

Considering the wide range of themes assayed here and the diversity of authorial voices pressed into service, the volume inevitably -- and, hopefully, engagingly -- articulates a variety of intellectual sympathies and emotional attitudes. Although editorial intervention by way of prescribing a focus for the study, guarding against avoidably repetition of data through the different articles, and touching up the language in certain cases could not be eschewed, no interference has been allowed on the findings, view-points and tones of the respective authors. Whatever incidental inconsistencies surface in the process should go to prove that they have not been sought to be scissored away on the editor's table. Further researches and analytical studies this volume intends to stimulate with respect to various aspects of the socio-cultural phenomenon would, it is hoped, come up with reliable resolutions of such problematic issues in not-too-distant a future.

With this brief introductory statement the reader is invited to explore for himself a stratiform body of writings in the following pages and reconstruct in his mind the vast, complex terrains from which they have been quarried. It is not for the editor to attempt, in a study of this kind, a more pointed critical sketch of individual pieces written by scholars drawn from a large variety of disciplines. He can only hope that the volume would prove to be worth the attention of perceptive minds here as elsewhere, and discharge its obligation of defining and commemorating a historical landmark with some measure of success.

Madhusudan Pati

Folk-songs

A Clean Mirror : the Folk Songs of Western Orissa

Nilamadhab Panigrahi

An All-Orissa Music Conference was going on at Cuttack one fine day in 1944. It was in its closing stages when an unknown, intruding voice was reluctantly permitted, on his eager request, to sing a song in the conference hall. No one, however, came forward to provide him with instrumental accompaniment. Undaunted, he started humming a refrain :

Jhupur jhupur paen barse
palha rui chal re bahen
palha rui chal

The very first few feet of the refrain, sung to immaculate rhythmic clapping by the singer himself, incited, first, a cacophony among the

musicians and listeners there who did not understand a word of the song. The noise; however, soon petered out into a dying murmur, and very soon the hall, profound was overflowing' with the singer's voice alone. When the refrain was sung for the last round, indicating the approaching finale, there were repeated cries of 'en core'. The audience, enthused in aesthetic joy, produced a tumult of applause and gave a prolonged ovation that must have echoed in the ears of the unknown and unsung singer for years thereafter.

To questioners desirous of ascertaining what kind of song he had sung¹, the singer informed it was a 'Sambalpuri Palligeeta', meaning a folk-song in the Sambalpuri language. The folk-song in question was not wholly of the traditional kind. Oral tradition and anonymity, the two important hall-marks of a folk-song, were conspicuous by their absence from the song, yet its claim to be regarded as a folk-song could not be dismissed, for it had absorbed the essential lilt and vibrancy of a folk song in both its tune and thematic content.² The overall West Orissan folk ethos of the song, the genuine native air it breathed (in just seven lines), both in its projection of a rural picture and the exposition of a rural woman's unsophisticated, yet universal mind and heart — all these lend a folk character to the song. To crown these, the language used in the song was Sambalpuri, a spoken language, striving to be a written one.

A huge crop of Sambalpuri folk songs of the above type has been produced in recent years in both rural and urban sectors of Western Orissa, by the 'litterati' as well as semi-educated, especially after a wider scope and incentive for such creations began to be provided by the All India Radio Station at Sambalpur in the 'sixties. Songs of this type have to be accepted as folk-songs today, although, to purists, they would not appear traditional enough. But it is necessary to classify them. For this purpose they could be designated as non-traditional; but since some would prefer the title 'cultivated folk-songs'³ we better adopt this appellation for our present purpose.

Before looking at the impact of the rapid growth and widespread circulation of the 'cultivated' Sambalpuri folk-songs on the 'traditional' or the 'semi-traditional'⁴ Sambalpuri folk-songs and folk-music, it would seem necessary to make a brief reference to folk-songs and folk-music in general in the historical perspective of Indian Music which has preserved, in tact, one of the world's earliest oral traditions in the form of Vedic music (which was at one time available only in the form of a chant, applying one to three notes).

Songs are called 'geeta's in Indian musicology. Though the word 'geeta' is found in the ancient Indian literatures and dramaturgy, the

earliest of the available definition of the geeta is found in a Sanskrit encyclopedic work of the 11th-12th century. It lays down that a judicious blend of musical notes, time-measures and meaningful words constitute a song.⁵ As regards folk-songs, ancient and medieval musicologists have recorded their views in compact verses that need a little elucidation. The earliest of the available views may be placed here. According to it, music of any country in the world can be of two broad categories, namely, folk ('deshi') and classical ('marga', meaning either 'searcher for' or, according to some, 'following the correct path').

Folk or 'deshi' music is the type that is played or sung just out of a natural, irrepressible impulse, without any knowledge of the science, by women-folk (presumably the common, generally illiterate Indian women of the pre-medieval period), boys, and girls (presumably those playing in the village streets or open fields), cowherds (who usually play the flute by way of enjoying sunny hours of relaxation and preventing their grazing cattle from straying), the plough-men or the watch-men of the fields.⁶ All these people do, indeed, come under the category of 'folk', and folk-songs are what they sing to express their joys and sorrows through the medium of sound, in the form of meaningful words coupled with musical notes. The folk-music that seems to come under the purview of this description may be tribal or non-tribal, or even, a blend of the two. According to another view, music that is devoid of any discipline relating to musical notes, the microtones, scales, modes etc. and is sung according as the people of the various countries or regions like to sing is folk or 'deshi'?⁷

In short, folk music is the music played, or songs sung, by the common people who have taken no pains to be conversant with the laws of consonance and dissonance, who do not know music either as an art or as a science, but who, nevertheless, sing because their mood urges or inspires them to sing. They sing to heighten the joyousness of their community-life on occasions of marriage, religious rites, and social customs, or simply to brighten their daily life amid the dreariness and hardships of living. Folk songs are the creations of the community as a whole rather than that of single individuals. It has been rightly said that "folk music does not employ any musical device as a result of conscious knowledge or the study of the science of music. It does not seek its theme or emotional content from music but starts with one of its own choices, in the form of a poetic piece or song and music serves as but a guide or groove for the overflow of the poetic emotion."⁸

Folk songs of India have, in course of time, formed the base of Indian Marga Sangeet and the folk tunes were developed into different Ragas

or melody patterns. Many of the current and obsolete Ragas, as their names such as Kosal, Kalingada, Gurjari etc. clearly indicate, originated from the names of tribes, probably of non-Aryan or mixed Aryan races such as Kosal, Kalingi, Gurjar etc. Who had their own traditional, favoured tunes. The partiality of certain tribes for certain specific tunes having certain specific musical notes ('Svaras') does exist even today.⁹ So it is quite believable that the present Indian Marga Sangeet that could justly be proud of its numerous sophisticated Raga-melodies owes a lot to ancient folk-tunes which have not retained their separate identity today. This goes to prove that there is a perennial process of subtle interaction between folk music and art music or classical, sophisticated music.

So far as Sambalpuri folk-songs are concerned it is not possible at present to draw a clear chart of their evolution with any degree of certainty, because, hardly any serious attempt has so far been made to collect them from reliable sources where they are current in the least contaminated form and to collate them for suitable research, both literary (and/or linguistic) and musical. We would, nevertheless, make an attempt to briefly outline the course after the different patterns obtaining in Sambalpuri folk-compositions are sketched. A bird's eyeview of the patterned, traditional or semi-traditional Sambalpuri songs is offered below, with relatively a closer scrutiny of Dalkhai as an illustrative form.

1. DALKHAI: It reflects the medieval conception of music (sangeet) as a composite art, including in its fold (a) songs (or compositions of musical notes together with words), (b) instruments to support the melody and accentuate the rhythm (or time-measure), and (c) dance ('nritta' i.e. pure dance without the 'abhinaya' or the representational aspect)¹⁰. Songs and instruments go together, and dance starts after the song takes a pause since the singing cannot go on when there is fast body-movement, particularly as the upper part of the body has to be bent forward from the waist almost up to a horizontal position.

After a brief but stimulating spell of instrumental exercise, the Dalkhai song starts smartly with the invocative 'Dalkhai re' (or 'bo'). It proceeds with the mild, rhythmic beats of the drums till it comes to the last line of the stanza. The repetition of the last foot of the last line predicts the approaching halt. Simultaneously with the halt, starts the explosive playing of the instruments as well as the group dance. After the dancing spell comes to a halt on a cue given by a particular phrase of drumming, the song resumes and the process goes on till the close. How

the Dalkhai songs and dance and drumming fill the surroundings with thrilling joy have only to be experienced to be believed. It may appear crude when compared with Odissi, but it is far more energised and intoxicating.

The performance of Dalkhai formerly used to belong to the so-called lower orders. The signers-cum-dancers belong to the fair sex while the instrument-players are men. Though mostly young girls are the singers, middle-aged women at times deservingly get a place of honour in the group. The reason is not their un-withered beauty, in case they happen to be beautiful, but their proficiency in the appropriate style of singing and dancing, and their large repertoire of Dalkhai songs which some of them readily compose in response to a prevailing situation or mood right through the dance.

The instruments that support and sustain the rhythm as well as keep time are percussions such as 'Dhol', 'Nisan' and often 'timki' i.e. 'nagra' (the mogul 'nakkara'). It is the dhol (a cylindrical, two-faced drum) that rules the roost. The nisan carries the rhythm far and wide. But the 'muhri', a wind-instrument made of wood and resembling somewhat the famous classical instrument 'sehnai' provides tonal accompaniment, often with notes of incorrect pitch owing to incorrect make. It also sustains the melodic part when the singing takes a temporary halt during the dance. The 'dhol' player among the instrumentalists also takes part in the dance with the dhol dangling from his neck, played even while he dances within the semi-circle of the women singers and dancers.

Dalkhai has a social and religious background; it is group-singing and group-dancing connected with the worship of goddess Durga, the demon-killing Mother and the embodiment of 'Power'. The worship-period and hence, the main period of Dalkhai-performance is autumn. The performance of Dalkhai commences only after the completion of some preliminary rituals which are believed to be of non-Aryan and pre-Aryan origin.

Thematically, Dalkhai songs present a variegated poetic picture. Nature, common natural objects and phenomena with 'man' at the centre stage, social behaviour and situation, and particularly human passion, which is a source of ecstasy and continuance of the race, are variously celebrated in Dalkhai songs. This human passion for mating and procreation (called love in the context of certain attitudes and actions through a process of intellectual refinement) is presented in the Dalkhai songs – with uninhibited directness and simple fervour – often

symbolically, the symbols being drawn from the immediate environment, and at times also mystically (perhaps a pointer to the wide-spread impact of the later forms of Buddhism and Saktism in Western Orissa at one time). Eroticism is blatant in some of the compositions, the reason why orthodox people used to shy away from such performances and used to take them as a degenerate form. But thanks to the silver scree, some of its more refined songs and dance-items have served as eye-openers to the conservatives and the hard-liners who are now compelled by the forces of time to adopt an attitude of 'glasnost' towards Dalkhai.

The length of Dalkhai compositions is not regulated. It has been found to vary from three to fifteen, at times eighteen lines, apart from the initial singing of the signature (refrain) 'Dalkhai re' once or twice at the beginning, and once at the end. The two lines following the signature are rhymed and are apparently of fourteen beats, to be followed by two beats (by prolongation of the last vowel or by a pause). Thus virtually these two lines are of sixteen beats, divisible as four measures or feet. Each foot, then, should consist of four beats, but each of the beats appears to be of three fractions. Under a fast tempo such compositions give the impression of moving in three-beat feet. In the last line of a three-lined Dalkhai composition the third foot is sung twice and the word 'Kai' (an interrogative meaning 'is it?' but having no contextual value), or some other two-lettered word is added. Then the signature (refrain) 'Dalkhai re' is sung once and the singing comes to a halt. If it is to resume, the signature is again to be sung twice.

On scrutinizing a Dalkhai song which has been sung and popularised in a cassette by an educated Sambalpuri folksinger and which has been branded as traditional,¹¹ it is found that all but the first and the last lines consist generally of fourteen syllables each with two rhymed lines of six syllables, each line inter-stitched after every two such rhymed lines of fourteen syllables. Due to metrical defect some of the longer lines contain more than fourteen syllables. The lines are obviously intended to be divided into two parts, with eight syllables in the first part and six in the second, which, in ordinary recitation, would be increased to eight syllables by stretching the last vowel or through a pause. This is exactly what has been done in the rendering in the cassette.

But in actual singing, a time-measure (tala) consisting of three beats in each foot has been employed. Consequently, more syllables have either been squeezed into one beat when the exigencies of time-measure so required, or short worded syllables have been stretched into more than one beat. This lends an unexpected charm at places by providing

contrast to the monotony of the metrical accent and the accent of the time measure mechanically falling on the same points throughout the musical progression.

Transliteration of the first part of the composition with syllabic values numerically indicated below the words and with places of division of the lines into two parts of eight and six syllables respectively would be as follows:

1st Division
3 beats + 3 beats

2nd Division
3 beats + 3 beats

Dalkhai re

Dalkhai re

1	1				3	1		
asa	asa	tukel	mane	jima	patar	tuli		
2	2	2	2	2	2	2		
bhuga	tupa	dhari	baha	rila	guru	bari		
3	2	2	2	2	2	2		
Dalkhai	alo	janki	jima	jharke				
4	2	2	2	2				
gala	gala	daudi						
5	2	2						
lulo	lulo	sukun	tula	padi	chhumuh	madi		
6	2	2	2	2	2	2		
pare	pare	jaldi	asa	chapi	auchhe	khara		
7	2	2	2	2	2	2		
bayla	bayla	bha	ma					
8	2	2	2					
dhangri	dhangri		jima					
9	2		2					
sudhi	sudhi	gale	jere	dhara	padi	jima		
10	2	2	2	2	2	2		
sang	sang	hei	gale					
11		2	2					
karichhe	karichhe	bhuga	bharna	kie	kariche	una		
12	3	2	2	2	2	2		
bayla	bayla	ai	go	kie	bayla	bai		
13	2	2	2	2	2	2		
thire	thire	numircha		dei	thibu	bhurei		
14	2	3		2	2	3		
gala	gala	se keti	kahi	gala	se keti			
15	2	3	2	2	3			

tar ghayta	marmarichhe	muh haichhe	phati
3	2 + 2	4	2
muh	jaichhe	phati	kai dalkhai re
	4	2	2 4

A few Dalkhai compositions of different structure, with lines varying in the total number of syllables and having different metrical patterns but always with feet of equal length such as (2+2) or (3+3) may be consulted by the curious in an anthology of Sambalpur folk-literature¹² published in 1983.

As regards the melodic aspect, it is confined to only a few musical notes and the musical phrases are repetitive in character with just a slight variation in the last line and in the refrain 'Dalkhai re' which has a raised last note.

2. RASARKELI : Compositions going under this name are similar to Dalkhai in almost every single respect, not excluding its eroticism. The main difference lies in the commencement of its signature-tune with the words 'Rasarkeli re' or 'rasarkeli bo', which also serve as a sort of refrain. The time-measure applied while actually singing the composition consists of four beats to one division and may be understood as of 2+2 pattern.

'Jaiphula' and 'Maylajada' songs also belong to the category of Rasarkeli, though some of the Maylajada songs have a relatively more jerky movement. Quite a few Rasarkeli songs are found in the anthology already referred to. The cassette referred to earlier has also a Rasarkeli song sung by Sasmita.

3. KARMA : Songs meant for Karma dance are known as Karma songs. Although the dance is preceded by an opening song, an invocation to goddess Karamsani, the presiding deity of this quasi-religious dance, other songs of all sorts are gradually introduced in accordance with the mood of the leading singer, the others following him to the best of their capacity. Songs even from Oriya literary masterpieces like *Mathuramangal*, *Lavanyavati* etc. are at times introduced by the singers. Songs called 'Jhumer' also feature here. But Karma is primarily of tribal origin, and is extensively in vogue among the tribals inhabiting parts of adjoining Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. In tribal Karma even members of the fair-sex sing and dance to the accompaniment of Madal a two-faced drum usually made of earth. Its sound is more musical than that of the 'dhol'.

As the dance proceeds with faster and fiercer tempo with the

increasing rounds of drink, the dancers separate out into pairs, and adopt a variety of formations. Generally speaking, the songs seem to have preference for three-beat divisions in respect of time-measure.

4. HALIA SONGS (Songs of the ploughman) : As their name signifies, the halia songs are exclusive to the male members of the community, for, rarely does any member of the fair sex plough the field. The halia (ploughman) has a peculiar existence. He shoulders the responsibility of feeding the society, often starving himself. He is a solitary person most of the time, undergoing the drudgery of pushing forward his plough through the unyielding soil of Western Orissa, plodding on hours and hours braving all the vagaries of weather. He sings to console not only himself but also his equally miserable pair of bullocks to whom his songs are usually addressed with the long and high-pitched, "balia re" (Oh my bullocks!). The halia is a ragged philosopher, and his songs are often philosophical in content. He sings of mythological themes, too, often picturing the great heroes of yore as his compatriots. Even God Ram and his brother Laksman, the heroes of the Ramayana, are invoked as tillers of the field. Quite a few songs, naturally enough, reveal the rustic eroticism of the halia besides presenting various facets of the love-life of the society in general.

5. KAISA BADI OR DIGDIGO : Songs of this category are by people of the cowherd caste. They hold small sticks ("badi") and strike one stick against the other to maintain the rhythm. The songs consist of two rhymed lines and start with the invocation 'hare Ram ho' (Oh lord Ram!).

6. HUMO BAULI : If halia songs are exclusive to the male, 'humo bauli' songs are so to the female, especially to the young girls, who stand in two rows facing each other, advancing forward while initiating a measure and retreating to the original position as it comes to an end. This goes on by turns covering a long stretch of composition. Humo is no dance in the strict sense. It is just advancing a few steps in a line and retreating the same way. The songs generally consist of only three rhymed lines, the first and the last being of eight syllables each and the second of eleven syllables, each sung in the easy pattern of three alphabets in a foot. The first and the third lines are repeated after addition of the address-word 'bauli re' at the end. There is no instrumental accompaniment of any sort.

The songs cover various aspects of social life as well as individual life. They are musically very simple and lively, touching and poignant.

7. **SAJANI** : Structurally these songs resemble 'humo bauli' songs but without any repetitive singing. A vocative of one syllable e.g., 're' or 'ho', is added after the second line and sung to a length of one foot of three syllables before starting the third line. The words 'dhana' or 'sate' or 'babu' meaning 'my dear', 'indeed' and 'young swain' respectively are added before the third line while singing and adjusted to the rhythm. Like 'humo bauli' these songs often pour out the heart and soul of women in love, their hopes, aspirations, their 'saddest thoughts', their outspoken partiality for the man they love, their amorousness, their dig at the callousness of their men, and so on. The 'sajani', like most folk lyrics, also express eroticism mythically, metaphorically, and symbolically.

8. **DANDA OR DAD** : The widely popular appreciation of this form may be explained by the fact that it harnesses the taste for religion and mythology together with the Dionysian spirit generated by the 'dhol' drum spoken of in *Dalkhai* and a fast dance-measure involving acrobatic contortions. Supporting rhythm is provided by the tinkle of the small bells fixed to a lute-shaped short stick which is held horizontally and shaken rhythmically by the singer-cum-dancer. The great God Shiva and His partner goddess Sakti are the presiding deities of the performance, but songs are not always of a preponderantly religious vein.

9. **SANCHAR** : Songs of various types, from the ludicrous to the sublime, are chanted to the accompaniment of a percussion instrument of ancient origin called 'murdung' (mridanga), played by the singer himself who also dances. At times the style of playing the murdung gives the suggestion of one or more of the time-measures (talas) mentioned in the Sanskrit treatises on music. More emphasis is put on the playing of the instrument than on the song and the dance-measure, both of which are designed to throw into sharp relief the pulsating rhythm-Sanchar of the murdung.

10. **SAMPARDA** : Songs of this class owe their origin to Vaisnavism preached by Chaitanya who lived for about two decades in Orissa. Songs glorifying lord Krisna and also depicting the episodes of Chaitanya's life, written by a poet named Chandidasa (not to be confused with the poet of the same name from Bengal) are sung by a group led by a main singer to the rhythmic accompaniment of cymbals held by all except the murdung players. The songs and especially the resonant cymbals produce a vibrant effect.

11. **KUSTA (KRUSNA) GURU** : These songs are also very popular these days with Lord Krisna's life as the theme of the songs. The songs are performed in a group and show little variation in singing or rhythm. A succession of the same rhythm accentuated by the beats of a small percussion instrument lends an aura of calm gravity to the performance.

12. **GHUMRA SONGS** : These songs are sung by a group of performers. The rhythm is emphasised by beating small, pot-shaped drums dangling from the neck. The songs are supposed to have been heroic formerly, but there has been an enlargement of themes in recent times to cover ordinary, realistic details of life.

MISCELLANEOUS : Bangri, Bajania, Nanchnia, Dul songs are almost of the same class as *Dalkhai*, the second, third and the fourth varieties being especially connected with marriage ceremonies.

Due to the woeful inadequacy of ready references in the form of books and recorded tapes, it is difficult for a curious scholar to glean anything beyond a few broad and tentative notions of this variegated and captivating subject. For the present purpose, therefore, as close as view as possible in this short space of the major forms of *Dalkhai* and Karma songs have been offered by way of a fuller illustration, touching upon the other varieties only in passing, as it were. It may be mentioned that though some of the tribal songs are broadcast from the Sambalpur Radio Station, they have not been taken cognizance of here. The language of such songs, broadcast under the caption 'adivasi' songs, being at present unintelligible at the general level, it has not been possible to take stock of them and to classify the different patterns obtaining therein. But that the tribal communities have a wide repertoire of folk songs is not to be forgotten or ignored in all such discussions.

The different categories of Sambalpuri folk songs touched upon here are generally deemed to be 'traditional'. If the epithet is used to signify that the songs have come down through the process of oral transmission it will be of questionable veracity, for most of the songs (perhaps as many as ninety percent of those that are in circulation), are not in the folk-language or the language of the common men in Western Orissa.¹³ It is improbable that the spoken language currently available in Western Orissa could ever be confused with the mere 'literary', elegant form in which a majority of the lyrics is composed. But the tunes in which they have been set are all traditional, and therefore, these compositions cannot be deemed non-traditional. They may rather identified as a 'semi-traditional' variety.

The tonal or melodic part of the earlier forms of Sambalpuri folk-songs viz : Dalkhai, Darma etc. is mostly of an ancient origin, related to tribal communities which proliferate in Western Orissa. The area within a radius of about fifty kilometers of the present Sambalpur city bears concrete evidence of a non-Aryan civilization of pre-Aryan days, the cave-wall inscriptions at Vikramkhól and other ancient relics nearabout. The unmistakable relics of a cave-theatre in the present Surguja area of Madhya Pradesh, adjoining Sambalpur district in the north, proves the prevalence of widespread musical activities of the Gandharva (Marga or classical) type as well as 'deshi' or folk type in the region. For the tribal people group-singing and dancing to the accompaniment of the sonorous 'madal' drum has been a timeless pastime and art. The chorus gives rise to a crystallized 'tune' that does not easily change or die. The non-tribal people of Western Orissa who were the later immigrants adopted many of the tribal 'tunes', eliminated the tribal language and substituted their own Prakrit-based expressions. Thus the tunes of many, in fact, almost all the folk songs of Western Orissa are traditional in character though of many of the songs is of a later, different variety.

As regards the 'cultivated folk songs' of Western Orissa a huge crop of which has since been raised and many of which are published in books and broadcast almost every day from the Sambalpur Radio Station, only some are found to conform to the old patterns like Dalkhai, Rasarkeli etc.. Many of them display a pronounced touch of sophistication, but yet are folk in character.

Paucity of space prevents us from discussing the different aspects of these cultivated folk songs here. We may, however, take note, in passing, of the way the earlier distinction between orthodox and modern varieties of the cultivated folk-songs is slowly breaking down, yielding a synthetic form in which the impress of traditional and innovative elements is equally marked. The following excerpt from one of the popular radio-songs¹⁴ is illustrative.

Kari kurupane (? kurhane) tara
 Kekat dahina tekar bhara
 Are phale
 Mahughara
 Sunajhara mor kahi gale se
 Gurubheli-ksheer-bhara
 Arkale padichhi (? padichhe) janha
 Charmudi khusa kala-chau ri
 Main-lesa lo, siuta pari
 Kajal akhina makhla bele

Bhangigala darpan
 Bailire
 Chikimike bali jamuchi latana
 Nai pade sei dhara
 Bhangi gale jau ahuri gute
 Gute phul kae jangle phute
 Kala kurubeli belsurngi
 Chamki uthe
 Gamki chhute
 Maru thile pani rute
 Man tale
 Kutnukuta hendua kutana
 Jarur padbi dhara

Sticklers for orthodoxy in the traditional pattern of 'Sajani' may raise frowning eyebrows at the several deviations in the above quoted composition. Undoubtedly the song starts with a promising Sajani simile but deserts the orthodox Sajani-lovers in the middle. But that is folk-art with its start and upward evolution. The rare and irresistible rural beauty of its poetic content – rare at least in Sambalpuri literature – is particularly impressive. The charming folk and rural setting ostensibly embraces the song from start to finish. In such a setting, the beautifully pictured belle, her longing for her lover, her despair (suggested by the breaking of the mirror held while dressing her hair and dyeing her eyes with streaks of collyrium suggesting the eve of fulfilment). The rest of the song depicts her temporary tendency to desert her cherished lover and respond to the overtures of another swain enamoured of her, but quickly recoiling from the momentary deviation and hearkening back to the one she was originally pining for, and her self-consolatory reflection that he will be caught in her ensnaring beauty when he meets her in a solitary spot either on the zig zag foot-path of the 'bahal' (low-lying paddy fields) or in the uplands where kandul pulses grow, when she would be carrying two brass-pitcherfuls of water, one near her upper waist encircled by her arm and another balanced on her head and coming home when manual transport of cropped paddy would be on full swing with a cool breeze blowing mildly, when she would hurriedly glance at him and shiver, causing the water in the pitchers to overflow and splash. The entire village muhalla will surely be dazzled by her beauty. How long can he restrain himself from her inviting chard? His thirsty longing for her would surely bring him smiling at her tomorrow, if not today !

Folk songs of western Orissa constitute a huge and clean mirror, which reflects faithfully the body and soul of the populace – the very fibres of the mental, physical and social being of the unsophisticated, unurbanised section of the region's population, placed in different stages of civilization, and building up or being built by a culture of its own. These folk-songs are justifiably the pride of its people, and an eminently eloquent medium of socio-cultural introduction for the others.

Maneshwar, Sambalpur.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

The song concerned is one of a small number of bewitching compositions by the Late Bidhubhusan Guru of Balangir district, first published in *Vanashree* (1943), long since out of print. It is included in *Sambalpur Kāvya Samkalpa*, an anthology of Sambalpur poems, published by Sambalpur Likhak Sangha, in 1986.

Bidhubhusan Guru, a senior contemporary of the writer of this paper, was "at once a poet, litterateur, musician, politician, educationist and vocalist", as P. K. Tripathy, (*Sambalpur-Orisa Lexicon*, Orissa Sahitya Akademi, p.2) puts it. Guru was a champion of Sambalpur folk-songs and language.

The pastoral character of the tune having peculiar inflectional nuances can never be explained by words and even by musical notation, though the latter could, if given here, have brought to light, at least partially, the tonal personality.

As for the literary content of the song, it can be appreciated even through a rather free translation as follows:

"Come out Bahen (Sister): There is an unending drizzle on. Come with me to the big paddy-field of the old land-holder for transplantation of paddy seedlings. A bevy of girls has already gone there with bunches of paddy seedlings. The girls, I am sure, must now be (inside the ploughed-up field and soft-mud puddles and) frolicking affectionately among themselves. An lo: behold the fine, ball-shaped Kadam flower: when Malti Nani (elder sister Malti) fixes up one of it in her Khusa (bunched up hair on the back side of a woman, a little side-wise), it looks like the moon (with the black clouds or the blue sky around). This must be generating intense/passion in the young tiller-boy (literally, causing saliva to drop from the young man's mouth) - to get her love, to marry her and if that fails, to have an affair with her and elope with her."

3. *Ethno-Musicology and India*, S. Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1968.
4. To be explained later.
5. Bhulokamalla Someshvara, '*Manasollasa*' or *Abhilasitaha chintamani*, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1961. It says: Svaranam cha padanam cha talanam cha smarvayah/ Geetani tyuchya te ...94 / Adhyaya 16, Svara - musical notes; pada - meaningful words; tala - time measure (rhythm).
6. This view is contained in the following definition:
Avalavalagopalaksi tipaleir nigechhaya
Giyate sanuragena svadeshe deshruchyate
The word 'Ksitipala' can have only far-fetched relevance in the context. So we have interpreted the verse with the word 'Dshetrapala' in place of the dubious text of the treatise Brihaddeshi, ascribed to Matanga (C. 600-800 A.D.), Sethu Laxmi Series, trivandrum, 1982). Detailed discussion on folk and classical music has been made in *Bharatiya Sangeet*, a book published by the author of this paper in 1965.
7. "Yesam shrutisvaragrama jatyadinyamo na hi. Nana desh gaticchaya deshiragastu te smrtah."
Ascribed to Anjaneya, believed to be an authority on Music-quoted in the *Kalanidhi*, the commentary of Kallinatha on *Sangeetaratnakara* of Sarngadeva (A.D. 1250 approx) - *Ragdhya II* (Adyar Library, Madras, 1959, p. 115).
It is significant that the medieval musicologists of India have judged folk music from the technical standpoint of musical notes, microtones, modal scales etc. and are silent on 'oral tradition' which is now taken as a hall-mark of folk-songs. The Indian viewpoint may appear curious to many who subscribe to the view that 'folk song' is 'a body of songs preserved and transmitted by oral tradition', as the *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (Macmillan, 1986 reprint, p. 283) would have it.
8. G. H. Ranade, *Hindustani Music - An Outline of its Physics and Aesthetics*, II edition, Narayan Peth, Poona-2.
9. A. Gangopadhyaya in his Introduction to *Rag O Rup in Bengali*, Swami Prajnarnadna, ramakesna Vedanta Ashram, Darjeeling, 1355 Bengali era.
10. 'Gitam vadyam tatha nrtyam trayam sangeetamuchyate' - 21, Chapter I, Page 13 op. cit., Sarngadeva, p. 13.
11. Cassette captioned 'Dalkhai' presented by 'Ka-Kha-Ga', produced and marketed by Samrat Electronics, Hariipur Road, Cuttack, particular peice sung by Baru with music by Bamboo, both belonging to Sambalpur.
12. Compiled by Kumar Hasan for K. K. Mishra & Co., Bankabazar, Cuttack.
13. It is difficult to adequately illustrate this point here. This writer has given many such examples and shown the awful linguistic corruptions thus noticed elsewhere. Cf. *Mahra or Mahu*, Nisan Sahitya Sansad, Maneswar, Sambalpur, 1990.
14. *Ghubukufu*, S. N. Bobidar, Saraswat Pustak Bhandar, Sambalpur, 1964, p. 75.