sources]
Finale (Jācanī or Bisarjan)

A

I. devā jībhiyō pai kariyo mukām, cārudattā jībhiyō pai kariyo mukām

B

I. premī yaha sansāra mē saba se miliyo jāy; sahapusē re, saba se miliyo jay
II. nā jāne kīsa bhēsa mē dādā nārāyana mili jāy
   [nā jāne kīsa bhēsa mē (bhaiyā) nārāyana mili jāy]

C

I. manāī janamavā pāi ke re abā tumāhā bhajō hari nāma
II. jāune dīni pāiho tuma ghore ke janamiyā re mukha mē pari doharā lagāma

D

I. sāhaba ke ghara dūra hai re jorā abā jāīse lābī khajūra
II. caṛhata cākhī prema rasa re bhāi abā girai to cakanācūra

---

1 Such, grammatical irregularities are commonplace.
2 Literally, ‘fainting happened to the nāgas’.
A

I. God(dess), make (your) abode on (my) tongue; (asks) Cārudatta, make (your) abode on my tongue.

B

I. Beloved, in this world you should go and meet all; companion, you should go and meet all.
II. (One) knows not in what guise, brother, God may be met.

C

I. Having attained human birth now you should devote (yourself to the) name of God.
II. The day you will obtain birth (in the species) of the horse, there will be fixed double reins in your mouth (so you would not be able to utter God's name).

D

I. The Sire's home is far, O companion, like a tall tree of dates.
II. Climbing up, one may taste the juice of (divine) love, O brother, and if (one) falls, he is shattered to bits.

90 Birahās xii [Party from Meerzorg, 1967]
Finale (introducing the composer)

A

I. hansū sahara gulajāra hai more bhaiyā
II. aba basti hai aparampāra

1 The Sumiran (see No. 80 F.) repeated at the end of the birahā also as the finale.
2 Premī, in this case a fellow lover of God.
3 Bhaiyā, brother, but dādā, elder brother.
4 Nārāyaṇa, i.e. Viṣṇu.
5 Hari, i.e. Viṣṇu.
6 In a reincarnation into a lower species as a result of not worshipping God in the present life.
7 A is a composition by a singer born in Surinam and shows the local linguistic effects; B is by an immigrant born in India.
III. o pārāmāriibo mē sahara ke habarā mē more bhaiyā
IV. aba prema ke lāge bajārā
V. hare mariyamburg asa kōthī na dekhā
VI. kantorau ke āge dukāna
VII. aba hansū asa gāu na dekhā
VIII. jahā carahana ke adhikāra

B

I. are rāmaharakha hansū ke rahavaiyā
II. ham to āile divākara āj

C

I. jilā javanapura mora hai
II. aba cakavaliyā hai gāva
III. sūpara bhagata ke putra haq
IV. aba bhagavantadāsa hai nāma

A

I. The city Hansū² is a flourishing one, my brother;
II. (And) the habitation (there) is unending.³
III. In Paramaribo, across (the river from the) city, my brother,
IV. Now, there is established a market-place (full) of love.
V. O, an estate⁴ like Maryamburg (I) have not seen (elsewere),
VI. (Where I have a) shop in front of the office.⁵
VII. (I) have not seen cows (so good elsewhere) as in Hansū² -
VIII. Where (there is an) open right to pasturage.

B

I. Rāmaharakh, a resident of Hansū,
II. I have come to the Divākara⁶ today.

1 See page 156, note 7.
2 Ansoe is a village to the east across the Surinam river from Paramaribo.
3 A hyperbole.
4 Kōthī, an industrial estate; in this case Marienburg, the only remaining sugar estate in Surinam.
   For a further list of Indianised Dutch names in Surinam, see Adhin (1964).
5 Kantoor: Hindi form kantorau, in this case the office of the Marienburg sugar estate.
6 The office of the Arya Dewakar Sabha in Paramaribo where the singers had been invited for this recording.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
I. My district is Jaunpur,
II. And Cakavaliyā is (my) village.
III. I am the son of a devotee (named) Sūpar
IV. (And) (my) name is Bhagavantadās.

91 Rasiyā [Nieuw Nickerie, 1967]

I. chorā paradesana mati jāye
II. merī terī yaḥī re gujara hai jāye, chorā paradesana...
III. mero tero pyāra baṛhyau hai mai roya roya ke mara jā
IV. paradesana ko pānī laganau piyatāi mara jāye
V. paradesana ki nārī burī haj to pai jādu dekhi calāy
   paradesana mati jāye

I. Young man, do not go abroad.
II. I and you will be able to manage (together) right here; young man...
III. Yours and my love is waxing strong; I shall die crying and crying.
IV. The water of the foreign lands is infectious; one dies immediately upon drinking it.
V. The women of the foreign lands are bad; they glance and put magic on you. Young
   man, do not go abroad.

92 Nakatā [Paramaribo, 1962]

I. suno sakhi saiyā jogiyā hōī gāile, hamahu jōginī hōī jāb
   suno sakhi...

1 The singer stated this to be Sūpardās.
2 Op. Grierson (J.R.A.S. 1884: 248); R. Tripāṭhī (‘29: 414); D. Sirhīa (‘44: 463); K. Upādhyāya
   (‘54: 150); S. Anilā (‘57: 105); K. Upādhyāya (‘60: 267).

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
I. Listen, sakhi, (my) master has become a jogī; I, too, shall become a joginī.

II. A red quilt looks charming on the jogī; on the joginī (also) the hermit-like clothing looks charming.

III. The jogī plays on a gold sāraṅgī (and the) joginī is keeping the beat (with her hands).

IV. The jogī will make (his) rounds from street to street (and the) joginī will sing the malhār.

93 Ulārā (general) [Paramaribo, 1962]

I. bāje muralī kadama tare suno sakhiyā

---

1 A wandering mendicant.
2 A female wandering mendicant.
3 Gudārī, a piece of clothing made of rags stuffed together and sewn. The colour of a mendicant's clothing is reddish; more accurately, ochre.
4 Cīra: clothing in general but in this case it denotes what may be suitably worn by a hermit in the forest, for example, barks etc., used to cover the body. The clothing Sītā had to wear when departing for the forest is referred to as cīra.
5 See p. 10.
6 An Indian tune especially suited for the rainy season. Here it connotes the singer's worry about wandering about behind her husband during the rains.
7 Cp. sohar ulārā (song Nos. 6 ff.) and cautāl ulārā (song No. 49C.) Cp. Fraser (J.A.S.B. 1883: 4-6, 32); D. Simha ('44: 474) on the theme of having a love letter written through a man of the clerical caste, kāyath (S. Kāyastha).
II. kikareḥāthāciṭhiyā likhi bheje, kikareḥāthe likhāye patiyā bāje...

III. ūdho ke ḫathḥo cīthiyā likhi bheje mādho ke ḫathḥo likhāye patiyā bāje...

IV. cīthiyā likhāvāna gāile munsī mahāliyā pāche se cīthiyā bācīsa piyā bāje...

I. The flute is being played under the *kadam* tree; listen, *sakhi*.

II. Through whose hand may (one) have the letter written and despatched? Through whose hand must the letter be written?¹ The flute...

III. Through Īdho's hand may the letter be written and through Mādho's hand may the letter be written.² The flute...

IV. (She) went to the scribe's palace to have the letter written; thereafter did the lover read the letter. The flute...

94 Caṭnī (general)³ [Paramaribo, 1962]

I. kahā macāve sora papiharā kahā macāve sor

II. jaisecaṭake more māge ke sēdurā vaise cātake piyā mor, papiharā kahā...

III. jaisecaṭake more ākhe ke kajarā vaise cātake piyā mor, papiharā kahā...

IV. jaisējhalake more dāte batisiyā vaise jhalake piyā mor, papiharā kahā...

---

1. See page 159 note 7.
2. This must be *pathāye*: 'to whose hand...? To Mādho's hand must the letter be delivered'.
3. See *sohar caṭnī* (p. 20 and Song No. 10).

I. What is the papiha\(^1\) singing?\(^2\)

II. As the vermilion in the parting of my hair glitters\(^3\) so shines\(^3\) my lover.
   What is...?

III. As the collyrium of my eyes shows bright,\(^3\) so shows bright my lover.
   What is...?

IV. As my (set of) thirty-two teeth reflects (splendid), so reflects my lover (splendid).
   What is...?

---

95 Invitation [Saramacca, 1962]

I. āy ke mila lo gale bahiyā, bahinā more āo āo
II. prema rasa ke jēunā, banā hai
III. āy ke jeva lo more jēunā, bahinā more... āy ke mila lo...
IV. prema rasa ke gerūā bharā ye
V. āy ke ghūta lo more gerūā, bahinā more... āy ke mila lo...
VI. prema rasa ke biravā jurāyo
VII. āy ke kuca lo more biravā, bahinā more... āy ke mila lo...
VIII. prema rasa ke sejiyā lagī hai
IX. āy ke sūa lo more sejiyā, bahinā more ... āy ke mila lo...
X. prema rasa ke gēdavā dharī hai
XI. āy ke khela lo more gēdavā, bahinā more... āy ke mila lo...

I. Come, meet (and embrace me with) your arms (around my) neck; my sisters, come, come.
II. A meal has been prepared with the sap of love;
III. Come and eat up my meal, my sisters...
IV. A water-vessel has been filled with the sap of love;
V. Come and sip (of) my water-vessel, my sisters...
VI. A bīṛā\(^4\) has been made up with the sap of love;

---

1 S. cātaka, a bird known for its cry of piū (lover).
2 Sor macānā: literally, making a loud noise.
3 Caṭaknā, may be translated in these various ways.
4 See p. 53, n. 3.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
VII. Come and chew my bīṛā, my sisters...
VIII. A bed of the sap of love has been made up;
IX. Come and sleep on my bed, my sisters...
X. A ball of the sap of love has been placed;
XI. Come and play with my ball, my sisters...

Modern socio-political compositions I
96 Modern i [Paramaribo, 1962]

On India¹

I. bacāiho na hari bhārata dūbā jāy
II. mela milāpa mitratā vipratā kāhū ke na suhāy,
   bacāiho...
III. cahū disa ke ika phūṭa parata para dekhata jiyā ghabarāy,
    bacāiho...
IV. bāla vivāha kurtīa desa kā are mūrakha desa cahāy,
    bacāiho...

I. Save (won't you?), God,² India is sinking.
II. Union and neighbourliness,³ friendship and wisdom,⁴ appeal to no one (today).
    Save...
III. On seeing the occurrence of divisions in all the four quarters the heart gets perplexed.
IV. The child marriage (is) a bad custom of the country - a foolish country (alone) wishes
    (to continue) (it).
    Save...

¹ The author is not certain whether this is a genuine folksong or taken from a published work.
² Hari, i.e. Viṣṇu.
³ Mel milāp, a twin-word denoting a general gregariousness.
⁴ Vipratā, (good qualities of) brahminhood.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
97 Modern ii [Paramaribo, 1967]

1. On Indian migrations because of caste oppressions
2. Reactions to Surinam

A

I. dhanya bakhāṇī bhārata kā, are bāṁhana chatriya kā
II. o raiyata ke chūta lagāye
III. unahį jora se rāja karata haj, are besavā ke saṅgata kīnha
IV. are raiyata bhāgi kara ṭapuvana ke āina
V. hā bhārata karavaṭa īnha
VI. o dhanya bakhāṇī o gyaṇi mahatamā ke re, bhārata khaṛā kara āiṁṇa

B

I. bhārata bhā̅ī läuṭā jāo ghara kā
II. bārahaibara hama bana mē rahabe, terahe mē āi gaye ghara kā, bhārata bhāī...
III. sāḍhu loga ke sevā karihau, naṅgana ke dāiho cīrā, bhārata bhāī...

C

I. kuliyā ke lobhī bakaravā re, are kamavā ke lobhī saradār
II. are pāisā ke lobhī surināma ke choriyā re, nahį cīnḥaj būṛhavā jaṁāna

A

I. (I) call India blessed (and) the Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas (thereof, too),

1 Cp. D. Siṁha ('44: 260); the song is addressed by Rāma to his brother Bharata to return to Ayodhyā, but the Surinam singer lengthening a mora said 'Bhārata' instead of Bharata and interpreted it as an advice to return to India.
2 Here, sarcastically.
II. (Who) attached (un)touchability to (their) subjects.
III. They rule by the power of these very (subjects) (while they) keep the company of prostitutes.
IV. The subjects escaped and came to the islands
V. (And) yes, India turned on her side.
VI. O, (I) call the wise great souls blessed (who) made India stand up.

B
I. Indian brethren, return to (your) home(land).
II. I shall live in the forest for twelve years, and in the thirteenth (I) return home.
   Indian brethren...
III. (There) you will serve the good people and (you) will give clothing to the naked.
   Indian brethren...

C
I. The white men are greedy for coolies (and) the drivers are greedy for work;
II. The girls of Surinam are greedy for money; (they) discern not old or young.

---

1 The immigrants called all the foreign countries to which they were recruited islands because when being recruited they were led to believe that they were being taken to some islands not far from Calcutta - so they state.
2 In sleep, about to wake up.
3 Rāma's own exile was for fourteen years. There must be some confusion in the singer's mind. The immigrant's contract was initially for five years.
4 Sādhus, also monks.
5 Bakarā, a term commonly used for white men by the people of all non-white races in Surinam. Its derivation is not clear but it may have some connection with blanc.
6 Coolies, in India 'porters'; but throughout the countries where the Indian labour was recruited to work in the estates etc. this term denotes an Indian in general.
7 Sardārs, the drivers of the labour gangs.
98 Modern iii [Ansoe, 1967]  
On Surinam politics

I. bhayle desā ājād mila kar raho eka sāth
II. mati karo utapāt yahi desavā mē
III. cāhe raho sirinām cāhe jāo hindustān
IV. mati bano krīstān, yahi desavā mē
V. jaba se bhāile khurāfāt hindū muslim donq sāth
VI. taba se bhāile barabād, yahi desavā mē
VII. mān lo gāndhīji ke kahanā tum na karo manamānā
VIII. aba na lagegā ṭhikānā yahi desavā mē
IX. suna lo hindū muslim bhāī donq bhārata ke pūta kahāī
X. mati karo takarār, yahi desavā mē

I. The country has become independent;¹ live together in unity.
II. Do not cause disruption in this country.
III. Whether you live in Surinam² or you go to India -
IV. Do not become Christians in this country.
V. Since the trouble has started between the Hindus and Muslims together -
VI. Since then there has been destruction in this country.
VII. Accept the teachings of Gandhiji; don't do (just according to your own) wishes -
VIII. (Otherwise there) will be no place³ (for you) in this country.
IX. Listen, Hindu and Muslim brethren, both are called the sons of India -
X. Do not argue (against each other) in this country.

¹ This refers to the independence of India. Perhaps the singer wishes the Surinamers to learn from the example of India in certain ways. On the other hand, the Indians of Surinam are on record as being against the independence of Surinam at this time.
² The word Surinam has many Indianised forms: Sarnām, Sirinām (as here) and even Śrīnām and Sirīrām.
³ Or, 'There will be no settlement'.

Usharbudh Arya, Ritual songs and folksongs of the Hindus of Surinam
99 Modern iv [Ansoe, 1967]
A Patriotic Birahā on Surinam geography

A Sumiran

I. ḍihavā digambara pīr paigambara jagadambā
II. more agama gyāna ghata kholaj
III. au birhā maj gā̄ś mātā tumhare saranavā jagadambā
IV. more bandha galā deyo khol

B Alcārī

I. kahū bayāna maj srīnāma kā pardeśī jarā sun leyo dhyāna lagāy
II. pahile banā sahara sahārātana phira piche gavāī bana jāy
III. tekare piche sāndarēj jahā para fikhafelta hai bhāy
IV. tekare piche pārānāma hai vahā se boksīla bikātī hai bhāy
V. tekare piche afubākā hai tāhā para pārī dihala baḍbhāy
VI. tekare piche kolā krīka hai vahā para sīdeh mukti ho jāy

C Finale

I. jīlā hamārā kamavainā hai bhāī bhajaniyā re yākalesa hai grāma hamār
II. nāma hamārā rāmanārāyana va dūvāre āmra vrikṣa laharāye

A

I. O Dīh and sky-clad ones,¹ pīrs and prophets (and) mother of the universe -
II. May (you) open the vessel of impenetrable knowledge for me.
III. And I sing the birahā, mother, (by taking) refuge with you, O mother of the universe.
IV. Loosen and vanquish² my bonds.

¹ See note 1, p. 144.
² Gaḷā denā, literally, to make (them) rot away.
B

I. I describe Surinam (to you), O foreigner, concentrate and listen a while.
II. First (there are) built the city and the urban areas, then, after that the villages are made.
III. Thereafter (comes) Zanderij where there is the airport, brother.
IV. Thereafter is Paranam; the bauxite is sold from there, brother.
V. Thereafter is Afobakka; there the water has been stopped (in a dam).
VI. Thereafter is Cola Creek; (by bathing) there Muktī is directly attained (by one).

C

I. My district is Commewijne, brother songster, (and) my village is Jagtlust.
II. My name is Rāmnārāyan and at the gate (of my house there) flourishes a mango tree.

1 Srīnāma; see note 2 on song 98.
2 The singer's reference is not really to their construction but rather that ‘they are found so built: start from the city of Paramaribo and travel to various places’.
3 Sanderēī flīkhafelt: Zanderij Vliegveld.
4 Boksī: the Hindi form of bauxite. Paranam has the bauxite factory where ships arrive on the Suriname river to collect bauxite.
5 The hydroelectric project where a dam has been built on the Suriname river.
6 Salvation. The reference is to the Hindu belief that sins are washed away by bathing in certain sacred rivers. The Cola Creek is a popular resort near Zanderij, but it is not yet ‘sacred’; perhaps the singer is well on the way to sanctifying it.
7 The Hindi form is Yākles.
100 Modern v [Ansoe, 1967]
On Surinam Indian community (economic history)

A

I. kisa njda so rahe ho hindustana vale
II. khandak me gir pare ho jce nisana vale

B

I. tuma para gama ki ghati hai chai, aba se khabaradara raho bhai
II. kalakatt se bhariya kara ke bheja diye saba bhai
III. lai utare surinama me dipu me bhata khyai
IV. paranasi me pahuce ja kar bakara report sunai
V. sabbala katalisa hatha me le leyo’ jangala ka taju tu jai
VI. jangala kate koko kate kofhi bhur turavai
VII. ciyuti ciyuti kathan lage haya haya cilai

aba se...

VIII. paaka barsa jaba giramita katha gaye kheta base taba jai
IX. agarama bagarama paida kara ke gola mirica saba khai
X. kauri kauri paisa jore jora dhare gharha mahi
XI. paisa lai ke kaka mirindhi kagaj diya thamai
XII. kantorau me paisa nahi hai rovata ghar ko jai
XIII. hay daya hama aise jana ki larakana ke deta parhai

aba se...

1 Another version gives the name of the composer: aura sabalasingha katalasa thama lo jangala kato jai, ’(says) Sabalsingh, (they ordered); ’hold a cutlass, go and cut the jungles’. Sabalsingh was a Punjabi immigrant who used to go around singing on various socio-political topics. Another version of the song gives the date as 1949. The episode is as follows. A notaris named Achmed Theodoor de Miranda opened a private banking house. His agent Karamat Ali went round and persuaded a large number of Indians to bank their money with Miranda, who, in league with Karamat Ali, used the money for personal benefits. In 1949, Miranda’s son who took over after his father’s death, announced his insolvency with the result that much suffering accrued to the Indians who lost their money.
A

I. What (kind of) sleep are you sleeping, O people¹ of India?
II. You have fallen in a ditch, oh (people) of a high standard.

B

I. The cloud of sorrow is hovering over you; be alert from now.
II. All the brethren were recruited from Calcutta and sent (here) -
III. (They) were brought and made to disembark in Surinam; (they) were fed on rice in the Depot.²
IV. They went and reached the estate³ (and the) white man (read out) an order (for them) to hear:
V. - Take shovels and cutlasses in the hands, go and cut the jungles.
VI. (The immigrants) cut the jungles, cut cocoa and were made to pick⁴ coffee also.
VII. Ants and insects⁵ began to bite (them and they) cried 'oh, oh'.
   Be alert from now...
VIII. When they completed the five years (period) of the contract,⁶ then they went to settle down on (their own) fields.

¹ Or, people from India.
² The temporary shelters where the immigrants were kept before embarking on board at Calcutta and where they had to await appointment to the estates upon arriving in Surinam were called Depots.
³ Parnāsī, a Neger Engels word perhaps from plantation.
⁴ Lit., the coffee was ‘made to be picked’.
⁵ Small (fem.) ants and large (masc.) ants.
⁶ Girmiṭ, the Indianised form of ‘agreement’. After working five years at the estates the immigrants had the freedom to return to India or to accept the grant of farm land, which was usually a piece of jungle to be cleared and then used for cultivation.
IX. After they had produced anything anyhow, the black pepper ate it all.¹

X. Farthing by farthing² (they) saved (some) money; having saved (they) placed (it) in a (banking) house.

XI. Uncle Miranda³ took the money and handed (them a piece of) paper.

XII. (When they wanted the money back they were told:) there is no money in the office. They come back home crying.

XIII. Oh, (let there be) on us the pity of some such person who may educate (our) children.⁴

Be alert from now...

C

I. Clasping (my) hands I make (this) appeal; listen with attentive ears.

II. (You must) forgive the mistakes and slips (which) have taken place in composing this song.

Be alert from now...

¹ ‘After the Indians produced various crops with great difficulty, the Negroes enjoyed the fruits thereof’: this is the general sense of the line. ‘Gol mirc’ (black pepper) is one of the terms used by Indians for the Negroes, because of their curly hair.

² Kaurī, a sea shell, orginally used as the smallest currency.

³ Indianised form: Mirindā.

⁴ It was felt that the Indians were cheated because they were not literate enough to understand the banking and the papers and receipts etc. Also, the money lost had been saved by many with the intention of educating their children and these hopes were now shattered.
Bibliography

Abbreviations

AGS   Āśvalāyana Grhyasūtra
AgGS  Āgniveśya Grhyasūtra
ApDS  Āpastamba Dharmasūtra
ApGS  Āpastamba Grhyasūtra
BPS   Baudhāyana Pitṛmedhasūtra
GGS   Gobhila Grhyasūtra
HkPS  Hiranyakeśi Pitṛmedhasūtra
H.S.B.I. Hindi Sāhitya kā Brhat Itihāsa
JASB  Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
JGS   Jaiminiya Grhyasūtra
JIAS  Journal of the Indian Anthropological Society
JRAS  Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
MB    Mahābhārata
MP    Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa
PGS   Pāraskara Grhyasūtra
RV    Rgveda Saṁhitā
SP    Sammelana Patrikā
VP    Viṣṇu Purāṇa
VS    Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā

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