

PART TWO

THE CONTENT

তুই কেন ভাই ছেড়ে গেলি
আমায় দিয়ে কাফেরে ।
বিপদ কালে ডাকি তোরে
বারেক আসি দেখা দে ।।

*Tui, keno, bhai chere geli,
amay diye kafere?
Bipad kale daki tore,
barek ashi dekha de.*

"Why, brother, have you gone leaving me,
Giving me to the *Kafers*?
In the time of danger I call you;
Allow me to see you once again."

— A verse from a *marsiya*, Calcutta, 1969.

THE NARRATIVE THEMES

আজকে তারে ঘিরিয়ে মোরা নাচব সবে রুদ্র তালে,
আরব দেশের করুণ গাথা আনব টেনে সুরের জালে।

(*Ajke tare ghiriye mora nachbo shobe rudro tale,*
Arab desher korun gatha anbo tene shurer jale.)

Surrounding him in a quick-stepping dance
We'll pull towards us in our net of song
A tale of pity from Arabia.

— A couplet from Jasimuddin's novel-poem, *Sojan Badiar Ghat*.¹

HISTORY AND LEGEND

Whether in a large or intimate gathering, Bangladeshis who have grown up hearing *jarigan* songs have definite expectations about the kinds of stories they will hear from a *jarigan* singer.² Although the "plots" remain essentially the same, the telling of them differs with each poet-singer. The stories, therefore, stay fresh and inspiring.

These stories represent a mixture of fact and fiction. They refer to historical events that have been dramatized in frequent repetitions. The episodes narrated concern the battle of Karbala or the lives of prophets, Muslim lore inherited from Muslim literature of the Middle East. *Jarigan* poets have transmitted these stories over the centuries in almost every corner of mainly eastern Bengal, now Bangladesh. No doubt poets have made alterations to suit the different tastes of different regions and different times. Each *boyati* in turn makes his own changes.³ The events he narrates that take place in a foreign setting have been localized into a Bengali landscape, so that a cast of protagonists from the Middle East—prophets, warrior-saints, and dedicated women—dwell in the imaginations of the *jarigan* audience as familiar figures.

Jarigan performances appeal to all communities. Thus Hindus, no less than Muslims, are moved by the courage of Hosein's men as each of his followers decides to stand by him. A Hindu weeps no less than a Muslim when the *jarigan* poet describes the grief of Fatema, daughter of Hosein, as she beholds the severed head of her father. Just as Bengali Muslims react sympathetically to stories from the

Mahābhārata and *Rāmāyaṇa*, so do Bengali Hindus relate to the situations depicted in the Karbala stories.

Although the Karbala stories focus on the heroism of the Shi'a party ambushed by Sunnis, the stories appeal to Sunni as much as to Shi'a Muslims. Sunnis not only condemn the action of the caliph at that time, but they sympathize with the heroes and heroines of Hosein's band and enjoy the dramatic scenes that are depicted in the *jarigan* texts.

"Story" as "history" and "history" as "story"

Jarigan stories, taken literally, offend some Bangladeshi religious leaders and historians who fear that the songs disseminate an incorrect idea of Muslim history. However, the inherent spiritual and moral themes residing within the episodes are universally true and appealing to all audiences, regardless of their religious orientation.

For example, the marriage of Kasem and Sokhina in the Karbala cycle of stories is one of the most popular of all the themes in Muharram pageants and in the *jarigan* repertory, although some historians claim that the marriage did not take place at Karbala.⁴ Yet, this tale of an ironic circumstance and its distillation of devotion between newly wed young people while they sacrifice their love to a higher cause is dependably moving.

Some Bangladeshis whom I consulted were disturbed when I used the word "story" in reference to the narrative themes of *jarigan* songs. To them the word "story" suggests "myth" as opposed to historical fact. In the case of the Karbala stories, some Bangladeshis felt that the events related contain too much historical and sacred material to be called "stories". Especially Shi'as, who base much of their identity on the events recounted at Muharram time and in *jarigan* songs, feel that the word "story" is demeaning. For them, Karbala narrations are more properly *namas* (chronicles) than "stories". In fact, the term *nama* is sometimes included in a *jarigan* title, such as in the "*Johor Nama Jari*" (The Poisoning-chronicle 'Jari'), included in Jasimuddin's collection of *jarigan* texts.

Some other Bangladeshis feel that there are too many exaggerations, too much poetic license, in the Karbala stories for them to be taken seriously as history. These people regard the Muharram celebrations and the Karbala stories as the naive works of communities lacking in formal education.

I leave the task to others to sort out the distinction between fact and legend in the case of *jarigan* song texts. For want of an English word that would express the concept of history and legend intertwined, as they are intertwined in the *jarigan* texts, I use the words "story" and "narration" loosely, whether the events recounted are historical or legendary.

The *pala*

In Bengali, the word *pala* (literally, episode) refers to a unit of narration which generally encompasses a discrete event, one which is described in detail, as in a canto in an epic or a chapter in a book. The word "episode" is often used by Bangladeshi

writers as a translation of *pala*, but this can be misleading if "episode" is taken to mean only a minor incident or anecdote. On the contrary, a *pala* generally consists of a lengthy story with incidents and anecdotes within it. Like the *mangala* and *vijaya palagans* (story-songs), a *jarigan pala* is a complete story containing episodes within it, as well as being an episode itself in a larger context of related stories.

Bengali scholars translate *pala* as "episode" because they have in mind a large context—a web of stories—of which the text of one song represents an episode; that is, a sub-song (*epi-odos* in Greek) which belongs to a mass of interrelated story-songs—a cycle of *palagans*. For instance, a *jarigan* song about the events surrounding the death of Hosein is an "episode" in the context of the whole cycle of various *jarigan palagan* stories concerning the battle of Karbala.

If the English word "episode" is used to describe a whole *jarigan* song, a word needs to be found to describe the divisions within it. Because these divisions are frequently marked by speeches, the word "scene", as used in play writing, serves well. The story of a single *jarigan* song, then, passes through a series of "scenes", or "sub-episodes". These scenes are the smallest narrative units of a particular *jarigan* song's *pala* or principal episode.

The *jarigan* called "Kasem-Sokhinar Jari" (The Kasem and Sokhina Jari), found in its entirety in Appendix A, is an example of a *jarigan pala-gan* (episode-song) belonging to the cycle of Karbala *jarigan* songs. Although this cycle is a defining feature of the term *jarigan* for many Bangladeshis, other Bangladeshis do not limit the term to this cycle. They include in their concept of the *jarigan* cycle-repertory other epic-like stories. Some of these *palas* ante-date the battle of Karbala, referring back to Biblical times, while others post-date the battle of Karbala, telling about its aftermath and extending to romances in which Muslim kings from Arabia convert Hindu princesses in India. By this broad concept of the *jarigan* cycle, the Karbala cycle of stories is virtually a sub-episode, a group of *palas* within a larger collection of Muslim stories. The Karbala stories, however, are what first comes to mind when the term *jarigan* is mentioned.

Stories within stories

The word *jari*, in the context of the *jarigan* repertory, is often used synonymously and interchangeably with *nama* (chronicle) or *pala* (episode). This is true in titles like "Tilekban Jari" (The Tilekban Jari) or "Kulsumer Mejvani Jari" (Kulsum's Feast Jari). Such titles are used for *jarigan* songs in printed collections of song texts, or are announced orally in the opening lines of the songs themselves.

Each *jarigan* narration or *pala* is self-contained, like a play or a lengthy short story. The narration is framed by a *bandana* at the beginning and a concluding statement at the end. Between these markers, narrative material unfolds in a rapid sequence of scenes.

The title of a *jarigan* song identifies the *pala* to be narrated. Within it there may be short stories (episodes in the literal sense, like sub-stories). These are injected as elaboration to the main theme, or simply added for their entertainment value. The inclusion of these sub-stories ("epi"- episodes) resembles the "framed stories" that are characteristic of Sanskrit epics and of Persian tales, such as those from the

Arabian Nights. In these works, stories are embedded one within the other, to the extent that the original story, the point of departure, is almost forgotten.

In *jarigan* narrations, however, anecdotes seem superimposed rather than embedded in the main narration. Thus, in the *jarigan* song called "Tilekban", when the princess has finally surrendered to her suitor, the poet tells a little story about the parsimony of the palanquin bearers hired to carry her to Arabia. The story has only a tenuous connection with the main *pala* theme, but provides entertainment for the audience familiar with the stingy ways of village money lenders and ungenerous *zamindars*.

The "net" of tales

The full repertory of *jarigan palas*, although untabulated as yet by any collector, nevertheless exists cohesively in the minds of *jarigan* singers and their audiences. There is no need for the *jarigan boyati* to explain the larger context of his narration, nor to describe the characters in it. The audience is already familiar with the names of the protagonists and how the story about them fits into the large, putative *jarigan* repertory. In this large repertory—this "net of song"—some *palas* are closer to the central themes than others.

Each poet-singer may have his own stock of *jarigan palas* for which he is especially well known. When I asked singers to give me examples of their songs, they had little hesitation in choosing the ones they would like to sing, either because they felt most at home in them, or they knew them to be especially popular.

No one has yet collected within the covers of one book all the *jarigan* stories that lie scattered in bardic repertories. The following descriptions of *jarigan* themes are based on a relatively few examples in the collections of Jasimuddin (1968) and S. M. Lutfur Rahman (1986). I have also used anthologies of Bengali folk songs, as well as paperback publications of song texts which include *jarigan* poems. The audio-cassettes found in Bangladeshi music shops have provided me with an additional source of existing *jarigan* themes. These various sources can be found listed in Appendix C. They are sufficient to establish characteristics common to the large majority of songs that go by the name of *jarigan*.

THE STORIES

The narrative themes of a *jarigan* singer's repertory represent popular stories from Islamic history and legend. The names of characters and places in *jarigan* stories are authentic, even if the details of the stories have been invented. The characters enter the scenes of *jarigan* with their aura of fame and holiness already established. They are also ordinary human beings. They have the same domestic joys and problems that the audience members experience in their daily lives.

The plots of *jarigan* stories have common patterns. One is that of an essentially worthy protagonist who transgresses the laws of Allah. Overjoyed at receiving a son, a father may forget to call on the name of Allah. A wife preoccupied by her sufferings in a jungle exile, may forget to pray. The hero or heroine then goes through

various punishing adventures in which repentance is stated and the essential goodness of the character is re-established. Allah then is moved to pity and rescues the hero or heroine from the dangers he or she faces.

In other *jarigan* stories the protagonist is initially sinful. Through the agency of a good person and after various adventures in which the transgressor is made to suffer, he is converted to the ways of Allah. In the story of "*Anal Haq*" (I Am the Truth), a judge refuses to believe the instructions of a saint and thereafter undergoes various misfortunes.⁵ Unrepentant villains, such as Yezid in the Karbala cycle, are condemned to an afterlife in Hell.

Jarigan narrative themes may be divided into: 1) the Karbala-related cycle of stories; 2) stories that are derived from scriptural sources, mainly episodes from the lives of the great prophets from Adam onwards; and 3) miscellaneous stories that only peripherally allude to persons and events in the first two categories. This last category includes stories that are localized around India or Bengal itself. These are most commonly romances, humorous parables and stories with modern social and political themes.

Karbala *palas*

The Karbala events are the themes most associated with the lamentation connotations of the *jarigan* name. Surprisingly, however, Karbala stories do not figure as prominently in the existing *jarigan* collections as might be expected. The episodes commemorated during the Muharram festival and in the *ta'ziyeh* (Karbala passion plays of Iran) are myriad, but in the *jarigan* collections we have only three types, as described below.

Events preceding the Karbala tragedy

Certain stories are about events that took place before the Karbala battle, such as the story about the poisoning of Hasan, the elder brother of Hosein. Although this murder (one of the historically controversial episodes) precedes the Karbala tragedy by about a decade, it foreshadows the martyrdoms among the other blood relatives of the Prophet that will occur at Karbala. In the "*Kasem-Sokhina*" *jarigan*, Hosein recollects the last words of his brother Hasan. These include a premonition expressed by the dying Hasan that his son, Kasem, would some day be in grave danger. By such narrative cross-references, non-Karbala stories are linked with the stories that fully concern Karbala episodes.

Karbala events

Among the *jarigan* songs that refer to events at Karbala, the most popular one, the one most singers choose to sing, is that of the brief marriage of Sokhina, daughter of Hosein, to Kasem. When Hasan lay dying, he asked his brother, Hosein, to promise that Kasem would marry Sokhina. At Karbala, Kasem asks to be allowed to try to fetch water for Hosein's desperate party. He will most surely be killed in this effort. Hosein, remembering his brother's last wish, instructs Kasem to first marry Sokhina. The wedding takes place with full celebrations, soon followed by Kasem's

farewells to his mother and to Sokhina before going to battle.⁶ This episode involves several scenes in which issues are discussed and grievous decisions are expressed in moving speeches.

The death of Hosein on the tenth day of the battle is the most dramatic *pala* story of all. In the "*Shahid-nama Jari*" (The Martyr's-Chronicle *Jari*), the events surrounding the final hours of Hosein's life are reported by Shimar, the captain of Yezid's army, who struck the final blow, to Yezid who is beginning to regret the treatment given to Hosein and his band.⁷ By this "flashback" device, the audience relives the last events of Karbala.

Post-Karbala stories

After the battle of Karbala, the women and single surviving son of Hosein are taken captive to the court of Yezid at Kufa. They are later released, but their mourning in captivity and their return to Karbala to visit the graves of their fallen family members provide the subjects of post-Karbala stories. Muharram *marsiya*s (dirges) often depict the words that the sister of Hosein and other women of his family utter in mourning for him. Other favorite post-Karbala themes include the captive women's taunting reception by Yezid and the efforts of Joynal, the imprisoned surviving son of Hosein, to contact an uncle in Arabia.

Scriptural *palas*

The scriptural group of *jarigan palas* can be divided into two groups: those which concern the early figures important to Islam and those having to do with the life of the Prophet himself.

Stories about the early prophets

Some *jarigan* themes are derived from ancient religious stories. These concern the same great prophets that are described in the Old Testament. The Islamic versions came to northern India through Perso-Arabic literature. Versions arrived in Bengal during the early years of Muslim rule when Turkic and Persian rulers invited poets from the Middle East to their courts and when Sufi spiritual leaders started to spread their faith into the countryside of Bengal. Episodes from the lives of the early prophets provided parables for teaching the values of Islam and binding the Muslim community with a common stock of shared stories from an ancient and sacred past.

The stories introduced to Bengal were reincarnated in the epic poetry penned by Bengali poets in the courts of the Muslim rulers. For example, the "*Nabi-vamsha*" (Prophets-Line) of Saiyad Sultan (1654) traces the lives of prophets, including in its sacred register some Hindu "prophets" as well.⁸ Heyat Mamud's "*Janga-nama Kavya*" ("Battle-chronicle Poem"), in the eighteenth century, is about Karbala events, but includes history going back to the beginning of time.⁹

As for the oral poetry developed by Bengali bards, the stories about early prophets seem especially popular. This is evident in the number of times that they are mentioned in the *jarigan* collections of Jasimuddin and S. M. Lutfor Rahman,

and in the titles of audio-cassettes in Bangladeshi music shops today. These *jarigan* songs include episodes about Ibrahim (Abraham) and the strife between his wife Sahera (Sara) and her co-wife, Hazera (Hagar); the banishment of Hazera to a wilderness existence when she was pregnant with Ishmail; the birth of Ishmail and his return to his father; the testing of Ibrahim's piety when asked by Allah to sacrifice his son; the story of Iusuf (Joseph) and his wicked brothers; the story of Ayub (Job) and his devoted wife; and others of Biblical-Koranic origin.

The Islamic stories about ancient prophets differ considerably from the Old Testament ones. The dreams of Ibrahim, through which Allah communicates with him, and the strife between his wives are treated in detail. How Ishmail talks to his mother while still residing in her womb and how Rohima, the wife of Ayub, struggles as a beggar to feed him, are typical of Islamic expansions of Old Testament stories. Popular stories about King Solomon are also found in anthologies that include *jarigan* poetry.¹⁰

Stories from the life of the Prophet

Stories about the Prophet also include circumstances not strictly scriptural, but coming rather from the collective imaginations of Persian and Bengali poets. The *jarigan* song called "*Kulsumer Mejhani*" (Kulsum's Feast) tells about a banquet arranged by one of the daughters of the Prophet in order to gain credit in the eyes of Allah. Her refusal to invite her poor step-relations, the family of Hasan and Hosein, is overcome by the compassion and diplomacy of the Prophet. In another *jarigan* story, "*Jaberer Putrabadh*" (The Deaths of Jaber's Sons), two young brothers are restored to life through the intervention of the Prophet.

Romances and other stories

The above themes all have some connection with important Islamic history or legend. Other *jarigan* songs, however, are only loosely connected to these themes. They refer to the same Islamic values, but they are set in a romantic world, one that is physically closer to Bengal, in India, if not in eastern Bengal itself. These stories are considered part of the *jarigan* repertory, probably because they are sung by *jarigan* singers or merely because they are Islamic.

Monsters, miracles and much humor characterize these fairy-tale-like stories. They can be grouped according to their close or distant association with origins in Persian and Arabic literature. For instance, the story of Iusuf and Zuleikha can be included as an importation to Bengal from Persia rather than from Arabic sources.

The equally popular story of the lovers, Leila and Majnun, comes from Persian poetry. This story is a good example of a romance with a fairy-tale quality. In it a princess falls in love with a commoner. When she is forced to marry someone else he goes mad. Most *jarigan* stories, except for the Karbala ones, end happily, but this one has a tragic, "Romeo and Juliet" finale.

The story "*Anal Haq*" (I Am the Truth) is a curious tale with many fantastic turns of events. The story involves a pun on the word "*haq*" which not only means truth, but is a name for Allah. The hero who has been inspired to say that he is Truth is

accused of presuming to be God. In the end, with the help of Allah, he convinces his antagonist that he speaks the truth about the tenets of Islam. The antagonist repents.

The stories of Rajeswari and of Tilekban¹¹ involve Indian princesses who refuse to be wooed by Muslim princes. Tilekban, about whom a *jarigan* is included in Appendix A, threatens not only to knock the teeth from her Muslim suitors' mouths, but to kill them, and she has a wrestling match with one of them. In these stories heroes have adventures in which they talk to jinns and face up to monsters.

A humorous *jarigan* story, "*Gobi-nama*" (The Cow-chronicle), concerns a cow about to be slaughtered, thereby becoming useful leather for musical instruments. Before being taken to be butchered, the cow laments not so much her own fate, but that of her calf who will be motherless. Her farewell speech contains an example of a mother's devotion and is a humorous echo of the heroic words in the farewell speeches of heroes and heroines in *jarigan* epics.¹²

Modern day themes

Traditional stories continue to be sung in *jarigan* performances, but new themes are included to suit the times. The *jarigan* songs composed at the time of the Bengali-vs.-Urdu language riots in 1952 and for the Bangladeshi War of Independence in 1971 are prime examples. Today, *jarigan* songs are sometimes used to disseminate information on current issues and to give advice on practical matters. An example of a *jarigan* song about family planning is included in the translations in Appendix A.

In the past, *jarigan* singers have included episodes from the Sanskrit epics in their themes. The Principal of Notre Dame College in Dhaka, Father Joseph Peixotto, told me about a Christian Father in Purulia who recently passed away. He used to entertain audiences for whole nights by singing *jarigan* songs about Saint Anthony.

THE CHARACTERS

The characters in the *jarigan* stories, although iconographic, are the lifeblood of the narrations. Allah, his angels, and humans speak openly their joys, wishes, disappointments and sorrow. Although the world of Allah, prophets, saints and martyrs is a lofty one, this "cast" of characters act out their parts in everyday language, expressing feelings familiar to the audience. So many personages fill the *jarigan* stories that only a few examples of the main ones can be mentioned here.

Allah

All the scriptural and Karbala *jarigan* stories revolve around the relationship of humans to Allah, the supreme being of the universe sitting in state in his *darbar* (throne room) in heaven. He is pictured not only as the prime creator and planner of the universe, but also as a strict ruler or governor, such as a caliph was expected to be: wise, firm and yet merciful. He communicates with humans through deputies, the angels who carry messages to humans and who sometimes intercede for them. He is strict in requiring allegiance and respect; he enforces his will with severe

punishments. His strictness, however, is tempered by mercy which he shows generously to those who repent their misdeeds.

Angels, *jinn* and monsters

Allah is attended by angels. The most important one in the *jarigan* stories is the angel Zibrail (Gabriel). He performs the office of messenger and facilitator of Allah's plans. Sometimes Allah asks Zibrail to find out the "*mon*" (mind and heart) of someone; that is, to test the true feelings of a protagonist towards Allah. Zibrail often assumes a disguise such as that of a holy man when he approaches mortals. After he meets and converses with them, he reports back to Allah. In his role of messenger, Zibrail sometimes intercedes for a hero or heroine in trouble, moving Allah to pity.

A second important super-natural being is the Hindu god of Death who goes by the name of Jom or Yama.¹³ When he has been commissioned by Allah to "take" a soul, he carries out his mission faithfully without mercy. He is rough with those who oppose him, but in at least one story he is actually outwitted and fails in his mission.¹⁴ In this story Jom uses foul language while arguing with the hero. The character of Jom is portrayed through the hero's response to the taunts of Jom. Thus:

"... Your birth was at an evil time; the lunar day was dark, otherwise how can you take the soul of the creation of God? ... You are a son of a procuress; one day you will know the hollow-feeling of life and you will have to give your life on the Day of Judgment."¹⁵

How Saitan (Satan) tempts the wife of Ibrahim (Abraham) with unctuous words is dramatically portrayed in the "*Korbanir Jari*" (The Sacrifice *Jari*) which is quoted in Appendix A.

Jinn and monsters figure in the *jarigan* romances. They are crude characters, rough in their speech and action, but they may turn out to be basically good. In the *jarigan* called "Tilekban", a monster with jaws that can stretch from earth to heaven threatens to eat the hero Hanifa. When he finds out that Hanifa is related to the Prophet through Hazrat Ali, the monster, who says he admires Ali, reverses his original intentions to eat Hanifa and sets about helping Hanifa to woo Tilekban.

Prophets and holy men

Prophets and holy men play important roles in the *jarigan* stories. The prophets share mutual characteristics. Above all, they are pious, putting the will of Allah before any wish of their own. They are gentle husbands and fathers. Ibrahim is reluctant to send Hazera to the wilderness. When he finally does, he leaves her with provisions and departs as gently as he can.¹⁶ In the story of Jaber's sons, the Prophet forgives a mother for concealing her dead sons from him and restores them to life.¹⁷

Martyrs and other heroes

Hosein is the central figure in the Karbala cycle of stories. From him and his brother, Hasan, *jarigan* songs sometimes take the name of "Hasan-Hosein *gan*"

(Hasan-Hosein Songs). Hosein is the primary example of self-sacrifice in devotion to Allah's will. In his stand at Karbala he chooses to die rather than sign a pledge of allegiance to a leader whom he knows to be unjust.

Hosein is portrayed as supremely compassionate. He offers his followers many occasions to leave him and save themselves, and he mourns in advance whenever one insists on going to battle. Not only is Hosein by descent the grandson of the Prophet, but he is also heir to the Prophet's magnanimity and holiness.¹⁸ Hosein is merciful even to his enemies, offering them water when he himself has only a limited supply, and he seeks to convert them before resorting to battle.¹⁹ Thus Hosein mirrors the highest ideals of Islamic life.

The heroes who die at Hosein's side reflect his virtues by their devotion to him. They include in their numbers both his close relatives and members of his warrior band. They represent true followers of a beloved leader. The *jarigan* song called "Kasem-Sokhinar Jari" contains expressions of love and loyalty on the part of several relatives.

Heroines

The *jarigan* stories concern the lives of women as much as they do those of men. Domestic scenes are frequent in which women carry out their duties as wives and mothers with devotion according to the dictates of Allah. The story of Rohima, wife of the prophet Ayub (Job), exemplifies the devotion of a wife to her husband. She insists on becoming a beggar in the city in order to feed her husband who has fallen on hard times. A popular *jarigan* song is about Rabeya, a Middle Eastern female saint.

Women who stumble in their duties are redeemed by admitting their mistakes and by seeking forgiveness from Allah. In all the *jarigan* stories in which they figure, the women possess wills of their own and the initiative to act on them. In the Karbala episodes, they exhibit, by their sacrifices, a heroism equal to that of the men.

Children

The audience visualizes clearly the children in *jarigan* stories through their words to their elders and amongst themselves. Ishmail speaks to his father Ibrahim with respect and love. He is a model of filial devotion as he helps his father prepare for the sacrifice. "Bind your eyes," he directs his father, "then you will be able to make the knife do its work."²⁰ Kasem addresses his mother with the same respect and sensitivity when he seeks her permission to go into battle. In a paraphrased version of his words he tells her: "Mother, bid me farewell... Do not grieve... This world is transient and we will meet again."²¹

As small boys, Hasan and Hosein are seen to connive tenderly to procure their mother a new sari so that she will not be ashamed to go to her step-sister's feast.²² The young sons of Muslim, Hosein's cousin who is executed in a pre-Karbala episode, help each other solicitously to escape from death at the hands of Yezid.²³

Villains

As often happens in literature, evil characters are the most intriguing. As well as Jom, the god of Death, the *jarigan* stories are full of villains who furnish foils to the virtuous heroes. Characters such as the wicked brothers of Iusuf (Joseph) who threw him into a well, and the witch Maimuna, who acts as agent in the murder of Hasan, are depicted in brief but vivid detail.²⁴ The arch villain of the Karbala cycle is, of course, the caliph Yezid, along with his deputies and the captains of his army.

Ordinary people

Princes, princesses and warriors are the heroes and heroines of the *jarigan* romances. Their wishes and hopes are relatively humble compared to the strivings of the Karbala heroes, or the piety of saintly prophets. They take pride in having a high station in life and in a life-style meant to be respected. Women in these romances marry only heroes who prove their worth in true fairy-tale tradition.

In stories outside of the Karbala cycle, the heroes come from many walks of life, from royalty in exotic lands to saints and working men from neighboring India. They reflect how Bengali villagers deal with their everyday domestic and social problems. In the scriptural and Karbala *jarigan* stories these characters usually play a secondary role.

Animals

Animals from the Middle East that are rarely or never seen in Bengal figure in *jarigan* stories. The prophet Ibrahim sacrifices a hundred camels before he learns that this was not the sacrifice asked of him. Horses, relatively rare in Bengal, are an essential part of Muharram processions and figure in several *jarigan* songs. For example, in the story of Tilekban, the horse, Duldul, Hosein's noble horse at the battle of Karbala, is asked by Hanifa to carry him from Arabia to Tilekban's palace in India in six seconds. At first the horse points out to Hanifa that he is old and that he deserves respect for the many battles in which he has carried the holy family of the Prophet. Nevertheless, the horse, Duldul, proceeds to accomplish the feat asked of him.

Animals common to Bengal show characteristic traits that are immediately recognizable by a rural Bengali audience. A dog enjoys a pudding left unguarded in a kitchen. During the strife between Ibrahim's wives, a thieving crow dies after tasting a pudding that has been poisoned. In a Karbala episode, a singing bird brings to a mother the news of her son's death on the battle field.

THE SPIRITUAL ASPECTS

“... এই সব কাহিনীর ভিতর যে অপূর্ব আদর্শবাদের কথা আছে তাহা যুগে যুগে মানুষকে অনুপ্রাণিত করিয়াছে ...”

... *Ei shob kahinir bhitore je apurva adorshabader kotha ache taha juge jage manushke anupranito koriyache ...*

(... Within all these stories, the superb idealism has inspired men down the ages ...)

— A line from Jasimuddin's book, *Jarigan* (1968).¹

PHILOSOPHY

Indeed, as Jasimuddin states in the above quotation, *jarigan* stories reflect a lofty vision of human destiny and the proper Islamic response to earthly challenges. To the early Hindu-Buddhist people of eastern Bengal, where most conversions to Islam in the region of Bengal took place, the advent of Islamic culture presented fresh ideas and attitudes to daily life. Whereas previously Hindu literature had described a universe based largely on mythology and caste mores, the *jarigan* songs, which embodied Muslim lore in vernacular form, told of historical events and of a real world in which humans are expected to deal with each other in a way acceptable to Allah. This view of life was attractively egalitarian and novel.

Sometimes the *jarigan* poet states explicitly the Islamic world view and the role that mankind should play in it. An Islamic attitude is often stated in the *jarigan bandanas*, the invocational passages already described. In addition, the *jarigan* singer may interrupt his recital to make *ex tempore* comments on his faith in Allah. The speeches of protagonists in the *jarigan palas* provide explicit pronouncements on the duties of mortal men as servants of Allah. Generally, however, the stories are left to speak for themselves as parables.

A *jarigan* recital may also include interpolated songs known as *dhuagan* (literally, refrain-songs) which express religious and philosophical ideas explicitly or symbolically through analogies, such as in songs known as *deho-totto* (analogy of the universe to the human body) and *prem-totto* (analogy of human love to divine love), and others. Jasimuddin's collection of *jarigan* songs includes a few such

religio-philosophical *dhuagan* songs.² These songs, in the form of commentaries, add emphasis to the underlying moral and spiritual themes of the *jarigan* narratives, and Jasimuddin considers them a significant part of *jarigan* recital traditions.³ S. M. Lutfur Rahman also stresses the importance of these songs in a *jarigan* recital.⁴

Allah's domain and his will

Allah's separate identity

Contrary to the Hindu perception of the universe as a fluid unity, the Islamic cosmos of *jarigan* poetry is divided into three discrete domains: Allah's kingdom or heaven, the world of earthly existence, and Hell. Allah is a supreme ruler in a kingdom remote from the material world. Humans who have followed his *kalema*, the expression of faith in his will, may be worthy to enter his kingdom. Life on earth constitutes the opportunity to prove one's faith in Allah.

In the *jarigan* stories, the protagonists are aware of their separation from Allah, the one and only God who "without blemish" sits in his *darbar* (a king's assembly room). Allah rarely speaks to humans directly. Rather he communicates with them through dreams or through his angel messengers. Access to his *darbar* is the aim of the virtuous protagonists, martyrdom being the most direct path to heaven. The earthly world remains a proving ground and the deeds of each person's life will be evaluated on the Day of Judgment (*kiyamat*).

One *jarigan* story, "*Anal Haq*" ("Anal Haq", or, literally, "I Am the Truth"), in contrast, states that mankind is within the being of Allah. Jasimuddin explains that this story is based on a legend concerning a religious reformer who lived about a hundred years after the Prophet's death. He says that reformers at that time tried to redefine God's position as part of the universe and not separate from it. The hero in this story is executed for suggesting this unity, but at the end of the story his enemies are converted to his beliefs.

Allah's will expressed in the *kalema*

The *kalema*, or profession of faith in Allah, is set forth in the Koranic scriptures transmitted directly to the Prophet. The *jarigan* protagonists are frequently reminded to "read", or, more precisely, "recite" the *kalema* which includes invoking the name of Allah and promising to do his will.

Those who forget to call on the name of Allah are sorely punished. In the *jarigan* story about the sacrifice of Ishmail, Ibrahim is punished for forgetting to call on Allah when he finally received a son.⁵ In a *jarigan* about the birth of Ibrahim's son, when his banished wife Hazera is in labor with Ishmail, the child speaks from her womb telling her to "read" the Koran so that he can "come to earth."⁶

The Karbala cycle of *jarigan* stories provides the most sublime examples of obedience to Allah's will. Faced with sure death, the Karbala heroes nevertheless continue to fight on the side of Allah, always remembering to call on his name as they go forth. Hosein is kneeling in prayer when he is killed. Even the horse, "Duldul," remembers to call on Allah before he sets off to carry the hero, Hanifa, to India.

Life on earth

Contrary to the Hindu and Buddhist idea of re-incarnation, Bengali Muslims, like all Muslims, believe that a person's current life constitutes the only chance to prove devotion to Allah. The *jarigan bandanas* frequently contain the statement: "*Ei bhabe din jabe na*" (This kind of day will not pass by again), meaning that one should not expect another earthly opportunity for pleasure or piety. The universe has been set up, as it is, once and for all; the worldly life on earth is a "bazaar-of-the-moon," a beautiful but transient place of commerce, illusions and temptations.⁷ The real life is yet to come.

Destiny

The concept of *kopal* (literally, forehead) or destiny, as frequently referred to in the *jarigan* stories, resembles the Hindu concept of *dharma*, the pre-ordained role to which each human is born. In Islamic lore, the destiny of each human is "written" on his forehead at birth. Thus the forehead is referred to as the place where one's fate resides. "*Aj abodhi dani kopal amar bamete*" (Today my *kopal*, which was favorable, has now turned unfavorable), laments the wife of Hasan as he dies from the poison that she unwittingly served him.⁸ In the *jarigan* about the banishment of Hazera, in her shock at abandonment she forgets to call on Allah. He tells the angel Zibrail that for her neglect he will "write" seven years of sorrow on her forehead.⁹

The daughter of Hosein in captivity moans to her captor: "Oh, Yezid, in evil *kopal* you offer dates to me."¹⁰ With the realization of her own *kopal*, she resigns herself to a life of sorrow, Allah's pre-ordained path to be followed without bitterness.¹¹

MORALITY

Good against evil

Moral themes, especially those of devotion to Allah and one's family members, bind the *jarigan* stories together like a strong thread through a necklace of differing beads. The struggle between good and evil is presented at a level familiar to everyone in the audience. Whether a story is about a respected prophet or about the wooing of a princess, the underlying themes concern devotion and loyalty to Allah's will. Even great prophets like Ibrahim are seen to hesitate when torn between two choices. The audience enjoys hearing exactly how Allah will punish those who make the wrong choice, how basically good characters recover his favor, and how the evil ones are converted or destroyed.

The play of good against evil in *jarigan* themes provides their dramatic appeal. The audience looks forward to hearing what the protagonists will do in a compromising situation. "What he did then, I am going to tell you," sings the *boyati*, and the audience waits expectantly to hear the details of the action, although they already know the outcome.

Virtuous characters in the *jarigan* stories have the power to perform miracles. In the *jarigan* called "*Jan Churi*" (Soul-thief) a saintly man is able to challenge Jom,

the "King of Death".¹² In reverse, the evil characters, who are impious, tell lies and commit murder, are made to suffer for their crimes and to repent before they can receive Allah's forgiveness.¹³

Piety

Piety is extolled in the *jarigan* literature above any other virtue. Life is a time to devote to Allah and follow his path as revealed by the Prophet. The Karbala cycle of stories contain, of course, the most moving examples of such piety. Each episode of the Karbala cycle is an example of supreme sacrifice in the name of Allah on the part of Hosein and his loyal followers. All give up their lives in the cause of Islam. Although Hosein's death is in human terms tragic, the audience is aware of the lesson implied in his death; they know that Hosein and his followers will enter heaven directly, while the impious captain of Yezid's army, who blasphemes the name of Allah by invoking it in a patently villainous war and who has spilled the blood of the Prophet's descendants, will go directly to Hell.

The dedication of women to Allah

While the heroes of Karbala prove their dedication to Allah on the field of battle, the heroines at Karbala, in a more intimate setting, put the will of Allah before their own needs. They suffer when they see their children crying in agony, deprived of water which is so close but unattainable. The women watch husbands, sons and brothers go into battle from which they have little chance of returning. As true Muslims, these women face sacrifice with grief, but with submission to the will of Allah who has ordained these events.

The heroines of non-Karbala episodes exhibit dedication in situations where they must decide between their own immediate desires and the path they know to be the correct one. When Saitan (Satan) warns Ibrahim's wife that Ibrahim has taken Ishmail to sacrifice him, she answers that if he had wanted a thousand sons, she would give them. In the *jarigan* song about Ayub and his wife, Rohima, his devoted wife insists on becoming a beggar in order to feed him, although he tries to dissuade her.¹⁴

Family devotion vs. dedication to Allah

Devotion between father and son, uncle and nephew, one brother and another, husband and wife, and, most prominently, between mother and son, figures in almost every *jarigan* story, especially in the Karbala episodes. The examples are countless.

The "Kasem-Sokhinar *Jari*" (The Kasem and Sokhina *Jari*) in Jasimuddin's collection contains all of these relationships. The story starts out with Kasem's request from Hosein, his uncle, to be allowed to cross the enemy lines to fetch water. Hosein answers: "Kasem, you are the treasure of my heart. How can I allow this and send you into battle?" Then Hosein recalls how his brother, Hasan, the father of Kasem, entrusted Kasem into his hands. Hosein wishes to please Kasem and yet he loves Kasem too much to let him go to battle, especially as he must keep his promise with his brother, Hasan, to be a father to Kasem and to see to the marriage of Kasem and Sokhina.

The audience knows how close Hosein was to his brother from a scene, for instance, in the *jarigan* song "Kulsumer *Mejbani*" (Kulsum's Feast). In this *pala*, the brothers are seen as young boys working together to help their mother to be invited to the feast. Whenever Hasan's name is mentioned by Hosein, the audience remembers their close relationship.

The speeches in "Kasem-Sokhinar *Jari*" between Kasem and his mother are filled with deep filial and maternal devotion. The following speech illustrates the love of Kasem's mother for her son:

"Now saying what (to me), Kasem, saying what,
Do you pierce my heart with a poisoned arrow.

The mother whose son has died, (imagine her!)
Sitting in a distant country, that unfortunate mother!

Leaving me thus you are going, Kasem; is this your will?
I will call for you, I, a sad mother weeping for her son.

If I were your son and you were my mother,
Then you would understand my pain for my son, my son.

Calling me, (say) 'Mother!' once as you leave, Kasem.
I will not be able to see your face-like-the-moon again.

I carried you ten months, ten days in my womb;
Now at Karbala I must bid farewell to your life."

The devoted relationship between husband and wife is alluded to when Kasem's mother remembers her husband's (Hasan's) words when she wanted to take her own life as he was dying: "Wife, at this time do not leave your life. If you leave your life now, Kasem will be fatherless and motherless."

Finally, in this song the love between Kasem and Sokhina illumines the sorrow of their parting speeches. When the dying Kasem asks for water, Sokhina says: "Kasem, friend of my heart, my dear one, where shall I get water? I have not water except the water of my eyes ... If you want my heart, my flesh, I agree to give it ..." Kasem answers: "Sokhina, you speak correctly. The bravest of the Prophet's tribe have not been able to fetch water ... No! No! No! I do not want the water of this world. Look, Sokhina, my dear father [Hasan] speaks to you while drinking the cool water of Heaven."

These instances of devotion run through the non-Karbala *jarigan* stories as well. The speeches between Ibrahim and his son in the "*Korbanir Jari*" (The Sacrifice *Jari*) song are full of respect and devotion, especially when Ishmail seeks to help his father with the sacrifice: "Dear father, let me advise you. I think you have held the knife too high. Make the blow penetrate my throat. You will be able to do the sacrifice at the *darbar* of Allah Haq."

In this same story the devotion of Ibrahim's wife for her husband is portrayed when he asks her to bring Ishmail to him. The poet says: "Seeing her husband, his wife was greatly pleased, like a beggar-woman receiving a golden treasure chest." The death of her sons tempts the wife of Jaber to commit suicide in the *jarigan* song "Jaberer *Putrabadh*" (The Killing of Jaber's Sons). Only her duty to feed the Prophet who has been invited holds back her hand.

In all these and countless other instances, the profound importance in Bengali society which is given to human relationships is frequently reflected. Human ties are shown to form a powerful counter-weight to the dedication which Allah demands for himself from humans. The *jarigan palas* are parables that teach the glory of dedication to Allah above all earthly relationships. The parting between heroes and heroines is painful, but martyrdom is worth the reward of Allah's pleasure.

THE EMOTIONS

Moods

... জারী-গানের মধ্যে শুধু করুণ রস নয়, বীররস, মধুররস এবং শান্ত রসেরও আবির্ভাব লক্ষণীয়।

... *Jari-ganer moddhe shudhu korun rosh noy, bir-rosh, madhur-rosh ebong shanto rosher o abibharb lakkhaniya.*¹⁵

In this statement S. M. Lutfor Rahman reminds his readers that *jarigan* songs are not just songs of grief; "heroic, sweet and peaceful moods may also be found in them." By various narrative and rhetorical means, the *jarigan* singer moves the hearts of his audience not only to sorrow, but to a variety of feelings, including laughter. Bengali scholars often say that in *jarigan* themes two moods predominate: *korun rosh* (sorrowful mood) and *bir rosh* (heroic or "manly" mood), but these two moods color only the Karbala cycle of stories, not the stories from the larger compendium of songs that are also called *jarigan* songs.

The identification of moods derives from the *Nāṭyaśāstra* (*Performing Arts Treatise*) by Bharata that has served over two thousand years as scripture for artists and critics in India. Nine major moods are identified. In Bengali, the *nava rasa*, the nine major moods, or "sentiments", as the world renowned sitarist, Ravi Shankar, prefers to call them, are listed as follows: *shringara* or *prem* (romantic or erotic); *hasya* (humorous); *karuna* or *korun* (sad); *bir* (heroic); *raudra* (angry); *bhayanaka* (frightened); *vibhatsa* (disgusted); *adbhuta* (amazed); and *shanta* (peaceful). The idea of a joyous mood is curiously absent from the list, but *shanta rosh* may cover this connotation.¹⁶

Besides *korun rosh* and *bir rosh*, the other moods, including humor, can be found in non-Karbala *jarigan* stories. The exception is *prem rosh* (romantic or erotic sentiment). The joys and pangs of love, which are central themes in a large number of Bengali folk songs, are largely missing from *jarigan* poetry. Even in the story about Kasem and Sokhina the pangs of their impending separation are expressed without reference to erotic love. Perhaps *prem rosh* is inappropriate to Islamic themes.

The *shanta rosh* (peaceful mood) occurs, if at all, at the conclusion of stories with happy endings, or with the catharsis that follows the dramatization in *jarigan* Karbala songs of extremely tragic events. Meanwhile, with the exception of the Karbala narratives, almost all the *jarigan* stories contain elements of humor.

Contrary to the effort that a classical Indian poet-musician makes to maintain a unity of mood throughout a composition, the *jarigan* bard depicts a variety of moods in one *pala* narration, depending on the scene being described. He does this in the way Shakespeare (as opposed to the ancient Greek dramatists) produces different

moods in different parts of the same play. However, unlike Western operas, in which singers use sad or happy tunes according to the different moods expressed in the lyrics, the *jarigan boyati* maintains the same tune throughout his entire narration. Moods are conveyed only by recounting the words and actions of heroes, and by the *boyati*'s dramatic rendition of them.

The *boyati*, therefore, spends little time describing particular moods, but rather he uses his talents to organize the events of his narrative, so that the events of the story are what engender various moods. The traditional mood categories are useful, however, for examining how the stories affect the audience.¹⁷

Korun rosh (tragic mood)

The term "*jari*" implies that the grieving mood should be the principal one in the *jarigan* repertory. However, this mood characterizes only the Karbala cycle of stories, not by any means the other songs in the *jarigan* repertory in its broad sense. In the Karbala *jarigan* songs, *jarigan* poets, like the script writers of the Persian *ta'ziyeh* dramas, portray the grief of heroes and heroines in the lines they speak. The heroes of Karbala express grief in words of final farewell to mothers, wives and children. Other than in speeches, grief is not described verbally, except in the stock phrase "*kandite lagilo*" (he or she began to weep).

Two passages chosen at random from the *jarigan* about Kasem and Sokhina illustrate this principle. The words in the first example are spoken by the mother of Kasem after he tells her that he intends to challenge the enemy in order to bring water to the camp.

Example 1. Kasem's mother speaks to him as he bids her farewell before going into battle.

"What are you saying, my Kasem! What are you telling me!
You put poison on my head, an arrow in my heart!
When a son goes to a distant land and dies,
How does the mother sitting grieving at home survive?"¹⁸

Example 2. Kasem lies dying in the arms of his bride, Sokhina. He asks for water. In a prose passage Sokhina answers:

"Kasem, friend of my heart, my love, where will I get water? Today is the seventh day since only the tears of my eyes have furnished water. Even these have dried. Take my heart, take my flesh, I agree to all. Only the tears of my eyes I cannot give."¹⁹

The grief embodied in the Karbala stories as a principal theme, whether expressed in literary Karbala epics or in the Karbala songs of *jarigan* bards, is an untraditional trend in South Asian literature. Although tragedy and grief are included in the great Sanskrit works, the stories generally end happily.²⁰

Bir rosh (heroic mood)

A foremost expert in Bengali folk songs, Mustafa Zaman Abbasi, comments that the only two genres of Bengali folk song that are "manly", in the sense of *bir rosh*, are

jarigan songs and *sari* songs. *Sari* songs are sung by the paddlers in the exuberant boat races in Bangladesh which take place at the end of the monsoon season.²¹ Jasimuddin and other writers credit especially the *jarigan* repertory for injecting "manliness" into Bengali poetry, after a prolonged period in Bengali literature during which the lyrical, more sentimental, poetry of the Vaishnava hymns was popular.

For about two hundred years, starting with the *Gīta Govinda* (Song of the Divine-cowherder, Krishna) by Jaya Deva in the thirteenth century, Vaishnava poetry was instrumental in spreading the religious outlook of this cult. Vaishnava *pads* ("verses" or songs) enlarged on the vision of the god Krishna as a lover in the groves of Vrindavan, rather than as he is portrayed in the *Mahābhārata*, as a warrior on the field of Kurukshetra.²² Vaishnavist bards, like the Baul singers who were influenced by them, used the pangs of love as a metaphor for the passion involved in the worship of a divinity. In *jarigan* narrations, this metaphor would seem sacrilegious, if used to suggest a worshiper's relationship with Allah.

Instead, the poetry of *jarigan* songs is based on the Muslim world view in which humans seek approval, not love, from Allah. His approval will come at a distant time on the Day of Judgment. The mood of *jarigan* stories, therefore, emphasizes courage and determination, not pining for an absent lover or enjoying the pleasures of romance. Whether a *jarigan* song is about the bravery of Hosein, determined to fight a battle that he cannot win, or the courage of a Persian prince tackling with wit, as well as strength, an indomitable Hindu princess, the audience is treated to scenes imbued with a fighting spirit. Even the cow, the heroine of the mock *jarigan* song, "*Gobinama*" (The Cow-chronicle), goes to her death courageously,²³ reflecting the *bir rosh* (brave spirit) of the great heroes and heroines of Karbala.

The Karbala women are portrayed as being just as "manly" as the men, stoically accepting the loss of their sons and husbands in battle and facing the taunts of their captors. In other stories, Ibrahim's wife, Hazera, endures with manly courage her abandonment in the wilderness.²⁴ Jaber's wife, after one of her sons kills his younger brother, then falls to his own death, resists committing suicide in her grief. She hides the bodies of her sons and cooks dinner in order to be ready for the scheduled arrival of the Prophet who has been invited to dine.²⁵ The *jarigan* fairy-tale songs are also full of such determined action on the part of women facing dilemmas and threats.

Prem rosh (romantic feeling)

As already stated, *prem rosh* (romantic or erotic mood) enters *jarigan* stories only episodically, not as a main theme. The following two examples contrast verses from a Vaishnava song, in which love is described sensually, with a passage from a *jarigan* fairy-tale song, in which love is treated quite mundanely:

Example 1: lyrics from a Vaishnava song in which Radha thinks of her love-making with Krishna:

"As I near the bed,
He smiles and gazes.
Flower-arrows fill the world.
The sport of love,

Its glow and luxuries
Are indescribable, O friend,
And when I yield myself,
His joy is endless..."²⁶

Example 2: a passage from the *jarigan* "Tilekban" in which Prince Kumin of Arabia woos the Hindustani princess Tilekban:

"Prince Kumin says, 'Lady, listen to me;
After seeing your beauty and feeling weak (thereby),
Please decide to marry me.'
Tilekban answers, 'Test my wisdom.
(See) how bold you are that you wish to marry me for my beauty.
If you wish to marry me by force,
I will knock out all of your teeth one by one.'"²⁷

Hashya rosh (laughing mood)

The example from the "Tilekban" *jarigan* above is typical of the humor in *jarigan* narrations which are not directly concerned with the Karbala tragedy. Humor appears in most of the non-Karbala stories of *jarigan* songs, enlivening their serious moral themes. Scholars who limit their definition of the *jarigan* repertory to the Karbala songs, maintain, of course, that *hashya rosh* is absent from *jarigan* songs. However, even the scriptural *jarigan* songs contain elements of humor.

Humor in *jarigan* stories often lies in humble details. For example, listeners are entertained by a *jarigan* description of crows that swoop down to eat a pudding left on a window sill,²⁸ or with a hero who eats twenty-two *maunds* (approximately 880 kilograms or 1,760 pounds!) of rice at one sitting before undertaking a journey to woo a princess.²⁹ The crude language of monsters addressing heroes, and the different ways in which the angel Zibrail disguises himself, are a few of the many amusing scenes which enhance *jarigan* songs that deal with stories other than Karbala episodes. The cow story already mentioned is an example of outright humor.

Wit is the main feature of the poetic debates that are sometimes included in *jarigan* performances. One *boyati* poses a difficult question for a rival *boyati* to answer. The question and answer on the topic of how a woman keeps her modesty in a compromising situation has already been mentioned.³⁰

Feelings of tension

Many *jarigan* songs portray less dramatic moods than the main ones mentioned above. One of these is anxiety, a mood which lies between fear and courage. It occurs when a protagonist is faced with a difficult decision, as when the prophet Ibrahim hesitates to believe that he is asked to sacrifice his son. He ponders dolefully the sorrow that this will bring to his wife as well as to himself. The audience knows that ultimately he will attempt the sacrifice, but his indecision provides moments touched with anxiety.

The talented *jarigan* poet knows how to keep his audience in suspense and this mood pervades the entire *jarigan* repertory. Suspense is invoked as heroes

commence deeds that are fraught with danger. The *boyati* avoids telling what will happen next by addressing comments directly to the audience or inviting the chorus to repeat his lines. Even if the audience knows what will happen, it craves being suspended emotionally. This the *boyati* can do masterfully.

As mentioned above about the theme of human relationships in *jarigan* stories, devotion between humans in opposition to devotion to Allah supplies the principal conflict and source of suspense in the *jarigan* episodes. In the thoroughly epic *jarigan* songs—the Karbala and scriptural ones—the stories all involve a challenge to humans to stay devoted to Allah in the face of various threats to themselves or their loved ones on earth. The audience is kept in suspense as to how Ibrahim will obey Allah when he feels such intense love for his son. Suspense pervades the Karbala stories as each hero and heroine decides to face death rather than side with the enemy. The listeners are kept aware of great choices to be made and, although they may know the outcome, they enjoy the suspense that precedes it.

The impact of poetry and music

The story themes and moral lessons of *jarigan palas* might never have developed into a popular form of entertainment without the accompanying arts of poetry and music. The *palas* described in *jarigan* songs are not only dramatic, but prosodically and musically compelling. Thus *jarigan* performances represent a tight congruity of narrations, poetry and music. The next chapters introduce the salient features of the poetic and musical form of *jarigan* songs that have ensured the survival of this repertory.

PART THREE

THE FORM

আরে নাচে রে, বুইড়া নাচে, বুড়ি নাচে, নাচে বুইড়ার বউ ...

[Are] nache [re], buira nache, buri nache, nache buirar bou ...

Oh, he dances, the old man dances, the old woman dances,
the old man's bride dances ...

— A line from a *dhuagan* song, Faridpur, 1964.

THE POETIC FORM

"... বিজ্ঞানায় শুইয়া কেবলই মনে হইতে লাগিল, একটা গ্রাম্য লোক আফাজউদ্দিন।
কিছু কি সুন্দর মর্মস্পর্শী তাঁর গান ..."

"... As I lay on my bed, this thought kept entering my mind:
Afazuddin is a village man! Yet, how beautiful, how moving his
songs! ..."

— Lines from Jasimuddin's book, *Jarigan* (1968).¹

THE LANGUAGE

Vocabulary

The vocabulary of *jarigan* poetry is characterized by the presence of Persian and Arabic loan words as well as by dialectal versions of modern Bengali words. On the whole, the vocabulary is standard enough for someone brought up in "*shadhu*" (refined) Bengali to understand. Occasionally, however, the dialectal vocabulary may present problems to the transcriber of *jarigan* verses, especially when the words cannot be found in Bengali dictionaries, not even in those devoted to Bengali dialects. In their respective *jarigan* collections, both Jasimuddin and S. M. Lutfur Rahman use footnotes to translate dialectal words into standard Bengali. Most of the Perso-Arabic vocabulary can be found in the Bengali dictionary compiled by Golam Maksud Hilaly.²

1. Bengali dialectal words

a. Verb forms

Both long and short forms of verbs are used either for metric reasons or because the poet prefers the sound of one form over the other. Sometimes both the long and the short forms of a verb will appear in the same passage. On the whole, however, long forms prevail: *thakiya* for *thake* (staying); *aichao* for *asho* (come); *hoibe* for *hobe* (will be); etc.

b. Other dialectal changes

Other dialectal features in *jarigan* vocabulary represent changes in the pronunciation of words. For example, *jonom* for *jonmo*³; *manab* for *manush*⁴; *pairache* for *poreche*⁵; *tor* for *tomar*⁶; *tui* for *tumi*⁷; *mor* for *amar*⁸; *chila* for *chilo*⁹. If the transcriber "corrects" these changes, he risks destroying the meter of the *boyati*'s sung lines.

c. Plural forms

Generally, in Bengali, the context of a word indicates whether the word is to be understood in the singular or plural form. However, in the *jarigan* poetry the affix "-gon" signifying the plural form of nouns pertaining to people is used more frequently than in standard Bengali.¹⁰

d. Dialectal pronunciation of consonants

The pronunciation of Bengali in the *jarigan* songs may be dialectal. Most frequently this occurs with the letter "j" which is pronounced as "z"; for example, the word *jari* is pronounced "zārī." "Ch" (চ) and "chh" (ছ) (formerly transcribed as "c" and "ch" respectively, but pronounced approximately as "ch" in standard Bengali) may be pronounced like an "s". Thus *korcho* (short form for *korecho*) sounds like "kor-so." A Bengali letter transcribed orthographically as "s" is often pronounced as "sh", in standard as well as in dialectal Bengali.

2. Arabic and Persian vocabulary

The *jarigan* themes involve names of persons, places and terminology which are exotic in the Bengali environment. Usually these names come from the Middle East. The following list contains several examples that can be found in each category.

PROPER NAMES: Mohammad, Ibrahim, Ishmail, Hazera, Fatema, Sokhina, ...

TITLES: *shah* (king); *badshah* (prince); *ustad* (master artist); *kazi* (lawyer or judge); *shipai* (soldier); *huzur* (Master, Sir); *hazrat* (revered); ...

RELIGIOUS AND LEGENDARY TERMINOLOGY: *poygambar* (prophet); *nabi* (prophet); *imam* (Muslim religious leader); *pir* (Sufi religious leader); *darvish* (a Sufi follower); *fakir* (mendicant holy man); *murshid* (Sufi religious leader); *shahid* (martyr); *khoda* (God); Allah (Allah); *jeresta* (angel); *pori* (fairy); *momin* (believer); Koran (Koran or Quran); *musulman* (Muslim); *ummat* (followers); *kafer* (unbeliever, pagan); *kiyamat* (Day of Judgment) ...

ALTERNATE NAMES FOR ALLAH: "Malek Shah" (Lord of Lords or King of Kings) and many others.

ALTERNATE NAMES FOR THE PROPHET: "Rasul" (literally, a messenger of God); *nabi* (literally, prophet); and others.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS: *baba* (father, grandfather); *baba-jan* (father-soul, meaning dear father); *zohor* (step-brother); *bibi* (lady-wife, lady-mother, lady of rank); ...

ADMINISTRATIVE TERMS: *kalema* (statement; cardinal formula of Muslim faith); *forman* (edict, generally in writing); *hukum* (command); ...

HOUSEHOLD WORDS: *hukka* (smoking pipe); *mej* or *mez* (table or floor; feast); *khidamat* (service); ...

FOOD: *khorma* (dates).

ANIMAL: *dunga* (camel).

PLACE NAMES: Makka (Mecca); Madina (Medina); Bogdad (Baghdad); Damesk (Damascus); Nimrud (an ancient city in the Middle East); Forat (Euphrates River); Karbala (battle ground on the Euphrates River); Sham (another name for Damascus); Nilufar (a city in the Middle East).

Because of their Middle Eastern setting, *jarigan* stories contain scenery that is alien to most of Bengal. Some of the vocabulary that refers to this distant and different world can be found in common Bengali words. For instance, the sorceress in the *jarigan* song about the poisoning of Hasan lives in a *guha* (cave) in the *pahar* (mountains) of what is now Iraq.¹¹ These geographical features are foreign to the flat plains of eastern Bengal. Even the rocks, *pashan*, that exist in the *jarigan* landscape of the Middle East—those on which the heroines of tragic episodes strike their heads¹²—are not found in the Bengal landscape.

Imagery

Although imagery is a prominent feature of most Bengali poetry, it is minimal in *jarigan* song texts. The nature of *jarigan* poetry is expository; it is action-oriented rather than description-oriented. Not only are there few similes and metaphors in *jarigan* poetry, but those that appear are spare in contrast to the hyperbolic expressions in Karbala-related *masnavis* and *marsiyas* of Persian and Urdu poetry.

Jasimuddin has listed similes and metaphors from the *jarigan* songs in his collection. Many of these are stereotypical in Bengali folk poetry. Jasimuddin's list represents a few exceptional as well as common examples in *jarigan* poetry. Some metaphors are listed below:

"*ei chander bazar*" (this bazaar-of-the-moon, meaning the visible, temporal world of men with its variety, transience, ephemeral beauty, etc.)¹³

"*chandra mukh-khani*" (this moon-like face, meaning this face which is beautiful as the moon)¹⁴

"*shoker agun*" (the fire of grief)¹⁵

"*amor buker 'por (upor) pairache pashan*" (a rock has fallen on my heart, meaning "I am pierced with grief.")¹⁶

According to Jasimuddin, the poetry of certain districts in Bengal tends to be more imagistic than others. He says that *jarigan* poetry from Mymensingh, like the famous *mangalas* and *vijayas* of that region, contains few similes. Nevertheless, his

list of *jarigan* similes, though stock ones, exhibits a rich collective imagination. Several are cited here. (The numbers given refer to Jasimuddin's listings.):

Sorrowful similes:

জমিনেতে লুটায় যেন তীর বেন্দা পাখি।

No. 7. "*jaminete luthai jeno tir benda pakhi*" (He rolled on the earth like a bird wounded with an arrow)¹⁷

জানের চেয়ে অধিক আমার ছিল সকল লোক।

No. 13. "*Janer cheye adhik amar chilo shakal lok.*" (All my people were [to me as] more than my life.)¹⁸

Heroic similes:

আগুন সমান মর্দ, দোনো আঁখি লাল।

No. 5. "*agun shaman marda, dono akhi lal*" (like the powerful sun, his two eyes red)¹⁹

ইমাম হোসেন আলী যেন মস্ত হাতী।

No. 9. "*Imam Hosein Ali jeno mashta hati*" (Imam Hosein Ali like an immense elephant)²⁰

Allusions

Stock allusions to other literature occur in *jarigan* poetry. Hanifa compares the plight of his step brothers, Hasan and Hosein, to Ram and Lakhsman, the banished brothers in the *Rāmāyana*.²¹ The suffering of the bereaved Sokhina is compared to Radha without her Krishna. Such stock allusions in *jarigan* poetry are meager embellishments compared to the way such allusions are elaborated in Vaishnava and other Bengali poetry.

Rhetorical devices and dramatic declamation

Rather than metaphors, similes, and literary allusions, *jarigan* poets focus on creating scenes and moods by relating events, animating them with monologues and dialogues. Immortals, mortals and even animals reveal themselves in speeches. The *jarigan* poet works with dialogue like a playwright, depicting actions and emotions through the words of the protagonists. Whether the poet speaks as the narrator of his story or acts out the speech of a character, his poetry draws on various rhetorical devices.

1. Rhyme, assonance and alliteration

While the *jarigan* composer often takes liberties in the syllable count and stress pattern of his poetry, he is faithful to the rhyme scheme, often including assonance and inner rhymes, as well as final ones. The prevalence of rhymes provides an over-all metric unity to the composition. Since rhyming words are common in the Bengali language, a rhymed couplet-verse structure is ideal for *ex tempore* composition: this rhyme scheme provides a pre-cast framework which can withstand irregularities

of meter. Thus the poet is free to concentrate on his personal elaboration of text and melody.

Jarigan poetry often conforms closely to a form of Indian prose known as "*curnika*", a word derived from "*curna*" which means, according to G. H. Ranade who writes about this genre, "a finely powdered substance, smooth and soft to the feel."²² He describes this style of composition as devoid of "hard consonants and rich with alliterations and rhymes at the close of successive clauses and sentences and delivered or recited in the manner of a poem." The poetry of *jarigan* songs is exceptionally "smooth and soft."

Ranade goes on to say: "the bards and heralds (the *bhatas* and *charanas*) usually employed this style in proclaiming on ceremonial occasions the high traditions and the tenets of their royal masters, the kings. So also do the devotees in paying homage to the saints of God." I suggest that this form of declamation may have been customary practice among the *bhatas* and *charanas*, whom I mentioned in Chapter Three as precursors of *jarigan* bards.

Rhyme and alliteration are used as part of the aural effects of *jarigan* poetry in order to attract or hold the attention of the audience to a particularly dramatic passage. Inner rhymes, as well as rhymes at the ends of lines, assonance and alliteration serve to captivate the ear and stir the emotions. The following verses illustrate, through the repetition of similar sounds, the mood of anguish as Kasem takes leave of his mother before going to battle.

Example: repetitions of the sounds "a" and "e" in couplet verses from a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin's collection.

*Keba mata keba pita keba poribar,
Chokk (s) hu mude ceye dekho duniya andokar,
Ele bhabe jete hobe Jom esechhe pache,
Eraite na parbe keha shei Jomer kache.*

(Who is mother? Who is father? Who is wife?
Shutting your eyes, look and see how dark is this world!
Jom (the angel of death) must come bringing death behind him.
No one can flee from this Jom.)²³

2. Repeated words and phrases

The repetition of entire words and phrases, as well as of interjections, is characteristic of *jarigan* rhetoric. The repetitions allow the poet-singer to think about his next utterance. More significantly, the repetitions create suspense and underscore the emotion of a line. The repetition of the word "*shok-nama*" (sorrow-story) animates the following passage from a *jarigan bandana*.

*Allah, Allah bolo [go] banda jatek momin-gon,
Shok-nama laye jari shono diye mon,
Shok-nama je shunibe del koribe shar,
Ek rojer gonah, Allah maph koribe tar.*

(Allah!, say Allah, oh!, all you faithful followers who are gathered here,
Receiving the sad-tale, listen to the *jari*, paying attention.
He who will hear the sad-tale, taking its essence to heart,
Allah will forgive him his sins of a day.)²⁴

A supply of stock phrases and verbal formulas provide the *jarigan* singer with a chance to think ahead. They also add dramatic feeling to his narration. For example, he frequently uses such phrases as "*Shunen diya mon*" (Listen, giving your mind), "*ami tomake janai*" (I inform you), or "*kandite lagilo*" (he or she began to weep).

Such stock expressions have been accumulated during generations of Bengali recitals of other narrative genres, as well as in *jarigan* songs. The collective artistry of thousands of poets has ensured the effective placement of such phrases, whether to add suspense to a narration or to emphasize the mood of a situation.

Often a *jarigan* singer adopts stock phrases to expand his melody, prolonging, say, the sound of "o" in the last syllable in "*kandite lagilo*" (he began to cry), thus increasing the emotion of the line.

Example: a musical prolongation of a syllable for dramatic effect in a line from a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin's collection. The song is "[A!] *bahire thakiya ghora* ..."

Narration

বা - হি - রে থা - কি - যা ঘো - ড়া রে
Ba - hi - re tha - ki - ya gho - ra [re]

THE PROSODY

Payar couplets

In its bare form, stripped of choral refrains and interjections, the verse structure of a *jarigan* song reveals a well-defined couplet structure known as *payar chanda* (*payar* meter). It is roughly similar to the *śloka*, a type of couplet used in Sanskrit verse for epic poems such as the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*.²⁵

Most of the early poets in Bengal who wrote in Bengali, as opposed to Sanskrit, tried to make their verses conform to Sanskrit prosody. When they translated the epics from Sanskrit into Bengali, they had difficulty in adapting the Bengali language to the metrical exigencies of Sanskrit prosody. Nevertheless, the *śloka* couplets of the Sanskrit epics were adapted to Bengali poetry by various literary poets, such as by the fifteenth century poet, Krittivas, in his *Ramayana*.²⁶

The prosodic pattern of *jarigan* songs is called *payar chanda* ("payar" meter). It consists of a line containing fourteen *aksharas* (syllables). The basic rhythmic unit is the trochaic foot: a long syllable followed by a short one. This pattern of syllabic stress conforms most consistently to colloquial Bengali stress patterns. (A stress in Bengali words is manifested in "duration" rather than in "force" of sound.)²⁷

Two *payar* lines form a *payar* couplet-verse. The last syllable of the first line rhymes with the last syllable of the second line. Each line is bipartite: a caesura after the eighth syllable in each line divides the line into two groups of syllables.

Each line contains a complete clause or sentence; except in rare cases, the first sentence does not continue into the second line of verse. A sentence-line often contains a participial phrase, such as "hearing the horse..." or "saying this..." Two typical line-sentences chosen at random are quoted below:

Bahire thakiya ghora korche [re] khinkhin.

(Standing outside the horse made a whinnying sound.)²⁸

Ei katha shuniya Kasem koreche gaman.

(On hearing these words Kasem set forth.)²⁹

The participial phrase economizes on words. The participial phrases conform euphoniously with the caesura line division. This sentence pattern establishes an underlying "beat" to the couplet which is characteristic of the sound of *jarigan* poetry. When a sentence-line contains two clauses, these also generally observe the position of the caesura.

A literary (written and polished) couplet in *payar* prosody is quoted below as a standard with which to compare the folk version of *payar* couplets as they occur in *jarigan* songs. The verse is from the *Mahābhārata* in a Bengali version by the eighteenth century poet, Kasiram Das. The vowel sound "[a]", which appears thus in brackets, represents the sounding of a normally unwritten, and generally unpronounced, vowel after the last consonant of certain words. Here, the sound is used to add syllables, so that each line has exactly fourteen syllables.

Example: a literary *payar* couplet from the *Mahābhārata* of Kasiram Das, a Bengali poet of the eighteenth century. The extra syllable is indicated in brackets. Note the exact fourteen-syllable lines (8+6, 8+6).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8,	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ma	ha	bha	ra	ter	-[a]	ka	tha,	am	rit	-[a]	sa	man	-[a],
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8,	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ka	si	ram	-[a]	Das	-[a]	ka	he;	"Su	ne	pu	nya	van	-[a]."

(The stories of the *Mahābhārata* are all immortal,
Kasiram Das says: he who listens is virtuous.)³⁰

Next, a couplet-verse in *payar* meter is represented here schematically. The asterisk indicates rhyme. The "-" indicates more stress and the "v" indicates less stress.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8,	1	2	3	4	5	6
-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v'	-	v	-	v	-	v*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8,	1	2	3	4	5	6
-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v'	-	v	-	v	-	v*

The following verse in English imitates *jarigan* couplets, giving the feeling of the rhythmic "beat" of Bengali *payar*. The "+" sign indicates the pause that frequently occurs at the end of a *jarigan* line, like a "rest" in Western music, to fill out the rhythmic pattern of a *payar* line when one of its syllables is missing in the first or second part of the line, or, sometimes, when syllables are missing in both parts of a line, as occurs in the second line of the example below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8'	1	2	3	4	5+(=6)
Rise,	my	bride,	Sokhina,	dear	one;			day	is	born	from	night.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	+(=8)'	1	2	3	4	5+(=6)
Hear	the	drummer	beat	his	drum,			calling	me	to	fight. ³¹	

Unlike the verse lines in literary *payar* couplets (such as in the Bengali *Mahābhārata* verse by Kasiram Das), the length of *jarigan* lines is frequently irregular, as in the English imitation above of a *jarigan* couplet-verse. The *jarigan* singer is an expert at rendering such lines smoothly through verbal and melodic devices, which he employs to lengthen a line with less than fourteen syllables or to reduce the length of a line containing an excess of syllables.

In the excerpt cited below, the singer accommodates the lack of a full fourteen-count complement of syllables per line by prolonging melodically the final syllable of "*shuniya*" (as indicated by the plus sign ["+"]) in the first line and after "*jagay*" at the end of the second line. He adds the vowel sound "[e]" (pronounced as the "é" in the French word "*café*") after the word "*bibigon*" in the first line and the vowel sound "[i]" (pronounced as the "i" in police) after the word "*jagay*" at the end of the second line.

Example: couplet lines in *payar* meter in a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin's collection, showing the addition of pauses and of vowel sounds to lengthen the lines.

1	2	3	(4)	5	6	7	8,	1	2	3	(4)	5	6
-	v	-	[+]	v	-	v	-'	v	-	v	-	v	-
Shu-ni-ya	[+]	gho-rar	khin-khin,'					bi-bi-gon-[e]	ko-i,				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8,	1	2	3	4	5	(6)
-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v'	-	v	-	v	-	[v]
"Ron	ko-ri-ya	Ka-sem	bu-jhi '					a-shol	ei	ja-gay-[i]."			

(Hearing the whinnying of the horse, the women said:

"We can tell that Kasem having fought in battle has come to this place.")³²

Other devices for adjusting a text to *payar* meter consist of adding interjections or eliding two syllables into one or three syllables into two. Thus the poet-singer can adjust his text to fit the semblance, if not the facsimile, of *payar* meter. In fact, if the slight pauses at the caesura or at the end of a line are considered, the fourteen-syllable *payar* lines may, in reality, be counted as sixteen-count lines. This sixteen-beat concept conforms nicely to eight-count and sixteen-count drum patterns that are popular in classical as well as folk music of South Asia, including Bangladesh.

The poetry of Jasimuddin's ballad-novel, *Sojan Badiar Ghat* (*The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy*) (first edition, 1933) is a good example of the difference between Bengali literary prosody and the *ex tempore* couplets of *jarigan* composers. I cite below a couplet from *Sojan Badiar Ghat*.

Example: a couplet from Jasimuddin's *Sojan Badiar Ghat* (*The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy*), showing regularity in the length of his lines, each of which contains sixteen syllables. The caesura in each line comes after the eighth syllable. Note that, unlike *jarigan* poetry, no interjections or added vowel sounds are necessary to fill out the syllable count of Jasimuddin's lines. Note also that the sentence which begins in the first line runs on into the second one. This rarely occurs in *jarigan* poetry.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8' 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
Maharamer mash ashilo, Shimultolir gaye shabe,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8' 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
Jarir gane lathir khelay matlo abar mahotsabe.

(The month of Muharram has come; in the whole village of Shimultoli, In *jari* song and play of sticks, again they have become intoxicated in mad-excitement.)³³

I suggest that the fourteen-syllable lines of *jarigan* poetry are, actually, a folk version of sixteen-count lines, such as in Jasimuddin's couplet quoted above. In some *jarigan* songs, the lines that have their full complement of fourteen syllables per line are lengthened still further to sixteen "beats" by prolonging the sound of some syllables or adding a prolonged rest, especially after the last syllable of a line. The addition of "beats" is made in order to accommodate the *jarigan payar* couplets to a particular tune, one that is, perhaps, borrowed from another song which uses sixteen beats in its rhythmic cycle. This phenomenon is discussed more fully in the next chapters on the music of *jarigan* songs.

"Tripadi" couplets

A popular form of prosody sometimes used by *jarigan* poets is called *tripadi chanda* (three-footed or three-legged meter) because of the tripartite division of each line. Each line contains twenty syllables. There are two caesuras; the first one follows the sixth syllable and the second one follows the twelfth syllable. The last group of syllables contains eight syllables.

Tripadi couplets are frequently found in classical Sanskrit poetry and in literary Bengali verse. This verse structure occurs occasionally within the body of a *boyati's jarigan payar* verses.³⁴ Otherwise *tripadi* couplets occur in songs that the *dohars* may inject into a *boyati's jarigan* song to add variety to it. *Tripadi* meter is a common meter especially for *marsiya* songs.

A *tripadi* couplet verse scans visually as in the pattern shown below. The single asterisk indicates the rhyme occurring at the end of the first and second grouping of syllables. A double asterisk indicates a different rhyme occurring at the end of each line of the couplet.

Example: schema of a couplet in *tripadi* meter.

1	2	3	4	5	6*	1	2	3	4	5	6*
-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v'
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8**			
	-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v			
1	2	3	4	5	6*	1	2	3	4	5	6*
-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8**			
-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v	-	v		

The following example of *tripadi* verse is from a song that may be used to give variety to a *jarigan* recital program. It illustrates clearly the *tripadi* couplet form. As can be detected from the notations of this song, some syllables are lengthened by the melody to accommodate the necessary syllable count and some are sung quickly together to fit into the "beat" of one syllable in order to fit the rhythm of the melody.

Example: a couplet in *tripadi chanda* from the song "Tumi ga tolo Sokhina ..." in Jasimuddin's collection.

Narration $\text{♩} = 100$



তু - মি গা তো - ল স - খি - না মু - খের ক - থা যায় শো - না
 Tu - mi ga to - lo So - khi - na. Mu - kher ko - tha jay sho-na.



নি - শি প্র - ভাত হ - লো ও
 Ni - shi pro-bhat ho-lo - - [i]o.



ও রে রণ খো - লা - তে বা - জে কা - ডা দর - জা - তে সি - পাই খা - ডা
 [O re] ron kho-la-te ba-je ka-ra, dor-[o]-ja-te shi-pai kha-ra.



আজ বু - ঝি মোর র - নে যে - তে হ - ল
 Aj bu-jhi mor ro-ne je-te ho-lo.

(Alas! Rise up, Sokhina; listen to the words of my mouth;
The night has become dawn.

Alas! Beating on the war drum, a soldier stands at (our) door;
Today I know I must go into battle.)³⁵

Because *tripadi* is a longer and more complex verse form than *payar*, it is generally used for purely lyrical songs, not for long narrative songs. The above example, for instance, is included in Jasimuddin's collection of *jarigan* related songs, not in the main body of his *jarigan* song collection. He calls the example above a "*dhuagan*" (literally, "refrain"-song), not a *jarigan* song, perhaps because it may be injected by the *dohars* intermittently during the *boyati's jarigan* song, like a refrain. Other possibilities for the meaning of *dhuagan* are discussed in the chapters on *jarigan* music.

Interruptions in the sequence of *jarigan* couplets

Within the sequence of *payar* couplets in a *jarigan* song, the *boyati* may temporarily break away from his song to talk in normal speech, returning later to singing in the regular rhythmic pattern of *payar* couplets. Occasionally he may sing in free rhythm, as in recitatives in Western music.³⁶

A single *jarigan* song consists of one hundred to three hundred or more couplet-verses. Because of the inclusion of injected refrains and *dhuagan* songs during the *boyati's* singing of the *jarigan* song, only a portion of the *jarigan* song may be sung at one recital session—perhaps only fifty or so couplets.³⁷

In a *jarigan* recital session, the *dohars'* choral additions contrast with the narrative style of the *boyati's jarigan payar*-couplets. Not only do the *dohars* add interest to the *boyati's* song by the increased volume of their unified voices when they join in the singing, but also by the introduction of different song forms. The *boyati* himself may embellish the *payar chanda* structure of his *jarigan* singing with tunes in a more complex form than a repetitive, standard, chant-like tune.

THE SECTIONS

I have mentioned the different items on the program of a single session of *jarigan* singing. Within the featured *jarigan* song itself there are a few identifiable sections, depending on whether the performance is with or without *dohars*. The following sections are generally included in a solo performance; that is, a performance by a *boyati* without *dohars*.

Solo recitals

1. *Bandanas*

Although they are lengthy, *jarigan* songs in their bare form, when stripped of refrains, interlude pieces, and repetitions, follow a simple and straightforward structure. This usually begins with an invocational passage known as a *bandana*, a word

cognate with the Sanskrit word *vandin*, a praiser or bard.³⁸ Indeed, the practice of doing a *bandana* before a performance is an ancient one and is used in Indic culture by dancers and singers. Also known as *pranam*, it is a fixed prayer-like greeting that introduces a performance. In fact, public performances today probably originated with religious ritual songs and dances performed for deities and offered as an invocation.

The *jarigan* bard performs the office of "praiser" in his *bandana* section, either briefly or at length. He invokes the names of Allah, the Prophet, and of anyone else he may wish to praise or greet. He may send greetings to geographical sites, such as the Himalayas, the rivers of Bengal, the city of Mecca, or to a local place. In the past, Hindu gods and goddesses were included for the sake of the large number of Hindus attending the performance.³⁹

A *bandana* may be as short as half a line, or it may be several verses long, comprising a song within a song. The poetry of the *bandana* is in the same couplet-verse structure as the narrational verses that follow, but the tune may be somewhat different. The examples below illustrate the different themes and styles of *bandana* texts.

Example 1. This example is interesting in the way that the text addresses both Hindu and Muslim communities and in the attention it gives to the norms of musical composition. Taken from Dinesh Chandra Sen's book, *Eastern Bengal Ballads*, published in 1923, it shows a more formal style of *bandana* than the examples from Jasimuddin's and S. M. Lutfur Rahman's collections published in 1968 and 1986, respectively. Unfortunately the verse structure of this *bandana* has not been given. Presumably each sentence is a *payar* line of poetry. There are indications in the text that the singer was addressing a literate society.

I bow to the great Pir-Saheb Gazi (Pir-Lord Warrior). Now play on the flute, oh musicians! To the great Pir Saheb Gazi do I offer my salutes with all humility. First do I make obeisance to Allah and then I bow to the feet of my parents. My preceptor do I salute next. I bow to the earth with its four corners and stand firm on the solid basis of my devotion. Oh! Hindus and Musulman who have assembled here, I salute you all. All the great religious places, Makka, Madina, Kasi and Gaya should also receive my homage. To seas and lakes do I bow, and prostrate myself in reverent humility before the holy tomb of Saheb Ali. My obeisance goes to this house which I am just going to address and now my purpose is settled. I do not know the modes of music, nor how to keep time. Conscious of this limitation I tremble with fear. Once more do I bow to this assembly and crave your permission to begin my song.⁴⁰

Example 2. It should be noted that the text of the following *bandana* resembles a *murshidi* song text with its religio-philosophical commentary, but Jasimuddin identifies it as a *jarigan bandana*. The Bengali text and notations for this example can be found in Appendix B of the present book, under the title: "[A hai, are] bolo Allahr nam ..."

Say the name of Allah, call on him, believers; remain in the way
that he has ordained.

The birth of this pleasure-world will not come again.

Say Allah. Call his name, believers. Take his name this time.

Only the name of Allah is worthy; worldly concerns are without worth.

A worthy, saintly life will never come again.

Allah will not mingle (again) with this bazaar-of-the-moon.
 Will there ever be again the birth of humans? Shall we sit side by side
 (at the Day of Judgment)?

Will Allah mingle with this law-court-of-the-moon?
 The day has passed; the will of God is lost in the illusions and
 passions of men.

This world is a business of sorrow. Some weep; some laugh.⁴¹

Example 3: a one-line *bandana* followed by an announcement of the *jarigan* story to be sung, from a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin's collection.

Allah! Allah! Say (his name), brothers; fill the desire of your heart.

Paying attention, all listen to (the story of) "Hazera's Exile in the Jungle."⁴²

2. The body of narration

Following the *bandana*, the *jarigan* singer launches into his narration, adhering to the structural pattern of *payar* couplet-verses which may consist of hundreds of lines—over four-hundred in some cases. The narration is self-contained with a beginning, development, and a conclusion to its *pala* (episode or plot). Examples of complete *jarigan* songs in Appendix A represent *jarigan* compositions devoid of embellishments that may occur. These full-length *jarigan* songs may be divided into sections sung at different sessions of a long program that also includes interlude songs and instrumental pieces.

3. Concluding lines

The *jarigan* singer generally concludes his song with a statement such as: "I have now finished the story of Hasan's poisoning" or "My story is done. Call on the name of Allah." He may include a *bhanita*, a line or several lines of verse that give his name and sometimes the name of his village. This oral signature sometimes occurs in the *bandana*, instead of in the concluding lines of a *jarigan* song. While *bhanitas* are frequent in other Bengali folk songs, they seem to be rare in the Jasimuddin and S. M. Lutfor Rahman collections of *jarigan* texts.

Example: a concluding couplet to a *jarigan* song.

Allah, Allah, say, brothers, faithful ones.

"Hazera's Exile in the Jungle" has been completed.⁴³

4. Improvisation

Within the body of narrative verse a *boyati* may improvise on new topics. Talented *boyatis* have the ability to compose verses *ex tempore*. These may be comments on the story being narrated or digressions from it. In the *jarigan* competition I attended, one *boyati* included a greeting to me and my group at the end of his performance, mentioning that my husband and I had come from America. A *boyati* from another group included a digression praising the produce from the districts of Bangladesh: mangoes from Rajshahi, for example, and *mishti kola* (sweet bananas) from Sylhet.

A ninety-five year old *boyati* from a village near Brahmanbaria, whom I described earlier, expressed pride in the fact that he never uses verses composed by other poets. He said he composed his own songs. Presumably, as artists in other Indian arts, each *boyati* relies on inherited models of songs that he re-creates. It is difficult to say how much of a *jarigan* song performance is extemporized and how much is repeated from a previous performance, or how much was learned during training. Nevertheless, *jarigan* singers, like so many artists in South Asia, have an exceptional faculty for *ex tempore* verbal improvisation as well as for remembering massive amounts of poetry.

Recitals with *dohars*

Up to this point, I have described the inner structure of a *jarigan* song as if the *boyati* were singing solo without *dohars* and instrumental accompaniment. In a full-scale performance, when the *boyati* is accompanied by *dohars* and instrumentalists, there may be a number of digressions during his singing, including inserted songs sung by the *dohars* or tunes played by the ensemble. Although the inserted songs are not *jarigan* songs by the precise definition of *jarigan*, these songs are characteristic of *jarigan* performances. The inserted songs are such an integral part of a *jarigan* recital that Jasimuddin includes these songs among the examples in his book. Most of these non-*jarigan* songs Jasimuddin identifies as "*dhuagan*" ("*dhua*"-songs), as will be discussed in the next chapters on the music of *jarigan* recitals.

The *dohars* alternate singing with the *boyati* in different ways. Most frequently they simply repeat a line that the *boyati* has just sung. As the *boyati* proceeds with the next lines, the alternations continue. This echoed manner of repetition allows the *boyati* a few moments to think ahead. It also adds variety to his chant and each entrance of the *boyati* or *dohars* infuses new vigor to the rendition.

Besides simply echoing the *boyati's* lines, the *dohars* may also sing short refrains. These may consist of a single line. The line may be repeated twice before the *boyati* resumes his *payar* verses. The refrains may be longer, some of them coming from portions of songs from other genres of folk songs. For instance, the *dohars* may inject a few verses of a light, humorous song or from a *marsiya*, if the *boyati's* narration is about a Karbala episode.

Echoes and repetitions are typical of Bengali folk song performances. A *jarigan* recital, however, differs from Baul and other important Bengali folk song performances in that entire songs, not just echoings, may be inserted in the main *jarigan* narrative song, contrasting with it structurally, as well as thematically.

THE INSERTIONS

Non-*jarigan* songs

In Chapter Four on *jarigan* performances the presence was mentioned of song items that are additional to the *jarigan* song featured in the program of a single *jarigan* session. A variety of songs were named and described. As well as these songs that

are included in a *jarigan* song session, there are other songs, or parts of songs, that are inserted into the *jarigan* song itself.

I find evidence of these non-*jarigan* insertions into a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin's collection of *jarigan* texts. The "*Kasem-Sokhinar Jari*" (The Kasem and Sokhina *Jari*) contains two "*dishas*" which seem to be lines excerpted from a non-*jarigan* song and inserted into the *jarigan* song in the way that Shakespeare injects a scene of comic relief into a tragic drama.

The "*Tilekban*" *jarigan* song, begins with a couplet identified as a "*disha*". It contains the opening lines to a humorous song that begins "[*Are*] *nache [re] buira nache ...*". In the notations section of his book, Jasimuddin identifies this song as a *dhuagan* song. "*Disha*", therefore, seems to connote a portion of a popular song that is injected into a long narrative song. Also in the "*Tilekban*" *jarigan* a humorous couplet identified as "*dhua*" appears in the text after the fifteenth couplet of the *jarigan* text and another humorous couplet, also identified as "*dhua*", appears after the thirty-first couplet.

Golam Saklayen, who writes about *jarigan* songs in his book about Bengali *marsiya*s, says that *dhua* songs are injected into a *jarigan* session or *jarigan* song (which item is not clear) in order to "keep the tune of *jari* awake," as he puts it.⁴⁴ Whatever may be the precise meanings of "*disha*" and "*dhua*", these non-*jarigan* songs, or portions of them, indeed keep a *jarigan* recital "awake" by contrasting in theme and tune with the *payar* couplet chant of the *jarigan* song narration.

In the *jarigan* dance competition described at the end of Chapter Four on *jarigan* performances, the *dohars* injected extraneous verses with gusto into the *boyati*'s pauses. One of these "injections" is a refrain about an engine that keeps running without fuel.⁴⁵ Although these instances of extraneous insertions are few, I am sure that they indicate that such insertions exist.

The derivation of *dhua* is unknown. It has been suggested that it comes from "*dhrupa-pad*" (literally, fixed verses or fixed poetry), a song form in classical Indian music that has four sections. I suggest that the word *dhua* may come from the word "*doha*", a form of song which appears in descriptions of *kirtan*, and other types of song performance, including particular songs in the Indian folk dramas known as *Nautanki*.⁴⁶

The term *dhua* may also be cognate with "*dohar*", sharing a common possible root with *doha*. The dictionary translates "*dhua*" (spelled "धुआ", "*dhuya*") as refrain. However, the English term refrain generally means a verse text repeated at regular intervals within a song. According to the way in which Jasimuddin and S. M. Lutfur Rahman use the word *dhua*, it signifies a complete song in itself, such as the *dhua* songs in the program schedule cited in the chapter on *jarigan* performances. The possible meanings of *dhuagan* are further discussed in Chapter Ten on song compositions. There a description of the musical form of these songs adds clues to the meaning of the term "*dhua*".

Passages of spoken prose

The introduction of spoken prose passages during the body of a *jarigan* song is common. The abrupt change into this form of narration injects new vitality into the

recital. The effect of passages of spoken prose renews the attention of auditors who may have become mesmerized by steady *payar* portions of the recital.

A *boyati* may break into spoken prose in order to tell certain parts of his story more rapidly, or to make commentaries of his own, or simply to provide variety to his performance by continuing his narrative in prose instead of verse. The following passage from a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin's collection is an example of alternations between sung verses or *padya* (literally, to-be-rendered-into-feet or verse) and passages of spoken prose or *gadya*⁴⁷ (literally, to-be-spoken), also known as *katha*. The *boyati* delivers these passages in rapid, clearly articulated words.

The scene depicted takes place at Karbala, where Hosein and his followers have been besieged and cut off from water for several days. Kasem, the young son of Hosein's brother (Hasan), seeks permission to cross the enemy's lines in order to fetch water for Hosein's party, especially for the children who have been deprived of it for several days.

[*Payar* verses]

Hosein says: "Kasem, you are the joy of my heart;
How can I send you into battle?!
When your father died of poisoning,
While clasping my hands, how much he cried!"

[*Katha* (spoken prose)]

"Kasem, when your father lost his life in eating poison, then holding my hands he said: 'Brother, Husein, I have taken poison. Keep these matters in mind. Firstly, take care of my kingdom of Medina; secondly take care of all my subjects; thirdly, take care of my Abul Kasem. Keep him like the fibers of your heart. Kasem should at no time forget that I am his father.'"

[*Payar* verses]

"All these words, Kasem, are in my mind;
How can I send you into the arms of the enemy?"⁴⁸

The *boyati* continues in *payar* verse until the next interjection of *katha*. In the *jarinach* competition described earlier, the *boyatis* occasionally addressed the audience in spoken prose, although not as frequently as in the example above. It can be seen from the above example that the break into ordinary speech not only adds variety to a recital, but also a sense of excitement, as if the *boyati* has so much to tell of importance that he must express himself in the most direct way possible.⁴⁹

THE MELODIC FEATURES

“... এক পয়ার ছন্দ লইয়া গ্রাম্য-কবির কত শত সহস্র সুর সৃষ্টি করিয়াছেন,
তাহা ভাবিলে বিস্মিত হইতে হয় ...”

“... Within one meter, the *payar* meter, how many thousand
tunes village poets compose! If I think of it, I am amazed ...”

— Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968)¹

MUSIC IN BENGAL

Historians of Bengali literature point out that early Bengali poetry was intended to be sung. Bengali poems that have survived in writing often state at their beginning what melodic mode is to be used in recital. Not until the end of the eighteenth century did Bengali poets begin to write poems apart from tunes. Even then, music continued to permeate poetic composition.² In the twentieth century, for example, the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore wrote many of his poems as songs, composing the music himself and notating it in the Indian system.

Throughout the years preceding and following the arrival in Bengal of rulers from the Middle East, local oral poetry expressed in song flourished in a variety of forms. Of these forms, *jarigan* poetry resembles most closely the *mangala*, *vijaya* and *gazirgan* ballads. These lengthy ballads may have supplied tunes, as well as the verse form, for *jarigan* compositions.

Music itself in South Asian music, including Bengal, is founded on the congeneric quality of poetry and music, in classical as well as folk music. A performance of Indian classical music traditionally consists of an improvisation on a tune which is derived from a song. Whether the improvisation is vocal or instrumental, it refers melodically to a song, even though the actual words may be long buried in the past. Concerts in the Western sense of purely instrumental music, without reference to texts, developed relatively late in India. In the same way, Bengali poetry developed as a separate medium from music not until after the eighteenth century.

The link between poetry and music is so close in Bengali culture that one medium suggests the other. The sound of a particular tune infers a particular text, whereas the text of a poem infers a particular tune to express it. This is, of course, characteristic of all song repertoires, but in the case of Bengali songs, there are song tunes, or styles of tunes, that belong traditionally to certain kinds of poetry. In reverse, certain kinds of poetry suggest certain kinds of tunes.

This interdependency of words and music is well illustrated in Jasimuddin's description of how, when still a child, he found he could write poetry once he allowed himself to pretend he was singing:

'... For so many days I was accustomed to composing my verse to a tune. Without a tune I could not compose the words in poetical meter. Now that I discovered how to find the rhythm for my verse, who could hold me back? I filled notebook after notebook.'³

Bhatiyali songs and Baul songs are well-known examples of the interconnection of tunes and words. The mystical topics of these songs and the elliptical expressions in their poetry have acquired characteristic melodies by which they can be recognized. *Jarigan* songs likewise can be recognized by the style of their tunes.

Understanding the words of *jarigan* songs is important to understanding the narration, but even without understanding the words, the music has an arresting quality that holds the attention of foreign as well as Bengali listeners. In trying to define this effect, I can only describe isolated features of the music, those that become evident when the music is musically notated. Notations, however, fail to represent subtle variations in pitch, volume and timbre, which are important factors in the emotional impact of the *jarigan* songs.

The performance format of *jarigan* recitals has been compared to the protagonist-cum-chorus format of ancient Greek dramas. Unfortunately no one knows how the music of those ancient dramas sounded, but it may be possible that the ancient Greek *meloi* (strains) have been preserved in the extant folk music of isolated Greek communities. In the same way, the tunes of *jarigan* songs used today may antedate the texts by hundreds of years.

This chapter is designed primarily for readers with little access to either "live" or recorded performances of *jarigan* songs. To my knowledge, there are no tunes in Western music to which *jarigan* tunes can be compared. Readers familiar with the bardic singing of Hungary, Yugoslavia and other eastern European countries, or of Turkey and other West Asian countries, may find important similarities with the bardic format, if not actual sound, of *jarigan* singing. Even a general knowledge of Gregorian chant is helpful for imagining the modal quality of *jarigan* melodies. The reader should also bear in mind that the *jarigan boyati* is free to improvise, so that no two recitals are the same.

My descriptions in this and the following chapter are simplifications of how *jarigan* songs actually sound. Notating the songs is like trying to capture the shape and texture of mutating clouds carried by a swift wind. However, through the exercise of "capturing" as much as possible on paper, noting especially how the syllables of words are fitted to individual notes, and how sentences of the text are suited to the "sentences" of melody, features emerge that typify *jarigan* tunes.

The following descriptions are based on the notations of nineteen song excerpts, thirteen of which are included in Appendix B. Seven of these come from Jasimuddin's 1964 recordings and others come from my recordings made in the summer of 1995. One example comes from a radio program of Bengali folk songs that I happened to record in Dhaka in the 1960s.

The notations of the songs sung by Meghu Boyati for Jasimuddin's sound recordings in the 1960s are entirely my own. During my research in Bangladesh in 1995, a Bangladeshi vocalist, Sukalpa Gupta, trained in classical Indian music, helped with transcribing words and notating the music from the recordings I had made currently. He transcribed the tunes in the Indian system of notation⁴ and I retranscribed his work into Western staff notations. I consulted with an eminent ethnomusicologist in New York, Israel J. Katz, who gave me valuable guidance.⁵ A jazz-musician and composer in New York, Steven Sweeting, improved on my notations, transcribing them on his computer.⁶ Even after these combined efforts, the notations represent sketches rather than fully-detailed portraits.

I have omitted the notation of instrumental accompaniment. Most songs I recorded were made at the homes of the singers, without the participation of *dohars* and instrumentalists. I found that the style of *jarigan* instrumental accompaniments is much the same as for Baul songs and other Bengali folk song repertoires, whose description may be found in other works. While the presence of instrumental accompaniment provides *éclat* in a public performance, its presence or absence makes little difference to a study of the *boyati*'s tunes, because he is the composer-leader from whom the instrumentalists take their cue and choice of accompaniment.

A QUESTION OF QUALITY

A "very minor form"

Two eminent Bangladeshi musicologists casually remarked to me on separate occasions that *jarigan* songs are a minor form of Bengali music—"a very minor form," as one of them expressed it.⁷ Their statements came as a shock. Until then I had believed that the music of *jarigan* songs contains as much melodic character and interest as the more famous forms of Bengali folk songs, such as Baul and *bhatiyali* songs.

An intriguing form

My early analyses of *jarigan* music, based on Jasimuddin's 1964 recordings, revealed a complex relationship between the poetry of *jarigan* songs and their melodic setting. These analyses indicated that some of these melodies are exceptionally complex and expressive—not easily imitated or transcribed.

My impressions seemed to concur with Jasimuddin's enthusiasm for the *shur* (tunes) of *jarigan*. In his book, he expresses his admiration for Bengali folk singers, who, within a traditional couplet-verse structure, can invent "so many thousand tunes ... the artistry of which defies description."⁸ His admiration for *jarigan* music can be heard on the 1964 recordings of Meghu Boyati. Jasimuddin can be heard encouraging Meghu Boyati to sing one example after another. "Please sing," he says, "another

beautiful, beautiful tune." In his own book-length ballad, *Sojan Badiar Ghat (The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy)*, Jasimuddin describes *jarigan* singing in a village during Muharram time. "The sound of it," he writes, "plays like the ripples on a sea of tears."⁹

Could such music come from a "very minor" musical form? The Bangladeshi musicologist who made this statement spoke with knowledge and experience. I respected his judgment, especially because of its reference to the music of *jarigan* songs apart from their texts. This was an approach that I rarely encountered among Bangladeshis whom I consulted and for whom words and music are inextricably bound together.

A re-examination

Realizing that I needed to re-examine my impressions of thirty years ago, I asked myself: Should, in fact, the tunes of *jarigan* be classed as a minor form of Bengali music? Taking into account this possibility, I recognized that I must consider two factors: 1) the particular limitations of the 1964 recordings on which I had based my earlier impressions, and 2) the subsequent lapse of thirty years since that time.

The 1964 recordings contained examples of *jarigan* singing by only one, clearly talented, artist, Meghu Boyati, a singer chosen for his exceptional skill. At the time Jasimuddin made the recordings, Meghu Boyati was over sixty years old. He had probably perfected his style twenty or thirty years before, at a time when large-scale recitals were still flourishing. I realized that the Bangladeshi musicologists mentioned above might have based their judgments on how *jarigan* songs are generally sung today, rather than on how they might have been sung in the past by an exceptionally talented singer.

As I listened to my 1995 recordings, I had to agree that the melodies of contemporary singers tended to be chant-like and repetitive. Of course, this form is a logical choice for long expository compositions. The case is different for *bhatiyali* and Baul songs, comparatively short songs that are lyrical, not expository, in nature. It is quite likely that most *jarigan* singing is in a repetitive, chant-like style of tune rather than in the style used by Meghu Boyati.

I also revised my perceptions of *jarigan* music by noting that Meghu Boyati was singing solo for the recordings. He was unfettered by the constraints of maintaining a strict rhythmic pattern to which *dohars* and instrumentalists could respond. He was free to improvise. For most Bengalis, however, *jarigan* connotes the *boyati-cum-dohar* style of performance. This style of performance somewhat restricts the *boyati's* freedom to improvise elaborate embellishments. I reminded myself that *jarigan* singing is generally associated with the full-scale performance format and I concluded that the 1964 recordings of Meghu Boyati were exceptional in more than one respect.

While analyzing the recent recordings, I noticed that in contrast to the 1964 recordings, the melodies followed closely the prosody of the texts, giving precedence to the verbal aspect of the singing, rather than to the musical one. Although this choice of compositional style is a natural one for narrations, I wondered whether it need be the only choice. As I listened to an increasing number of contemporary *jarigan* examples, I found that both styles of singing, expository and lyrical, seemed to exist in current *jarigan* performances. However, when the melodies were in a lyrical style, they resembled Baul tunes, not the tunes used by Meghu Boyati in the

1964 recordings. None of my 1995 recordings contained songs with as much compositional complexity as exhibited in the 1964 examples.

The Bangladeshi musicologists who inspired me to revise my impressions were correct in saying that the music of *jarigan* is basically repetitive. As a general rule, in comparison to Baul and *bhatiyali* tunes, most *jarigan* tunes are less ornate. Yet, even in the modern singing of *jarigan* songs I found that four styles exist: the expected narrative style, the exceptional lyrical style and two styles which combine the first ones in different proportions. Just as a Mozart or a Beethoven transcends the rondo form of musical composition with melodic invention, so the repetitive form typical of *jarigan* songs can include musical invention that allows a tune to escape from the established mold.¹⁰ This "escape" is found in the tunes by Meghu Boyati, whose tunes had suggested to me in the 1960s that *jarigan* tunes are important musically as well as textually.

Four styles of song composition are explained in Chapter Ten on *jarigan* forms of song composition. In the present chapter I introduce the main features of *jarigan* tunes—their modes, tonal range, rhythmic patterns, melodic syntax and their characteristic vocalization in performances.


MODE, RHYTHM AND TEMPO

Modal scales

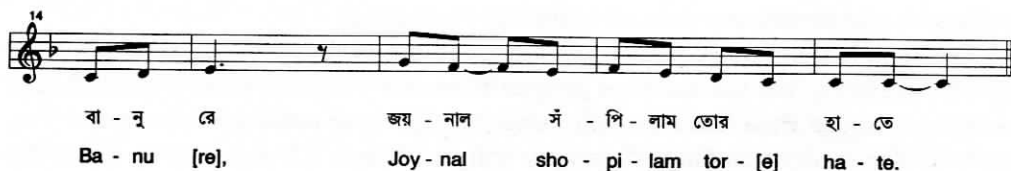
Thats

Various modes (types of scales) called *thats* in Indian music theory represent scales on which Indian musicians traditionally base their improvised compositions known as *ragas*. The term *raga* is cognate with the Sanskrit word for color. Each *raga* is associated with a particular coloration or mood. In the case of Bengali folk music, musicologists generally agree that it is difficult to "pin down" the tonal material of folk songs to specific *thats* and *ragas*. It can sometimes be said, however, that the tonal material of a song happens to contain the same tones that resemble a particular *that*. Thus, for instance, if the tones in the following sample of a *jarigan* tune are organized into a scale (a series of tones proceeding consecutively in an upward or downward direction), the resulting scale resembles a *that* (mode) called *Khamaj*. In Western musical terminology, the scale would be named after a specific medieval mode, like the Mixolydian, which is a "major" scale with its seventh note lowered.

Example 1: a *jarigan* tune using a major scale with lowered 7th.¹¹ Middle "C" is the tonic in this tune and "B" is flattened. The song is "*Banu [re], Joynal ...*"



কি উত্ - তর দি - ব আ - মি রো-জ কি - যা - ম - তে
 ki ut - tor - [o] di - bo a - mi ro - j[o] ki - ya - ma - te.



The Bengali folk singer, who is generally untutored in theories of music and not bound to its rules, develops a melody according to his instinct and personal taste. Nevertheless, the *jarigan* modes of the songs notated for this book resemble the following *thats*, albeit irregularly: *Khamaj* ("major" scale with lowered 7th); *Kaphi* ("major" scale with lowered 3rd and 7th); *Bilaval* (unaltered "major" scale); *Bhairav* ("relative minor" scale with lowered 2nd, raised 3rd and raised 7th), and *Bhairavi* ("relative minor" scale with lowered 2nd). Most *jarigan* songs seem to be in *Khamaj* or *Kaphi*.¹² The *that* of each song example in the notations in Appendix B is indicated in the captions.

The choice of *that* in a *jarigan* song appears unrelated to the particular narrative theme or particular mood expressed in the text. To a Western ear, a *jarigan* song may sound as if it is sung in a "minor" mode, although the text of the song may be in a victorious rather than plaintive mood. In reverse, a choice of *that* which sounds to the Western ear like a "major" scale may be used for a somber *jarigan* textual theme. Exceptions are the few songs in *Bhairavi* and *Bhairav that*s which have a large proportion of lowered tones. Tunes in these *thats* may be safely identified as mournful.

"Home" tone and pitch range

The tone on which a song tune tends to end is known in Western musical theory as the "home" tone or the "tonic." Indian music is based on a concept of a "home" tone which is central, but not necessarily articulated as the final tone. In Indian music this tonic is generally chosen by the singer to suit his or her voice, normally a pitch that lies somewhere in the area of middle "C" of Western music. The notated examples provided in this book have generally been written so that middle "C" coincides with the tonic of each song, whereas in the recordings the actual tonic of each singer may be somewhat lower or higher. The tonic of some songs is ambivalent.

The pitch range of the *jarigan* songs is generally within an octave, usually remaining within a range of six notes (within a hexachord). Concerning individual *jarigan* examples, the widest pitch range among the notations is an interval of a major 9th. I have no examples of a pitch range smaller than a 6th. Most of the tune melodies are active above the tonic, occasionally dipping to tones below it, especially in cadences, before rising to conclude on the tonic.

The extent of pitch range is closely related to the type of song within the *jarigan* recital. The expository (narrative) singing of *jarigan* songs is expressed mostly within a pitch range smaller than an octave. Within this limited range, the *jarigan* singer, adds an element of excitement by economizing on his use of the highest and lowest tones. For instance, a high tone may express a particularly emotional stage in

the poetry, or it may be used to anticipate such a stage, or it may serve as a moment of vocal embellishment for its own sake.

Example 1: two measures showing a rise to a high tone for an interjection. The tonic is A below middle C. The song is "*Shonen, amar koi ...*".

কি কান্ - ড ঘ - টা - ই - ল দুৰ - জন এ মন রে
 Ki kan - do gho - ta - i - lo du - jon [e], mon [re].

Example 2: a leap to the 5th degree of the scale, in the *jarigan* song called "[A!] *Bahire thakiya ghora ...*".

Narration

বা - হি - রে থা - কি - য়া ঘো - ডা - রে
 Ba - hi - re tha - ki - ya gho - ra [re]

কান্ - দি - তে লা - গি - ল
 kan - di - te la - gi - lo.

In the notations, I have not indicated some tones whose pitch is slightly lower or higher than expected in the context of the rest of the tones used in the tune. Some of these unexpected tones are known as "accidentals." These instances, when the singer seems to be "off pitch", may not be accidental at all, but rather deliberate expressions of emotion. Micro-tonal intervals are always difficult to notate, especially where they appear to be unintentional. In my notations, I have taken responsibility in deciding whether a certain pitch is intentional or accidental. Other interpretations, however, are possible.


Rhythmic units

Matras, *aksharas*, and the *tali* beat

The basic rhythmic unit in Indian classical music is called the *matra*. This word is cognate with the word "meter" and is roughly translated as the "beat"-unit of a piece of music, as in a heart beat or pulse. In many Bengali folk songs, especially songs that accompany dances or are derived from dances, the beat is as easy to distinguish as the ticking of a clock. In other tunes, the beat may be less evident, especially when obscured by melodic embellishments.¹³

Example 1: a *jarigan* song with strongly perceptible beats. The song is "[O] Allah, bolo [re] ...".

Narration



বা - হি - রে থা - কি - যা ঘো - ড়া কর - ছে রে বিন - বিন
Ba - hi - re tha - ki - ya gho - ra kor - che [re] khin - khin.

Example 2: a *jarigan* song with lightly perceptible beats. The song is "[Ore] darun Ejid ...".

Narration $\text{♩} = 80$



ও রে দা-রুণ এ- জি- দা ব- লে
[O re] da - run E- ji- da bo- le



ও রে ফা- তে- মার আ- গে
[o re] Fa - te mar a- ge:



ও ধ - রো খুর - মা খা- ও এ- সে
[O] dho - ro khur - ma kha- o e- she."

Generally, in the Indian system of notation, one *matra* of the melody articulates one *akshara* (syllable) of text. In the staff notations of this book, a *matra* is generally represented by an eighth note. In tunes where one *matra* per syllable predominates, the tunes are characterized as "syllabic". *Jarigan* tunes are normally syllabic. An example of a simple syllabic tune and a more ornate one are given below.

Example 1: a syllabic tune with one *matra* per syllable. The song is "Banu [re] ...".



য - দি জয় - নাল মা - রা যায় দোশ - ত কার - বা - লা - তে
Jo - di Joy - nal ma - ra jay dosh - to Kar - ba - la - te,



কি উত - তর দি - ব আ - মি রো-জ কি - যা - ম - তে
ki ut - tor - [o] di - bo a - mi ro - j[o] ki - ya - ma - te.

Narration ♩ = 80

The syllables of a Bengali line of poetry are stressed by the length of their sound rather than by the strength of the sound exerted on the syllable. In Sanskrit poetry, the lines of verse follow strict patterns of predetermined long and short syllables. In Bengali speech, and even less in Bengali poetry, accentuation is often imperceptible. In the *jarigan* songs, the rhythmic pattern of a tune may cause stress on one syllable of a word which, in normal (unsung) speech would not be given stress. The melody determines stress more than the customary accentuation in the spoken form of words.

Some *matras* are accented more than others. For instance, the first of every two *matras* may be given some stress, as if in walking one foot were to be placed more heavily on the ground than the other. A simple marching rhythmic pattern rarely exists in Indian music. Generally, at least four *matras* occur in a group, with the first one stressed. The stress is known as *tali*; literally, a hand-clap.

Using the song "Twinkle, twinkle, little star", I have indicated *matras* and *talis* as they would be indicated in Indian notation. This will give an idea of the average time value of *matra* beats and of the *talis* in a typical *jarigan* song.

x = a *tali* (mental clap).

+ = a possible extra accent. It is felt every four *matras* in the case of this song.

* = a silent beat (a "rest")

+					+		
X			X		X		X
!	!	!	!	!	!	!	*

Twin-kle, twin-kle, lit-tle star,

+				+			
X		X		X		X	
!	!	!	!	!	!	!	*

How I won-der what you are.

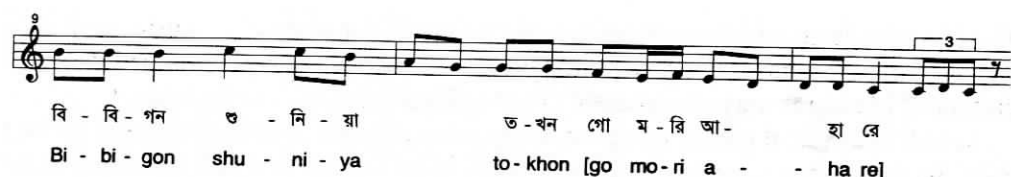
Sometimes, in *jarigan* songs, the *boyati* may vary such a mechanical pattern as the one above, giving more *matras* to one syllable. For instance, in the word "wonder",

he might take the syllable "won-" and extend it melodically for several *matras*, depending on how ornate he wishes to make his melody. To accomplish this embellishment, he may sing other syllables more rapidly in order to allow time for the elaboration of one syllable. Generally, however, the *boyati* maintains a steady *matra*-pulse, usually a fast one, as well as a steady *tali* pattern.

The following two examples show first a tune related to *jarigan* songs, although not a real *jarigan*. It has a definite pulse and a regular pattern of *talis*. The next example shows a *jarigan* tune in which the singer embellishes syllables melodically, so that the *talis* are less immediately perceived.

Example 1: a *dhuagan* (digressive, non-*jarigan*) song with a steady pulse and steady *talis*. The song is "[Are] nache [re] ...".

Narration $\text{♩} = 116$



Occasionally a *boyati* may sing without uniform *matras* or *talis*. He may sing in "free rhythm", as it is called in English. Passages of this kind are similar to recitatives in Western oratorios and operas. This style of singing is only possible if the *boyati* is unaccompanied. It is unsuitable for the main body of narrative singing, because it requires the *boyati* to focus on melodic invention, rather than on the text of the story. It serves effectively, however, for *bandanas* that contain mystical textual themes.

Example: a *jarigan* tune in recitative style. The song is "[A hai are] bolo Allahr nam ...".

Bandana alap

আ হায় আ - রে ব - লো আল - লার নাম
 [A hai] [A - re] bo - lo Al - lahr [e] nam.

এই যো
 [Ei jo]

আ - হা রে ব - লো আল - লা ব - লো মো - মিন যার ডা - বে যে থা - কো
 [A - ha re] bo - lo, Al - lah bo - lo mo - min jar bha - be je tha - ko.

আ - রে আর হ - বে না সা - ধের জ - নম আল - লা ব - লে ডা - কো
 [A - re] ar ho - be na shad - her jo - nom, Al - lah bo - le da - ko.

Rhythmic patterns

Talis

The *matras* in the melodies of *jarigan*, as in the melodies of most Bengali folk songs, are generally grouped so that a rhythmic pattern consisting of strong and weak beats is as discernible as in the above example of "Twinkle, twinkle, little star..." In Western music, most melodies are organized into a three- or four-beat

group, which becomes the unit-pattern or "measure" for a piece of music, such as a waltz (groups of three beats per measure) or a march (groups of four beats per measure). Measures may also contain groups of multiples of 3- or 4- beats.

In Indian classical music, however, many more patterns or *talas* (rhythmic cycles) exist. In the *jarigan* repertory, the *talas* seem to be limited to a few involving three or four beats in a cycle, or their multiples (6 or 8 beats). However, one of the *jarigan* songs in Appendix B has a 7-beat cycle. As in Indian classical music, the *jarigan* rhythmic cycles are generally subdivided into two or three rhythmic sub-groups by giving stress to particular beats. The examples below illustrate a variety of rhythmic cycles among the varied *jarigan* tunes.

A negative stress, called a *khali* or "empty" beat exists in Indian classical music. The mental *tali* (clap) that is expected on this beat is withheld. The *khali* beat generally marks a midway point in the *tala* cycle, like a caesura, such as on the 5th *matra* of an 8-beat cycle. In the examples below, the *khali* beat is not indicated. Although it may be perceived in the drumming that accompanies a *jarigan* song, it is not noticeable in the singing.

Example 1: a 4- or 8-beat cycle, depending on how a percussionist chooses to accompany this song. Measures 6-13 might be interpreted as a 16-beat cycle. This is not indicated in the notations. The other groupings are indicated by the brackets. The song is "*Banu [re] ...*".

| = a *matra*

x = a *tali* (mental clap)

+ = a stress on the first beat of a *tala* cycle

o = a *khali* (mental un-clapped beat)

য - দি জয় - নাল মা - রা যায় দোশ্ - ত কার - বা - লা - তে
Jo - di Joy - nal ma - ra jay dosh - to Kar - ba - la - te,

কি উত - তর দি - ব আ - মি রো-জ কি - যা - ম - তে
ki ut - tor - [o] di - bo a - mi ro - j[o] ki - ya - ma - te.

Example 2: a 3-, 6- or 12-beat cycle, depending on how a percussionist chooses to accompany this song. "*Allah, tomay daki ami ...*".

আল্ - লা তো - মায় ডা - কি আ - মি আ - মা - য় দ - য়া ক - র গো
Al - lah, to - may da - ki a - mi. A - ma - y do - ya ko - ro [go].



তো - মার নাম বি - নে ড - র - সা নাই আ - মার
 To-mar [ə] nam bi - ne bho - ro - sha nai a - mar.

Example 3: a 6-beat cycle. The song is "Amar Alir shontan ...".



অ - ত - বা আ - লি - দা ছি - লো এ - জি - দার লস্ - কর
 A - to - ba A - li - da chi - lo E - ji - dar las - kar.



এ - জি - দার কা - ছে লে - খক লে - খে বা - রে বার।
 E - ji - dar ka - che le - khok le - khe ba - re bar.

Example 4: a 7-beat cycle. The song is "Allah, prothom selam ...".

Boyati and adohar $\text{♩} = 156$



আল্-লা প্র - থ - ম সে - লা - ম ভে - জি আল্-লা নি - র - ন - জ - ন
 Al-lah, pro-tho - m[o] se - la-m[o] bhe - ji, Al-lah ni - ro - n - jo - n.

Example 5: a 12-beat cycle. The song is "Udashi hoilo Hasan ...".

Refrain $\text{♩} = 102$



উ - দা - সী গো হ - ই - ল হা - সান জয় - না - বের লা - গি - যা গো
 U-da[i] - shi [go] ho - i - lo Ha-san Joy - na - ber la - gi - ya [go].



হায় হায় হায় - রে হা - সান হই - ল উ - দা - সী
 Hail Hail [Hai - re] Ha - san hoi - lo u - da - shi.

Free rhythm

Related to the use of normal speech during a *jarigan* song is a form of singing in free rhythm, not in conformity to the *payar* meter of *jarigan* texts. At the beginning

of a *jarigan bandana* on one of the 1964 recordings, Meghu Boyati sings a few measures in free rhythm to introduce a longer passage in *payar* verse with a syllabic, measured melody.

These initial measures of the *bandana* exhibit a vocal "warming up", sung to the syllable "A!" on the tonic. Then the first section of a *bandana* text begins. It is set to an ornate melody in free rhythm. This recitative style of singing is appropriate for expressing the mystical statements of the text and may also be used for emphasizing emotions, creating suspense, or for merely adding melodic interest.¹⁴

Example: a recitative passage used in an introductory passage to initiate a *jarigan bandana*. The song is "[A hai are] bolo Allahr nam ...".

Bandana alap

আ হায় আ-রে ব-লো আল্-লার নাম
[A hai] [A-re] bo-lo Al-lahr [e] nam.

এই যো
[Ei jo]

আ-হা রে ব-লো আল্-লা ব-লো মো-মিন যার ডা-বে যে থা-কো
[A-ha re] bo-lo, Al-lah bo-lo mo-min jar bha-be je tha-ko.

আ-রে আর হ-বে না সা-ধের জ-নম আল্-লা ব-লে ডা-কো
[A-re] ar ho-be na shad-her jo-nom, Al-lah bo-le da-ko.

Jarigan tunes have a "swing" to them due to the combination of a basically regular rhythmic pattern (easy to clap to) with an over-layer of accents that occur at unexpected moments, as in the following example.

Example 1: measures showing a simple 4-beat rhythmic cycle with an overlay of displaced accents. The song is "[A] Bahire thakiya ghora ...".

Narration

বা-হি-রে থা-কি-য়া ঘো-ড়া-রে
Ba-hi-re tha-ki-ya gho-ra [re]

Example 2: "Shonen amar koi ...".

¹³ Refrain (Dohars)

বি - না কয় - লায় চল - ছে ইন - জিন চল - ছে রে দু - লে
Bi - na koy - lay col - che in - jin, col - che [re] du - le.

Laya (tempo)

In Western music, the tempo (or the speed of a composition based on the number of beats per minute) can be measured on a metronome (a calibrated tick-tock device). The measurement, included on the written music, suggests to performers how "fast" or "slow" to play the piece. In Indian classical music, the *laya* (tempo) of a composition is determined instinctively at the time of performance. Unlike Indian classical music, in which a starting tempo may be doubled in the course of an improvisation, in Bengali folk music, including *jarigan* music, only one *laya* (tempo) is used throughout a song.

Jasimuddin characterized some of the song tunes that I notated for his book as being in *drut laya* (fast tempo) and some as in *bilambit laya* (slow tempo). The tunes that he considered to be in *drut laya* turned out to have approximately 100 beats or more per minute on a metronome. Tunes that he considered to be in *bilambit laya*, turned out to have less than 100 beats per minute.¹⁵

The average tempo of the *jarigan* songs notated in Appendix B seem to have about 100 beats per minute; that is, 100 *matras* per minute. The majority of these songs are, therefore, in *drut laya*, such as the "[Ore] ga tolo Sokhina ..." example in which a *matra* (represented by a "dotted" quarter note) is valued at 108 beats per minute. A few songs are in *bilambit laya*, such as the song "[Ore] darun Ejid ..." whose *matra* comprises 96 beats per minute.

The *jarigan* songs with a metronomical reading of 100 or more *matras* per minute correlate with songs that have clearly articulated *matras*; that is, "fast" songs seem to correlate with metrically even melodies. The "slow" songs seem to correlate with less clearly defined *matras*; that is, with recitative melodies. In Bengali folk music *madhyam laya* (medium tempo) may be a subjective concept. Jasimuddin mentions only *drut* (fast) and *bilambit* (slow) for *jarigan* songs.

Once the *jarigan boyati* has established his tempo, he adheres to it throughout the song. Frequently, however, in resuming singing after a choral interlude, the *boyati* will sing in a slightly slower tempo to gain the audience's attention. Thereafter he returns to the original tempo.¹⁶

The following examples show one melody in *bilambit laya* (slow tempo) and one in *drut laya* (fast tempo).

Example 1: a tune in *bilambit laya* (slow tempo). The song is "[A] Probhat kale kokilo ...". A quarter-note-beat is valued at 90 MM.

Narration $\text{♩} = 90$

আ প্রভাত কা-লে কো-কি-ল রে ব-লে গা তো - ল দু - খি - নী মা
 [A] probhat ka-le ko-ki-lo [re] bo-le: "Ga to - lo du - khi - ni ma.

খ-বর কর - তে আ-ই - ছি রে আ - মি কা-লো কো - কি - লা
 Kho-bor kor - te a-i - chi [re]. A - mi ka-lo ko - ki - la.

Example 2: a tune in *drut laya* (fast tempo). The song is "*Tumi ga tolo, Sokhina ...*". The dotted quarter-note-*matra* is valued at 100 MM.

Narration $\text{♩} = 100$

তু - মি গা তো - ল স - খি - না
 Tu - mi ga to - lo So - khi - na.

মু - খের ক - থা যায় শো - না
 Mu - kher ko - tha jay sho - na.

নি - শি প্র - ভাত হ - লো ও
 Ni - shi pro - bhat ho - lo - - - [jo].

The tempo of a *jarigan* tune is not necessarily related to the story theme or its verse structure (prosody). In the previous examples above, the song "*Tumi ga tolo, Sokhina ...*" concerns the death of Sokhina's husband, yet its tune is in a lively and cheerful style. The text of the song that begins "[O!] *Allah, bolo [re], mono [re] ...*" expresses sadness at the transience of this world, yet it is accompanied by a cheerful tune in fast tempo.

EMBELLISHMENTS AND VOCALIZATIONS

In contrast to English ballad singing, the singing of *jarigan* songs, though following traditional patterns, is open to musical as well as poetic invention. If the *boyati* so

chooses, he may inject changes into the contour of a melody, yet adhere to the rhythmic pattern, or, if unaccompanied by an instrumentalist, he may completely break away from the rhythmic pattern. In the process of melodic invention, he may add beats without compensating by removal of the preceding or subsequent beats, as must be done in classical Indian music. *Dohars*, who have accompanied the same *boyati* in many performances, know when he is apt to vary his melody. They know his habits so well that they may adopt his innovations into their own melodies.

"Soul-captivating" music

The vocal vitality of *jarigan* singing is impressive. Throughout a *jarigan* recital, whenever the *boyati* embarks on a new section of narration, or when the *dohars* provide choral responses, the music progresses in waves of energy, each new wave overtaking the ebbing strength of the previous one. The singers make their entrance into each section of song with evident relish as they exercise their individual or combined vocal power.

Jasimuddin remarks that the singing of Bengali folk songs used to make him "mad with their beauty and power."¹⁷ In this respect, he comments on the influence of *bhatiyali* tunes on *jarigan* tunes. Dinesh Chandra Sen, one of the foremost scholars of Bengali folk literature and Jasimuddin's mentor, describes *bhatiyali* tunes in the following words:

... its plaintive and appealing notes ... go straight to the heart and create their own pathos ... The power of the 'Bhatial' to strike the tender cords of the human soul, was found out by the Vaisnavas who refined and enriched it with modulations and made from it that soul-captivating air... The writers of religious songs adopted it with peculiar modifications to form the 'Baul sura' which produces emotions peculiar to an ascetic mood.¹⁸

This "soul-captivating" ability of *bhatiyali* singing applies to *jarigan* singing as well. It results from identifiable techniques which consist of various forms of ornamentation that inject a standard tune with new life. "A melody without ornament is like a night without a moon, a river without water, a vine without flowers, or a woman without jewels" is the oft-quoted statement from the Sanskrit *Nāṭyaśāstra* (*Performance-Treatise*). This love of ornamentation, which is integral to Indian classical music, is also an important feature of Bengali folk singing. Even in the mostly expository passages of *jarigan* songs, the *boyati* instinctively includes ornamentation.

Unlike grace notes, turns and trills in Western classical music, the myriad embellishments in Indian classical music are difficult to isolate from the substance of a melody, because they form an integral part of its essential contour. However, when listening to an entire performance, a pattern of "essential" material emerges. In the case of the *jarigan* melodies, as in those of Baul and other refined Bengali folk songs, the essential contour of a particular song emerges after listening to several verses.

A *boyati* may include ornamentation to provide time for his inventive talent to work on the next portion of the song. Although this practice may exist, I found no such melodic padding in the songs that I notated. For the *jarigan* composer-singer, ornamentation comes naturally and it is an integral part of his performance style.

The prolonged syllable

One "soul-captivating" technique utilized by a *boyati* consists of prolonging a syllable on one tone, like stretching an elastic thread to an indefinite length. This device, a feature of Baul and *bhatiyali* songs, also appears in my recordings of *jarigan* songs. A prolonged syllable may occur mid-line, or at the end of a line. It may conclude by becoming softer in sound before ending, or it can be transformed into flourishes during or at the end of the prolongation.¹⁹ (With only one exception, the examples below are from my notations based on the recordings which Jasimuddin made in 1964 for his book, *Jarigan*, published in 1968.)

Example 1: prolonged syllables in a song identified by Jasimuddin as a *dhuagan* song. When such ornamentation is removed, as in this example, the song reveals itself as a typical *jarigan* chant. The song is "[Ore] darun Ejid ...".

Narration ♩ = 90

ও রে দা-রুণ এ- জি- দা ব- লে
[O re] da- run E- ji- da bo- le

Example 2: a prolonged syllable with further embellishments in a *jarigan* song. The song is "[A!] Bahire thakiya ghora ...".

Narration

বা - হি - রে থা - কি - যা ঘো - ড়া রে
Ba - hi - re tha - ki - ya gho - ra [re]

The prolonged syllable is used economically. It may occur at a particularly emotional part of a text and may also be used, as in the previous example, merely for musical interest at a carefully chosen moment when it suits the structure of a "melodic sentence", generally called a musical phrase.

In Indian classical music, a prolonged tonic may be used at the beginning of a recital for practical reasons. The singer warms up his voice and establishes his "home" tone by humming it or singing it on the vowel sound "ah" for a brief or a long passage. The musician "explores" in free rhythm the melodic territory surrounding his tonic, gradually moving to higher and lower tones. A long passage of this sort is known as an *alap* (literally, conversation in the sense of a discussion).²⁰ One of the *jarigan* songs notated contains a "warming-up" tone followed by a recitative passage, much in the spirit of *alaps*.

Example: a "warming up" tone on the tonic with ornamentation followed by a recitative passage. The example is from the *bandana* of a *jarigan* song. The song is "[A hai are] bolo Allahr nam ...".

Bandana alap

আ হয় আ - রে' ব - লো আল্-লার নাম

[A hai]] [A - re] bo - lo Al - lahr [e] nam.

A high-pitched, prolonged tone followed by ornamentation or a descending "melodic phrase", may be used with dramatic effect to introduce a new "melodic sentence" in a higher register, like a musical cry.²¹ This technique suggests that Middle Eastern styles of singing may have influenced Bengali ones. In each of the following examples, a new "melodic sentence" begins in a higher register.

Example 1: a new "melodic sentence" which starts on the octave above the tonic, upon which the previous "melodic sentence" ended. The song is "[A hai are] bolo Allahr nam...".

আ-রে সার কে - বল আল্-লা-জীর নাম অ-সার সং - সার

[A - re] shar ke-bol Al-lah-jir nam a-shar shong-shar.

আ - রে ও

[A - re ol]

মু - নি - শ্যি দূর - লভ জ-নম না হ - ই - বে আর

Mu - ni - shi dur - labh jo-nom na ho - i - be ar.

Example 2: a new "melodic sentence" which starts on the fifth degree of the scale after the previous "melodic sentence" concluded on the tonic. The song is "[A!] Bahire thakiya ghora ...".

বা - হি - রে থা - কি - য়া ঘো - ড়া - রে

Ba - hi - re tha - ki - ya gho - ra [re]



কান্-দি-তে লা-গি-ল
kan-di-te la-gi-lo.

The prolongation of syllables by fioriture and sustained tones are devices sometimes used in mid "melodic sentence" to emphasize its apex, or to punctuate inner "melodic phrases".

A syllable prolonged on a sustained tone is often used as a melodic conclusion to a "melodic sentence". Used thus, the sustained tone is sometimes preceded by brief melodic ornamentation. No example is given because the occurrence is so frequent that it can be observed in most of the notations in Appendix B.

Interjections expressed melodically

The generous amount of verbal interjections in *jarigan* texts has already been mentioned in Chapter Eight on *jarigan* poetic form. These interjections, without explicit meaning, represent cries from the heart and are found in most Bengali folk songs. They are especially important in *jarigan* melodies. The main ones are: "are!" "re!", "are o!", "go!", "aha!", "aha re!", "mori," "hai!," and "hai are!"²²

Not only do these interjected syllables dramatize the text, but they also play a practical esthetic role in binding the textual line to the musical one, when otherwise the "melodic sentence" does not concur with the textual one. The use of interjections as part of "melodic sentences" is illustrated in the *jarigan* song below.

Example: the use of interjections to fill out "melodic sentences" in a *jarigan* song. The song is [A] *Probhat kale kokilo ...*.

Narration ♩ = 80

আ প্রভাত কা-লে কো-কি-ল রে ব-লে গা তো - ল দু - খি - নী মা
[A] probhat ka-le ko-ki-lo [re] bo-le: "Ga to - lo du - khi - ni ma.

খ - বর কর - তে আ-ই - ছি রে আ - মি কা-লো কো - কি - লা
Kho-bor kor - te a-i - chi [re]. A - mi ka-lo ko - ki - la.

The flow of notes

Smooth progressions

The melodic "phrases" and "sentences" of *jarigan* melodies generally flow smoothly; that is to say, each tone follows another without intervallic "leaps", except when a

boyati or the *dohars* begin on a high note to dramatize the text. The upward and downward movement of a melody pursues a wide rather than a narrow curve. This characteristic can be seen in the notations cited earlier throughout this chapter and in the other songs notated in Appendix B.

Interrupted progressions

Sometimes the *jarigan* singer's voice momentarily loses its melodious quality. The *boyati* may interrupt the upward or downward flow of a melody to catch his breath or to add drama to a phrase. In the case of elegiac passages, such an interruption may sound like a pause or break in breathing while sobbing.²³ In the example below, such breaks occur in the same places, indicating that they were deliberately injected.

Example: a deliberate "break" in the middle of a word in a song identified by Jasimuddin as a *dhuagan* song, not a *jarigan* song, although the text resembles *jarigan* poetry. The song is "[A!] *probhat kale kokilo ...*" The "break" occurs in the 4th measure.

Narration ♩ = 80

আ প্রভাত কা-লে কো-কি-ল রে ব-লে গা তো - ল দু - খি - নী মা
[A]probhat ka-le ko-ki-lo [re] bo-le: "Ga to - lo du - khi - ni ma.

Altered and indefinite pitches

While notating *jarigan* tunes, I occasionally found it difficult to identify the particular pitch of tones through which a melody was passing. In some cases the singer intended a higher tone than the previous one, but failed to reach it. Sometimes I heard a deliberately "off pitch" tone—unexpected, yet emotionally compelling. At other times, a singer's voice might lose its melodious quality, sounding more like speech rather than song. This may have been due to fatigue, but may have also been used for emotional effect.

Example: shouted vocalizations by *dohars* in a *jarigan* performance during the competition at Gouripur, Mymensingh, June 12, 1995, as described in Chapter Four on *jarigan* performances. The song is "*Shonen amar koi, shrotagon ...*". The shouts occur in measure 4.

Echo (Dohars)

হায় হায় ক - রি বি - শ্লে - শন
Hail Hail Ko - ri bi - shle - shon.

Non-melodic vocalizations by *dohars* are used in the background for rhythmic effect. At the *jarigan* Gouripur competition, one of the *dohars* could be heard

pronouncing soft, grunt-like sounds in an even, rhythmic beat, while the others sang their melodious refrains.

A group I recorded in Brahmanbaria included, as background to their singing, a soft repetition of the name Hosein. The two men who chanted the name performed graceful arm and hand movements, adding thumping sounds by beating their chests, which is done more forcefully in the *matams* at Muharram time. These sounds provided a moving effect, furnishing a percussive obligato to both the soloist and the remaining *dohars*. Outright shouts expressed within the rhythm of a song are also characteristic of the *dohars'* singing, as in the example below.

Example: a passage illustrating interjected shouts, from an unidentified song I recorded from a radio program of Bengali songs, New York City, 1967. The song is sung solo, yet it is easy to imagine *dohars* joining in on the shouts. The song is "*Udashi [go] hoilo Hasan ...*". The shouts occur in measures 3 and 5-6.

Refrain ♩ = 102



উ - দা - সী গো হ - ই - ল হা - সান জয় - না - বের লা - গি - যা গো
U-da[ī] - shi [go] ho - i - lo Ha-san Joy - na-ber la - gi-ya [go].

3



হায় হায় হায় - রে হা - সান হই - ল উ - দা - সী
Hail! Hail! [Hai - re] Ha - san hoi - lo u - da - shi.

Link

5



আ - চ্ছা বি - যা গো ভাই সা - বাস সা - বাস সা - বাস ভাই
A-ccha bi-ya [go] bhail! Sha-bash! Sha-bash! Sha-bash, bhail!

Normal speech

Sometimes the *jarigan boyati* will deliberately interrupt his singing by shifting to normal speech. In *jatras*, alternating songs with spoken texts is standard practice. Likewise, the *jarigan boyati* includes passages of *katha* (spoken words) within his narrational singing.²⁴

In the following illustration, a messenger, portrayed as a bird, assumes normal speech. The *boyati's* singing shifts into non-melodious articulation when the bird says "*mout kale bolche Ashgor ...*" (As he died, Ahsgor said ...). Then he uses a semi-melodious phrase to say in bird-style Bengali: "*Koio! Koio! Koio!*" (Tell! Tell! Tell!). This onomatopoeic "melodic phrase" blends into the melodious continuation of the song. The dramatic quality of the poetry is intensified by the interjection of *ipsissima verba* in the tones of normal, non-melodious speech.

Example: a bird-like speech injected into the song "[A!] *probhat kale kokilo ...*," which Jasimuddin identified as a *dhuagan* song, but whose text closely resembles that of *jarigan* songs. The song is "[A!] *probhat kale kokilo ...*". The bird speech occurs in measure 29.

28

আ ম-উত কা-লে বল-ছে আস-গর কই-ও কই-ও কই-ও রে খ-বর আ - মার

[A] mo-ut ka-le bol-che Ash-gor: 'Koi-o, koi-o, koi-o [re] kho-bor a - mar

At greater length than in the previous example, the *boyati* may pause in his musical singing to speak directly to the audience in *gadya* (literally, to-be-spoken; that is, prose) style. In these speeches he can either summarize concisely a complex episode, or inject his personal comments. Such passages rendered in normal speech resemble the spoken passages in European operettas and American "musical" comedies. They enable the plot to progress more rapidly, allowing emotions to be expressed in song or the singer uses them to repeat his story in a different mode. For whatever reason they are injected, spoken prose passages add variety to the lengthy *padya* (literally, to-be-placed-in-feet or verse) passages of the main body of a *jarigan* song. Examples of spoken passages can be found in the translation of the *jarigan* song, "Kasem-Sokhinar *Jari*" (The *Jari* of Kasem and Sokhina) in Appendix B.

Timbre of voice and changes in volume of sound

The following passage describes, in Western terms, approximately how a *jarigan boyati*'s voice sounds to the foreign "ear." The passage is taken from an article by Alan Lomax, an ethnomusicologist who studied the singing styles of different cultures. In this passage, he describes the style of West Asian (Middle Eastern) and South Asian (Indic) folk singing. His observations are admittedly generalizations, yet they seem to apply to the vocal style of *jarigan* singers.

... Instruments very often correspond to the voice quality which is ... delivered from a tight throat with ... vocal tension... The singing tone ... frequently soprano ... in character, even for male singers ... is suitable for the presentation of long and ... decorated melodic lines, where variation is achieved by the addition of rapid quavers, glottal stops, and the like ...²⁵

The Bengali male folk singer sings in the tenor or alto range. While he maintains a tense throat to some extent, he may use a tremolo, if it is natural to his voice. The prominent tremolo practiced by Western opera singers is absent in Indian classical and folk singing. To foreign ears, the vocal quality of Bengali singers sounds slightly "nasal"²⁶ and the timbre of the voice seems slightly hoarse.

Most Bengali folk singers maintain the same dynamic level of voice throughout a song. The exceptions are the trailing off of sound at the end of a sustained tone or a slightly louder tone in starting a new passage. When *dohars* accompany a *boyati*, the

volume of their combined singing contrasts naturally with the soloist. Occasionally, for emphasis, the *boyati* will increase his level of sound, but only briefly. This increase in volume is generally accompanied by a rise in pitch, especially when the *boyati* begins a melody on a high note.

Articulation

Both the *boyati* and *dohars* articulate the syllables of the *jarigan* text clearly and forcefully. Those words in my transcriptions which are indicated as unintelligible (enclosed within brackets) are due to faulty sound recording or dialectal differences, rather than to the singer's lack of vocal articulation.

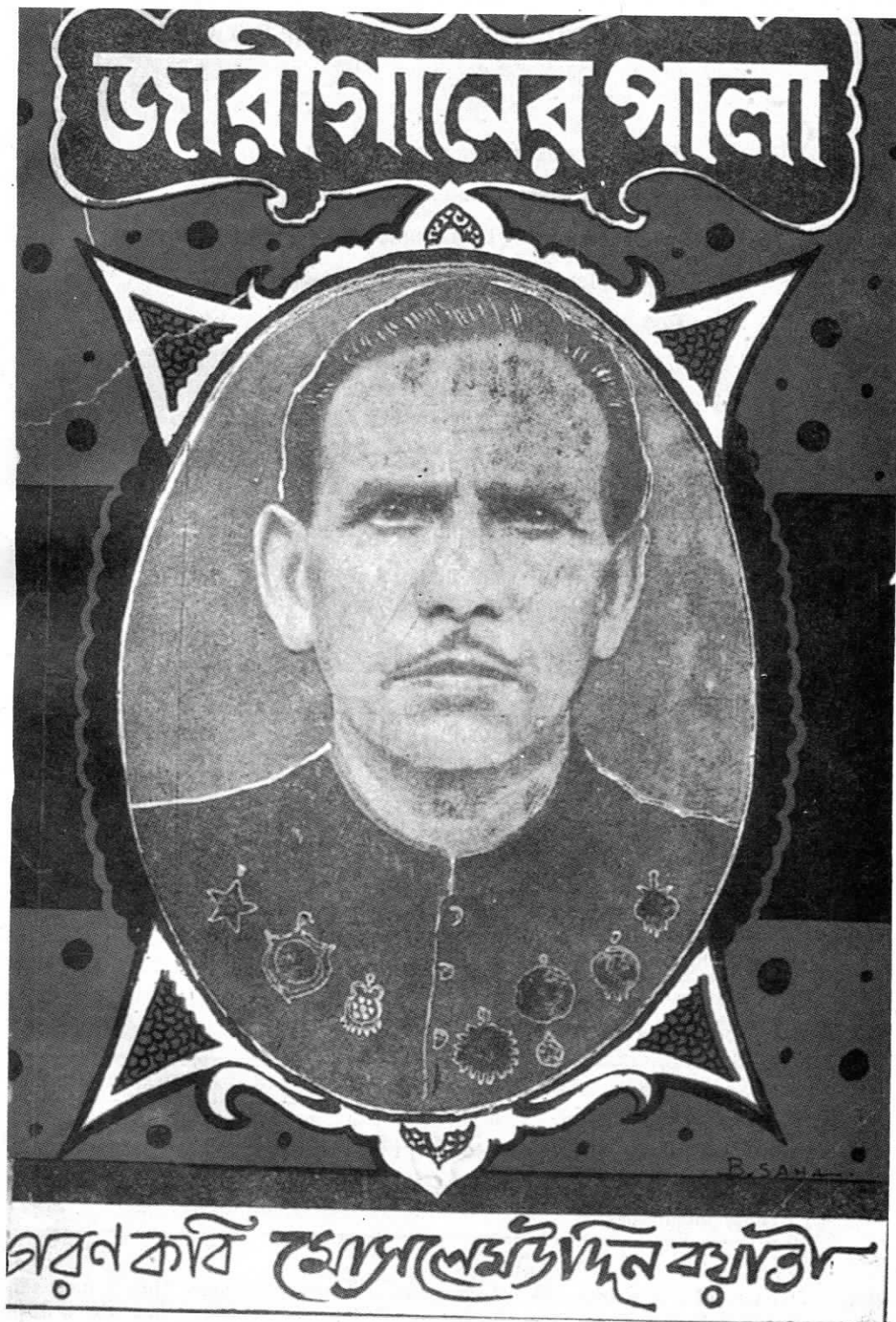


Fig. 36. Cover of a booklet containing *jarigan palas* by Mosleuddin Boyati, 4th edition, 1989.

CHART 1: SIMPLE AND COMPLEX TEXT-TUNE RELATIONSHIPS

Key

- A/ = the first textual sentence of a couplet.
 B// = the second textual sentence of a couplet.
 A/ B// C/ D//... = textual couplets. (Two couplets are represented here.)
 "Etc." = the couplet series continues indefinitely.
 a = first "melodic sentence".
 b c d ... = subsequent "melodic sentences".
 . = the end of a "melodic sentence".
 - = the continuation of a "melodic sentence".
 ! = the end of a tune, but not the song.
 "1-sent. tune" = a tune with only 1 "melodic sentence".
 "2-sent. tune" = a tune of 2 different "melodic sentences", etc.

I. Concurrent Possibilities

	A/	B//	C/	D//	E/	F//	G/	H//	Etc. (text couplets)
1.	a!	a!	a!	a!	a!	a!	a!	a!	Etc. (1-sent. tune)
2.	a.	b!	a.	b!	a.	b!	a.	b!	Etc. (2-sent. tune)
3.	a.	a.	a.	b!	a.	a.	a.	b!	Etc. (2-sent. tune)
4.	a.	b.	c.	d!	a.	b.	c.	d!	Etc. (4-sent. tune)
5.	a.	b.	c.	b.	d.	e.	a.	b!	Etc. (5-sent. tune)
x.	Many other possibilities.								

II. Non-Concurrent Possibilities

	A/	B//	C/	D//	E/	F//	G/	H//	Etc. (text couplets)
6.	a. b - !		a. b - !		a. b - !		a. b - !		Etc. (2-sent. tune)
7.	a. b. c.		d. e. f!		a. b. c.		d. e. f!		Etc. (6-sent. tune)
x.	Other possibilities.								Etc.

Note : The size of a box indicates the comparative length of a tune. Thus a tune may contain only 2 different "melodic sentences", but it accompanies four textual lines (2 couplets), as in row no. 3; and a tune may contain 6 different "melodic sentences", but it accompanies only four textual lines (2 couplets), as in row no. 7.

THE SONG COMPOSITIONS

তালগাছে শালিক নাচে, ঘুরিয়া নাচে পেঁচা,
মেয়ের কাপড় মিন্সা পরে ঢুলিয়া বেড়ায় কোঁচা।

Tal-gache shalik nache, ghuriya nache pencha
Meyer kapor minsha pore, dhuliya beray koncha!

(On the palm-tree the *shalik*-bird dances, the owl dances whirling around.
The fellow wearing female dress, nodding [his head], strolls about,
swishing the hem of his skirt.)

— Lines interpolated from an extraneous song into a *jarigan* song.¹

MELODIC GRAMMAR

"Song" and "tune"

In speaking about the tunes or melodies of *jarigan* songs, it is important to make a clear distinction between the term "song", and the term "tune". I use the word "song" to connote an entire *jarigan pala* composition, from its first couplet-verses to its final one. The word "tune" is reserved to connote a melodic pattern that characterizes the sound of a song because the same pattern of music is repeated many times. Like the tune of an English ballad, the same tune in a *jarigan* song accompanies each *jarigan* couplet-verse or set of couplet-verses, depending on the *boyati's* choice of tune. The musically notated examples of the songs included in Appendix B show only the tune that characterizes each song, not the music of a whole song.

I have shown that the text of a *jarigan* song is organized into couplet-verses and how each textual line of a couplet-verse is a complete grammatical clause or sentence, telling something new as the narration unfolds. The tune, however, may or may not conform to this couplet-verse pattern, but it remains basically the same as it is repeated throughout the song.

The "melodic sentence"

In order to study the relationship between the text syntax and tune syntax of *jarigan* songs, it is necessary to identify what is generally called melodic phrases as

"melodic sentences". A "melodic sentence" is a series of tones that gives a feeling of a musical statement. The ending of the series of tones determines this feeling, like a period at the end of a textual sentence. This conclusive feeling is aurally marked in different ways: by a pause after the last tone, by prolonging the last tone, by a cadential flourish before the last tone, or by various combinations of these devices. A "melodic sentence" is illustrated in the following passage quoted from the song "*Amar Alir shontan ...*".

Example: a "melodic sentence".

13 Narration (*boyati*)

হায় হায় - রে শু - নো ভাই ম - মিন - গণ শু - নো দি - য়া মন
[Hai!] [Hai-re!] Shu - no, bhai mo - min - gon, shu-no di-ya mon.

Sometimes a "melodic sentence" is interrogative; that is, it seems to ask a question. In this case, a subsequent "melodic sentence" provides an answering feeling. The two "melodic sentences" in the example below are in this question-and-answer relationship. The song cited is "*[A hai are] bolo Allahr nam ...*".

Example: two "melodic sentences" in a question-and-answer relationship.

15

আ-রে সার কে - বল আল-লা-জীর নাম অ-সার সং - সার
[A-re] shar ke-bol Al-lah-jir nam a-shar shong-shar.

20

আ - রে ও
[A - re ol]

In the above example, the interrogative feeling of the first "melodic sentence" is partly due to the way it ends on the third degree of its *that*-scale (mode-scale). Some "melodic sentences" seem to a Western ear to end on the third degree of the *that*-scale, although they actually end on the tonic. This misperception is due to the relatively few modes used in most Western music. The possible misperception should be kept in mind when distinguishing "melodic sentences".

Often a "melodic sentence" begins with an anacrusis; that is, it begins before the principal down beat in the rhythmic cycle. If it is difficult to determine whether a "melodic sentence" has ended or not, the anacrusis of the next "melodic sentence" establishes that the preceding "melodic sentence" has ended. This relationship is shown in the notations below.

Example: "melodic sentences" that begin with an anacrusis in the *jarigan* song "[Ore] darun Ejid ...".

Narration ♩ = 80

ও রে দা-রুণ এ- জি- দা ব- লে
[O re] da - run E- ji- da bo- le

ও রে ফা-তে- মার আ- গে
[O re] Fa - te mar a- ge:

A "melodic sentence" generally contains "melodic phrases", an expression I use to indicate subdivisions like phrases in a textual sentence. Grammatically, a textual phrase is dependent on the rest of a clause or sentence for its full meaning. For instance, the phrase "in the hope" provides scant information until there is a subject and verb to give it meaning. In the same way, there are groups of a few tones within a "melodic sentence" which are marked by a pause or a prolonged tone or a flourish, but such a group of tones is insignificant in isolation from the "melodic sentence" in which it resides. In the example below, two "melodic phrases" reside within one "melodic sentence". The second of the two phrases serves as a refrain in the song cited below.

Example: "melodic phrases" within a "melodic sentence" from the *jarigan* song "Shonen amar koi, shrotagon ...". The motival phrase serves as a refrain in this song. The first phrase ends on the last C sharp of the second measure. The next phrase ends on C sharp at the beginning of the fourth measure.

Narration (Boyati) ♩ = 82

শো - নেন আ - মার কই শ্রো - তা - গন ক - রি বি - শ্লে - শণ
Sho - nen - [a] a - mar koi, shro - ta - gon; ko - ri bi - shle - shon.

Text-tune relationships

Text-tune concurrence

If a "melodic sentence" begins and ends with a textual sentence, the text-tune relationship is concurrent. In *jarigan* song composition, *boyatis* generally use a concurring relationship. The tune may be as short as one "melodic sentence" used repeatedly to accompany each textual sentence throughout the song. Combination 1 in the chart of text-tune relationships shows this text-tune relationship: A/a. B//a! C/a.

D//a!, etc. The following passage from a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin's collection illustrates this pattern. The refrain line that intervenes between the couplet-verse lines is omitted in order to show the fundamental structure of the narrative couplets.

Example: a passage from a *jarigan* song in which the tune structure conforms to the textual couplet-verse structure. The song is "[O!] Allah bolo [re], mono [re] ...".

Narration

43

শু - নি - যা ঘো - ড়ার খিন - খিন বা - হি - রে আ - সি - লো
Shu-ni-ya gho - rar khin - khin ba - hi - re a - shi - lo.

Narration

52

বা - হি - রে এ - সে বি - বি - গন দে - খি - তে পা - ই - লো
Ba-hi-re e - she bi-bi-gon de - khi - te pa - i - lo.

Often *boyatis* use at least two "melodic sentences" per textual couplet-verse, so that a different "melodic sentence" accompanies the second textual sentence of each couplet-verse. The same two different "melodic sentences", as a pair, are repeated to accompany each couplet-verse of the song. Combination 2 shows this common text-tune relationship: A/a. B//b! C/a. D//b!, etc. The same song as the one above illustrates this pattern with, this time, the intervening refrain line included, as it would be in a performance.

Example: a tune in which the "melodic sentences" concur with the textual ones in the relationship: A/a. B//b. The song is "[O!] Allah bolo [re], mono [re] ...".

Refrain

37

আল্ - লা ব - লো রে ম - ন রে এই ভা - বে দিন যা - বে না
Al-lah bo-lo [re], mo-no [re]. Ei bha-be din ja-be na.

Narration

43

শু - নি - যা ঘো - ড়ার খিন - খিন বা - হি - রে আ - সি - লো
Shu-ni-ya gho - rar khin - khin ba - hi - re a - shi - lo.

Refrain

46

আল্ - লা ব - লো রে ম - ন রে এই ভা - বে দিন যা - বে না
Al-lah bo-lo [re], mo-no [re]. Ei bha-be din ja-be na.

Narration



বা - হি - রে এ - সে বি - বি - গন দে - খি - তে পা - ই - লো
Ba - hi - re e - she bi - bi - gon de - khi - te pa - i - lo.

Some tunes of *jarigan* songs contain two "melodic sentences" one of which may be repeated several times. These tunes are longer. For instance, one "melodic sentence" (a.) may be repeated three times to express three different textual sentence-lines (A/B// C/). A second "melodic sentence" (b.) accompanies a fourth textual sentence-line (D//). Thus the tune accompanies two textual couplet-verses. Combination 3 shows this text-tune relationship: A/a. B//a. C/a. D//b!. This text-tune relationship is illustrated in the song "*Allah, prothom selam bheji ...*," a *bandana* of a *jarigan* song.

Example: a tune consisting of one "melodic sentence" sung three times to accompany three different successive text sentences, followed by a different "melodic sentence" to accompany a fourth textual sentence.

Boyati and adohar  = 156



আল্-লা প্র - থ - ম সে - লা-ম ভে - জি আল্-লা নি - র - ন - জ - ন
Al-lah, pro-tho - m[o] se - la-m[o] bhe-ji, Al-lah ni- ro- n - jo- n.
যা - হা - র কুদ- র-তে পয় - দা এই তিন - [ও] ভূ - বন।
Ja- ha - r[o] kud- ra-te poy - da Ei tin - [o] bhu- bon.
তার প - রে সে - লা-ম ভে - জি ন - বি - জির চ - রণ
Tar po - re se - la-m[o] bhe-ji No-bi - jir co - ron.

4 dohars



উ - মে - দ ত রাই-বায় ন - বী ম - দি - না - র সন
U-me - d[o] to - rai-bay No - bi Mo-di - na - r[o] shon.

Text-tune non-concurrence

In all the above text-tune relationships, the "melodic sentences" concur with the textual sentences; that is, the "melodic sentences" are "in step" with the textual sentences, as is generally the case in English ballads. In some *jarigan* songs, however, tune "sentences" and text sentences may be "out of step" with each other; that is, non-concurrent. This happens when a "melodic sentence" of the tune ends before the

textual sentence that it was accompanying reaches its end, causing the next "melodic sentence" to begin before the first textual sentence has ended. This non-concurrence is rare in average *jarigan* songs, but some of Jasimuddin's song examples that I musically notated show that this relationship can occur. Combinations 6 and 7 show non-concurrent relationships.

For instance, in Combination 6, the first "melodic sentence" (a.) ends before the first textual sentence (A/) has ended, so that a second "melodic sentence" (b.) begins before the first textual sentence (A/) has ended. Then this "melodic sentence" (b.) continues by accompanying the second textual sentence (B//) of the couplet-verse. The new "melodic sentence" (b.) and the second textual sentence (B//) end together. Combination 6 shows this text-tune relationship: A/a.b B//-. The *jarigan* song quoted below uses this combination.

Example: "melodic sentences" that do not concur with the textual sentences in the *jarigan* song "[A/] *Bahire thakiya ghora...*" in Jasimuddin's collection. The initial "warming up" syllable "[A/]" is omitted as is the refrain line at the end of the textual couplet-verse. In order to appreciate the non-concurrence of melody and text, the text lines are given below as they would be understood in writing without the melody.

Bahire thakiya ghora kandite lagilo.

Bibigon shuniya tokhon bahire ashilo.

(Outside standing, the horse to weep began.

The ladies hearing, then outside they came.)

It should be observed in the following musical notations that the first "melodic sentence" does not end until the end of measure five, but the textual sentence is left incomplete. A new "melodic sentence" is used to complete the textual sentence.

Narration

বা - হি - রে থা - কি - য়া ঘো - ড়া রে
Ba - hi - re tha - ki - ya gho - ra [re]

কান্-দি-তে লা - গি - ল
kan-di-te la - gi-lo.

বি - বি - গন শু - নি - য়া ত - খন গো ম - রি আ - হা রে
Bi - bi - gon shu - ni - ya to - khon [go mo - ri a - - ha re]

Another song, "[Ore] *darun Ejid...*", also contains some "melodic sentences" that are non-concurrent with the textual ones that they initially accompany. In this

song, the first "melodic sentence" (a.) ends after the word "*bole*", but the first textual sentence (A/) of the first textual couplet does not end until the word "*age*". A second "melodic sentence" (b.) accompanies the remaining words of the first textual sentence (A/), ending concurrently with it. A new "melodic sentence" (c.) is in concurrent step with the second textual sentence (B//). Then the same phenomenon re-occurs in the second textual couplet. Two new "melodic sentences" (d. and e.) accompany the first textual sentence (C/) of the second couplet and a new "melodic sentence" (f.) is in concurrent step with the second textual sentence (D//) of that couplet. As a result (as clear as is the summer's sun!), six "melodic sentences", some of which are the same, accompany four textual sentences. Combination 7 shows this text-tune relationship: A/a.b. B//c. C/d.e. D//f!.

Example: a song in which there are more "melodic sentences" than couplet-line sentences. The song is "[*Ore*] *darun Ejid bole ...*".

Narration ♩ = 90

ও রে দা-রুণ এ- জি- দা ব- লে
[O re] da-run E- ji- da bo- le

ও রে ফা- তে- মার আ- গে
[o re] Fa - te mar a- ge:

ও ধ - রো খুর - মা খা- ও এ- সে
[O] dho - ro khur - ma kha- o e- she."

হো- সে - নের ও কা - টা মুন - ড দি-লো ফা- তে- মার হা- তে
Ho- she - ner [o] ka - ta mun- do di - lo Fa- te- mar ha- te.

ও রে হায় হায় ব - লে তা-রা কান্- তা- ছে
[O re] "Hail Hail" bo - le ta - ra kan- ta- che.

The "melodic sentences" in the above song show a pattern of two sets of three "melodic sentences" each. In each set, the third "melodic sentence" ends on the tonic of the tune, forming a musical rhyme. If the six "melodic sentences" of this

tune are listed with their final tones identified, the triplet grouping of "melodic sentences" into two groups becomes apparent. The "melodic sentences" nos. 2 and 3 of the first group "rhyme" with "melodic sentences" nos. 5 and 6 of the second group. Thus:

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|---------|---|--------------------------|
| 1. "Melodic sentence" | "a." | ends on | C | (the 5th of the scale) |
| 2. "Melodic sentence" | "b." | ends on | A | (the 3rd of the scale) |
| 3. "Melodic sentence" | "c." | ends on | F | (the tonic of the scale) |
| 4. "Melodic sentence" | "d." | ends on | A | (the 3rd of the scale) |
| 5. "Melodic sentence" | "e." | ends on | A | (the 3rd of the scale) |
| 6. "Melodic sentence" | "f." | ends on | F | (the tonic of the scale) |

This subdivision of the tune into two parts, each containing a triplet of "melodic sentences", suggests that the text of this song is possibly in *tripadi* couplet-verses. Indeed, the text of this song can be transcribed as follows:

Example: a couplet verse from the same song, transcribed as a *tripadi* verse.

- A/ [Ore] darun Ejid bole (=a.) [ore] Fatemar age, (=b.)
 "[O] dhoru khurma khao eshe." (=c.)
 B// Hoseiner kata mundo dilo (=d.) Fatemar hate. (=e.)
 [Ore] hai hai bole tara kantache. (=f!)

(Oh, the terrible Ejid said in front of Fatema,
 "Oh, come and eat dates."

He gave the severed head of Hosein into Fatema's hands.
 Oh, saying "Alas! Alas!" the ladies wept.)

As mentioned in the chapter on the poetic form of *jarigan* songs, *tripadi* couplets, according to Jasimuddin, are sometimes used for *jarigan* songs,² although I find only one example in his collection. This instance is found within the *jarigan* song called "Hasaner Bishpan" (The Poisoning of Hasan). Eight successive *tripadi* couplets are included in this song. Perhaps the *boyati* wanted to add variety to his recital or give emphasis to a particular part of the narrative by a change in prosody.³

There are so many different text-tune relationships which *boyatis* use in singing *jarigan* narratives that it is impossible to show examples of all the patterns. Sometimes it is necessary to hear several couplet-verses of a *jarigan* song before the tune pattern emerges. Just as *boyatis* are skilled in extending or reducing textual lines to fit a melody (as described in Chapter Eight on poetic form), so, likewise, *boyatis* are skilled in fitting a variety of tune structures to *payar* couplets, as in the concurrent and non-concurrent tunes just described.

MUSICAL HINGES

In much Western music composed in the pre-classical and classical period (eighteenth century), a composition with several sections contains melodic signals

that mark the end of one section before the next one begins. The composer uses various forms of musical punctuation to give a feeling of completion to the end of a section, whether marking a movement in a concerto or in a sonata. In Indian classical music, however, and in the major types of Bengali folk songs, such as *jarigan*, the divisions of a musical composition are often so tightly dove-tailed that the end of one section may form the beginning of the next.

Notations of the songs composed by the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore show eliding techniques derived from both Bengali classical and folk forms of music. Seen on paper, the sections are clearly marked, but in performance they glide one into the other without interruption. Likewise, in my notations of *jarigan* songs, discrete sections become visually apparent, but in performance they blend one into another.

Some of the ways in which these sections are linked are illustrated in the notations below. Although the *boyati* was unaccompanied by *dohars* when I made the sound recording, their presence is easily imagined from the difference between the lyrical refrain sections and the expository narrative body of the recital. A tight connection between one section and the next is effected in the way one side of a hinge is interlocked with the other. This "hinge" technique joins the end of the *boyati's* expository singing to the beginning of the refrain. The same "hinge" connects the end of the refrain to the beginning of the next passage of expository singing.

In the *jarigan* song example below, the line "*Banu [re], Joynal shopilam tor hate ...*" (Oh, Banu, I entrust Joynal into your hands ...) provides a "hinge". This line begins and ends the four-line refrain of the song. After the fourth line of the refrain, there is a feeling of finality, but the *dohars* (had they been there) continue the melody by singing an exclamation line, "*Allah [go]!*", as a "hinge" to elide the refrain with the *boyati's* next series of narrative couplets. When the *boyati* feels he would like the *dohars* to take up the refrain, he works the "*Banu [re] ...*" phrase into the end of the second line of his latest couplet. The *dohars* join in while he is singing it. Then they take up the refrain verse which uses the "*Banu [re] ...*" line as its first line. The refrain tune is different from the tune that accompanies the narrative couplets, but it is in the same rhythm and mode.

Example: a *jarigan* song called "*Muharramer Jari*," sung for me by the *boyati*, Hatim Uddin Sarkar, without *dohars*, in Gouripur, Mymensingh, May 31, 1995. In the refrain, Hosein is addressing his wife, Shar Banu, mother of Joynal.⁴

Structural scheme:

- R — the refrain quatrain (note: lines 1 and 4 are the same in text and melody.)
- H(e) — the "hinge" line, an exclamation.
- N — a series of narrative couplets sung by the *boyati*, as many as he likes.
- H(R1) — the first refrain line sung as a "hinge" - line after the last narrative couplet.
- R — the refrain quatrain.
- Etc. — the above pattern [R, H(e), N, H(R1), R] is repeated indefinitely.

Theoretically this pattern is repeated throughout the entire *jarigan* song. The *boyati*, however, is free to vary the pattern and he generally does. The actual text which is articulated by the musical composition is given below.

REFRAIN (4 lines = R:1-3,1):

"*Banu [re], Joynal shopilam tor hate.*" (=Line 1)

(Oh, Banu! I have entrusted Joynal into your hands.)

Jodi Joynal mara jay doshto Karbalate, (=Line 2)

(If Joynal is killed at ill-fated Karbala,)

Ki uttor dibo ami roj kiyamate? (=Line 3)

(What answer shall I give on the Day of Judgment?)

Banu [re], Joynal shopilam tor hate." (=Line 1)

(Oh, Banu! I have entrusted Joynal into your hands.)

HINGE (an exclamation with the last syllable lengthened):

Allah [go]! -----

(Oh, Allah!)

NARRATION (three couplets, but the quantity varies):

Shonen, shonen, shrotagon [go], shonen diya mon.

(Listen, listen, listen audience. Listen paying attention.)

Mohorromer jari [go] ami korlam aroombhon.

(I have started the Muharram jari.)

Jugal lash ailo, bhai [go] phiriya jokhon,

(When they brought the two bodies back oh, brothers,)

Joynal pagol, bhai [go], hoilo tokhon.

(Joynal, oh, brothers, went mad.)

"Eke, eke shobai gelo, keu-to roilo nai.

("One by one, all have perished; not one has remained.)

Kebol matro ami roilam. "Shonen, shrota bhai.

(Only I have survived". Listen, listening brothers.)

HINGE (First line of the refrain.):

"Banu [re], Joynal shopilam tor hate."

(Banu, I have entrusted Joynal into your hands.)

REFRAIN (4 lines, same as the refrain above.)

HINGE (Same exclamation as above.)

NARRATION (Series of new narrative couplets.)

HINGE (First line of the refrain.)

ETC.

Below a few measures from the "*Banu [re] ...*" song show a smooth elision between the end of the series of narrative couplets and the return to the refrain. The melodic progress from the last syllable of the last couplet, into the "*Banu [re] ...*" "hinge" line, should be observed carefully. The last syllable is the "i" sound at the end of the word "*bhai*" (brother). This "i" (pronounced as in "police") is melodically

prolonged into the beginning of the next measure, the one in which the "*Banu [re] ...*" hinge-line begins, thus eliding extra smoothly the end of the narrative section with the beginning of the refrain.

Example: an elision within an elision in the same song. The song is "*Banu [re] ...*".

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কে - বল মা - ত্র আ - মি রই - লাম শো - নেন শ্রো - তা ভাই
 Ke - bol - [a] ma - tro a - mi roi - lam." Sho - nen, shro - ta bhai.

45

বা - নু রে জয় - নাল সঁ - পি - লাম তোর হা - তে
 Ba - nu [re], Joy - nal sho - pi - lam tor - [e] ha - te.

To Refrain

The interlocking of sections of a *jarigan* song can be more complex and subtle than in the above example. In order to show the variety of linking techniques it would be necessary to notate entire performances. The reader, however, should be aware that other possibilities of linking exist and to what extent the *boyati* and his *dohars* are adept at making the links automatically without apparent signals or interruptions.

FOUR STYLES

CHART 2: STYLES OF SONG COMPOSITION IN *JARIGAN* SONGS AND RELATED SONGS.

		TUNE:	
		EXPOSITORY	LYRICAL
TEXT:	EXPOSITORY	1. FULLY EXPOSITORY Expository text (narrative text in <i>payar</i> couplets) with Expository tune (word oriented tune).	2. COMPOSITE: Expository and Lyrical Expository text with lyrical tune (ornate tune).
	LYRICAL	3. COMPOSITE: Lyrical and Expository: Lyrical text (non-narrative text in any verse form) with Expository tune (word-oriented tune).	4. FULLY LYRICAL Lyrical text with lyrical tune.

A *jarigan boyati* takes pride in his bardic craft which requires him to be a *shur-kar* (tune-maker) as well as a *kabi* (poet). In fact, the term *kabi* need not be taken literally, but often implies a tune-maker as well as a verse-maker.⁵

Each *jarigan boyati* has his own style of tune composition, inherited from his *ustad* (master-teacher), then developed over the course of his own public performances.⁶ The tunes that I studied show remarkable variety. As Jasimuddin observes in his book, I found that the tunes in the *jarigan* repertory appear to be limitless.⁷ Analyses of my notations revealed four basic styles of text-tune relationships: a "fully expository" style, a "fully lyrical" style and two combinations of these styles, as shown in Chart 2 above.

The "fully expository" style (Style # 1)

The "fully expository" style is characterized by a text that tells a story, exposing the facts with minimal elaboration, as in typical *jarigan* song texts. The tune is also "expository" in style; that is, it exposes the words of the text and is, therefore, word-oriented. The "melodic sentences" are mostly in the syllabic style and they are in synchronous concurrence with the two lines of each text couplet-verse. The tune in this style may be long enough to cover two text couplet-verses (four text lines or a quatrain) before it is repeated. (See Chart 1 of text-tune relationships.)

The same tune used repeatedly for different verses is common procedure in European ballads. It is the style most suited to long, narrative singing. However, in *jarigan* songs, the "melodic sentences" that accompany the textual ones tend to be longer and more ornate than in English ballads. While current *jarigan* songs are generally composed in the "fully expository" style, some show enough musical elaboration to transcend it. I will show how this is effected after the example below of a standard, "fully expository" style of song composition.

The diagram below shows a *jarigan* text in which the melody closely articulates the syllables, sentences and couplet-verse structure of the expository (action-oriented) text. The tune (which is not shown) is predominantly word-oriented; that is, it is "expository" in the sense of exposing (articulating) the text. Each syllable (represented by an asterisk) is articulated by only one or two beats. There are relatively few melodic flourishes and the ends of lines are regularly emphasized by extending the last syllable with a long note, but not a flourish.

Diagram: a passage from a typical *jarigan* song, "*Amar Alir shontan ...*". The notations for this song are in Appendix B.

- * = a note that articulates one syllable.
- ~ = a flourish in the melody which lengthens a syllable.
- = a held note that lengthens a syllable.

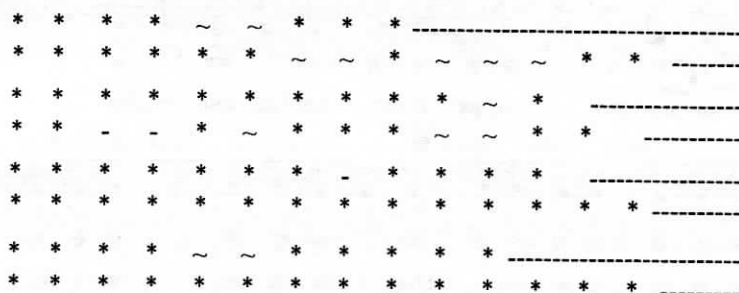
REFRAIN (2 rhymed lines)

```

*   *   *   *   *   *   ~   *   ~   *   ~   *   *   -
*   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   -----

```

NARRATIVE COUPLETS (action-oriented text)



REFRAIN (same pattern as the refrain above)

ETC.

The contours of the "melodic sentences" of this song are repetitious, as can be observed in the following notations of the narrative section of the above song. The first lines of each text couplet follow approximately the same path. Likewise, the second lines of each text couplet follow roughly the same path, with the exception of the second "melodic sentence" of the last text couplet. This last "melodic sentence" is different in order to prepare for starting the melody of the refrain.

Example: verses from "*Amar Alir shontan ...*" that illustrate the "fully expository" style of song composition.

¹³ Narration (*boyati*)

হায় হায় - রে শু - নো ভাই ম - মিন - গণ শু - নো দি - য়া মন
[Hai!] [Hai- re!] Shu - no, bhai mo - min - gon, shu - no di - ya mon.

¹⁸

জ - হর না - মা জা - রীর কি - ছু ক - রি বি - ব - রণ
Jo - hor na - ma ja - rir ki - chu ko - ri bi - bo - ron.

²³

অ - ত - বা আ - লি - দা ছি - লো এ - জি - দার লস্ - কর
A - to - ba A - li - da chi - lo E - ji - dar las - kar.

²⁷

এ - জি - দার কা - ছে লে - খক লে - খে বা - রে বার।
E - ji - dar ka - che le - khok le - khe ba - re bar.

32

এই ক - থা শু - নি - যা এ - জিদ্ কোন - কাম ক - রি - ল
Ei ko - tha shu - ni - ya E - jid kon - [o] kam ko - ri - lo!

36

শ - হ - রে বা - জা - রে নি - যা ভেন - ডে - রা ফি - রা - ই - ল আ - মার
Sho - ho - re ba - za - re ni - ya bhen - de - ra phi - ra - i lo. (A - mar)

D.C. al Fine

Such a repetitious style of composition understandably classes *jarigan* songs as a "minor" musical form when compared to the music of Baul and *bhatiyali* songs, or, certainly, when compared to *raga* improvisations. However, the "fully expository" style of song composition (a word-oriented, repetitious style of composition), as in the song above, serves well for telling a long story. The "fully expository" style articulates clearly the words and syntax of the narrative text which can then reach the listener unobstructed by melodic elaboration.

Nevertheless, even in the "fully expository" style, the relatively simple tunes of *jarigan* songs do not adhere to their texts so tightly that they become monotonous. They generally include enough melodic ornamentation and variation to keep audiences musically as well as verbally enthralled. The musical rendition of *jarigan* texts, even in this basic style of song composition, places them in a category distinctly more musical than the *path* ("reading" recital) genre of narrative poetry.

The "fully lyrical" style (Style # 4)

In this style both the text and tune are lyrical. The text is non-narrative; it may refer to a story, but does not tell it. The text mainly expands emotionally on an episode or on a philosophical idea, often on a religious perception or feeling. The "melodic sentences" in this style are more complex than in the "fully expository" style illustrated above. The "melodic sentences" express the textual syllables in a variety of ways other than the one-on-one relationship that often characterizes the "fully expository" style.

In the example below, the "melodic sentences" feature undulations and an exceptionally wide pitch range. The syllables of the text are extended aurally by tones that are prolonged or by flourishes in the melody and by pauses.

Example: the beginning of a *jarigan bandana*, "*Allah, prothom selam bheji...*". showing elaboration in the "melodic sentences". The text is non-narrative.

Boyati and adohar

4 dohars



উ - মে - দ ত রাই-বায় ন - বী ম - দি - না - র সন
 U-me - d[o] to - rai-bay No - bi Mo-di - na - r[o] shon .

3



আল্-লা প্র - থ - ম সে - লা-ম ভে - জি আল্-লা নি - র - ন - জন
 Al-lah, pro-tho - m[o] se - la-m[o]bhe - ji, Al-lah ni - r[a]-on-jon. (Etc.)

Composite styles: the "expository-lyrical" style (Style # 2)

Although it may be exceptionally used in *jarigan* singing, the "expository-lyrical" style of composition is the most structurally intriguing and the most esthetically enchanting. In this style, the text is based on a typical *jarigan* story rendered in *payar* couplet-verses, but the tune has its own structure which is at moments out of phase with the textual syntax and even out of phase with the textual couplet-verse structure. This style requires an exceptionally talented singer-composer to render regularly for *jarigan* singing.

Theoretically, this style is ill-suited to the expository quality of the narrative poetry of *jarigan* songs. However, in full-scale performances of *jarigan* songs, or at the pleasure of an individual *boyati*, this composite style may be used not only for refrains and interlude songs, but even within the body of the narrative recital for the sake of temporary variation.

The following example shows how in the "expository-lyrical" style the "melodic sentences" have a life of their own and do not necessarily concur with the textual sentences. When the text of this song is stripped of its interjections, a regular *payar* couplet emerges, but the melodic elaboration requires the text to include interjections and to extend some syllables for a longer time than they would be ordinarily pronounced. In the song's tune, the broad pitch range, graceful contour, prolonged tones and dramatic pauses create a strong emotional impression on the listener.

The song example below is the same song as the one used to show how a tune alters a *payar* couplet-verse structure. This time, however, the text is transcribed purely textually; that is, according to the textual syntax and versification, as if the text were pure poetry with no accompanying tune. The horizontal brackets above the text indicate where "melodic sentences" begin, showing their concurrence or non-concurrence with the textual sentences. The tildes (~) represent melodic embellishments and the dash marks represent prolonged syllables. These marks are intended to give an idea of how many melodic embellishments are included in the "melodic sentences"

Example 1: one couplet-verse from a *jarigan* song about the death of Kasem at Karbala. The horizontal lines indicate "melodic sentences".

<p>1. ~</p> <p>[A!] Bahire thakiya ghora [re]-----</p> <p>(Ah, standing outside, alas, the horse began to cry.)</p>	<p>2. ~</p> <p>[kandite lagilo ----.</p>
<p>3. ~</p> <p>Bibigon shuniya tokhon [go mori aha re],</p> <p>(The women hearing it, alas, went outside.)</p>	<p>4. ~</p> <p>[o] bahire ashilo ---.</p>

~ ~

"[O re] ami ki herilam [aha re]!"

(Alas, what have I seen, alas!)

The same song is next presented from its melodic point of view. Here the "mirror image" reveals the same mis-matching of text and tune.

Example 2: one couplet-verse of the same song with notations.

Narration

বা - হি - রে থা - কি - য়া ঘো - ডা - রে
Ba - hi - re tha - ki - ya gho - ra [re]

কান্-দি-তে লা - গি - ল
kan - di - te la - gi - lo.

বি - বি - গন শু - নি - য়া ত - খন গো ম - রি আ - হা রে
Bi - bi - gon shu - ni - ya to - khon [go mo - ri a - - ha re]

ও বা - হি - রে আ - সি - লো
[O] ba - hi - re a - shi - lo.

Refrain

ওরে আ-মি কি হে-রি - লাম আ-হা রে
"[Ore] a - mi ki he - ri - lam [a - ha re]!"

In the song example above, the lack of concurrence between the melodic and textual composition is exceptional, as if the melody were being forced to fit the text, or the

text forced to fit the melody. In theory this mis-matching of melody and text might seem disturbing, but, in reality, this "expository-lyrical" style not only suits the unsettled emotions to which the text refers, but is esthetically refined and highly moving.

Composite styles: the "lyrical-expository" style (Style #3)

In this style, the text is lyrical in the sense that it does not expose a sequence of events, but expresses an abstract concept, opinion or feeling. The tune, however, is "expository"; that is, it is word-oriented, exposing the words of the text clearly without much elaboration. The following example is a *bandana*. The verse structure of the text is in *payar* couplets which conforms with the subsequent narrative verses, but the text is lyrical in its expression of religio-philosophic ideas.

Example: a passage from a *jarigan bandana* in which the text is lyrical (non-narrative, non-expository), but in which the tune is expository (word-oriented). The song is "[A hai are] bolo Allahr nam ...".

Bandana payar ♩ = 100



আ-রে ব-লো আল্-লা ব-লো মো- মিন ল -হো ভাই এক বার

[A-re] bo-lo, Al-lah bo-lo, mo-min lo-ho, bhai, ek bar.



আ-রে সার কে -বল আল্-লা-জীর নাম অ-সার সং - সার

[A-re] shar ke-bol Al-lah-jir nam a-shar shong-shar.

The "lyrical-expository" style of song composition is not used for *jarigan* songs, but it characterizes other songs that are described later in this chapter. These "other" songs play an important part in the program of a full-scale *jarigan* recital, furnishing contrast to the *jarigan* song. For this reason, it is important to know that the "lyrical-expository" style of song composition exists.

The choice of style

Regardless of whether one style is more suitable than another to *jarigan* singing, the existence of several styles manifests the artistic skill of the Bengali poet-composers of *jarigan* songs. They are able to break the mold of the repetitive, "fully expository" style, making subtle combinations of one form with an opposite form. In the short, fully lyrical songs of *bhatiyali* and Baul songs, the singer has a lyrical text; therefore, the "fully lyrical" style of musical composition is the logical choice. *Jarigan* singers, however, must deliver a long narrative in fixed *payar* couplets. Their task is far greater and, therefore, requires more inventive stamina. By using the "fully expository" style of song composition, the *boyati* can save his creative energy for

developing the narrative text of his song. He can embellish his expository "melodic sentences" to add variety, but he need not be so musically inventive that he starts to use the composite "expository-lyrical" style, which the exceptionally talented *jarigan* singer, Meghu Boyati, uses for the examples in Jasimuddin's book.

The texts and tunes of *jarigan* songs are probably composed simultaneously. *Boyatis*, however, do not compose entirely new texts and tunes for each performance, although they are free to improvise during their singing. Each *jarigan* singer re-works the songs he has inherited, re-composing them, just as in Indian classical music the performer-composer re-composes at each performance the *ragas* that he chooses to interpret.

Without doubt, as Jasimuddin suspects, *jarigan* singers have borrowed musical ideas from repertoires such as *kirtans*, Baul songs, *marfati*, *murshidi*, *bhatiyali*, and other categories of lyrical Bengali folk songs.⁸ It is difficult to say whether texts and tune come already united in the creation of *jarigan* songs, or whether a tune suggests a text, or a text suggests a tune. The composing of *jarigan* songs probably works both ways.

Grouping of the *jari*-related tunes in this book

In the outline below I have grouped the thirteen songs that are notated in Appendix B according to the four styles of composition outlined in Chart 2.

Note: The 1964 recordings were made in Dhaka by Jasimuddin of the singer, Meghu Boyati, of Faridpur. The 1995 recordings were made by me in various villages of Bangladesh.

I. The "Fully Expository" Style (Style # 1)

- 1964: 1. "[O] Allah bolo [re]..." (*Jarigan*)
- 2. "[Are nache [re]..." (*Dhuagan*)
- 3. "Tumi ga tolo, Sokhina ..." (*Dhuagan*)
- 1967: "Udashi hoilo Hasan ..." (*Jarigan*. From radio.)
- 1995: 1. "Shonen, amar bhai shrotagon ..." (*Jarigan*)
- 2. "Banu [re]..." (*Jarigan*)

II. "Fully Lyrical" Style (Style # 4)

- 1964: "[A hai are] bolo Allahr nam ..." (the opening recitative portion of this *bandana*)
- 1995: "Allah, prothom selam bheji ..." (*Bandana*)

III. Composite Style: Expository Text With Lyrical Tune (Style # 2)

- 1964: 1. "[Ore] darun Ejid ..." (*Dhuagan*)
- 2. "[A] bahire thakiya ghora ..." (*Jarigan*)
- 1995: "Amar Alir shontan ..." (*Jarigan*)

IV. Composite Style: Lyrical Text With Expository Tune (Style # 3)

- 1964: 1. "[Ahai are] bolo Allahr nam ..." (*Bandana*. The section following the opening recitative passage.)
- 2. "[Ore] ga tolo Sokhina ..." (*Dhuagan*)
- 1995: "Allah, tomal daki ..." (*Murshidi gan*)

DHUAGAN SONGS

The meaning of *dhuagan*

"There are songs which take 'very small sections of grief' from the story of the Karbala battle and as songs of their own kind are sung along with '*jari*'. These are called '*dhua*'-songs. There is no connection between these '*dhua*' songs and the *dhruva pads* (fixed verses) of '*jari*'. Here (that is, in these "*dhua*" songs) there are no '*biboron*' (details, reports)."⁹

This passage translated from S. M. Lutfur Rahman's book refers to an important aspect of a traditional *jarigan* recital; namely, the inclusion of songs called "*dhuagan*" ("*dhua*"-songs).

In spite of the dictionary translation of "*dhua*" as "refrain", *dhuagan* songs seem to be songs in their own right, not refrains. *Dhuagan* songs or parts of them may, perhaps, be interpolated into a *jarigan* narration for the sake of variety in the recital, but my observations of songs identified as "*dhua*" suggest that they are rarely interpolated as refrains in the sense of one or a few lines of poetry repeated verbatim at regular intervals within a long song, as in many European ballads. Rather, the term *dhua* seems to signify complete songs that come from various sources outside of *jarigan* songs.¹⁰

Dhuagan songs may be in any of the four styles of composition described above. They are usually short compositions, but not as brief as refrains in the ordinary sense of the word.

In the text of his book, Jasimuddin describes the singing of *dhuagan* songs by the *dohars* in a *jarigan* recital. Jasimuddin says that, as in *kabigan* recitals, *dhuagan* songs play a part in the *jarigan* recital program. He says that the *dhuagan* songs belong to various categories according to their themes, such as *nabi-tatto* (prophet-themes), *imam bicched* (Imam separation-grief), *patanir dhua* or *lila-kari dhua* (*dhua* songs about Krishna), "and others."¹¹ He omits mentioning the purely humorous songs included in his collection of notated songs that he identifies as "*dhua*".

The meaning of *dhuagan* becomes more clear after an examination of how Jasimuddin identifies the songs in his collection of notated songs. Of the twelve song excerpts that I notated musically for him, he identifies three as *jarigan* songs and nine as *dhuagan*. Two of these nine *dhuagan* songs have themes that are satirical and unrelated to Karbala or other Islamic epic themes, although their verse form is in *payar* couplets and they are composed in the "fully expository" style. The remaining seven songs that Jasimuddin identifies as "*dhuagan*" concern Karbala stories.

Because of the lyrical (non-expository) tunes that accompany the texts of these *dhuagan* songs, Jasimuddin has transcribed their texts in verse forms other than *payar* couplets. I have shown, however, that in these songs there is an underlying *payar* couplet form when interjections and extra vowel sounds have been removed. Thus, it is possible that these songs which are identified as *dhuagan* songs are, actually, *jarigan* songs or that they represent popular portions of *jarigan* songs that have evolved into *dhuagan* songs over time. *Dhuagan* songs, then, unlike most *jarigan* songs, may, or may not be, in the "fully expository" style of song composition, but they are definitely different from *jarigan* songs by the fact that they are not

used for telling a long story. Rather, they are used to add non-narrative variety to a full-scale *jarigan* recital.

To some extent, the "refrain" connotation of "*dhua*" is acceptable, if the word refrain broadly connotes any song or section of a song that has been injected into and contrasts with the body of a narrative song; that is, a short piece injected into a longer composition. If, however, "refrain" connotes a line or short verse repeated verbatim (or slightly varied) at regular and frequent intervals, this connotation suits poorly the self-contained nature of *dhuagan* songs as described by S. M. Lutfur Rahman.

A study of the music of Jasimuddin's *dhuagan* examples¹² reveals that even though their textual themes may refer to Karbala themes, their musical composition differs from the chant-like structure of *jarigan* songs.

S. M. Lutfur Rahman points out that *dhuagan* songs can have a musical structure with four parts, analogous to, but not the same as, the four sections of classical *dhrupad* or *dhrupad* (literally, "fixed-foot") songs, a structurally rigid form of classical Indian music. In *dhrupad* music the four sections are: *asthayi* or *sthayi* (literally, fixed; a foundation section); *antara* (literally, the interior or interval; the section that is mainly in the upper register of the scale); the *sanchari* (literally, alternation; a development on the earlier melodic material); and the *abhog* (literally, coda; a section that brings the piece back to the *asthayi*).¹³ If the term "*dhua*" is derived from "*dhrupad*", this would explain the self-contained nature of *dhuagan* songs.

S. M. Lutfur Rahman cites *dhuagan* songs that he heard sung in the style of *kirtan* songs. He identifies four sections of such songs: *asthayi* (fixed, as in classical music), *khad* (literally, bass note), *chiten* (a loudly sung part), and *por-chiten* (literally, post-*chiten*). In his example, the *asthayi* and *chiten* are in couplet form defined by end-rhymes. The *khad* is a quatrain of short lines and the *por-chiten* is a three-line verse, presumably leading back into the *asthayi*. He suggests that this form is a vernacular version of classical *dhrupad*.

In the full-scale *jarigan* recital program which S. M. Lutfur Rahman outlines, the "*dhua*" items serve to fill out the session with invocational songs, songs of greeting, anecdotal songs, and songs that conclude the *jarigan* item and the particular recital session. The other types of songs that he lists, such as *chora* (jingles in song form) and *panchali* (an ancient Bengali narrative song genre) also embellish the recital program.

In Jasimuddin's collection, it appears that some *dhuagan* song texts would qualify as portions of *jarigan* song texts because they contain typical Karbala narrative texts. They may actually be portions of *marsiya*s which share the same themes. Jasimuddin identifies them as *dhuagan* because, perhaps, he knows that they come from short songs, not *jarigan* songs.¹⁴

An ambivalent song

The song "[*Ore*] *darun Ejid ...*," which Jasimuddin identifies as a *dhuagan* song, is a particularly intriguing example of ambivalence in the classification of songs as *jarigan* or *dhuagan*. How the textual verses can be written two ways has already been shown in Chapter Nine on melodic features of *jarigan* songs. The two ways are worth a second display. In the first way the textual lines are written according to their sentence structure—one sentence per couplet-verse line. In the second way, the

one revealed by the tune structure, the text lines turn out to be tripartite, as in *tripadi* couplets, rather than bipartite, as in *payar* couplets.

Example 1: the song text of "[Ore] *darun Ejid bole ...*" transcribed in two couplet verses with bipartite lines.

[Ore] *darun Ejid bole, Fatemar age:*
 (Oh, the terrible Ejid said, in front of Fatema:)
 "[O] *dhoro khurma, khao eshe.*"
 (Oh, take dates, come and eat.)
Hoshener kata mundo dilo, Fatemar hate.
 (He gave the severed head of Hosein, into Fatema's hands.)
 [Ore] "*Hai! Hai!*" *bole, tara kantache.*
 (Oh, saying "*Hai! Hai!*", they [the women] wept.)

Example 2: the same song text written in one couplet of two tripartite lines:

A/ (1)I-----* (2)I-----*
 [Ore] *darun Ejid bole Fatemar age:*
 (3)I-----*
 "*[O] dhoro khurma khao eshe.*"
 B// (4)I-----* (5)I-----*
 Hoshener kata mundo dilo Fatemar hate.
 (6)I-----*
 [Ore] "*Hai! Hai!*" *bole tara kantache.*

Since *tripadi* meter is also used, albeit rarely, for *jarigan* song composition, this song could be classified as a *jarigan* song, not a *dhuagan* song. Theoretically this song has all the qualifications of a typical *jarigan* verse: the narrative theme is from the Karbala cycle, the narrative style is expository (action-oriented), the prosody is in couplet-verse form (*tripadi* meter, in this case), and the tune syntax conforms to the textual syntax. Practically considered, however, the song sounds musically more "fully lyrical" than "fully expository". Therefore, I can understand why Jasimuddin classes it in the *dhuagan* category rather than the *jarigan* one.

A *dhuagan* song as a mock *jarigan* song

Jasimuddin identifies the song "[Are] *nache [re], buira nache...*," included in the notations in Appendix B, as a *dhuagan* song. Although it is in the "fully expository" style of song composition, typical of *jarigan* singing, the theme is humorous and unrelated to *jarigan* themes. When interjections have been removed, the meter of the text of this song is relatively faithful to *payar*-couplets and the tune has the expected, chant-like quality of *jarigan* melodies. The result is a *jarigan*-like *dhuagan*, a clever mock-epic both in text and music.

Marsiyyas

Jarigan songs may be, but should not be, confused with Muharram *marsiyyas* (elegies).¹⁵ As opposed to *jarigan* texts, *marsiya* texts are lyrical; they may refer to

Karbala episodes, but they focus on one emotional moment and one mood—generally one of profound anxiety and grief.

The "[Ore] *darun Ejid* ..." song passage quoted above is a *marsiya*-like composition. Perhaps this is why Jasimuddin has identified it as a *dhuagan* song, not a *jarigan* song, nor even part of a *jarigan* song. Cruelty, horror and grief, concentrated into a few couplets of tri-partite lines, endow this song with a *marsiya*-like quality.

A Muharram *marsiya*, "*Katore Hosene kande* ..." (In distress Hosein weeps ...), which comes from a booklet of lyrics by a contemporary Bangladeshi *boyati*, is included in Appendix A. I repeat here only the translation of one of its couplets to illustrate the intensity of mood and the tri-partite prosody common to *marsiyas*.

Example: a couplet verse from a booklet of *marsiya* songs. Note that the couplet-lines are tripartite.

Katore *Hosene kande,*
 bhaier shoke dishahara.
Bipad kale *bhaier piche,*
 bhai bine ke hoy khara.

(In distress Hosein weeps,
 Being at a loss in grief for his brother.
 "In time of danger (looming) behind a brother,
 Who (will) stand behind me?")¹⁶

Because Muharram *marsiyas* and *jarigan* songs share Karbala themes, such as the one in the example above, it is easy to understand how *marsiyas* can be confused with *jarigan* songs, and, in reverse, how sections of *jarigan* songs may be confused with *marsiyas*.¹⁷ This sharing of themes may explain how *jarigan* songs received the generic name of "*jari*" (lamentation), although "lamentation" applies more precisely to *marsiyas*, not to the lengthy expository narratives of *jarigan* songs, even those about Karbala episodes.¹⁸

A comparison of the text of the *marsiya* cited above with the examples of *jarigan* texts reveals differences in the poetic style of each genre. *Marsiyas* are short in comparison to *jarigan* songs. The ones in booklets and the ones that I recorded in Dhaka and Manikganj during the 1995 Muharram celebrations contain six or more verses, which is not nearly as many verses as *jarigan* songs contain. Unlike the song structure of *jarigan* songs, the poetic structure of *marsiya* songs is not confined to a prescribed prosody. *Marsiyas* may be composed in various *chandas* (meters), not just *tripadi* couplets. *Marsiyas*, unlike *jarigan* songs and more like *bhajans* (Hindu hymns), are suited to congregational singing as opposed to solo recital; the tune-text relationship is close. In spite of these differences between *jarigan* and *marsiya* songs, it is easy to imagine how *marsiya* texts could be interpolated into a *jarigan* narration and how, in reverse, *jarigan* poetry on Karbala themes can inspire the poetry of *marsiyas*.

PART FOUR

THE LEGACY

আল্লা বলো রে মন রে, এই ভাবে দিন যাবে না ...

Allah bolo [re], mono [re], ei bhabe din jabe na ...

(Oh, say Allah, oh, my soul; in this way life will not continue ...)

— A refrain line from a *jarigan* song, Faridpur, 1964.

CONTEMPORARY CONSIDERATIONS

আমার আল্লার বান্দা নবীর উম্মৎ যারা যেভাবে থাকে
কাশেম শহীদ সাঙ্গ হ'লো আল্লা বলে ডাকে।

*Amar Allahr banda nabir ummat jara je bhabe thako,
Kasem shahid shanga ho'lo, Allah bole dako.*

(The command of my Allah, the community of the Prophet, these things,
keep (yourself) in that path.

The story of Kasem's martyrdom is done. Call on the name of Allah.)

— Concluding lines to a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin's collection.¹

A MASTERPIECE

One of the *jarigan* songs in Jasimuddin's collection is, in my opinion, superior to all the other ones in his and S. M. Lutfor Rahman's collection. It merits to be called a masterpiece. It is the "Kasem-Sokhinar *Jari*" song, the one that I mentioned in the Preface as a source of inspiration. Before re-defining *jarigan* songs, as promised earlier, I would like to focus for a moment on the virtues of this song.

In this song, Abdul Gani Boyati, identified by Jasimuddin as the composer, created a drama consisting of spare, poignant scenes, much like the scenes in Euripides' *Trojan Women*. Both the *Trojan Women* and the "Kasem-Sokhinar *Jari*" contain a *pala* from national history made universal by the artistic portrayals of grief (*korun rosh*) and heroism (*bir rosh*). Both stories are told mainly through the words of the survivors of a prolonged and agonizing siege, both of which ended in capture for the survivors. Both compositions commemorate the heroes and heroines who chose to resist rather than surrender at any cost. Both works are memorable for the poignancy of their laments.

As in the poetry of a Grecian tragic drama, the poetry of the Kasem-Sokhina song is in essence an elegy, a poetic expression of grief, rather than a story with a plot. Grief is presented to the audience from the different points of view of different characters. Just as Hecuba and Andromache in the *Trojan Women* mourn the loss of husband, or home, or freedom, so Kasem's mother and his young bride, Sokhina, mourn for the impending loss of their loved ones and for the days ahead which must

be lived without them. The mood of "zārī" (grieving) pervades the Kasem-Sokhina song no less than in the poetry of the *Trojan Women*.

Like the music which once was heard accompanying the chanted lines of the ancient Grecian dramas, the music of Abdul Gani is lost to us and can only be conjectured since no record of it survives. However, the mellifluous lines of his poetry suggest that Abdul Gani was no doubt a fine melodist as well as a fine poet. We know that his singing could make the audience weep, as Mustafa Zaman Abbasi described to me. I feel sure that Abdul Gani could combine music and text in as intricate and refined a way as I have described in reference to the exceptionally complex songs of Meghu Boyati.

Within the speeches of this one poem—domestic in their language—Abdul Gani encapsulates the whole thesis that underlies the Karbala commemorations, the theme of self-sacrifice for the glory of Allah. The physical body of man requires the water of this earth—the water of the Euphrates—to survive, but the physical body and this earth are transient entities. The soul must seek the water of heaven, the permanent principle of truth and justice as embodied in the concept of Allah. Kasem tells his mother to consider the world as a dark place where people engage with each other for only a few days in contrast to the brightness and permanence of the "field of Hashor". He tells Sokhina that it is not the water of this world that he craves, but the water of an eternal life that will follow.

The metaphor of the battle of Karbala involves chivalry, *bir rosh*, in its most sublime form: bravery tempered by tenderness. Abdul Gani portrays the chivalry of Hosein and Kasem through their brave words gently spoken. Hosein answers Kasem's request to be allowed to cross the enemy line to fetch water with deep regret. Both know that if Kasem tries to fetch water he will be killed, yet both know that martyrdom is inevitable in order to uphold the righteousness of their cause. Kasem's mother, reared in chivalry, cannot bear to lose her son, yet she, too, knows that her role is to make the ultimate sacrifice; not that of her own life, which she would gladly give, but the life of her son without whom death is preferable.

Kasem's efforts at comforting his mother are full of tenderness as well as philosophy: "Mother, Mother! Please cry no more; there is no (real) friend in this ocean-of-a-world save Allah." With equal tenderness he comforts Sokhina when she despairs that she cannot find water for him: "Sokhina, you speak correctly. The bravest of the Prophet's tribe have not been able to fetch water." Sokhina reciprocates in her feelings for Kasem as he dies: "Do not go. Do not go, Kasem. Stay awhile. I will go along with you as your companion in death." Sokhina, in the words of a young woman just realizing the joys of love, offers the most she can give Kasem: "If you want my heart, my flesh, I agree to give it."

Abdul Gani composed the poetry of the Kasem-Sokhina song with exceptional esthetic feeling. The lines are as melodious as their meaning is poignant. In his poetry, many lines contain sentences that "run on" to the next line, an unusual practice for *jarigan* composers. I observe more metaphors and similes worked into his poetry than in other *jarigan* songs. "Why do you pierce my heart with a poisoned arrow?" laments the mother of Kasem when he tells her that he asks her permission to go to war. Kasem speaks of human life as "this ocean of the world."

Each character is sparingly, but distinctly drawn. Hosein is seen in his role as both uncle and proxy-father to Kasem, symbolic of his role as leader of a small, beleaguered team, the father of his companions, caring for their suffering and longing to end it. Kasem is a young knight: "Since I am the son of the great and valiant Hasan and the grandson of Hazrat Ali, if I do not go to war, I will gain a bad name." He is a tender philosopher as well: "There is no friend in this ocean-of-the-world save Allah ... We have come into life; we must go from life ... No one is able to flee from Yama."

Kasem's mother is the maternal ideal, the child-bearer ("I carried you ten months, ten days..."); the keeper of family memories (Kasem tells her to read the contents of the amulet); and she represents the sacred being of the family to whom a son dedicates his last thoughts ("Calling Mother! say it once as you leave, Kasem.") Sokhina is portrayed as young, tender, and helpless: "Kasem, look at me! See, I married you wearing this wedding dress that now I am still wearing. My hair is still in order. Tell me, to whom shall I now go wearing this dress? Who can understand my pain?" Yet Sokhina is wise and brave: "Kasem, I bid you farewell. I have given you into the custody of holy Allah."

The drama ends with a final lament, the last speech of Sokhina as she holds the dying Kasem in her arms:

"Do not go! Do not go Kasem. Stay yet awhile.
I will go along with you in death.

Look! Look! See (me), Moon and Sun!
My life-lord goes away leaving me!

You (who) have existed from the beginning of the universe,
Where have you seen a woman so unfortunate as Sokhina?

Today was our happy wedding day.
You (Kasem) go to the world of the tomb leaving me alone."

Saying this much, Sokhina held Kasem.
She smeared her body with a drop of Kasem's blood.

Without further description, the poet then addresses the audience:

All you (here) keep in the path of the prophet, the servant of my Allah.
The "Martyrdom (story) of Kasem" has ended. Call on the name of Allah.

As he ends his song, I imagine Abdul Gani has moved his audience more deeply than they are moved by even the best Muharram sermons and most beautiful *marsiya*s. Even today, the poetry of Abdul Gani draws the reader into "a tale of pity" of exceptional inspiration and beauty. From such poetry it is easy to understand how *jarigan* songs were used for inspiration during times of crisis in Bangladesh, such as during the 1952 movement in defense of Bengali as a national language and during the Bangladeshi War of Independence in 1971. Such poetry is truly enduring for all time and all cultures.

A DESCRIPTIVE DEFINITION

Up to this point, the present book has provided only a working definition of the *jarigan* repertory and a general introduction to *jarigan* sources, themes and form, comprising a preliminary sketch based on a limited quantity of *jarigan* samples from a few districts in Bangladesh. This "sketch", however, is sufficient for providing a revised definition, one that benefits from the terminology that I have introduced, so that more features of the *jarigan* repertory and its performance can be added to the earlier definition.²

The *jarigan* repertory (*jarigan* songs) is a Bengali repertory of Muslim *gitikas* (song-stories) of an epic quality based on a wide range of *palas* (episodes) derived from Islamic lore (Koranic, historical and legendary), expressed in *payar* couplet-verses, set to tunes that are characterized by an embellished expository style of melodic composition and which are generally expressed in the *boyati-cum-dohars* (soloist-cum-chorus) style of performance.

The initial definition and the revised one above identify *jarigan* songs as a distinct genre of narrative song with a specified style of performance. This style is described further in the following definition and description of *jarigan* performances.

A traditional *jarigan* performance is a bardic recital consisting of a *boyati* alone (in informal recitation), or accompanied by a group of *dohars* and instrumentalists (in public presentation). When *jarigan* performances flourished in the form of festivals, an *ashor* (session) consisted of several *jarigan dols* (groups) who performed in succession. These performances lasted all night for several nights, including in their programs dialogue in verse between *boyatis*, extraneous (non-*jarigan*) songs sung by the *boyati* or the *dohars*, and musical pieces played by an ensemble.

Jarigan performances today represent a reduced form of the nineteenth century festivals. The *boyati* (generally male) is responsible for rendering a *jarigan pala*; that is, a complete *jarigan* story using poetic text and music as inherited from his training under an *ustad*, or re-composed or composed by himself. The *boyati's* tunes can be recognized as *jarigan* tunes from their combination of an expository style of text (action-oriented) with tunes that include lyrical features as well as chant-like, expository ones.

In a full-scale performance, instrumentalists as well as *dohars* contribute to the program. The *dohars* support the *boyati* by echoing his lines, singing refrains and interjecting short songs into his song that may or may not be associated with its central theme or be in the same tune that he is using.

The above definition and "nutshell" descriptions serve to distinguish *jarigan* songs and their performance from any other Bengali genres of song or song recitals. The *jarigan* repertory and performance traditions may share particular features with other Bengali song repertoires, but no other Bengali genre of song embodies the particular combination of Muslim themes, song characteristics and program items.

MODERN LITERARY COUNTERPARTS

The novel *Bishad Sindhu*

The epic nature of the Karbala stories in the *jarigan* repertory has influenced directly or indirectly modern Bengali literature. In discussions with Bangladeshis about the epic nature of *jarigan* material, I found that some people believe that it was Mir Mosharraf Hossein's "historical novel" titled *Bishad Sindhu* (*Sorrow Sea*) written at the end of the nineteenth century, that furnished the Karbala stories for *jarigan* poetry. This popular novel narrates the Karbala episodes in chronological sequence, recounting them in a dramatic prose style. The novel accomplished in Bengal what the Persian *ta'ziyeh* accomplished in the Middle East. Both productions based on the Karbala cycle of episodes represent cohesive compositions with popular appeal, thereby disseminating the stories to a wide audience.³

Most of the rural people of Bengal, however, may not have read *Bishad Sindhu*, although they may have heard of it. It seems to me likely that the author of *Bishad Sindhu* was inspired by the Muharram festival commemorations and by the *jarigan* renditions of the Karbala stories rather than the possibility that *jarigan* poets were inspired by Mir Mosharraf Hossein's work. The novel served well, however, to popularize the Karbala stories among a reading public in Bengal, a group which has become increasingly detached from folk literature. For instance, his novel has helped to keep the Karbala stories in the syllabuses of Bengali school curriculums.



Fig. 37. Scene from *Bishad Sindhu*. Hosein's wife is placing a red mark on his forehead in preparation for battle, Mohila Samity theater, Dhaka, 1995.

The drama *Bishad Sindhu*

In my visits to Dhaka during 1993-1995, I frequently attended a monthly musical drama based on Mir Mosharraf Hosein's book from which the drama takes its title. The production which spans two evenings in length and is into its sixth year of playing, was created by a highly talented director and scholar, Jamil Ahmed, working with a skilled team of actors and musicians who contributed their ideas as well.

Thanks to one of my landlord's daughters and her husband, both members of the Dhaka Padatik drama troupe, I was able to learn about the transformation of Mir Mosharraf Hossein's novel into one of the most theatrically gripping creations that I have seen in any part of the world. I was amazed to find a drama that was similar to the descriptions of *ta'ziyeh* in the literature that I had studied. Most of all I was delighted with the principal format of the drama, a creative adaptation of the *jarigan boyati-cum-dohars* format of performance as I have described it in the chapter on *jarigan* performances. The production even included a few seconds of genuine *jarigan* singing in a scene portraying the street celebrations for Yezid's victory over Imam Hasan.

Jasimuddin's novel-ballads

Throughout this book I have been citing passages from the novel in lengthy ballad form, *Sojan Badiar Ghat (The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy)*, which was written by Jasimuddin in 1933. Not only does one chapter or canto of this romance center on events during a Muharram festival, describing *jarigan* singing and dancing, but the entire poem shows the influence of Bengali epic poetry. Another novel in ballad form by Jasimuddin, *Nakshi Kathar Math (The Field of the Embroidered Quilt)*, published later (1939), but started earlier, is similarly imbued with qualities of Bengali epic poetry, as shared by Muslim poet-singers composing *jarigan* songs as well as Hindu poet-singers composing epics about Hindu stories.

In her Introduction to *Gypsy Wharf* (the translation into English of *Sojan Badiar Ghat*), Barbara Painter summarizes Jasimuddin's life as a poet. She describes how at the age of eight Jasimuddin happened to hear a ballad recitation in a village where he was attending the wedding of a relative. He was so fascinated with the recital that he remembered lines from it. Later he asked a weaver, who was a poet, to have a "ballad competition" with him. Barbara Painter cites Jasimuddin's own words on how subsequently he struggled to write poetry in a notebook according to the rules he had heard; namely, that poems have fourteen syllables per line and that two lines must rhyme in their last syllables. She quotes Jasimuddin's autobiography where he says:

... One day it suddenly occurred to me; how would it be if I wrote the words in my notebook in the same ready manner that I composed oral poetry? After writing three or four of my couplets in the notebook I was astonished. There were fourteen syllables in every line and the last syllable of every line rhymed with the second line's last syllable. I doubt whether Columbus discovering America felt such joy as I felt at the discovery ...⁴

During his college years in the early 1930s, Jasimuddin was one of the students who worked with Dinesh Chandra Sen, an outstanding historian of Bengali literature and a pioneer folklorist, to collect transcriptions of Bengali ballads from the countryside of eastern Bengal. Later Jasimuddin was among the first Bengalis to make sound recordings of folk singers, adding his own versions of folk songs. This background and his own love for the people and region of what is now Bangladesh were profound influences on his poetry. *Sojan Badiar Ghat* and *Nakshi Kathar Math* are worthy counterparts in literary poetry to the ballad and epic songs of eastern Bengal, now Bangladesh.

Besides Jasimuddin, other Bangladeshi literary poets have composed in the style of *jarigan* poetry. Lenin, my assistant, introduced me to Ahmed Sofa, the contemporary poet described in Appendix A along with a transcription and translation of a recent *jarigan* song by him.

QUESTIONS OUTSTANDING

The following important questions concerning the origins and development of *jarigan* remain unanswered in the present book:

1. Are *jarigan* songs according to the above definition sung during the Muharram festival?

Today, *marsiya*s and *nauhas* (dirges that are simpler, more ritualistic than *marsiya*s) are still sung in Muharram programs, but the long, narrative songs of the *jarigan* repertory seem to be absent. Perhaps in earlier times the epic-like recitals of Muslim bards, which typify *jarigan* singing, figured more prominently in Muharram activities than they do today.

2. At what period in history did Bengali folk singers start to incorporate Islamic themes into their repertoires and how long did it take for *jarigan* songs to develop into the form that has been transmitted to us today? For instance, in the development of *jarigan* performances, it is possible that the danced form evolved before the purely sung form.

3. What is the exact meaning of the term "*dhuagan*"? Presuming that it is related to "*doha*," indicates that the term signifies interlude songs of a special character. However, within this broad domain, do *dhuagan* songs represent an identifiable repertory or is the term merely generic for all interlude songs or any songs of a lyrical nature? The *dhuagan* songs that resemble *marsiya*s are appropriate for inclusion in *jarigan* recitals of *palas* from the Karbala cycle of stories, but other *dhuagan* songs seem to be extraneous songs brought in from such categories as *Baul gan*, *murshidi gan*, *bhatiyalis*, and other genres of Bengali folk songs. Can I presume that stray songs not identified by such names as *Baul gan*, *bhatiyali*, etc. are called *dhua* songs?

4. Is it possible that *jarigan* music was more complex at an earlier time than at present? What are the musical ancestors of *jarigan* tunes?

I posed this last question in the second section of Chapter Nine on melodic features of *jarigan* songs. I repeat here that my musical analyses of the songs of one

singer, Meghu Boyati, of the 1960s reveal a style of composition as sophisticated as the better known Baul and *bhatiyali* songs. My recordings of contemporary (1990s) singers are limited to a few performances, too few from which to make generalizations.

The answer to the first question is important for establishing the connection between *jarigan* songs according to the above definition and merely "*jari*" (lamentation) songs such as *marsiya*s and *naohas*. If a distinction exists, as I believe it does, the origin of *jarigan* songs (as defined above) can be situated more accurately than I have been able to do by its closeness (or remoteness) to a Muharram context. At the moment, I believe that singing Karbala stories may antedate the advent of Muharram to Bengal, but I have no evidence for it other than the assumption that bards were singing about such stories just as literary poets were composing epics about them.

The answer to the second question could help historians to be more precise about where and when conversions to Islam took place in Bengal. *Jarigan* may have played an important role in sustaining Islam among Bengali communities, if not actually effecting conversions. A comparison of the texts of *jarigan* to the texts of *panchalis*, *mangala*, *vijaya* and *gazirgan* songs may reveal vocabulary and turns of phrases that suggest when *jarigan* songs first evolved from those matrices and at what period they were first sung.

The third question suggests the need for folklorists and historians of literature to compare a quantity of *dhuagan* songs known by that designation in order to establish their origins and whether they have certain performance contexts that can be identified. Musicologists may be able to study songs identified as *dhuagan* tunes in order to discover whether they are musically identifiable or whether the term "*dhua*" merely signifies a role not an identifiable form, which is what my studies, albeit limited, lead me to suspect.

Testing conjectures about the fourth question might provide insights into the evolution of Bengali music. Analyzing the *jarigan* tunes that exist today and comparing them with analyses of non-*jarigan* tunes may reveal more precisely than I have been able to do the special characteristics of Bengali music and how one genre of song is distinct from another.

Of course, other questions of origin and classification exist which I have only touched on during the course of this book. The above questions are the ones that have most occupied my research. I hope that they encourage further studies in the analysis of the music of Bengali songs as well as the texts.

AN ENDURING FORM

Universality yet originality

I have already mentioned the resemblance of *jarigan* songs to the epic songs of the Middle East and of countries that have been influenced by Middle Eastern culture, such as Turkey, Yugoslavia and Spain. The folk melodies of eastern Bengal manifest the same fusion of western Asian and northern Indian cultures as evident in the classical music of northern India. The individual tunes of *jarigan* songs show the presence of specific melodic "genes" that derive from indigenous and exogenous

parentage, just as the *kheyals* (important form of *raga* improvisations) are derived from the same two sources.⁵ The mysteriously heart rending quality of eastern Bengali folk melodies may have evolved in part under the influence of Middle Eastern melodies imported along with the poets and musicians from the area of the Persian empire. This fusion in the music of *jarigan* songs, as also present in the music of Baul and *bhatiyali* songs, renders the sound of *jarigan* songs, if not their meaning, accessible to foreigners.

The *boyati-cum-dohars* style of performance is also a universal trait of *jarigan* songs. There are bound to be similarities in how epics are sung the world over. I have mentioned the various similarities that exist between *jarigan* recitals and bardic recitals in other countries. The same circumstances evoke the same interventions.

Like bardic performances the world over, *jarigan* songs and the style of their performance remain original and fresh due to their *ex tempore* circumstances of creation. Each performance is subject to particularly local influences—the tastes and interests of a particular locality and of a particular singer. Thus the song that is collectively created over hundreds of performances continues to evolve in unexpected ways. The lamentation themes of Karbala stories serve to stir the courage of modern day revolutionaries and the humor in an *Arabian Nights* type of song can be turned to good use in teaching family planning.



Fig. 38. A *boyati* and instrumentalists with dholak and behala at a public awareness program before the national elections of June, 1996.

Jarigan songs have served to educate a population with limited access to formal education. The historical and legendary accounts, with their underlying themes of piety and loyalty, have served a purpose beyond temporary entertainment. The *jarigan* repertory has played an important role in preserving an Islamic ethos among Bengali Muslims. The expression of underlying moral values is universal.

Baul song festivals have replaced *jarigan* festivals, but only as entertainment for mass audiences. The broader historical and philosophical scope of *jarigan* songs provides these songs with greater intellectual depth. In times of stress the *jarigan* format provides the most scope for informational as well as inspirational content. The songs of the Bauls, the *bhatiyali* songs, *murshidi* songs and other mystical songs of Bengal have provided a format for the lyrical works of Rabindranath Tagore, but it is the epic nature of *jarigan* that provided the "manly" format for songs of Kazi Nazrul Islam. *Jarigan* songs have not only complemented the "feminine" literature of Bengal with their "manly" themes, but enriched Bengali culture with a unique style of expository singing which is adaptable to current needs and tastes.

To some extent modern uses of *jarigan* songs represent an expansion of the meaning of *jarigan* beyond its religio-historical essence. Nevertheless, modern uses manifest how *jarigan* songs are deeply rooted in the consciousness of Bangladeshis today and how the sound of *jarigan* singing has remained an effective medium of expression.

It is difficult to know how long *jarigan* songs will continue to be sung, just as it is difficult to know how long any one oral tradition will last, especially one that requires as much training and dedication as the *jarigan* repertory. For the moment, however, *jarigan* songs are still popular, albeit in current modified forms and roles. Further transcribing of existing songs and the preservation on film of their traditional mode of performance is worth the effort and expense of these projects, not only for the benefit of Bengali studies, but to disseminate abroad the literature and beauty of *jarigan* songs themselves.

NOTES

Chapter One

- ¹ These lines are from Jasimuddin's novel-poem, *Sojan Badiar Ghat (The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy)*, first edition, 1933: 22. The free translation is from the translation of *Sojan Badiar Ghat*, made by Barbara Painter and Yann Lovelock in their book, *"Gypsy Wharf"* (1960): 58. My literal translation reads as follows: The month of Muharram has come; all the people of Shimultoli village/ in *jari* songs and in play with sticks have again become intoxicated with excitement.//

Because Jasimuddin was such an important pioneer in bringing Bengali folk literature to the attention of the general public, I cite the following passage which gives a succinct biography of his life and achievement. The article is by a friend in Dhaka, Ameneh Ispahani. She says that much of her information was taken from *Selected Poems of Jasimuddin* by Hasna Jasimuddin Moudud, *Gypsy Wharf*, translated by Barbara Painter and Yann Lovelock, and *The Field of the Embroidered Quilt*, translated by E. M. Milford.

Jasimuddin's writings, poetry, ballads and songs were mostly about the rural people of Bangladesh and it was most fitting that he came to be known as "*Polli-Kobi*," or the Poet of the People. His songs were sung by boatmen as they rowed, or by farmers as they worked in the fields; his poetry reached the hearts of the rural people while it awoke a response in their minds. He was more than a folk-poet; he was a scholar and a teacher of Bengali literature, a civil servant and a world traveler. He wrote more than fifty volumes of work and his poems have been translated into English, Czech, Russian, Italian, Arabic, Hindi, Urdu and French. He received an UNESCO prize and was awarded a D. Litt. by the Bishwa Bharati University in Calcutta, but nothing gave him more satisfaction or joy than to be known, as he was, simply as "*Polli-Kobi*."

Jasimuddin was born in 1903 in the district of Faridpur. His father was a teacher and the religious head of the village. His mother, a housewife, spent her spare time making beautiful embroidered quilts and, like all Bengali housewives, cooking rice cakes.

Jasimuddin studied under his father's guidance to begin with, then went to a formal school, and later to college where he completed his Intermediate Arts degree in 1929. Even as a young boy he wrote poetry and his poem, *Graves*, was prescribed as the text for the Matriculation Examination in Calcutta even while he was a student at the Intermediate level. After this, Jasimuddin went to Calcutta to study Bengali at the University where he completed his Master of Arts degree. He stayed on in Calcutta and did research on folk songs and folk literature. All the time he collected songs, ballads and any other writings that had a connection with folk literature. After 1938, he went to Dhaka to join the University as a lecturer in the Bengali Department. He lived in Dhaka until his death on March 14, 1976. He was buried in Faridpur where a mausoleum stands to mark his grave.

² See Peter J. Chelkowski, "Iran: Mourning Becomes Revolution," in *Asia*, magazine of the Asia Society (May-June, 1980): 34.

³ It is outside the purpose and beyond the scope of this book to describe the Muharram celebrations in detail. Descriptions are available from a variety of sources as mentioned in the Bibliography for this book. The booklets about Muharram celebrations in Lucknow and Hyderabad that were prepared in English for the Indian Census publications of 1961 and 1971, respectively, contain descriptions that are remarkably similar to what can be seen in Bangladesh. Mohammed Sayeedur's book, *Maharram Anusthan (The Muharram Festival)* (1988), contains carefully researched descriptions of Muharram in Dhaka, Manikganj and Hobiganj, with well-chosen photographs of the celebrations in these places. In my descriptions I review only those aspects of the festival which are particularly relevant to the development of *jarigan* literature.

⁴ About a seven days lamentation by these women, see Mahmoud Ayoub, *Redemptive Suffering in Islam: A Study of the Devotional Aspects of 'Ashura' in Twelver Shi'ism* (1978): 152.

⁵ Muharram is celebrated in such remote corners of the world as Trinidad with remarkable similarity in the basic program of the celebrations. See Frank J. Korom and Peter J. Chelkowski, "Community Process and the Performance of Muharram Observances in Trinidad," *The Drama Review*, Vol. 38, no. 2 (summer 1994): 130-175.

⁶ In a booklet-brochure about the history of Hoseini Dalan in Dhaka, the writer estimates that ninety-five percent of participants in present day Muharram celebrations in Dhaka are Sunni Muslims. See M. M. Faiz Shirazi, *Hossaini Dalan* (1994): 15-16. The booklet is distributed by the Management of Hoseini Dalan and can be obtained in its library. As Richard Eaton remarks, during about a century of Moghul rule in India, "Dhaka's Muslim élite was overwhelmingly Shi'a." He goes on to say that "the predominance of Shi'as in Bengal became even more evident during the 21-year governorship of Prince Shuja' (1639-1660), who according to later traditions brought three hundred Shi'a nobles to Bengal and even turned Shi'a himself." See Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760* (1994): footnote on page 168.

⁷ Some Sunnis and even Shi'as object to the excessive display of grief in Muharram celebrations, especially Sunnis who find fault with the historical basis of some of the Muharram stories. A Muslim community known as Kuttis who are of tribal descent and who live in the old part of Dhaka disapproves of the celebrations. See Syed Muhammed Taifoor, *Glimpses of Old Dhaka* (1956): 70.

⁸ The date given for the construction of Hoseini Dalan is 1642. See Syed Muhammed Taifoor, *Ibid.*: 161.

- ⁹ See the entry under "Hobson-Jobson" in the dictionary by that name compiled by Henry Yule and A. C. Burnell, first edition in 1903, fourth edition in 1984: 419-420. The citation is from a longer passage describing Muharram in India in the nineteenth century by Mir Shahamat 'Ali in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Volume xiii: 369.
- ¹⁰ *Gypsy Wharf*, a translation by Barbara Painter and Yann Lovelock (1969): 64. See note no. 1 above.
- ¹¹ See a forthcoming dissertation on Urdu *marsiya*s by Amy Bard of Columbia University, as listed in the Bibliography for this book.
- ¹² The expression "Hobson-Jobson" may have come from a chant as vulgarized by, probably, British soldiers in nineteenth century India. Yule and Burnell named their amusing Anglo-Indian glossary after this expression. See their article on this topic in Henry Yule and A. C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson: a Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian words ...* first edition (1903); 4th edition (1984): 419-420.
- ¹³ This apt expression comes from Charles E. Cobb, Jr., "Bangladesh, When the Water Comes," in *The National Geographic* (June, 1993): 120-134.
- ¹⁴ David Abecassis, *Identity, Islam and Human Development in Rural Bangladesh* (1991): 9.
- ¹⁵ Richard M. Eaton, *Ibid.*: 207-219.
- ¹⁶ Richard M. Eaton, *Ibid.*: 63-70.
- ¹⁷ Humayun Kabir, *Studies in Bengali Poetry* (1962): 6-7.
- ¹⁸ Humayun Kabir *Ibid.*: 5.
- ¹⁹ Syed Muhammed Taifoor, *Glimpses of Old Dhaka* (1956): 248.
- ²⁰ While *jarigan* singing still exists on the Indian side of the border (in West Bengal), this book is limited to examples of *jarigan* in Bangladesh, where I was able to do research on the subject. Meanwhile, readers should keep in mind that *jarigan* once thrived in undivided Bengal before the political border was drawn. I am told that performances of *jarigan* still exist in the state of West Bengal in India, especially in the Murshidabad area, at one time a center of Shi'as and where Muharram was celebrated on a lavish scale. One of the oldest *Imam baras* in South Asia is in Hooghly, a suburb of Calcutta. *Marsiya*s if not *jarigan* songs may figure there during Muharram time. Thus the existence of *jarigan* songs in West Bengal should be kept in mind, although a study of them is beyond the scope of this book.

Chapter Two

- ¹ These lines are from the invocational section to a *jarigan* song. More of this song can be found translated and musically notated in Appendix B under the title, "*Allah, prothome selam bheji ...*". The song was sung by Mohammad Ali Akbar Miah of Shuhilpur Village near Brahmanbaria, July 18, 1995.
- ² These expressions are from an Urdu dictionary without title page in the possession of a friend in Dhaka, Ameneh Ispahani. Similar connotations are given in her dictionary called *The One-Volume Persian-English Dictionary* by S. Haim (Teheran: Librairie Beroukhim, 1961).
- ³ Some Muslims believe that it is a sacrilegious indulgence according to Islamic traditions to express grief demonstratively. However, a Bangladeshi Sufi writer shows that historically famous pious Muslims have shown their grief. He writes that people who are

sincere in their grief need not fear "fatwa" (religious punishment). See the introduction to *Zikre Ahalobayet ba Jari, Murshiya Matam* (Invocation of the Members of the Prophet's Family, or *Jaris, Marsiyas, and Matams*) by Sayad Golam Nabi Hosseini Chishti of Hobiganj, Sylhet (ca. 1980 A. D.). The writer gives ten reasons why grieving is not against Islam. He says, for instance, that Hazrat Adam (Holy Adam of Biblical-Koranic lore) wrote a *marsiya* in the Syrian language and he gives examples of saints and prophets in Islam who have shown extreme grief. Aisha, wife of the Prophet, beat her head on the "mattress" when he died and the wives of other prophets cried loudly; some, he says, fainted and disciples broke their teeth.

- ⁴ If a Bengali speaker calls a song a *jarigan* song, I accept this as a legitimate appellation, even if the song may also belong to another category such as *marsiyas*. This acceptance serves to reveal not only how different Bengalis view *jarigan*, but how the term itself has undergone different connotations at different times and in different places.
- ⁵ The two scholars who compared *jarigan* singing to American "spiritual" singing are Mustafa Zaman Abbasi, expert in Bengali folk songs, and S. M. Lutfur Rahman, author of *Bangladeshi Jarigan* (1986), on which much of the present book is based.
- ⁶ See Marta A. Ghezzeo, *Epic Songs of 16th Century Hungary* (1989).
- ⁷ *Marsiya* no. 6 in Munshi Mohammad Mahachen Ulla, *Bangala Marchiya (Bengali Marsiyas)* (n. d., possibly 1950s or 1960s): 7.
- ⁸ First couplets from the "*Kasem-Sokhinar Jari*" (The *Jari* of Kasem and Sokhina), a full-length *jarigan* in Jasimuddin's collection in his book, *Jarigan* (1968): 185. I have provided a literal translation in Appendix A.
- ⁹ See Golam Saklayen, *Banglay Marisya Sahitya (Marsiya Literature in Bengali, 1969):* 441-468.
- ¹⁰ See S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 2.
- ¹¹ See S. M. Lutfur Rahman's nine comments in identifying features of *jarigan*, *Ibid.*: 4-7.
- ¹² Song no. 7, Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 324. This example is not included in the musical notations of the present book, but can be found in Jasimuddin's book, *Ibid.*: 324.
- ¹³ "*Kasem-Sokhinar Jari*" in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.* (1968): 182.
- ¹⁴ In the recording of this song, the *kokil* bird is pronounced "*kokilo*". This bird is a species of cuckoo that is common to Bengal.
- ¹⁵ Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 307.
- ¹⁶ Mitch Miller, *Community Song Book* (1962): 26.
- ¹⁷ S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 5.
- ¹⁸ S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 3rd page of the Introduction.
- ¹⁹ See the support for the idea that *jarigan* songs are nascent epics in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 88. See also S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: iii; and Golam Saklayen, *Ibid.*: 449.
- ²⁰ See Marta A. Ghezzeo's book, *Epic Songs of Sixteenth-Century Hungary: History and Style* (1989) and Yildiray Erdener, *Song Contests of Turkish Minstrels* (1994). See also Bela Bartok's pioneer work, *Hungarian Folk Music* (1931).
- ²¹ I imagine that folk dramas existed in ancient Greece along with the great Greek literary dramas of those times. It is possible that the *jatras* and *jarigan* performances of Bengal indicate how folk dramas inherit themes from literary sources and also how the reverse process may occur.

- ²² For detailed descriptions of *ta'ziyeh*, see the essays in *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran*, edited by Peter J. Chelkowski (1979). The Urdu and Bengali word *taziya* (literally, consolation) is used to designate the model tombs in the Muharram processions of northern India and Bangladesh. Participants and spectators receive consolation from seeing and touching the models.

Chapter Three

- ¹ These lines are from an invocation which is sung before a *jarigan* song and which is known as a *bandana*. More lines from this song can be found in translation and in musical notations in Appendix B under the song title, "[A hai are] bolo Allahr nam ...". The song is from Jasimuddin's book, *Jarigan* (1968): 303.
- ² S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Bangladeshi Jarigan* (1986): first page of the Introduction.
- ³ The Arabic word *makatil* means legends about martyrs. See the article, "Shi'a" in the *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam* edited by H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers (1961): 541. See also the use of the Anatolian Turkish word *maktel* in "The Muharram Observances in Anatolian Turkey" by Metin And, and in *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran*, edited by Peter J. Chelkowski (1979): 248-250.
- ⁴ S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 14-15.
- ⁵ The derivation of *panchali* is unknown, but it may refer to marionette shows called *panchalikas* which accompanied the recital of narrative poems. See J. C. Ghosh, *Bengali Literature* (1948): 34.
- ⁶ J. C. Ghosh, *Ibid.*: 82-83.
- ⁷ Although I can at present give no firm evidence of the exchange between court and rural artists, the Moghul paintings, Indian classical and folk music, Indian theater, all seem to reveal a close association between the cultivated arts and the more *ex tempore* art forms of South Asian rural peoples.
- ⁸ For the roots of *jarigan* in literary epics see Golam Saklayen, *Banglay Marciya Sahitya (The Literature of Marsiyas in Bengali)* (1968): 33-38. See also the following material on early epic literature of Bengal: Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *A Socio-Intellectual History of the Isna Shiis in India* (1986): 356-357; also Ephraim M. Miller, "History, Society, and Salvation in a Bengali Muslim Didactic-Epic Poem of the Eighteenth Century," a paper for the 1974 Bengal Studies Conference, Chicago.
- ⁹ Ali Jawad Zaidi, *Mir Anis* (1986): 48-49.
- ¹⁰ For a history of Bengali *marsiya*s see Golam Saklayen, *Ibid.*
- ¹¹ Henri Massé describes three kinds of reciters for the Muharram meetings: 1) the *rowzle-h'an* who declaims poems based on the lives of the Prophet and his family; 2) the *medd'ah*, a panegyrist, dressed as a dervish, who stands and recites *marsiya*s composed by himself or by a classical poet; and 3) the *v'alez*, a theologian who says a sermon, ending with *marsiya*s. See Henri Massé, *Croyances et coutumes persanes* (1938): 122-124.
- ¹² My explanation here is from Regula Qureshi's article on the singing in Pakistani *majlises*. She outlines a *majlis* program which starts with *Soz*, a "short lament ...", followed by *Salam*, a "salutation or eulogy ...". A *marsiya* is next which she describes as an "elegy or heroic narrative, often highly dramatic, consisting of 6-line strophes. Chanted usually by a group in unison. The chanted *marsiya* may be followed by a *marsiya* poem in the style

- of formal oratory." See Regula Qureshi, *Islamic Music in an Indian Environment: The Shi'a Majlis*, *Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 25, no. 1 (1981): 41-47.
- ¹³ Ahmad Hasan Dani, *Dacca: A Record of its Changing Fortunes* (1962): 90-95.
- ¹⁴ On the different uses of the expressions reading, reciting and chanting, see Regula Qureshi's article, "*Tarannum: The Chanting of Urdu Poetry*," *Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 13, no. 3 (Sept., 1969): 425-468.
- ¹⁵ For descriptions of chanting known in Urdu as *tarannum* used in *mushairas*, see Regula Qureshi, *Ibid.* In India, in the Deccan, according to Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, the earliest "known" *marisiya* to be composed in the Deccani language was by the sixteenth century poet, Burhanu'd-Din Janam. "Janam's *marisiya* depicts the pouring out of Divine love through heart-felt sorrow for Imam Husayn's martyrdom." See S. A. A. Rizvi, *Ibid.*: 357.
- ¹⁶ See Ashok D. Ranade, *On Music and Musicians of Hindoostan* (1984): 29, 46-47. For a description of Urdu *marisiyas* in the *mushaira* context, see Amy Bard, "Text and Performance: Classical *Marsiya* in Modern-day *Majlis*," forthcoming doctoral dissertation for Columbia University, 1996.
- ¹⁷ S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: third page of the Introduction.
- ¹⁸ Ashok D. Ranade, *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹ See S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: first to third page of the Introduction. He notes the following source: Bhupendranath Datt, *Sahitya Pragati (Literature Development)* (no publisher or date): 94. See also Ashok D. Ranade, *Ibid.*: 47.
- ²⁰ J. C. Ghosh, *Bengali Literature* (1948): 34. Golam Saklayen says that the form of *jarigan* songs, both external and internal, is based on *panchali* poetry as the ideal of Bengali literature since the fourteenth century. See Golam Saklayen, *Ibid.*: 450-451. See also Lutfur Rahman's article, "*Madhya-juger Natyamulak Geyakabyer Angkik: Dveitadveitabadi Shilpatatta*" (The Form of Medieval Dramatic Sung-poetry: 'Duality-in-Unity' Esthetics) in *Theater Studies*, the Journal of the Department of Drama and Dramatics, edited by Selim Al Deen, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Bangladesh (June, 1995): 94-129. It should be noted that the writer of this article is not S. M. Lutfur Rahman.
- ²¹ The song starts with a *bandana*. A *bandana* for a *gazirgan* is cited in Chapter Eight of the present book. See also Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760* (1994): 71-77; and Afsar Ahmad's article, "*Dveitadveitabadi Shilpatatter Alope Gajir Gan: 'Didar Badshahar Pala'*" (Duality-in-Unity in the Art of *Gajir-gan: 'The Story of King Dida'*), *Theater Studies*, journal of the Department of Drama and Dramatics, edited by Selim Al Deen, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka (June, 1995): 41-93.
- ²² Dushan Zbavitel, *Bengali Folk-ballads from Mymensingh and the Problem of their Authenticity* (1963): 12-13.
- ²³ See Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 7-9. Regula Qureshi explains that in Urdu, "chanted and spoken recitations are covered by the general term '*parhna* (to read)' be it '*tarannum se*' (with chanting) or '*taht-ul-lafz se*' (with speaking)." She says that "accordingly, the term 'chanting' is not used in Indo-Pakistani English. Instead, 'reciting' and 'reading' are commonly applied to spoken as well as chanted recitation. Sometimes the distinction between the two is made by referring to spoken recitation as 'reading' and chanted recitation as 'reciting', but the connotation is not definite. See Regula Qureshi, "*Tarannum: the Chanting of Urdu Poetry*," in *Ethnomusicology*, Volume 13, no. 3 (September, 1968): 425-469. I note that due to the Islamic injunction on singing, even highly musical chants,

such as the Muslim calls to prayer, are known as recitations, not chants, and certainly not songs.

- ²⁴ I have been told by a Bangladeshi friend that even if the "reader" is unable to read, he holds the book open in front of him from which he "reads"—that is, recites.
- ²⁵ Manju M. Seal, "Representing Vaiṣṇava Kirtan: A Bengali Genre of Performance," thesis for a Master of Music Degree, University of Wisconsin at Madison (1993): 1.
- ²⁶ J. C. Ghosh, *Bengali Literature* (1948): 32. The dissertation for her Master of Music degree by Manju M. Seal, *Ibid.*, was especially helpful to me in understanding the probable influences of *kirtans* on *jarigan* songs and their performance practices.
- ²⁷ See Manju M. Seal, *Ibid.*: 24, 28-29, 42, 62.
- ²⁸ The description is in the Bangladeshi newspaper, *Janakanta* (May 4, 1995), by the reporter Shamudra Haq. It was located by my assistant, Mokhesur Rahman Lenin. It is interesting to note that the village mentioned, Shimuldai, is near the Jamuna River, just like the fictitious village, Shimultoli, in Jasimuddin's novel-poem, *Sojan Badiar Ghat* (*The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy*) (1933), in which Jasimuddin describes Muharram celebrations and the singing of *jarigan* songs. See Jasimuddin, *Sojan Badiar Ghat* (1933): line 37, page 22.
- ²⁹ Jasimuddin describes the influence of *kabigan* debates on *jarigan* recitals in his book, *Jarigan* (1968): 7-8.
- ³⁰ Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 7-8.
- ³¹ S. M. Lutfor Rahman, *Ibid.*: 13-14.
- ³² The recording was made of folk singer, Mohammad Ali Akbar Miah, and a small chorus of four *dohars* in a village outside of Brahmanbaria on July 18, 1995. Akbar Miah held pages of typescript texts which he used only as reference. The verses were written in paragraph form, but the verse structure was nevertheless clearly in traditional *jarigan* form.
- ³³ S. M. Lutfor Rahman, *Ibid.*: 13-14.
- ³⁴ S. M. Lutfor Rahman, *Ibid.*: second page of the Introduction.

Chapter Four

- ¹ Lines from a *jarigan* song sung for me by Hatim Uddin Sarkar in Gouripur, Mymensingh, May 31, 1995. The beginning portion of this song can be found in translation and musically notated in Appendix B of this book.
- ² Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): Introduction, 8.
- ³ S. M. Lutfor Rahman, *Bangladeshi Jarigan* (1986): 49.
- ⁴ Jasimuddin uses the term *baithak* in his book, *Ibid.*, but S. M. Lutfor Rahman uses the term *ashor* in his book, *Ibid.*
- ⁵ Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 6-10; and S. M. Lutfor Rahman, *Ibid.*: 40-42.
- ⁶ For various derivations of *doha* see this word and *dhuagan* in the Glossary. Anthony Kennedy Warder traces the term *doha* to the name of a meter in ancient Indian poetry. From his descriptions, *dohas* are a form of short poetry (or song) that are "on the whole more theoretical and even polemical." See A. K. Warder, *Indian Kavya Literature* (1972), Vol. I, 27 and Vol. IV, 445.
- ⁷ This line is cited by S. M. Lutfor Rahman, *Ibid.*: 27. For the names and descriptions of instruments that are used in *jarigan* singing, I recommend the clear photographs and

descriptions by Charles Capwell in his book, *The Music of the Bauls of Bengal* (1986): 89-114. See also S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 28-29 and Deben Bhattacharya, *Songs of the Bards of Bengal* (1969): 28. Bengali readers may like to refer to Mobarak Hossein Khan's book on Bengali instruments, *Badyajantra Prasanga* (1982): 1-67.

- ⁸ Abdul Khaleq Dewan, a folk singer from the Dhaka area, described how in the 1940s he used to travel long hours by boat to the different places where he was hired to sing. Also a friend, Aziz Haq, who is in his early sixties, told me how in his grandfather's time, during the monsoon season, passengers traveling by country boats, while returning home after a market day or festival, would listen to *jarigan* songs sung by other passengers and the boatmen while they guided the boats. I heard similar accounts from other friends in their sixties.
- ⁹ For an example of Muslim concern for Hindus in the audience, see the invocation to the *Gazirgan* cited in Chapter Seven from Dinesh Chandra Sen, *Eastern Bengal Ballads*, (1923): Vol. II, 28.
- ¹⁰ The singer was Abbas Ali Bhashan, aged ninety-five, of Brahmanbaria, interviewed on July 18, 1995.
- ¹¹ I have only seen this word used in S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 45. The photo-illustrations in Jasimuddin's book, *Jarigan* (1968), show the performers at ground level without a platform.
- ¹² Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 10.
- ¹³ I saw these uses of simple "props" in a video film of a *jarigan* singer made by the Bangla Academy. See note 14 below.
- ¹⁴ The Bangla Academy in Dhaka invited me to a showing of a video film of a *jarigan* singer performing solo. He assumed various roles, female as well as male, using a *gamcha* and other similar "props". The viewing was in the summer of 1993. From my own experience, however, *boyatis* today generally perform without any "props".
- ¹⁵ A few seconds of a *boyati* singing a *jarigan* song occur in a scene in the drama *Bishad Sindhu* (*Sorrow Sea*) which is staged monthly in Dhaka by the Dhaka Padatik drama group. The scene depicts street celebrations in honor of a victory. The *jarigan* singer is seen and heard entertaining a crowd in one corner of the stage while monkeys and acrobats are performing in others. In actual fairs, other entertainment may include marionette shows and performances of a variety of story-tellers.
- ¹⁶ For a marionette show at fairs or market places, a group of marionette players may set up a room made of cloth walls in which about thirty people can be accommodated. A puppeteer works the marionettes from behind the back curtain of a small stage. A singer-reciter sitting near the foot of the stage recites the lines. He is accompanied by one or two instrumentalists. The custom of introducing interlude songs and instrumental pieces in a *jarigan* recital shows the influence of these marionette shows as well as the influence of *jatras*.
- ¹⁷ Rumi Aktar, a young woman who sang with a *jarigan dol* that I recorded, also sings weekly at a *mazar* near the High Court Building in Dhaka. She used the word *mazar* as if she were speaking of an *ashor* (performance event). For example, she said: "Come to my *mazar* on Thursday."
- ¹⁸ See note 13 above. This bard was exceptionally dramatic. Others that I have observed in person did not use "props", only gesturing. In the stage production of the drama *Bishad Sindhu* (*Sorrow Sea*) for which the director, Jamil Ahmed, studied Bengali *jatra* performances, the lead singer uses a fly-whisk (*chamor*) in many different ways to depict, for

example, a baby cradled in his arms or a tall adult as he holds the whisk above eye level and addresses it.

- ¹⁹ The dialogues in the sung poetry of *jarigan* songs about the tragic events of Karbala resemble the format of the ancient Greek tragedies in which the chorus chanted or sang their responses. Even the word "tragedy" comes from the Greek word *odos* meaning song, suggesting that the Greek tragedies were sung or chanted performances.
- ²⁰ Edward G. Browne says that the Persian poet Firdausi took a 'repeater' with him when he set out to Ghazna to present his epic poem, the *Shah-nama* (*Kings'-chronicles*) (999 A. D.). See Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* (1906): Vol. II, 133.
- ²¹ S. M. Lutfor Rahman, *Ibid.*: 41.
- ²² The ditty is in S. M. Lutfor Rahman, *Ibid.*: 41.
- ²³ The description of *dhuagan* songs is in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 9-10.
- ²⁴ The program outlined here is paraphrased from a hypothetical program described by S. M. Lutfor Rahman in the section in his book on traditional *jarigan* performances. See S. M. Lutfor Rahman, *Ibid.*: 41-53.
- ²⁵ Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 8.
- ²⁶ Jasimuddin, *Sojan Badiar Ghat* (*The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy*), seventh edition (1960): 23.
- ²⁷ These lines are from Barbara Painter and Yann Lovelock's book *Gypsy Wharf* (1969): 60. This book is a free translation of Jasimuddin's *Sojan Badiar Ghat* (*The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy*). My literal translation of the cited lines runs as follows: "Sojan is today the new singer, circling a red *gamcha* around his head, / Dancing the Muharram dance he sings, moving throughout his group. //"
- ²⁸ The choreography of *jarinach* may come from ancient forms of group dances in Bengal. Jasimuddin suspects Afghani influence on the form of these dances. See Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 10-11. The form of *jarinach* dances may be more directly influenced by the dances of tribal peoples on the borderlands of Mymensingh District.
- ²⁹ See S. M. Lutfor Rahman, *Ibid.*: 33.
- ³⁰ Muslims in India used to wear *dhotis* in the past.
- ³¹ For a more detailed discussion of *jarigan* dancing, see my paper, "Jari Nac: The Epic Dance of Muslim Bengal," presented at the Eighteenth Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, November, 1973.
- ³² Jasimuddin, "The Decline of Folk Songs," in *Folkmusic and Folklore Anthology*, Volume I (Oct. 1, 1967): 151-155.
- ³³ The shopkeeper of a music store in central Dhaka told me that he stocks about two hundred different titles of *jarigan* songs on audio-cassettes. He said he easily sells about a thousand a year.
- ³⁴ I am indebted to Peter J. Bertocci, Professor of anthropology at Oakland University, Michigan, and author of numerous articles on anthropology in Bengal, who sent me a valuable reference which cites *jarigan* singing used for disseminating information on family planning in the Comilla area of Bangladesh. I include in Appendix A. The passage which is quoted on the pages that Peter Bertocci sent me. See Arthur F. Raper, *Rural Development in Action* (1970): 180-181, 230-231 and 324-325. An example of the use of folk singing for campaigning appeared in photo-illustrations on the front page of the newspaper *The Daily Star*, Dhaka, June 2 and July 5, respectively, 1996.

Chapter Five

- ¹ See Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 328.
- ² Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 12-27.
- ³ Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 30-31.
- ⁴ A woman singer, Rumi Aktar, says she receives about takas 3,000 (about seventy-five dollars) on some occasions. Her husband, Baul Darbesh Shah, said that his *dol* makes about two to three thousand takas for a night of singing. Rumi Aktar may have included the whole *dol* in her answer.

Chapter Six

- ¹ The translation is a free one of Jasimuddin's novel in poetry, *Sojan Badiar Ghat* (*The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy*), first published in Calcutta or Dhaka in 1933. The passage cited in Bengali is on page 22 of the seventh edition of this book, published in 1960. The translation is by Barbara Painter and Yann Lovelock for their book under the title *Gypsy Wharf* (1969): 59. The following lines are my own literal translation: Today we will all dance, whirling to the fierce beat. / We will bring in the sad story of Arabia, pulling it in a net of song.//
- ² See the articles by Donald McCloskey and Peter Lamarque in *Narrative in Culture: The Uses of Storytelling in Sciences, Philosophy, and Literature*, edited by Christopher Nash (1994): 5-22 and 131-153, respectively.
- ³ See the essay, "Storytelling in Economics," by Donald McCloskey, *Ibid.*: 5-22. See also the following passage from Peter Lamarque's essay, "Narrative and Invention: The Limits of Fictionality," *Ibid.*: 131.
- ⁴ A religious leader who officiates at the *Imam bara* in Mohammedpur, Dhaka, wished to impress on me that some of the episodes commemorated during the Muharram festival activities are not historically accurate. He gave the Kasem-Sokhina wedding as an example. He said that it was impossible that they were ever married or married during the battle of Karbala.
- ⁵ "Anal Haq" (I Am the Truth), Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1964): 216.
- ⁶ "Kasem-Sokhinar Jari" (The Kasem and Sokhina Jari), Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 185-192.
- ⁷ See "Shahid-nama Jari" (The Martyrs'-chronicle Jari) in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 193-204.
- ⁸ See Ahmed Sharif, editor, *Nabi-bamsha* (The Line of Prophets) (1978) and Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *A Socio-Intellectual History of the Isna 'Ashari Shi'is*, Vol. II (1986): 356.
- ⁹ See Ephraim M. Miller, proposal for a paper for the Annual Bengal Studies Conference, Chicago, 1974.
- ¹⁰ For a listing and description of Biblical-Koranic themes of Islamic lore, see D. Sidersky, *Les origines des légendes musulmanes dans le Coran et dans les vies des prophètes* (1933).
- ¹¹ "Rajeswari" and "Tilekban" are *jarigan* songs with similar stories concerning the wooing and conversion of Hindu princesses by Muslim princes, in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 232 - 256 and 286 - 295.
- ¹² These two songs about the death of a cow may be interpolations into a *jarigan* recital program or into a *jarigan* song itself, in both cases for comic relief. See Jasimuddin, *Ibid.* (1968): 230-231 and 296-299.

- ¹³ Jom or Yama is actually the Hindu god of death. The Angel of Death in Islam is Azrail. In the *jarigan* songs he always appears as Jom or Yama.
- ¹⁴ See "*Jan Churi*" (Soul-Thief), a *jarigan* song text in S. M. Lutfur Rahman's, *Bangladeshi Jarigan* (1986): 73-93.
- ¹⁵ "*Jan Churi*" (Soul Thief), in S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 90.
- ¹⁶ "*Hazerar Bonbash*" (Hazera's Exile in the Jungle), Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 100.
- ¹⁷ "*Jaberer Putrobad*" (The Deaths of Jaber's Sons), Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*, 158.
- ¹⁸ "*Kasem-Sokhinar Jari*" (The Kasem and Sokhina *Jari*), "*Shahid-nama Jari*" (The Martyrdom-chronicle *Jari*) and songs called "*Imam-bicched*" (Grief for the Imams) in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 185, 193, and 257, respectively.
- ¹⁹ See *ta'ziyeh* scripts in such collections as Lewis Pelly, *The Miracle Play of Hasan and Husain*, Vols. I and II (1879).
- ²⁰ "*Korbanir Jari*" (The Sacrifice *Jari*), a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 207.
- ²¹ "*Kasem-Sokhinar Jari*" (The Kasem and Sokhina *Jari*), in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 185.
- ²² "*Kulsumer Mejhani*" (Kulsum's Feast), in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 143.
- ²³ "*Muslemer Dui Putro Shahid*" (The Martyrdom of Muslim's Two Sons), in *Alauddin Giti* (*The Songs of Alauddin*), Vol. II (1935): 39.
- ²⁴ "*Zohor-nama Jari*" (The Poison-chronicle *Jari*), in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 172.

Chapter Seven

- ¹ These lines about the idealism of *jarigan* themes are from Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 5. The translation is my own.
- ² These examples of mystical songs are given in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 10. For examples of the Bengali texts of these religio-philosophical *dhuagan* songs, see Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 273-281.
- ³ For Jasimuddin's statement about the presence of these *dhuagan* songs in *jarigan* recitals, see Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 10. He mentions a variety of these songs.
- ⁴ The meaning and role of *dhuagan* is discussed at some length in Chapters Eight through Ten of the present book.
- ⁵ "*Korbanir Jari*" (The Sacrifice *Jari*), in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 108 and 118.
- ⁶ "*Hazerar Bonbash*" (Hazera's Exile in the Jungle), a *jarigan* song in S. M. Lutfur Rahman's *Bangladeshi Jarigan* (1986): 113.
- ⁷ "Song no. 1" in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 313.
- ⁸ A "song" passage from Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 325.
- ⁹ "*Hazerar Bonbash*" (Hazera's Exile in the Jungle), in S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 111.
- ¹⁰ An excerpt from a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 327. This song can be found in translation with musical notations in Appendix B.
- ¹¹ David Abecassis, *Identity Islam and Human Development in Rural Bangladesh* (1990): 35.
- ¹² "*Jan Churi*" (The Soul Thief), S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 87-89.
- ¹³ See the story of "*Anal Haq*" (I Am the Truth), a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 216-229.

- ¹⁴ "Ayub Nabir o Rahima Bibir Jari" (The Jari of the Prophet Job and his Wife Rahima) sung by Shohorab, commercial cassette recording (Demra, Dhaka: Shur Mela Recording House, 1995).
- ¹⁵ Lines from the Introduction in S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 5.
- ¹⁶ Ravi Shankar, *My Music, My Life* (1968): 26-27.
- ¹⁷ Anthony Kennedy Warder lists "transient emotions" that are classified in the *Nāṭya-śāstra*. There are thirty-three in all of which I find that the following apply to character portrayals in the *jarigan* stories: *shanka* (alarm), *asuya* (envy or jealousy), *dainya* (misery), *cinta* (anxiety), *moha* (bewilderment), *smṛiti* (remembrance), *dhṛti* (contentment), *vṛida* (shame), *capalata* (rashness), *harsha* (joy), *avega* (agitation), *vishada* (despair), *autsukya* (eagerness), *amarsha* (indignation), *ugraha* (ferocity), *marana* (dying), *trasa* (terror), and *vitarka* (doubt). Anthony Kennedy Warder, *Indian Kavya Literature*, Vol. I (1972): 23-24.
- ¹⁸ "Kasem Sokhinar Jari" (The Kasem and Sokhina Jari) in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 187.
- ¹⁹ The same *jarigan* song, in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 187.
- ²⁰ "The idea of tragedy ...in the European tradition, does not occur in its strict sense in India ..." Anthony Kennedy Warder, *Indian Kavya Literature* (1972): Vol. I 27.
- ²¹ Mustafa Zaman Abbasi, in an interview at his home in Dhaka, June 19, 1995.
- ²² This contrast runs through David R. Kinsley, *The Sword and the Flute: Kali and Krishna; Dark Visions of the Terrible and the Sublime* (2nd edition, 1977).
- ²³ "Gobinama" and "Gabhinama" (both titles meaning "Cow-chronicle"), two *jarigan* songs in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 230 and 296, respectively.
- ²⁴ "Hazerar Bonbash" (Hazera's Exile in the Jungle), Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 100. See also the same story in a different *jarigan* version in S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 100.
- ²⁵ "Zaberer Putrabad" (The Murders of Jaber's Sons), a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 158-163.
- ²⁶ Lines from the "The Love Songs of Vidyapati" as quoted in David R. Kinsley, *Ibid.*: 49.
- ²⁷ Lines 35-40, from the *jarigan* song, "Tilekban", in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 287.
- ²⁸ "Hazerar Bonbash" (Hazera's Exile in the Jungle), in S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 107.
- ²⁹ "Tilekban Jari" (The Tilekban Jari), in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 286-287.
- ³⁰ An example of a topic for debate between poets cited by Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 8.

Chapter Eight

- ¹ Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 31. The translation is my own.
- ² Jasimuddin and S. M. Lutfur Rahman in their respective collections of *jarigan* examples, provide translations of dialectal vocabulary into standard Bengali, in footnotes below the texts of the songs. See Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968) and S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Bangladeshi Jarigan* (1986). For Perso-Arabic vocabulary in Bengali, see Shaikh G. M. Hilaly, *Banglar Pharsi-Arabi Upadan (Perso-Arabic Elements in Bengali)*, edited by Muhammad Enamul Haq (1967).
- ³ Lines 3, 6, and 8 in Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 303.
- ⁴ Line 8, *Ibid.*: 303.
- ⁵ Line 13, *Ibid.*: 271.

- ⁶ Line 13, Ibid.: 275.
- ⁷ Line 106, Ibid.: 290.
- ⁸ Line 2 of Song no. 9 and line 8 of Song no. 3, Ibid.: 304.
- ⁹ Line 351, Ibid.: 229.
- ¹⁰ See the notations of "*Shonen amar ko'i shrotagon ...*" in Appendix B.
- ¹¹ "*Hasaner Bishpan*" (The Poisoning of Hasan), in Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 168.
- ¹² Song no. 7, "[O] *shikar kore ...*" (Oh, having gone to the hunt ...), in Jasimuddin, Ibid.: 324-325.
- ¹³ Jasimuddin, Ibid.: Song no. 1, line 7, 303. For Jasimuddin's listing of similes, see Ibid.: 85-87.
- ¹⁴ Jasimuddin, Ibid.: Song no. 8, line 8, 306.
- ¹⁵ Line 8 of "*Fatemar Gan*" (Fatema's Song), Jasimuddin, Ibid.: 263.
- ¹⁶ Line 18 of "*Hanifar Gan*" (Hanifa's Song), Jasimuddin, Ibid.: 271.
- ¹⁷ "*Hasaner Bish Pan*" (Hasan's Poisoning), Jasimuddin, Ibid.: 164.
- ¹⁸ "*Shahid-nama*" (The Martyrdom-chronicle), Jasimuddin, Ibid.: 196.
- ¹⁹ Jasimuddin, Ibid.
- ²⁰ Jasimuddin, Ibid.
- ²¹ Ashutosh Bhattacharya, *Bangiya Lokshongit Ratnakar (Bengali Folksong Jewels)* (1966, 1967): Volume 2, 555; and line 4 of "*Hanifar Gan*" (Hanifa's Song), Jasimuddin, Ibid.: 272.
- ²² G. H. Ranade, *Hindusthani Music; An Outline of its Physics and Aesthetics* (1951): 59-60.
- ²³ Jasimuddin, Ibid.: 167.
- ²⁴ Ashutosh Bhattacharya, Ibid.: 559.
- ²⁵ See J. C. Ghosh, *Bengali Literature* (1946): 117.
- ²⁶ J. D. Anderson, *A Manual of the Bengali Language* (1962): 106-107. For the date of Krittivas, see J. C. Ghosh, *Bengali Literature* (1948): 35.
- ²⁷ J. D. Anderson, Ibid.: 11-12.
- ²⁸ Jasimuddin, Ibid.: 317.
- ²⁹ Jasimuddin, Ibid.: 188.
- ³⁰ J. D. Anderson, Ibid.: 106. The translation is my own.
- ³¹ The verse is purely fictitious, composed by me, in order to illustrate the "feel" of Bengali *payar* verse.
- ³² Song no. 2, Jasimuddin, Ibid.: 315-316. The interlinear refrain lines have been omitted.
- ³³ Jasimuddin, *Sojan Badiar Ghat (The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy)*, first edition (1933), 7th edition (1960): 21. The literal translation of these lines is my own. A more poetic translation by Barbara Painter and Yann Lovelock runs as follows: "Maharram, and the villagers have come,/ Drunk with excitement, singing Jari songs, / To fence with canes ..." See Barbara Painter and Yann Lovelock, *Gypsy Wharf* (1969): 58.
- ³⁴ There are eight verses in *tripadi* meter (lines 52-66) in "*Hasaner Bishpan*" ("Hasan's Poisoning"), a *jarigan* song in Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 164-171. It is hard to tell why the change in verse form is made, except for the sake of variety.

- ³⁵ Song no. 9, Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 330.
- ³⁶ See the notations for the *jarigan* example called "[*Ahai, are*] *bolo Allahr nam ...*" in Appendix B.
- ³⁷ This estimate of the number of couplets sung in one session was given to me orally by S. M. Lutfur Rahman. This amount seems small, but one should keep in mind all the embellishments that are included in a *jarigan* song recital: the echoing of the *boyati's* lines by the *dohars*, their injections of interpolated songs, and the *boyati's* own impromptu digressions into spoken comments or *ex tempore* verses on an extraneous topic.
- ³⁸ The word *bandana* according to Monier-Williams "is probably cognate with the Sanskrit word *bandin*, a praiser, bard, or herald (who sings the praises of a prince in his presence or accompanies an army to chant martial songs." Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (4th edition, 1964): 720.
- ³⁹ Golam Saklayen, *Banglay Marsiya Sahitya (Marsiya Literature in Bengali)* (1969): 452.
- ⁴⁰ Dinesh Chandra Sen, *Eastern Bengal Ballads* (1923): Volume II, 28.
- ⁴¹ A long *bandana* from Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 303.
- ⁴² S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Ibid.*: 104.
- ⁴³ "Hazerar *Bonbash*" ("Hazera's Exile in the Jungle"), *Ibid.*: 107.
- ⁴⁴ Golam Saklayen, *Ibid.*: 451, footnote.
- ⁴⁵ The refrain verse about the engine running without fuel can be found in the song, "*Shonen amar ko'i shrotagon ...*" included in the notated songs in Appendix B.
- ⁴⁶ For the mention of *doha* verse, see Kathryn Hansen, *Grounds for Play: The Nautanki Theatre of North India* (1992): 220-221. Anthony Kennedy Warder describes *dohas*: "From the period of +800 to +1200 we have numerous Buddhist lyrics in Apabhramsa, called *dohaas* and *caryapads*, of varied form ...". See A. K. Warder, *Indian Kavya Literature*: Vol. I: 179. He also says that the term *duvahau* (*dvipathaka*) as the name of a metre was "contracted into *doha*." "This short lyric metre," he says, "became extremely popular in various languages [of India] in later centuries." See Vol. IV of the same work: 252.
- ⁴⁷ The literal translations of *padya* and *gadya* come from J. D. Anderson, *Ibid.*: 106.
- ⁴⁸ "Kasem-Sokhinari *Jari*" ("Kasem and Sokhina's *Jari*"), Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 185.
- ⁴⁹ According to Anthony Kennedy Warder, the existence of verse passages interspersed with prose passages is traditional even in the Sanskrit epics. He points out that the word for poetry, *kavya*, from *kavi* (poet) does not mean that poetry is only in verse. He says that *gadya* (prose) passages are traditionally combined with *padya* (verse) passages in Indian poetry. See Anthony Kennedy Warder, *Ibid.*: Volume I, 2.

Chapter Nine

- ¹ Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 301.
- ² J. C. Ghosh, *Bengali Literature* (1948): 31.
- ³ I have cited this passage from Barbara Painter's Introduction to *Gypsy Wharf* (1969): 22-23. She cites the passage from Jasimuddin's autobiography, *Jiban Katha (Life Story)*, Part I (Dhaka: Polash Publishers, 1964): 122.
- ⁴ The Bangladeshi musician is Sukalpa Gupta, currently on a grant to study classical Indian vocal music in Delhi.

- ⁵ Israel J. Katz was an advisor, along with Professor Theodore Riccardi, both of Columbia University, during the preparation of my Master's degree thesis about *jarigan* in 1972.
- ⁶ The New York City jazz musician and composer is Steven Sweeting.
- ⁷ I consulted with Karunamaya Goswami, musicologist, Dhaka, July 16, 1995, and with Waheedul Haq, musicologist, Dhaka, August 13, 1995.
- ⁸ Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 301.
- ⁹ Translation from Jasimuddin, *Sojan Badiar Ghat (The Wharf of Sojan Gipsy)* (1933). The translation is by Barbara Painter and Yann Lovelock, *Gypsy Wharf* (1969): 59.
- ¹⁰ It is interesting to note that the "rondo" form of Western classical music comes from European medieval dances known as "rondeau", containing alternation in the direction of the dance. The dancing in *jari-nach* performances of the Gouripur competition that I attended (June 12, 1995) was rondo-like in its alternations of direction. It is also interesting to note that the word "ballad" comes from a word meaning to dance.
- ¹¹ This example and all subsequent ones come from the notations that can be found in Appendix B.
- ¹² For these *thats*, see N. A. Jairazbhoy, *The Ragas of North India* (1970): 47.
- ¹³ The *matra* is a term which is used in a prosodic sense equivalent to *mora*. See Macdonnell, *A Sanskrit Grammar for Students*, 3rd edition (1962): 232. A. J. Fox-Strangways writes: "*mātrā* means 'instant', or 'unit'; what the Greeks called *Chronos protos*, the first or smallest duration from which you start reckoning." A. J. Fox-Strangways, *The Music of Hindustan* (1967): 199-200.
- ¹⁴ See Charles Capwell's *The Music of The Bauls of Bengal* (1986): 115, 118.
- ¹⁵ Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 301.
- ¹⁶ This observation comes from my recordings of the Gouripur *jarigan* competition on June 12, 1995, described at the end of Chapter Four.
- ¹⁷ Jasimuddin, "Folk Music of East Pakistan," in the *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, Volume III (1951): 42.
- ¹⁸ Dinesh Chandra Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature* (1911): 774-775. He makes a similar statement on page 579: "For pathetic chant of tender sentiments and for cadence and soul-stirring effects, the Manoharsahi tune is without its rival in the Indian musical system."
- ¹⁹ The practice of prolonging a note may be derived from Muslim traditions of the Middle East. Ivar Lassý, for instance, makes the following observations about the singing of Azerbaijani Turkish bards: "The *afrah* singer begins with a high, very loud and protracted note, producing it first at full volume. Then, changing its strength and timbre with regular movements of his mouth and lips (the latter being at times quite closed), he sends forth light trills and chromatic figures, and thereupon prolongs the original note as long as it lies within his power to do so." See Ivar Lassý, *The Muharram Mysteries among the Azerbaijani Turks of Caucasia* (1916): 65. *Jarigan* singers do not embellish a note to this extent before prolonging it on one pitch, but I found *jarigan* melodies contain considerable embellishments in the form of wavers and turns before the prolongation on one pitch, as in Baul and *bhatiyali* singing.
- ²⁰ See Charles Capwell on the same technique in Baul songs. *Ibid.*: 115.
- ²¹ See the quotation above from Ivar Lassý's description of a specific type of Muharram song. *Ibid.*: 65.

- ²² George A. Grierson refers to *śtobhā* (i.e., insertion) in Bihari folk-music. There are four types: *mātrā śtobhā* (the syllable insertion), *varna śtobhā* (the letter insertion), *shabda śtobhā* (the word insertion) and *vakya śtobhā* (the sentence insertion). See his article, "Some Bihari Folksongs," in *Folkmusic and Folklore Anthology*, edited by Hemango Biswas, (1967): Vol. I, 31. See the use of "meaningless syllables" in French medieval songs in "Medieval Song" by J. A. Westrup, Chapter IV of *Early Medieval Music Up To 1300*, edited by Dom Anselm Hughes (1955): 241.
- ²³ Bela Bartok, the Hungarian composer and scholar of Hungarian folk songs, comments on "interruptions" in melody that he noticed in Serbo-Croatian folk melodies. His description suggests the breaks in singing that occur in *jarigan* performances. He says: "... line-, word-, and syllable-interruptions (are) affected by shorter or longer rests, not for articulation's sake, but for decorative—one might almost say for expressive—purposes. This astonishing custom will invariably deceive the best-trained musicians when they first listen to this kind of interruption. They will without fail interpret the rests erroneously, that is, as section caesuras." See Bela Bartok, *Serbo-Croatian Folk Songs* (1937): 37.
- ²⁴ There is a good example of the alternation between sung poetry and spoken prose in the *jarigan* song example included in Karunamaya Goswami's ninth audio-cassette, side B, in his kit of cassette recordings and booklet, *History of Bengali Music in Sound* (1994). Theoreticians of Bengali literature make a distinction between *gadya* (literally, to-be-spoken) texts and *padya* (literally, to-be-in-verse) texts. See J. D. Anderson, *A Manual of the Bengali Language* (1962): 106.
- ²⁵ Alan Lomax, "Folk Song Style," in *The American Anthropologist*, Volume 61, no. 6 (Dec., 1959): 935-936.
- ²⁶ The nasal passages in the upper throat are partially blocked by a raised tongue.

Chapter Ten

- ¹ This couplet is part of a humorous refrain song whose lines are used at intervals to give variety in the *jarigan* song called "Tilekban" in Jasimuddin's collection. See Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 287. The meter of the couplet fits the tune of the *dhuagan*, "[Are] nache [re], buira nache ...," also a humorous song. See the musical notations for this song in Appendix B. The *shalik* is a bird native to Bengal. Its call is melodious.
- ² For the mention of *payar* and *tripadi* meters in Jasimuddin's book, see Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 9.
- ³ For this example of *tripadi* couplets inserted among the *payar* couplets of a *jarigan* song, see "Hasaner Bishpan" (The Poisoning of Hasan) in Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 166.
- ⁴ The text of the refrain above comes from a speech in an episode that is not part of the current narration, but which contains suitable emotional overtones of grief. Sometimes the texts of refrains may have no connection with the themes of the narrative verses. In the *jarigan* example, "*Shonen, amar bhai shrotagon ...*," found in Appendix B, the refrain melody fits the meter and melodic scale of the narrative section, but the text is about a broken engine that keeps running without fuel, possibly a metaphoric passage borrowed from a Baul or *marfati* (Sufi) song.
- ⁵ The *jarigan boyati*, Hatim Uddin Sarkar, whom I recorded in Gouripur, Mymensingh (May 31, 1995), gave me a booklet containing the text of a *jarigan* song that he composed in honor of the death day of the Bengali poet Kazi Nazrul Islam. On the cover of the booklet he gives his name and title, "*Boyati o Shurkar*" (*Boyati* and Tune-maker).

- ⁶ A *boyati* by the name of Abbas Ali Bhashan, whom I interviewed in Brahmanbaria, July 17, 1995, wished me to know that he always composes his own songs. He said, "I never copy from others."
- ⁷ Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 301.
- ⁸ Jasimuddin, *Ibid.*: 302.
- ⁹ "Karbala-juddher ghotonar 'khudro khudro bishader angsho' grohon ko'reo ek shrenir gan 'jarir' shonge gito hoy. Take 'dhua'-gan bola hoy. 'Jari'r dhruva pader shonge ei 'dhua'-gitir kono samparka nei" (A kind of song is used with *jarigan* singing which is taken from sad episodes in the Karbala battle story. This is called 'dhua'-gan. This kind of song has no relation with the fixed verses of *jarigan* songs.) This statement is from S. M. Lutfur Rahman, *Bangladeshi Jarigan* (1986): 3. He says that the difference is remarked by Golam Saklayen. I presume that the remark may be found in Saklayen's book about *marsiya*s: "Banglay Marsiya Sahitya" (*Marsiya Literature in Bangla*) (1969).
- ¹⁰ Ashok D. Ranade defines a word "*dohaa*" as a "popular meter in which a great number of saint-poets have composed." He says that the "*bhaats*" and "*charans*" (both terms mean bards), who were patronized by kings in North India used to sing *dohaas* on "erotic and ethical themes." It would seem that the word *dhua* would be derived from this context. Ashok D. Ranade, *On Music and Musicians of Hindoostan* (1984): 41-47.
- ¹¹ See the passage about *dhuagan* songs in Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 9-10. One writer whom he cites says that *dhua* and *disha* mean the same thing. S. M. Lutfur Rahman refutes this idea saying that there is a big difference between the two forms. From the distinctions that he makes, a few characteristics of *dishas* and *dhuagan* songs emerge. He says that a *disha* is not a song. It is only a part of a song—a refrain in the common sense of this word. From the way the word "*disha*" is used in Jasimuddin's collection of *jarigan* texts, it seems to connote a few lines interpolated from songs outside of the *jarigan* song repertory. The lines are sung at undesignated, probably random, intervals during the singing of the *jarigan* song. Presumably they are sung by the *dohars* to inject variety into the *jarigan* body of narrative singing.
- ¹² The musical notations that I made for the songs in Jasimuddin's book, *Jarigan* (1968), include the only ones of *jarigan* that I have been able to find in print having comparable length and detail. I have based my conclusions on these examples.
- ¹³ For a simple explanation of *dhruvapad* (or *dhruvad*), see Walter Kaufman, *The Ragas of North India* (1968): 24-26.
- ¹⁴ *Jarigan* songs are furthermore enriched in performance by the inclusion of refrain songs called *dhuagan* that are more like arias than refrains. These refrain songs are not only textually lyrical instead of narrative, but they are expressed in a musically ornate form, such as found in the singing of Baul, *bhatiyali* and other Bengali folk songs that are primarily solo songs allowing for individual invention.
- ¹⁵ In Calcutta in 1969, I acquired a booklet of Muharram liturgical songs. The booklet is titled *Matame Karbala o Karbalar Matamjari* (Karbala in *Matam* and *Matamjari* of Karbala) (1996). It contains short songs (*shur*) in sequence depicting various episodes in the Karbala story. These are meant to be sung by a leader and chorus, as instructed before each song. All the songs are in various tri-partite couplet verse forms. The word *jari* in some of the titles seems to signify "grief-song" not a lengthy, expository narrative song as signified by the expression "*jarigan*". The word *matam* seems to signify "grief-expression" or "grief-exercise".

- ¹⁶ This *marsiya* text is from Mohammad Mohachen Ulla, *Bangla Marchiya* (Bengali *Marsiya*), a booklet undated which I acquired in Calcutta during Muharram time in 1969.
- ¹⁷ A booklet called *Bangla Marchiya* (Bengali *Marsiya*) that I purchased in Calcutta during 1969 contains lyrics based on Karbala themes in *tripadi* verse structure. There are thirty-three entries, numbered consecutively. Each entry is titled with the words "Shur-marchiya" ("Tune-marsiya") and consists of four couplet verses. The booklets that are used by the women whose Muharram *majlis* I attended in Dhaka (June, 1995) were in Urdu. Booklets of Bengali lyrics entitled *Bangla Naoha o Matam* (Bengali *Naohas and Matams*) which were given to me at that time contain texts numbered consecutively; all are titled *naoha*. They are in various verse structures and lengths, averaging fifteen lines each.
- ¹⁸ Marta A. Ghezzi who writes about Hungarian epic songs quotes a writer who says that a large number of Hungarian epic texts use "lament-type melodies." She also notes that there are "several studies of the relationship between funeral (vigil songs and laments) and epic songs." She mentions a twelve-syllable lament. She says that some Hungarian epic songs have been preserved in collections of funeral songs. I speculate that *jarigan* tunes may have the same close relationship with *marsiya* and *naoha* tunes in their Middle Eastern form. See Marta A. Ghezzi, *Epic Songs of Sixteenth Century Hungary* (1989): 231.

Chapter Eleven

- ¹ These lines are from the *jarigan* song called "Kasem-Sokhinar *Jari*" ("The Kasem and Sokhina *Jari*"), Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 192. The translation is my own.
- ² The following definitions of *jarigan* songs and their performance are based on how the term is used in 1) the collections of transcriptions of Jasimuddin and of S. M. Lutfur Rahman, 2) the repertoires of contemporary singers, and 3) the repertoires of commercial recordings and performances for media audiences.
- ³ See Mir Mosharraf Hosein, *Bishad Sindhu* (*Sorrow Sea*) (3rd Edition, 1994).
- ⁴ I quoted this passage as cited by Barbara Painter in her Introduction to *Gipsy Wharf* (1960): 22-23. She cites this passage from Jasimuddin's autobiography, *Jiban Katha* (*Life Stories*), Part I (1964): 122. My summary of the influence of folk ballads on Jasimuddin's poetry is taken from Barbara Painter's summary of *Jiban Katha*.
- ⁵ For a study of how epics develop and are performed, see Millman Parry, *The Making of Homeric Verse* (1971). For similarities in Middle Eastern epic song tunes with *jarigan* tunes, see Yildiray Erdener, *The Song Contests of Turkish Minstrels; Improvised Poetry Sung to Traditional Music* (1995).

APPENDICES

EXAMPLES OF JARIGAN AND RELATED SONGS

NOTE TO TRANSLATIONS

The translations are literal in order to preserve the direct, expository quality of the narrations. The reader can gain a partial feeling for the graceful meter, rhymes and assonances of Bengali poetry by reading the transcriptions that have been given in Roman letters in the musically notated songs in Appendix B. Each translation is accompanied by explanatory notes. The various interjections in the Bengali texts have been represented in the translations as simply "Ah!", "Oh!", and "Alas!". The words within parentheses are added to clarify the meaning of the text.

"KORBANIR JARI"

Sung by Afazuddin Boyati
Dhamrai, Dhaka (1946)¹

"*Korbanir Jari*" (The Sacrifice *Jari*) is from the collection of transcribed texts in Jasimuddin's book, *Jarigan* (1968: 108-113). Jasimuddin describes how in his youth he used to be deeply affected on hearing the singing of Afazuddin, the composer of this song.

The story concerns Allah's punishment of the prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) when Ibrahim, in his joy at the birth of his son, neglected to praise Allah. However, the

¹ The age of this singer at the time of transcription was forty-five years. Dhamrai is a town about 30 miles northwest of Dhaka in Dhaka district. This *jarigan* is the first of two versions that Jasimuddin includes in the anthology section of his book, *Jarigan* (1968). The second version, by a singer from Faridpur, age thirty-six, is 102 lines longer. It is told with different words and with some changes in the story. When Jasimuddin's book was published, Afazuddin was already dead.

story gradually reveals Ibrahim's intrinsic reverence and piety. The poet also describes the piety of Ibrahim's wife and her sincere love and respect for her husband, and the piety and exceptional filial devotion of Ibrahim's son, Ishmail. The conniving, insensitive nature of *Shaitan* (Satan) is well-depicted. The events leading up to the sacrifice and the attempt at sacrifice build in suspense.

This song text, like the other two full-length *jarigan* texts in this Appendix, shows the composer's art as a dramatist as much as a poet. Rather than listing events, the poet unfolds his story through a sequence of dialogues, like scenes in a play, graduating in their emotional import to a climax with a surprising ending.

In the city of Nimrud² lived the prophet Ibrahim.³
There was no son in Ibrahim's house.

Ibrahim said: "Allah, my heart is very heavy.
Give me a son, Oh, God, that I may see his face."

In this way Ibrahim wept many times.
Allah granted his wish by giving him a son.

When that handsome son arrived on earth,⁴
Seeing him, Oh!, how the prophet Ibrahim began to boast!

The prophet said: "Oh, to whom shall I make (his beauty) known?
There is no one in whose house there is such a handsome son.

10

There are stains on the body of the moon and sun.
There is not one mark on the body of my son."

When the prophet spoke boasting with these words,
From his looking-glass⁵ God became angry.

God said: "Ibrahim, I say to you⁶,
Forgetting me you boast about your son.

You praise your son forgetting me.
By your own hand you will sacrifice your own son."

In this way a few days went by.
One night the prophet saw a dream.

20

He was sleeping happily on his *palank*⁷.
An angel came to him and showed him a dream.

² Nimrud is a city in Syria. See the maps included in the present book.

³ The prophet Ibrahim is Abraham of The book of Genesis in the Old Testament.

⁴ The birth of a child is described in the *jarigan* texts as a coming to earth.

⁵ Allah does not look at his creation directly, but in his looking-glass.

⁶ The Bengali phrase here is: "*tomake janai*" (I make you know), a stock phrase used frequently as a synonym for "I say to you" or "I inform you".

⁷ A *palank* is a regal bed.

The angel said: "Prophet, I say to you,
Make a sacrifice for the *darbar*⁸ of Haq⁹ Allah."

When the prophet saw this dream,
In the early morning he sacrificed a hundred camels.

Again the prophet was sleeping happily that night.
The angel came again and said to him:

"Why are you sleeping, prophet Ibrahim?
Perform the sacrifice; think of God in your mind." 30

So (Ibrahim) performed sacrifices for three days.
On the fourth day he was lying again on his *palank*.

Lying on his *palank* at night the prophet was sleeping happily.
The angel came again and showed him a dream.

The angel said: "Prophet, I say to you,
Make a sacrifice for Allah Haq's *darbar*."

The prophet said: "Angel, I say to you,
What has Malek Shai¹⁰ asked me to sacrifice?"

The angel said: "Prophet, I say to you,
Your son whose name is Ishmail. Sacrifice him today." 40

When the prophet beheld the dream in this way,
He went in the early morning to the mother of Ishmail.¹¹

Seeing her husband, Bibi¹² was greatly pleased.
She was like a beggar-woman receiving a golden *shinduk*.¹³

Bibi said: "Dear husband, tell me truly,
Why have you come to see me. Tell me quickly."

The prophet said: "I have an invitation to go to a *mina bazar*.¹⁴
Dress your son suitably and give him to me."

As soon as Bibi heard these words,
She quickly dressed her son and gave him (to Ibrahim). 50

⁸ *Darbar* is translated in the dictionary as "court" or "throne room." Professor Tayub Khan who made the first translation of this *jarigan*, used the word "altar" which is appropriate.

⁹ Haq, a title for Allah, signifying truth and justice.

¹⁰ Malek Shai is one of the alternate names for Allah. It signifies Lord of Lords or King of Kings.

¹¹ Ishmail is the spelling in Bengali for Ishmael of the Book of Genesis. In the Koranic version of this story, Abraham sacrifices Ishmael, not Isaac.

¹² The name Bibi is more a title than a name, rather like "Lady-wife", or "Honored lady"

¹³ *Shinduk* means a treasure chest. This may be a small, wooden chest or one as big as the ornately carved ones in the Bangladeshi National Folk Museum at Sonargaon. Those are about 7 feet by 7 feet by 4 feet deep and so heavy that they must be supported on small stone wheels.

¹⁴ A *mina bazar* is a large fair with various forms of entertainment as well as booths of items on sale.

When she brought her son and gave him to Ibrahim,
The prophet held his gaze on the face of his son.

In his mind the prophet said: "I love this son.
How will I give the knife to the throat of this golden son?"

Taking his son the prophet Ibrahim went forth slowly,
Secretly he took a knife and a rope.

He kept the knife and rope beneath his clothes.
"If my wife knows the matter, she will not give her son to me." 60

The prophet Ibrahim went slowly forth with his son.
As he went he gazed again at the face of Ishmail.

When the prophet went slowly forth with his son,
Shaitan¹⁵ went secretly to the mother (of Ibrahim's) son.

Shaitan said: "Bibi, I inform you,
(Your husband has gone) to sacrifice your son. He has no
pity in his heart."

Bibi answered: "Go far from me, evil Shaitan!
He is a father; such a deed he will never do."

Shaitan said: "He does so by the *hukum*¹⁶ of God.
He will sacrifice your son on the *darga*¹⁷ of Allah."

Bibi said: "He will sacrifice one son for Allah.
If there were a thousand sons, I would give them." 70

Seeing her great piety in this way,
The Evil One went to Ibrahim.

Shaitan said: "Prophet, highly virtuous man, listen
to (my) good advice.
You are killing your son (on the strength of) seeing a dream.
This is no (proper) action.

(By using) a son, a father gets deliverance from hell.¹⁸
To see his beauty with your eyes, is this (not) a joy?"

When the prophet heard these words,
Father and son together struck him with stones.

Cursing and grimacing Shaitan went far away.
Then Ibrahim spoke confidentially to his son: 80

¹⁵ Shaitan is Satan, the evil angel.

¹⁶ *Hukum* is an official command.

¹⁷ *Darga* (*dargah*) is from the Persian word meaning court. It is synonymous with *darbar*. See note no. 8 above.

¹⁸ Jasimuddin thinks that the idea here comes from a Hindu belief that the son's virtue can save the father from Hell. See Jasimuddin's *Jarigan* (1968), footnote 3, page 10.

The prophet said: "Listen to me, my dear child,
Stand before my face as if for the last time."¹⁹

"Ishmail said: "Dear father, we are going to the *mina bazar* to
which we were invited.

Then why will you look at me for the last time?"

The prophet said: "Listen, listen, oh, my enchanting child.
I will sacrifice you at the *darbar* of Allah."

His son said: "Father, if you intend to sacrifice me,
Then why, father, are your eyes full of tears?"

You will perform a sacrifice; that is no trouble for me.
Before going, I will make three requests of you.

90

Give '*salam*'²⁰ to my grieving mother.
She will be without son or daughter on this earth.

When it is day and night, who will go to my mother's house?
Who will call 'Mother! Mother!?' Whom will she take into
her embrace?

The cow-keeper is very sad when his cow dies early.
He is more sad than that when his twin brother dies.

The merchant has great grief when his business fails.
He has greater grief than this when a good son dies.

A fish goes into deeper water, a bird goes to a higher branch.
Who can know how deep is the love of a mother for her son?

100

When, father, you sacrifice me,
Bind my hands and feet well,

In case when you strike me with the knife my hands or feet
May strike your body. Then I will mourn in Hell.²¹

When you sacrifice me, father, the blood that falls,
Wipe that blood on my clothing.

Staining my white clothes, father,
Send and give them to Hazera,²² my mother.

¹⁹ The Bengali phrase here is "*jonmer moton*" (as if at your birth), an idiomatic phrase meaning "for the last time in this life."

²⁰ "*Salam*" is the opening word to the Arabic phrase "*As-salam-u-alaikum*" which means "Peace be upon you," a phrase used as a simple greeting.

²¹ It is especially sinful for a child to strike a parent.

²² Hazera, the wife of Ibrahim and mother of Ishmail, figures in the popular *jarigan* story about her abandonment by her husband to live in the jungle when Ibrahim's first wife, Sahera, requested that he banish her. Hazera was five months pregnant with Ishmail who was born in the jungle. How he returned to his father is yet another *jarigan* story.

When prophet (Ibrahim) heard these words,
He put his son on the ground and bound his hands and feet. 110

Binding his hands and feet, using the rope,
Holding the knife over his (son's) throat, he prayed to Allah.

He applied the knife firmly to his son's throat.
The knife bounced back at the will of Allah.

Ishmail said: "Dear father, let me advise you.
I think you hold the knife too high up.

Make the blow of the knife penetrate into my throat.
Then you will be able to perform the sacrifice for the *darbar*
of Allah Haq."

On hearing these words, (the prophet Ibrahim) gave a
penetrating blow.

(But) without penetrating, the knife bounced back. 120

When the knife bounced back without penetrating,
(The prophet) angrily threw the knife far away.

When the angry prophet threw the knife far away,
It touched a rock and the rock fell into pieces.

The prophet said: "Oh, Allah, Pak Paroyar,²³
The knife cuts a stone, but not my son. What is my fault?

Ishmail said: "Dear father, I will explain.
To be a father killing a son is not an easy thing.

When you wish to take the knife to my throat,
Devotion burns in your two eyes. 130

Cover your eyes with a cloth.
In that way you will be able to cut me."

When (Ibrahim), having bound his eyes, started to place the knife,
Malekul²⁴ Allah, sitting and trembling on his throne rose up.

God said: "Zibrail,²⁵ I say to you,
Remove Ishmail and place a camel under the knife."

When Zibrail heard these words,
From heaven he threw a camel under the knife. 140

²³ "Pak Paroyar" is re-spelled *pak paroyay* in a footnote. *Pak* means pure and the footnote by Jasimuddin says that *paroyay* is the same as *pratipalak* which means chief protector or guardian. The expression is another name for Allah.

²⁴ "Malekul." See note no. 10.

²⁵ Zibrail is the Bengali spelling for Gabriel of the Book of Genesis. In Islamic lore, Zibrail is the angel of death. In the *jarigan* stories, he sometimes serves Allah as a messenger, much as Hermes serves Zeus in ancient Greek myths.

Allah said: "Prophet, make the knife do its work."

(The prophet) could hear the dripping sound of blood.

With joy²⁶ the prophet removed the cloth from his eyes.

He saw Ishmail standing on his right side.

The prophet said: "Oh, Allah, I petition you at your *darbar*.

Explain to me for what reason this (sacrifice) has not happened."

Then from the sky Malekul²⁷ explained:

"Do not worry. The promise of your sacrifice has been accomplished."

On hearing this the prophet Ibrahim was very happy.

He took his son home. My *jari* is finished.

²⁶ Ibrahim feels joy because he thought he had finally succeeded in the sacrifice.

²⁷ Malekul is a name for Allah. It is a short form for Malek-ul-mout, meaning the proprietor of death.

কোরবানীর জারী

মরহুম আফাজউদ্দীন বয়াতী, (৪৫ বৎসর)

পো: ধামরাই, ঢাকা। ১৯৪৬।

নিমরুদের শহরে ছিল ইব্রাহিম পয়গাম্বর,
পুত্রসন্তান নাহি ছিল ইব্রাহিমের ঘর।
ইব্রাহিম বলেছে আল্লা মনে বড় দুখ,
একটি পুত্র দাও হে খোদা দেখে যাই তার মুখ।
এইভাবে ইব্রাহিম বহু কান্না করে,
একটি পুত্র দিল তাকে পাক পরওয়ারে।
যখন ওই সুন্দর পুত্র ভূমিষ্ট হইল,
দেখিয়া ইব্রাহিম নবী গৌরব করিল রে।
নবী বলেছে এগো আমি কারে বা জানাই,
এমন সুন্দর পুত্র কারো ঘরে নাই রে।
চন্দ্র সূর্যের শরীরে কিঞ্চৎ ময়লা থাকতে পারে,
এক জাবরা^১ ময়লা নাই আমার পুত্রের শরীরে রে।
এই কথা গৌরব করে যখন নবী কইল,
আরশ থেকে খোদা বেজার হইল রে।
খোদা বলেছে ইব্রাহিম তোমাকে জানাই,
আমাকে ভুলিয়া করলে পুত্রের বড়াই রে।
পুত্রের প্রশংসা কর ভুলিয়া আমারে,
আপন হাতে আপন পুত্র জবাই করেন তারে।
এইভাবে কয়েকদিন গত হয়ে গেল,
একদিন রাতেতে নবী স্বপন দেখিল রে।
পালকে শুইয়া নবী সুখে নিদ্রা যায়,
ফেরেস্তা আসিয়া তারে স্বপন দেখায় রে।
ফেরেস্তা বলেছে নবী বলি যে তোমারে,
কোরবানী করহ তুমি হক্ আল্লাহর দরবারে রে।
এই মত স্বপন নবী যখন দেখিল,
নিশি ভোরে শত উট কোরবানী করিল।
আবার রাতেতে নবী সুখে নিদ্রা যায়,
ফেরেস্তা আসিয়া পুন: বলেন তাহায়।
কেন ঘুমাইয়া আছ ইব্রাহিম নবী,
কোরবানী কর তুমি মনে খোদা ভাবি।
এইভাবে তিন দিন কোরবানী করিল,
চতুর্থ রোজেতে পুন: পালকে শুইল।
পালকে শুইয়া নবী সুখে নিদ্রা যায়,
ফেরেস্তা আসিয়া পুন: স্বপনে দেখায়।

ফেরেস্তা বলেন নবী বলিহে তোমারে,
কোরবানী করহে তুমি হক্ আল্লাহর দরবারে।
নবী বলেছে ও ফেরেস্তা তোমাকে জানাই,
কোন্ বস্ত্র কোরবানী করতে বলছেন মালেক সাই।
ফেরেস্তা বলেছে নবী বলি যে তোমারে,
তোমার ইসমাইল নামক পুত্র আজ কোরবানী কর তারে। ৪০
এই মত স্বপ্ন নবী যখন হেরিল,
নিশি ভোরে ইসমাইলের মায়ের কাছে গেল।
স্বামীকে দেখিয়া বিবি খোসাল হাজার,
কান্নালিনী পেল যেন সিন্দুক সোনার।
বিবি বলে প্রাণপতি বল সত্য করে,
কি জন্য ডেকেছেন মোরে বলুন ধীরে ধীরে।
নবী বলে মিনাবাজার যাব নিমন্ত্রণ,
স্নান করাইয়া সাজাইয়া দাও তোমার নন্দন।
এই কথা যখন বিবি শুনিতে পাইল,
সসোহাগে আপন পুত্র সাজাইয়া দিল।
ইব্রাহিমের কাছে যখন পুত্র এনে দিল, ৫০
পুত্রের মুখের পানেতে নবী তাকাইয়া রহিল।
মনে মনে বলে নবী পুত্র স্নেহ করি,
কেমনে সোনার পুত্রের গলে দেব ছুরি।
ছেলে নিয়ে ইব্রাহিম নবী যাচ্ছে ধীরে ধীরে,
ছুরি আর রশি নিল অতি গোপন করে।
ছুরি আর রশি নিছে আস্তানের^২ ভিতরে,
সংবাদ জানালে বিবি বেটা দিবে না আমারে। ৬০
পুত্র লয়ে ইব্রাহিম নবী ধীরে ধীরে যায়,
যায় আর ইসমাইলের মুখপানে চায়।
ছেলে নিয়ে যখন নবী যাচ্ছে ধীরে ধীরে,
শয়তান গিয়েছে তখন পুত্রের মায়ের গোচরে।
শয়তান বলেছে বিবি আমি তোমাকে জানাই,
জবেহ করিতে বেটা প্রাণে দয়া নাই।
বিবি বলে দূর হ'রে তুই শয়তান হারাম,
বাপ হইয়া পুত্র কাটবে এইটা কোন্ কাম।
শয়তান বলে হুকুম তারে করেছে খোদায়,
কোরবানী করবে তোর বেটা হক্ আল্লাহর দরগায়।
বিবি বলে এক বেটা আল্লাজীর রাহে করিবে কোরবান
হাজার বেটা থাকলেও আমি তাহা করতাম দান। ৭০
এই রকম ঈমানের জোর শয়তানে দেখিয়া
ইব্রাহিমের কাছে পাণী যাচ্ছেন চলিয়া।
শয়তান বলে নবী তুমি শুন গুণধাম,
স্বপন দেখে পুত্র মার এইটা কোন্ কাম।
পুত্র হইতেই পিতা পায় নরকে উদ্ধার,^৩

^১ জাবরা = কণা, বিন্দু।

^২ আস্তানের = আস্তানের, জামার হাতায়।

দেখিতে নয়নে সুখ মরি কি বাহার।
 এই কথা নবী যখন শুনিতে পাইল,
 বাপ-বেটাতে মিলে তারে পাথর মারিল।
 শয়তান লানতে^৪ যখন ভেগে যাচ্ছে দূরে,
 ইব্রাহিম বলেন তখন পুত্রের গোচরে।
 নবী বলে, শুন তুমি ওহে বাছাধন,
 আমার সম্মুখেতে দাঁড়াও জনমের মতন।
 ইসমাইল বলে বাবাজান খাব নিমন্ত্রণ,
 তবে কেন দেখবেন আমায় জনমের মতন।
 নবী বলে শুন শুন ওহে যাদুমণি,
 আল্লার দরবারে তোমায় করিব কোরবানী।
 পুত্র বলে বাবা যদি করিবে কোরবানী,
 তবে কেন বাবা তোমার চক্ষে ঝরে পানি।
 কোরবানী করিবে মোরে তাতে ক্ষতি নাই,
 যাবার আগে তিনটে কথা তোমায় বলে যাই।
 ছালাম জানাইও আমার মা দুখিনীর ঠাই।
 আমি ভিন্ন বেটা বেটি তার সংসারেতে নাই।
 এ রাত্র প্রভাত হ'লে মায় কার বাড়ীতে যাবে
 কে ডাকিবে মা মা বলে কাকে কোলে নিবে।
 গোয়ালের বড় দুখ মরলে দোয়াল গাই,
 তার চেয়ে অধিক দুঃখ যার মরে জোড়ের ভাই।
 সদাগরের বড় দুখ বাগিচো পড়লে টোটা,
 তার চেয়ে অধিক দুঃখ যার মরে যোগা বেটা।
 মৎস্যে চিনে গহীণ গভীর পঙ্খি চিনে ডাল,
 মায় যে জানে বেটার দরদ যার বুকের শাল।
 যখন বাবা তুমি আমায় জবেহ করিবে,
 হস্তপদ রশি দ্বারা বেশ করে বাঁধিবে।
 তীক্ষ্ণ ছুরির আঘাতে যে হাত পা নাড়া দেব
 তোমার গায়ে লাগলে ব্যাথা দোজখে জ্বলিব।
 আমায় জবেহ করলে বাবা যে রক্ত পড়িবে
 আমার কাপড়ে তাহা তখনি মাথাবে।
 সাদা বসনে বাবা রক্ত মাখাইয়া
 আমার মা হাজেরার কাছে দিও পাঠাইয়া।

এই কথা যখন নবী শুনিতে পাইল,
 পুত্রকে জমীনে রেখে হাত পা বাঁধিল।
 হস্তপদ বাঁধে তাহার রশি লাগাইয়া,
 কঠদেশে ধরে ছুরি আল্লাহকে ভাবিয়া।
 জোর করে ছেলের গলায় ছুরি ঢালাইল,

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আল্লার কুদরতে^৫ ছুরি ফিরিয়া আসিল।
 ইসমাইল বলে বাবাজান তোমাকে জানাই,
 উঁচু করে ধরছ ছুরি ভাবে বুঝতে পাই।
 ছুরির আগা বিদ্ধ কর কঠের ভিতরে
 কোরবানী করিতে পারবে হক আল্লার দরবারে।
 এই কথা শুনে আগা বিদ্ধ করতে দিল
 বিদ্ধ না হইয়া ছুরি ফিরিয়া আসিল।
 যখন বিদ্ধ না হইয়া ছুরি আসিল ফিরিয়া,
 রাগ করিয়া হাতের ছুরি দিল দূরেতে ফেলিয়া।
 রাগ করি ছুরি যখন দূরেতে ফেলিল,
 পাথরে লাগিয়া পাথর ছিন্ন হইয়া গেল।
 নবী বলছে ওগো আল্লা পাক পরওয়ার^৬,
 পাথর কাটে ছেলে কাটে না কি দোষ আমার।
 ইসমাইল বলে বাবাজান দিচ্ছি পরিচয়,
 বাপ হইয়া ছেলে কাটা সোজা কথা নয়।
 যখন তুমি ছুরি ধরতে চাহ আমার গলে,
 বক্ষটি ভাসিয়া যায় দু'টি চোখের জলে।
 আপনার আঁখি ঢাক বেশ করে কাপড়ে,
 তাহ'লে কাটিতে তুমি পারিবে আমারে।
 এই কথা যখন নবী শুনিতে পাইল,
 আপনার দুই চক্ষু কাপড়ে ঢাকিল।
 চোখ বেঁধে যখন গলায় ছুরি দিতে চায়,
 তক্তে বসে কেঁপে ওঠে মালেকুল খোদায়।
 খোদা বলছে জিব্রাইল আমি বলি তোমার কাছে,
 ইসমাইলকে সরাইয়া দুখা ধর ছুরির নীচে।
 এই কথা যখন জিব্রাইল শুনিতে পাইল,
 বেহেস্ত হইতে দুখা ছুরির নীচেতে ফেলিল।
 আল্লা বলে নবী ছুরিটি চালায়,
 রক্তের কল কল ধ্বনি শুনিবারে পায়।
 আলহাত^৭ করিয়া নবী চোখের বান খসায়,
 ডান পার্শ্বে ইসমাইলকে ঝাড়া দেখিবারে পায়।
 নবী বলে ওহে আল্লা আরজ দরবারে,
 কি জন্যে এমন হইতেছে নারি বৃদ্ধিবারে।
 আকাশ-বাণীতে তখন জানায় মালেকুল^৮,
 চিন্তা নাই কোরবানী তোমার হয়েছে কবুল।
 ইহা শুনে ইব্রাহিম নবী বড় খুশি হ'ল,
 ছেলে নিয়ে ঘরে যায় আমার জারী সাজ হল।

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^৩ এই উক্তি হয়ত হিন্দুসমাজের প্রচলিত বিশ্বাস হইতে আসিয়াছে।
 আহাদের ধারণা পুত্র পিতাকে পুন্সাম নামক নরক হইতে উদ্ধার করে।
^৪ লানতে = অভিশাপে।

^৫ কুদরতে = মহিমায়।

^৬ পরওয়ার = প্রতিপালক।

^৭ আলহাত = আহলাদ।

^৮ মালেকুল = ফেরেস্তা।

"KASEM-SOKHINAR JARI"

Composed by Abdul Gani Boyati
Jhalakathi, Barisal (1950s)¹

This *jarigan* song is from Jasimuddin's collection in his book, *Jarigan* (1968: 185-192). The song represents an excellent example of what the term *jarigan* means to most Bangladeshis: a poignantly tragic episode from the Karbala cycle of stories told in *payar*-couplets interspersed with spoken prose passages. No doubt in performance Abdul Gani, the composer, one of the most famous of former *jarigan* singers, was supported by *dohars* who would repeat lines and, perhaps, inject lines from other songs.

The particular episode narrated takes place on the seventh day that Imam Hosein, grandson of the Prophet, and his small band of followers were besieged at Karbala in 680 A. D. by a large army of Yezid, a despotic caliph of the Muslim world. Hosein's band was cut off from the Euphrates River, the only source of water. His companions have fought bravely, but one by one they have been killed. Only Hosein himself and a few fighters remain. His young nephew, Kasem, asks to be allowed to enter the enemy lines to fetch the desperately needed water from the river. The speeches of the protagonists in this particular poem contain deeply felt spiritual commentary by the poet.

The poetry of the song's text is particularly refined. Masterful rhyming, assonance, alliteration and images express the narrative dramatically and musically. Presumably Abdul Gani's tune was as graceful as his poetry, possibly resembling the examples of song composition by Meghu Boyati described in the chapter on *jarigan* styles of song composition (Chapter Ten).

[Payar-Couplet Verses]²

At Karbala Hosein³ weeping said to Malek Shai (Allah):⁴

"In the present danger, no one but you is (left as) a friend.

¹ The exceptional poetic quality of this *jarigan* song suggests that the composer-singer, identified as Abdul Gani of Jhalakathi, Barisal, is the Abdul Gani of legendary fame. At an interview with Mustafa Zaman Abbasi, singer and expert on Bengali folk songs, he told me with much emotion in his voice about the greatness of Abdul Gani. He was such a fine poet-singer that people still make pilgrimages to his home. Abdul Gani died in the 1960s. His sons who are also singers still live there and maintain his house as a museum.

² See Chapter Eight on *jarigan* poetry for the meter of this verse which is basic to Bengali narrative poetry.

³ Hosein is one of several pronunciations and spellings. A letter-for-letter transliteration would render the present text as Hosen.

⁴ Malek Shai is an expression equivalent to Lord of Lords or King of Kings, one of the many names of Allah.

As many relatives and followers as I have had,
Each one (of us) has died, without food, without water.⁵

Deprived of water, (our people) in the camp cry: 'Alas! Alas!'
There is no friend (left) who will fetch water."

Saying this Hosein cried bitterly.
He began to bathe his breast with the water of his tears.

Kasem said: "Uncle, let me speak to you.
Command me. I will go to fetch water from the bank of the Forat.⁶ 10

Without water (I hear our people) crying: 'Alas! Alas!'
At this time I must bring water."

Hosein said: "Kasem, you are the treasure of my heart.
How can I allow this and send you into battle?

When your father died from drinking poison,
He gave you into my hands, and how greatly he cried!"

[*Katha* (Spoken Prose)]⁷

"Kasem, when your father's heart gave out because of the poison, then holding my hand he said: 'Brother, Hosein, I leave (this world) because of a dose of poison. Firstly, keep your thoughts on the throne of Madina⁸, secondly think of my people of Madina, thirdly think of my Abul Kasem. Embrace (these concerns) like the sinews of your heart. Never forget Kasem lest he say that he has no father.'"

[*Payar*-Couplet Verses]

"All those words are in my mind, Kasem.
How can I send you into the midst of the enemy?

Stay in the camp, meditate on Allah, and remain here.
I will go to the bank of the Forat for water." 20

Kasem says: "If you do not send me into battle,
I will end my life by taking poison."

Hosein says: "Oh, little father,⁹ I say to you,
I have no answer for you in this dilemma.

⁵ Actually the time of extreme thirst began on the seventh day. The heat of the desert is mentioned in Muharram literature as adding to the physical suffering of Hosein's band.

⁶ The Forat is the Euphrates River.

⁷ In a *jarigan* recital, the chief narrator (*boyati*) may interrupt his singing in *payar* meter to address the audience in prose, as here illustrated.

⁸ Hasan and Hosein grew up in Madina (Medina), the city to which the Prophet brought his family and followers in his flight in 622 A. D. The city, therefore, holds a special place in the hearts of Muslims as not only a refuge, but the cradle and home of the two brothers, Hasan and Hosein, beloved grandsons of the Prophet and later martyred heroes. Madina is often called "golden Madina".

⁹ Children in Bengal are often addressed affectionately as "little father" or "little mother".

If your mother says farewell to you,
Oh, then, my boy, you may go to fetch water."

On hearing these words Kasem goes (to his mother).
When he reaches her he says:

"Bid me farewell, mother. Bid me farewell.
I will go to the River Forat to bring water.

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Without water (our people) are crying in the camp.
It is my wish at this time to bring (them) water."

[*Katha* (Spoken Prose)]

Bibi¹⁰ says: "Kasem, I have not seen you so finely dressed. Where are you going, my little father?" Kasem says: "Mother, Uncle has said that if you, Mother, bid me farewell, he will have no objection for me to fetch water from the Forat."

Bibi says: "Kasem, tell me. In such a dire battle situation, what is the necessity (for you to go), my child? When your father was dying from taking poison, I took the cup of poison to take my own life. At that time my husband held my hand and said to me: 'Wife, at this time do not leave your life. If you leave your life now, Kasem will be fatherless and motherless. During woeful danger, should Kasem call out saying 'Father! Father! Mother! Mother!', there will be no one to answer him."

[*Shur* (tune):¹¹ *disha* (refrain)¹²]

Oh, golden Kasem!
At the time of saying farewell,
Call out, saying "Mother!"

[*Payar*-Couplet Verses]

"Now, tell me why, Kasem, tell me why
Do you pierce my heart with a poisoned arrow!
The mother whose son has died—(imagine her!),
As she sits in a distant country, that unfortunate mother!
Leaving me thus you are going, Kasem; is this your will?
I will call for you, I, a sad mother weeping for her son.

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¹⁰ The title "Bibi" is from Persian usage and generally signifies a wife or mother of rank or particular quality.

¹¹ The word *shur* (tune) indicated in Jasimuddin's transcription of this *jarigan* song suggests that the little verse is a song or an oft repeated part of a song from a popular, non-*jarigan*, Bengali folk song. These lines are probably sung by the *dohars* for contrast with the narrational singing in *payar*-couplets by the *boyati*.

¹² The term *disha* is translated as "refrain" in dictionaries. It seems to signify a short refrain or group of catch lines that are interjected by, presumably, the *dohars* as a refreshing change from merely repeating the *boyati*'s lines.

If I were your son and you were my mother,
Then, my son, you would understand my pain (in losing) a son.

Call 'Mother!' once (more) as you leave, Kasem.
I will not be able to see your face-like-the-moon¹³ again.

I carried you ten months, ten days¹⁴ in my womb;
Now at Karbala I must bid farewell to your life."

Kasem says: "Mother, please cry no more;
There is no friend in this ocean-of-a-world except Allah.

Nobody is (a sure friend) to anyone in this fragile world.

We see and hear (each other) on the path (of life) for only four
or five days.

50

Who is mother? Who is father? Who is wife?
By looking with your eyes shut see (how) the world is dark!

We have come into life; we must go from life. Yama¹⁵ follows us.
No one is able to flee from Yama.

At the time of coming, we have come with (our) destiny¹⁶
(already) written.

At the time of going, our destiny will go. See! See!

Bid me farewell, sad mother, bid me farewell.
I will go to the bank of the Forat to bring wondrous water."

60

Saying farewell, Kasem headed for battle.
From behind (him), Hosein Mir¹⁷ calls after him:

"Stay, stay, Oh, Kasem. Stay for a moment.
I wish to tell you what your father told me.

At the time of his death your father came (to me) and said:
'Please make a marriage for Kasem with your daughter Sokhina.'"

[*Katha* (Spoken Prose)]

"Kasem, at the time of his death, your father held my hand and said to me: 'Brother, Hosein, I have a great desire to see the marriage of (my) Kasem. My desire will not be

¹³ The moon symbolizes great beauty.

¹⁴ Mothers in the *jarigan* literature give birth after ten months and ten days. This is true of Ishmail's mother when she gave birth to him in a jungle. The length of gestation is based on the Muslim calendar which is lunar. The expression recurs in other *jarigan* stories.

¹⁵ Yama, known also as Jom, is the Hindu god of death.

¹⁶ *Korar* means a promise; stipulation; contract. It is believed that every person comes into the world with his or her destiny "written" already. The *kopal* (forehead) is the symbolic place where destiny is "written."

¹⁷ Mir is a title of respect.

fulfilled due to divine fate. Please do not marry my Kasem to any girl—not to any girl from another land. Marry Kasem to your daughter, Sokhina. Do not disobey my command.' Thus, Kasem, if you do not honor my request, if you do not marry Sokhina, you can never go into battle. Go to your mother; your mother knows about this."

[*Payar-Couplet Verses*]

Hearing these words, Kasem goes (to his mother).
Approaching his mother, he comes into her presence.

"Listen, listen, Oh, Mother. Come hear me.
Am I supposed to marry Sokhina?"

70

[*Katha (Spoken Prose)*]

Bibi says: "Kasem, this is true. Your father made this request to your dear uncle. I have forgotten this due to our many sorrows, the pains of grief. When you have married Sokhina, I permit you to go to battle."

[*Payar-Couplet Verses*]

Kasem says: "Oh, Mother; it has come to my mind,
That at the time of his death my father gave me an amulet.

(He said:) 'Kasem, when you will be in danger,
Open and read the page of the amulet.'

In this present danger, open the amulet.
You and I will see what is written there."

On hearing this his mother opened the amulet.
Saying "*Bismillah*"¹⁸ Kasem put it into her hand.

Having opened the amulet, she began to read it to Kasem.
"It is written (that) you are to marry Sokhina."

80

Kasem says: "Oh, Mother, make no more objections.
After marrying Sokhina, I will go into battle."

The family members dressed Sokhina for the wedding.
Hosein himself read the *kalema*.¹⁹

After reading the *kalema*, Hosein goes away.
Sokhina stands holding the hand of Kasem.

Kasem says: "Oh, Sokhina, bid me farewell.
I am going to the bank of the Forat for water.

¹⁸ *Bismillah* is the opening word to a daily prayer. The first lines of it are: *Bism-illah-ir-rahman-ir-rahim*, (In the name of God, the most Compassionate, the Merciful).

¹⁹ *Kalema* comes from the Arabic word *kalima* and means word or sentence. In the context of Islam it means the word of Allah expressing his will or command.

Sokhina says: "Kasem, stay awhile.

Let me enjoy with my eyes the sight of my husband as
for the last time.²⁰

90

A husband is wealth, a husband is life, a husband is
aristocracy and fame;

Without a husband, how can a weak woman survive!

Without a husband, what will be the future of a woman?
In your absence I will burn day and night.

Being deprived of you, how will I survive?

To whom will I tell my sorrow when it rises in my heart?

At the time of youth, whose husband does not stand near
(a young woman)?

How long will a young woman's endurance last?

Thus, for the sake of her husband Hazera Bibi²¹ had
to live in a jungle.

The lady Rahima²², for the sake of her husband ate by
begging for (their) food.

100

Do not go! Do not go to war! Turn to me.

I am a weak woman; with what will I live?"

Saying this the young woman clings to the young man's clothing.
Speaking with deep emotion, with tears in his eyes,

Kasem says: "Oh, dear Sokhina, cry no more.

How weak a thing it is to cry in time of war.

Since I am the son of the great and valiant Hasan and
the grandson of Hazrat Ali,²³

If I do not go into battle, I will dishonor my name.

If I do not go to war on this wedding day,

How will I show my face to my father (in heaven)?"

110

Sokhina says: "Kasem, I bid you farewell.

I have given you into the custody of holy Allah."

²⁰ This expression literally translated is "in the way of birth or life." It signifies in life for the last time.

²¹ Hazera Bibi is the second wife of the prophet Ibrahim (Abraham). The story of how he had to abandon her in a jungle as requested by his first wife, Sahera, is a popular *jari* story theme.

²² The lady Rahima is the wife of prophet Ayub (Job).

²³ Hazrat Ali ("Holy" Ali) is one of the *panchatam*, the five sacred family members of the Prophet. Ali was his cousin whom the Prophet married to his daughter Fatima. The Shi'as believe that before his death, the Prophet informally designated Ali as his successor to leadership. Three other caliphs served before Ali was finally voted as the fourth caliph. Ali was a great warrior and during his long reign won several important battles for Islam. In his old age he was murdered, thus becoming the first great martyr in Shi'ite history. His two sons, Hasan and Hosein, are the central heroes of the Karbala cycle of *jari* stories.

Having bid farewell, Kasem Mir went to battle.
What is on his right side is going on his left side.²⁴

He sees various signs of calamity.
No strength remains in the body of Hasan's son.

Holding his sword in his two hands he fights.
He cuts the soldiers of Ejid into pieces.

Even though there are many of Ejid's soldiers on the battle field,
Fighting alone he strikes them all.

120

Marowan²⁵ calls out and says: "Hear me, soldiers.
Join (yourselves) all together and send a flood of arrows.

Strike the body of Kasem with thousands of floods of arrows.
One deluge or another will surely kill him."

On receiving his command, all the *kafirs*²⁶ in his band,
Send arrows from all sides using their skill.

Kasem says: "Dear uncle, come and look!
The *kafirs* are killing me without pity.

Alas, (my) Bibi, the ink from your pen is fearful.
Why has it written so much sorrow on my forehead?²⁷

130

Do not cut my body in pieces; do not throw it in the water.
If I die, place it in my mother's lap."

Saying this much, trembling, Kasem fell down.
His intelligent horse could understand (what was happening).

Bearing Kasem on its back, (the horse) went to the camp.
From afar the eyes of Sokhina took in (the sight).

Calling from afar, Kasem says to Sokhina:
"Hold me, hold me, dear Sokhina, hold me!

For all of you I went to get water.
Without bringing (you) that water, I now leave (you).

140

Having no one (left) but my mother, I, Kasem, am alone.
If I die, call my mother.

²⁴ The right side represents good fortune. The left side represents bad fortune. This line probably means that his good fortune is abandoning him.

²⁵ Marowan was the chief minister of the despotic caliph, Ejid (Yezid). He figures in pre-Karbala episodes. In this episode, Marowan seems to be one of the generals in charge of Ejid's army sent to stop Hosein and his followers from reaching the town of Kufa and to capture him.

²⁶ *Kafir* is another word for infidel.

²⁷ In marriage, the husband and wife share equally whatever fate, happiness or sorrow, befalls them. In Islam it is believed that the bride has been predetermined. Thus her fortune and her husband's fortune have been predestined. Kasem sees Sokhina as having written his fortune as he has written hers.

When my mother says: 'Alas! Kasem you are leaving!'
Go, embrace her and say: 'Mother! Mother!'

Do not cry for me when you remember me.
We will meet again on the *maidan* of Hashor.²⁸

I see the world darkly at the time of dying.
Please give my mouth some water."

[*Katha* (Spoken Prose)]

Kasem says: "Sokhina, I did not know until now that a man could be so thirsty at the time of death. Can you not give me one drop of water?"

Sokhina says: "Kasem, friend of my heart, my dear one, where shall I get water? Today is the seventh day since I have not seen water except the water of my eyes. Without water (to drink), the water of my eyes has dried up. If you want my heart, my flesh, I agree to give it, but I can not give you water."

Kasem says: "Sokhina, you speak correctly. The bravest of the Prophet's tribe have not been able to fetch water. How would you be able?! No! No! No! I do not want the water of this world. Look, Sokhina, my dear father speaks for you while drinking the cool water of heaven."²⁹

Kasem says with his last breath: "Sokhina, I am going."

Kasem's body has fallen and the life-bird has flown its cage.³⁰ While holding her dead husband Sokhina says: "Kasem, look at me! See, I married you wearing this (wedding) dress that now I am still wearing. My hair is still in order. Tell me, to whom shall I now go wearing this dress? Who can understand my pain?"

[*Disha*]³¹

Oh, my cage; my *myna* bird³² of gold has flown away.
He has taken my mind, my heart; how can I keep (this bird)?

150

[*Payar-Couplet Verses*]

"Do not go. Do not go, Kasem. Stay yet awhile.
I will go along with you as your companion in death.

Look! Look! Look at (me), moon and sun!
My life-lord goes away leaving me!

You have existed from the beginning of the universe.
Where have you seen a woman so unfortunate as Sokhina?

²⁸ *Maidan* is a field in which large crowds can gather. Hashor means heaven.

²⁹ Kasem imagines his dead father, Hasan, calling to Sokhina from heaven, telling her, perhaps, that it is only in heaven that she will find true life.

³⁰ The image of a pet bird flying its cage is frequently used in Bengali folk poetry to express the departure of a soul from a body, or the longing for an absent lover. See also the refrain lines 249-250.

³¹ See Note no. 11 above.

³² *Myna* birds are common in Bengal. They are small, black birds with a yellow spot on the side of the head and they can be domesticated and trained to imitate speech.

Today was (our) happy wedding day.
You (Kasem) go to the world of the tomb³³ leaving me alone."

Saying this much, Sokhina held Kasem.
She smeared her body with drops of Kasem's blood. 160

All you (that are here), keep (yourselves) in the way of the Prophet,
the servant of our Allah.

The "Martyrdom (story) of Kasem" is ended. Call on the
name of Allah.

³³ Muslims, even in South Asia, entomb their dead, not cremate them as do Hindus.

কাসেম-সখিনার জারী

গায়ক: আব্দুল গনি বয়াজী

স্বাক্ষর: বরিশাল।

কারবালায় হোসেন কান্দিয়া বলে মালেক সাঁই

এ বিপদে তুমি ছাড়া বান্ধব কেহ নাই।

আত্মীয় বন্ধু বান্ধব যত আমার ছিল,

অনাহারে পানি বিনে সকলি মরিল।

পানি বিনে শিবির মাঝে করে হাহাকার,

কেবা যাবে পানি আনতে বন্ধু নাই আমার।

ইহা বলে হোসেন মিরে বহুত কান্দিয়া

নয়নের জলে বন্ধ ভাসিতে লাগিল।

কাসেম বলছে, চাচাজান আপনাকে জানাই

আজ্ঞা কর ফোরাতে কূলে পানি আনতে যাই।

পানি বিনে শিবির মাঝে করে হাহাকার

এই সময় পানি আনা উচিত আমার।

হোসেন বলে কাসেম তুমি আমার প্রাণ-ধন,

রণেতে পাঠাব তোরে করিয়া কেমন।

বিষ পানে তোমার পিতা যখন মরেছিল

আমার হাতে হাত দিয়ে দাদা কতই কঁদেছিল।

।। কথা ।।

“কাসেম, তোমার পিতা যখন বিষপানে প্রাণ ত্যাগ করে, তখন আমার হাতখানা ধরে বলেছিল, ‘ভাই হোসেন, আমি বিষ পানে চলে যাচ্ছি। মনে রেখো, একদিকে আমার মদিনার সিংহাসন, দ্বিতীয় দিকে আমার মদিনার প্রজাবর্গ, তৃতীয় দিকে আমার আবুয়াল কাসেম। তাকে বুকের মাংসের মত বুঝিয়ে রেখো। কাসেম কোন সময় মনে না করে যে, আমার পিতা নাই।”

।। পয়ার ।।

সেই সকল কথা কাসেম আমার মনে আছে,

কেমনে পাঠাব তোরে শত্রুকুলের কাছে।

আত্মা ভেবে শিবিরেতে বসে থাকো তুমি

ফোরাতে-কূলে পানির জন্য যাত্রা করি আমি।

কাসেম বলে, রণে যদি না দেন পাঠাইয়া

আমার পোড়া জীবন ত্যাজ্য করবো জহর খাইয়া।

হোসেন বলছে, বাপরে তোমাকে জানাই,

এ প্রশ্নের উত্তর কিন্তু আমার কাছে নাই।

তোমার জননী যদি বিদায় দেয় তোমারে

তবে বাছা যেতে পার পানি আনিবারে।

এ কথা শুনিয়া কাসেম করেছে গমন

জননীর নিকটে গিয়া উপস্থিত হন।

বিদায় কর জননী গো বিদায় কর মোরে

ফোরাতে নদী যাবো আমি পানি আনিবারে।

পানি বিনে শিবির মাঝে করে হাহাকার

এই সময় পানি আনা বাসনা আমার।

।। কথা ।।

বিবিজান বলছে, “কাসেম, এসন সুসাজে তোরে তো কখনো দেখিনি। কোথায় যাচ্ছে বাপ?” কাসেম বলছে, “জননী, চাচাজান বলছে ফোরাতে নদীর পানি আনতে। তুমি যদি মা বিদায় কর তাঁর কোনই আপত্তি নাই।”

বিবিজান বলছে, “কাসেম, বলতো এই মহাসঙ্গ্রাম স্থলে কি প্রয়োজন ছিল বাপ। তোর পিতা যেদিন বিষ খেয়ে প্রাণ ত্যাগ করেছিল, আমি বিষের পাত্র হাতে গিয়েছিলাম প্রাণ বিসর্জন দিতে। স্বামী আমার হাতখানা ধরে বললেন, বিবিজান এই সময় তুমি প্রাণ ত্যাগ করো না। এই সময় তুমি প্রাণ ত্যাগ করলে, কাসেম পিতৃহীন ও মাতৃহীন হবে। ঘোর বিপদে পড়ে কাসেম যখন ‘পিতা পিতা’ ‘মাতা মাতা’ বলে ডাকবে, তখন সাড়া দেবার বন্ধু আর থাকবে না।”

।। সুর ।।

(দিশা), ও সোনার কাসেম রে

বিদায়ের কালেতে একবার

মা বলে ডাক দে রে।

।। পয়ার ।।

কি বললে কাসেম আমার কি বললে এক্ষণে
বিষেতে মাঝিয়া পরাণ তীর বিদেহ পরাণে।

দূর দেশে যেয়ে যার বেটা মারা যায়

ঘরে বসে থাকে কেমনে তার দুখিনী মায়।

ছেড়ে যাবি কাসেম আমায় এই ছিল তোর মনে,

তবে বাছা দুখিনীরে মা ডাকছিলি ক্যান।

অমি যদি পুত্র হতাম তুই হতিস মোর মা

তবে বাছা বুঝতে পারতিস পুত্রের বেদনা।

যাবার সময় কাসেম আমায় একবার ডাকরে মা

তোর চন্দ্র বদন কি বাবা দেখতে পাব না।

দশ মাস দশ দিন জঠরে ধরিলাম

কারবালাতে বুঝি তোরে ভবের বিদায় দিলাম।

কাসেম বলে জননী গো আর কান্দিও না

ভবার্ণবে খোদা বিনে বন্ধু কেহ না।

অসার সংসার মাঝে কেহ কারো নয়

দিন চারি পাঁচ দেখাতনা পথের পরিচয়।

৩০

১০

৪০

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৫০

কেবা মাতা কেবা পিতা কেবা পরিবার
চক্ষু মুদে চেয়ে দেখে দুনিয়া অন্ধকার।
এলে ভবে যেতে হবে যম এসেছে পাছে
এড়াইতে না পারবে কেহ সেই যমের কাছে।
আসবার সময় আসিয়াছি করার দিয়ে লিখে,
যাবার বেলায় নিয়া যাবে করার দেখে দেখে।
বিদায় কর জননীগো বিদায় কর তুমি
ফোরাত-কূলে যাব আমি আনতে দারুণ পানি।
বিবিজান বলছে, বাহা বিদায় দিলাম তোরে
আমি তোরে সঁপে দিলাম পাক পরওয়ারে।
বিদায় নিয়ে কাসেম মিরে রণের দিকে যায়
পেছন থেকে হোসেন মিরে ডাক দিয়ে কয়,
দাঁড়াও দাঁড়াও ওগো কাসেম একটু দাঁড়াও তুমি
তোমার বাবাজানের কথা বলে দিচ্ছি আমি।
মৃত্যুকালে তোমার বাবা গিয়েছেন বলিয়া
আমার কন্যা সখিনাকে করতে হবে বিয়া।

।। কথা ।।

“কাসেম মৃত্যুকালে তোর বাবাজান আমার হাতখানা ধরে বলেছিল, ‘ভাই হোসেন! এই কাসেমের বিবাহ দেখবার জন্যে মনে অত্যন্ত সাধ ছিল। দৈবান্বিত হলে সে সাধ আর আমার পূর্ণ হল না। কাসেমকে বিবাহ দিও, অপরিচিত কোন মেয়ে নয়, ভিন দেশী কোন কন্যা নয়, তোমার কন্যা সখিনার সঙ্গে কাসেমের বিবাহ দিবে। আমার আদেশ কখনও লঙ্ঘন করো না।’ তাই আমার অনুরোধ, আমার সখিনাকে বিয়ে না করে কখনো রনে যেতে পারবিনে। যা তোর মায়ের কাছে, তোর মাও জানে।”

।। পয়ার ।।

এ কথা শুনিয়া কাসেম করেছে গমন
জননীর নিকটে গিয়ে উপস্থিত হন।
শোন শোন জননীগো শোনগো আসিয়া
আমার নাকি সখিনাকে করতে হবে বিয়া?

।। কথা ।।

বিবিজান বলছে, “কাসেম, সত্য কথা। এই প্রশ্ন তোর পিতাজী তোর চাচাজানের কাছে করেছিল। নানান শোক-তাপের যন্ত্রণায় আমি সব ভুলে গিয়েছিলাম। আমার আদেশ, তুই সখিনাকে বিয়ে করে রণে যাত্রা কর।”

।। পয়ার ।।

কাসেম বলেছে, জননীগো আমার মনেতে পড়েছে
মৃত্যুকালে বাবাজান কবচ দিয়া গেছে।
যখন কাসেম তুমি কোন বিপদে পড়িবে
কবচের অপর পৃষ্ঠা খলিয়া দেখিবে।

এ বিপদে কবচখানা দাওগো খুলিয়া,
কিবা লেখা আছে তাতে দেখিবে পড়িয়া।
ইহা শুনে বিবিজান কবচ খুলে দিল,
বিস্মিত্তাহ বলিয়া কাসেম হাতে তুলে নিল।
কবচ খুলে কাসেম মিরে দেখেন পড়িয়া
লেখা আছে সখিনাকে কর তুমি বিয়া।
কাসেম বলেছে জননীগো আর আপত্তি নাই
সখিনাকে দাওগো বিয়ে রণে চলে যাই।
পুরবাসিগণে সখিনাকে সাজাইল,
বিবাহ কলেমা হোসেন নিজে পড়াইল।
হোসেন বিবাহ-মন্ত্র শেষ করিয়া গেলেন চলিয়া
কাসেমের হাত ধরিয়া সখিনা আছেন দাঁড়াইয়া।
কাসেম বলেছে, সখিনাগো, বিদায় কর তুমি
পানির জন্যে ফোরাত কূলে যাত্রা করি আমি।
সখিনা বলেছে, কাসেম, একটু দাঁড়াও তুমি
জনমের মত স্বামীর রূপ দেখে রাখি আমি।
স্বামী ধন, স্বামী জন, স্বামী কুল-মান
স্বামী বিনে বাঁচে কেমনে অবলার পরাণ।
স্বামী বিনে এ যুবতীর কি হইবে গতি
তোমার বিরহে প্রভু জুলবো দিবা-রাতি।
তোমা হারা হইয়া আমি কেমনেতে রব
মনের দুঃখ উদয় হইলে কার কাছে বলিব।
এ হেন যৌবনের কালে যার স্বামী না রয় কাছে
নারীর নব যৌবন ধৈর্য্যে মানে কিসে।
যেমন স্বামীর কারণ হাজেরা বিবি বনবাসে যায়
স্বামীর কারণ রহিয়া বিবি ভিক্ষা মেটে খায়।
যেও না যেও না রণে ফের একবার
অমি যে অবলা বালা কি গতি আমার?
ইহা বলে ধরে বালা কুমারের বসন
গদ গদ বলে ভাষা সজল নয়ন।
কাসেম বলেছে, সখিনাগো, কান্দিওনা আর
রণের সময় কান্না করা এ কি অবিচার।
আমি মহাবীর হাসানের পুত্র হজরত আলীর নাতি,
যুদ্ধে যদি না যাই আমার হবে অখ্যাতি।
যুদ্ধে যদি না যাই প্রিয়ে আজি বিয়ের দিনে
কেমনে দেখাব মুখ পিতার সামনে।
সখিনা বলেছে, কাসেম বিদায় দিলাম তোমারে
আমি তোমায় সঁপে দিনু পাক পরওয়ারে।
বিদায় নিয়ে কাসেম মির রনে চলে যায়
ডাইনের দশা ছেড়ে তার চলে গেল বাঁয়।
নানা রঙ কু-মঙ্গল দেখিল নয়নে,
গা’র শক্তিতে হাসান-কুমার কিছুই না মানে।

৮০

৯০

১০০

১১০

দুই হাতে অসি ধরে কাসেম পাহুলওয়ান
এজিদের সৈন্য কেটে করে খান খান।
রণস্থলে এজিদের যত সৈন্য ছিল
একা কাসেম যুদ্ধ করে সবারে মারিল।
মারওয়ান ডাকিয়া বলে, শোন সৈন্যগণ,
সবে মিলে কর ওকে বাণ বরিষণ।

১২০

হাজার হাজার বাণ মার কাসেমের গায়
কারো-না-কারো বাণে কাসেম মরিতে নিশ্চয়।
আজ্ঞা পেয়ে যত ছিল কাফেরের দল,
চারিদিক হইতে বাণ মারে করিয়া কৌশল।
কাসেম বলছে, চাচজাজান দেখগো আসিয়া,
কাফেরগণে মারে মোরে নির্দয়া হইয়া।

আহারে দারুণ বিবি তোর কলমের এই কালি,
কি জন্যেতে এত দুঃখ আমার কপালে লিখিল।

১৩০

না কাটিও মম অঙ্গ না ভাসিও জলে,
মরিলে আমাকে দিও মা দুখিনীর কোলে।

এত বলে কাসেম বীর চলিয়া পড়িল
শিক্ষিত অশ্ব তাহা বুঝিতে পারিল।

কাসেমে পুষ্টে নিয়ে শিবিরে চলিল
দূর থেকে সখিনার নজর পড়িল।

দূর হ'তে থেকে কাসেম বলে সখিনারে,
ধর ধর সখিনাগো ধরগো আমারে।

তোমা সবাব জন্য আনতে গিয়াছিলাম পানি
সে পানি না আনা হইল এখন চলছি আমি।

১৪০

আমার মায়ের আর কেহ নাই একা কাসেম আমি,
আমি মরিলে আমার মাকে মা ডাকিও তুমি।

যখন বলবে মাতা আমার, আয় কাসেম চলিয়া
তুমি তাঁর কোলে যাইও মা মা বলিয়া।

না কান্দিও আমার জন্য যখন পড়বে মনে
তোমার সনে দেখা হবে হাসর ময়দানে।

মৃত্যুকালে দুনিয়াদারী দেখি অন্ধকার

দয়া করে পানি দাও গো মুখেতে আমার।

।। কথা ।।

কাসেম বলছে, “সখিনা, মৃত্যুর সময় যে মানুষের এত পিপাসা
লাগে আমি তা আগে জানতাম না। তুমি আমায় কোন রকমে
এ বিন্দু পানি দিতে পার?”

সখিনা বলছে, “কাসেম, হৃদয়ের বন্ধু প্রিয় আমার, পানি
কোথায় পাব? আজ সপ্তদিন পর্যন্ত চক্ষের জল ব্যতীত অন্য
কোন জল দেখি নাই। জল বিহনে সেই চক্ষের জল পর্যন্ত শুষ্ক
হ'য়ে গেছে। তুমি আমার হৃদয় চাও, আমার শরীরের মাংস
চাও, আমি দিতে রাজী, তবু তোমায় আমি পানি দিতে
পারবো না।”

কাসেম বলছে, “সখিনা, ঠিক বলেছো। নবী-বংশের যারা
শ্রেষ্ঠ বীর তারা যখন পানি উদ্ধার করতে পারে নাই, তুমি
কেমন করে পারবে। না না না, আমি এ জগতের পানি আর
চাই না। ওই দেখ সখিনা, বাবাজান ভেস্তের সুশীতল পানি
নিয়ে বলছে, ‘কাসেম আয় বাবা ছুটে আয়। তোর জন্যে
ভেস্তের সুশীতল পানি নিয়ে বসে আছি।’—শেষ নিঃশ্বাসে
কাসেম বললে, ‘সখিনা, আমি যাই।’

কাসেমের দেহখানা পড়ে রইল, প্রানপাখী পিঞ্জর হ'তে
উড়ে গেল। মরা পতি নিয়ে সখিনা বলছে, “কাসেম চেয়ে
দেখ আমার পানে, যে বস্ত্র পরে তোমার সঙ্গে আমার বিয়ে
হয়েছিল, সেই বস্ত্র এখনো পরা রয়েছে। কেশগুচ্ছ স্থান ভেঁট
হয় নাই। বল আমার এই বেশ নিয়ে আমি কার কাছে যাবো।
কে আমার দরদ বুঝবে।”

।। সুর ।।

(দিশা) ও আমার পিঞ্জিরা, গেল গো উড়িয়া
সোনার ময়না পাখী

মন প্রাণ হরে নিল কেমনে তারে রাখি। ১৫০

।। পয়ার ।।

যেও না যেও না কাসেম, একবার দাঁড়াও তুমি
তোমার সঙ্গতে হব মরণ-সঙ্গিনী।

দেখ দেখ চন্দ্র সূর্যগো দেখগো চাহিয়া
প্রাণ পতি ছেড়ে যাচ্ছে আমাকে ফেলিয়া।

জগতে সৃষ্টি হতে গো তুমি রয়েছ ধারায়
সখিনার মত দুখিনী দেখেছ কোথায়?

আজ শুভ দিনে বিয়ে তোমার আমার
একা ফেলে যাচ্ছ চলে জগত মাঝার।

এত বলে সখিনা কাসেমকে ধরিল

কাসেমের রক্তবিন্দু অঙ্গেতে মাখিল।

১৬০

আমার আত্মার বান্দা নবীর উন্মাদ যারা যেভাবে থাকে

কাসেম শহীদ সাক্ষ হ'লো আত্মা বলে ডাকে।

"TILEKBAN"

Possibly composed by Meghu Boyati
Tepakholā, Faridpur (1950s)¹

The following song comes from Jasimuddin's collection in his book, *Jarigan* (1968: 286-295). Although in the opening lines the composer announces the song as a "*jari*", its text represents a fairy-tale full of humor, hardly a *jarigan* song in the literal sense of lamentation. The story, however, is connected to the Karbala cycle of stories through the hero, Hanifa, the son of Hazrat Ali and the step-brother of Imam Hosein. As well as this sacred relationship, Hanifa is known as a wrestler of exceptional strength. The famous horse of Hosein, Duldul, also figures in this story and links it to the Karbala cycle.

I was told by the Bangladeshi poet and novelist, Ahmed Sofa, that there are many versions of this story in which Hanifa plays the romantic hero. Jasimuddin includes two versions, "Rajeswari" and "Tilekban", in his collection. The heroines and localities vary with each story, but Hanifa's conquest of Amazonian princesses is a constant. In the Tilekban story, Prince Kumin of Arabia wishes to marry a Hindu princess living in "Hindustan" (Hindu-land). When he fails, Allah arranges that Hanifa, introduced as the king of Ambaz² in Arabia, will go to India to do the wooing. To reach the kingdom of Tilekban he uses his horse, Duldul, who complains of old age and fatigue due to its long service to Ali and Hosein in battle. Hanifa has an adventure with a monster (perhaps a jinn) and eventually wins the hand of the princess in a wrestling match. An extraneous anecdote about niggardliness is injected just before the ending of the song. The heroines of these romances must, of course, embrace Islam before marriage.

The poetic meter of this *jarigan* text conforms to the traditional *payar*-couplet style of *jarigan* prosody. The lines from another song that are injected at the beginning of the song and at the end are the same as found in two songs that were sung by Meghu Boyati for Jasimuddin's recordings in 1964. (The musical notations of their tunes can be found in Appendix B.) These lines from extraneous songs provide good examples of how such songs are injected into *payar*-couplet singing to give it fresh life.

The language of this song contains more dialectal expressions than in other *jarigan* song examples in Jasimuddin's collection. Some clauses in the following translation are paraphrases, not direct translations.

¹ In the Introduction to his book, *Jarigan* (1968), Jasimuddin says that the singer-composer of this "Tilekban" song, Meghu Boyati, was sixty years old and that he sang for Jasimuddin on November 26, 1964. Twenty-five years previously Meghu Boyati collected the song from Selim Boyati, from the village of Dhunachi, Rajbari, Faridpur. See Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (1968): 80.

² I have been unable to locate this city or region.

[*Disha*³]

The old lady dances, the old man also dances.
They put paste on their teeth where there are no teeth.

[*Payar-Couplet Verses*⁴]

Speaking (more) playful words, I will waste time.
Paying attention, listen a little to the *jari* of "Tilekban."
Listen, listen, brothers. Listen, all of you, paying attention.
I will sing the "Tilekban *Jari*." To this (story) pay attention.

In a town of Hindustan there was a king called Dakkho.
In his house was a daughter; her name was Tilekban.

That woman, Tilekban, what a thing she used to do!
If she heard word of Muslims, she would cut their throats. 10

One day the son of king Asman, Prince Kumin by name⁵,
Calling his maid-servant gave her an order.

"Listen, maid-servant, my heart is taken; I'm in love.
I am going to see what that Tilekban lady is like."

Prince Kumin said: "Maid-servant, heed my words.
I have come from hunting. Bring (me) some water."

When she heard these words, the maid-servant did not delay.
Quickly she brought a jug of water.

First the maid-servant brought twenty-two *maunds* of *khoi*.⁶
She brought fourteen *maunds* of *muri*,⁷ fifteen *maunds* of *dhoy*.⁸ 20

Taking this, Prince Kumin sat down and went to work.
He mixed thirteen *maunds* of sugar with fourteen *maunds* of *dhoy*.

³ A *disha* is a kind of refrain. In this case it represents a couplet taken from an extraneous humorous song.

⁴ For a description of the *payar* meter, see the chapter in the present book on poetic form (Chapter Eight). This meter is characteristic of *jarigan* narrative poetry.

⁵ King Asman is a Muslim king of a kingdom in Arabia, not specified and, perhaps, fictitious. I have translated the word *raja* before the name Kumin as "Prince" rather than King in order to avoid a confusion about who is in love with Tilekban.

⁶ One *maund* is about 80 pounds. *Khoi* is rice. This passage involving a feat of gourmandise resembles a description that Ashraf Siddiqui, expert on folk literature, gave me (February 18, 1996) about *gazirgan* songs, the Bengali songs about warriors who perform great feats. He said that people hearing about such prowess, as in this passage, imagine that the hero is super-human, and able to work miracles. The listeners, he said, imagine inheriting some of this power by listening to a *gazirgan* song and, thereby, imbibing some of the power, perhaps with curative results.

⁷ *Muri* is puffed rice.

⁸ *Dhoy* or *dohi* is milk curd.

After eating this, Prince Kumin drank the water.
Then he called to his maid-servant and said: "Bring rice."

On hearing these words, the maid-servant went to the kitchen.
She cooked twenty-two *maunds* of rice.

Twenty-two *maunds* of rice, fifteen *maunds* of *khatta*,⁹
She gave (him), and nine *maunds* of *mohish*¹⁰ meat, eighteen *maunds*
of goat meat.

After Prince Kumin had received and eaten (the food), he dusted
himself off and stood up.
Then he called his maid-servants and said: "All of you, watch me."
(Observe how I go forth.)

30

While riding an elephant the prince has an encounter:
Suddenly he meets with Tilekban.

[*Dhua*¹¹]

The *shalik* bird¹² dances on the palm tree. The owl, spinning about,
dances.
The fellow¹³ wearing female clothes, nodding his head, strolls about
swishing the hem of his skirt.

[*Payar*-couplet verses]

Prince Kumin said: "Lady, hear my words.
On seeing your beauty I wish to speak to you of marriage."
Tilekban said: "Prince, listen to my idea.
Seeing my beauty, you wish to marry me. Your vision (ambition) is large!
If you can hold onto me firmly, you can marry me.
Alone I will fight you every day.

40

I will break your teeth. You will be toothless.
In this way, happily or sadly, (see how) you will eat goat!"

Prince Kumin said: "If you break my teeth,
After the night (meaning in the morning) people will say, your husband is
toothless¹⁴."

⁹ *Khatta* is a dish of mixed vegetables.

¹⁰ *Mohish* is a kind of cattle native to the Indian subcontinent. A *mohish* is like a large steer with a deep black color.

¹¹ *Dhua* here seems to function as a *disha* so that the terms seem interchangeable. However, both the *disha* above and this *dhua* are excerpts from longer songs which both happen to be extraneous and humorous.

¹² The *shalik* bird is native to Bengal. It has a sweet song.

¹³ The word here is *minsha* which is translated in the dictionary as "male person; man; fellow; guy."

When she heard these words, the lady grew angry.

"Strike! Strike!" Saying this she raised a club.

She strikes the club forcefully on his body.

He is not able to keep his balance. He falls on the ground.

When Prince Kumin fell on the ground,

She took a knife in hand and sat on his chest.

50

Tilekban said: "Prince, let me tell you something.

Marriage is a fatal thing (since) I will send you to the house of Jom.¹⁵"

Hearing these words, the prince began to cry.

"Marriage is a fearful word!" He cried out saying "Ma!".¹⁶

"Don't strike me! Don't strike me, lady!" (he said). "I clasp your feet.

Let not marriage with me be fatal. I have said 'Mother' to you."

On hearing these words the lady let him go.

Prince Kumin was left crawling across three *kathas*.¹⁷

Having gone three *kathas* far, the prince looks about him
with tired eyes.

"Seeing me (in this state) you feel proud," (he said).

60

"Seeing me (like this), you feel great pride.

If Hanifa¹⁸ comes, he would smash all your pride."

[*Dhuagan* song]

The fox eats the small fish-shaped mangos in the mango tree.

When the *kabiraj*¹⁹ sees this, he goes there taking with him a
basket made for catching fish.

[*Payar*-couplet verses]

Tilekban said: "Prince, don't talk boastfully.

Your Hanif is in Makkah.²⁰ I know it well."

When the lady scolds him, cursing (him) and ranting,

Allah sitting on his throne is moved to pity.

¹⁴ The word here is *bokra* which means someone without teeth.

¹⁵ Jom or Yama is the Hindu god of Death.

¹⁶ The word *ma* (mother) is so revered that it has power to move an enemy.

¹⁷ One *katha* (a unit of square measurement) is approximately sixty acres.

¹⁸ Hanifa is the step-brother of Imam Hosein. He came to the rescue of Hosein's youngest son, Joynal, when that son was a prisoner after the battle of Karbala. Hanifa is the King of Ambaz who is acting as agent to woo Tilekban for Prince Kumin.

¹⁹ A *kabiraj* is a medicine man or shaman.

²⁰ Mecca.

Allah said: "Zibrail²¹, listen. Pay attention.
I say (to you) go quickly to Hanifa to give him this message.

70

In the form of air go to Hanifa. Tell him that
In a town of Hindustan there is a princess called Tilekban.

(Say to him) 'By Allah's command, you must go there.
Saying the *kalema*²² of the Prophet, make her a Muslim'."

On hearing these words, Zibrail did not delay.
He went to Hanifa and spoke to him quickly.

When Hanifa received the order of Allah,
He prayed until morning saying "Allah! Allah!""

He said: "Where have you gone, Kalu, my squire.
Prepare my horse.
My order to you is to prepare my saddle.

On hearing these words, Kalu prepared the horse.
He brought Duldul²³ and fed him.

He ties four golden bracelets to the four hoofs of the horse.
He placed the skin of a chita²⁴ on the horse's back.

He binds the skin on, making (the horse) look splendid.
He ties golden bells on the feet of the horse.

Calling out with his whinny, the horse makes his war sound.
The heart of Hanifa is happy as he looks at the horse.

Hanifa's heart was happy seeing his decorated horse.
After seeing to the preparation of the horse, he prepared himself.

90

He binds his head with a *pagri*²⁵ forty arms long.
On top of that he slowly entwines pieces of gold.

He binds his waist making it tremble and writhe.
After decking his body part by part, Hanifa was ready.

When Hanifa was ready, he went to the horse.
Calling Duldul then he said:

Hanifa said: "In what direction, horse, do you decide (to go)?
You must reach Hindustan within six seconds.

²¹ Zibrail is the angel that acts as Allah's messenger.

²² The *kalema* is the cardinal formula of the Muslim faith.

²³ Duldul is the horse of Imam Hosein inherited from his father, Hazrat Ali. By the time of this story he has carried these heroes through many battles and is old and weary.

²⁴ The skin of a chita is a sign of royalty.

²⁵ A *pagri* is a turban consisting of several yards of wound cloth.

If you cannot do it, horse, I tell you,
I will strike you with a *lathi*²⁶ making you quit this world." 100

When the horse heard these words, he began to cry.
"In my old age, Hanif, you start to hurt me.

My brother's name is Zulphukkar²⁷; I am Duldul.
We two brothers together were born at one time.

The Prophet used to call out (his battle cries) loudly while riding on me.
I moved eighteen thousand banners of Allah around (the battle field).²⁸

In my old age, Hanif, you hurt my feelings.
(But) I will take you to Hindustan within six seconds."

Hanifa said "*Bishmillah*"²⁹ and raising his foot, he struck his horse.
The horse of Hanifa went forth saying "Allah and Rasul."³⁰ 110

The horse called out ("Allah and Rasul") loudly and proceeded to the field
called the Field of King Tiger.

A monster called Bhuvan lived there.

The demon said: "Oh, Bari'tala,³¹ I warn you.
I have not eaten for six months. Today I will eat something.

I'll eat the boy and keep the bones aside.
I will eat the head of the horse like eating *muri*.³²

I have opened my mouth, stretching it from sky to earth.
Horse and boy, now go into my stomach.

When you reach my stomach, boy, how happy you will be!
Inside my stomach you can see many fairs and bazaars with
plenty of space to live in. 120

How many shopkeepers are there together!
Everything (is there that) you can eat. You will want for nothing."

Hanif said: "Monster, I will go into your stomach.
On going into your stomach I will make you see five houses."³³

²⁶ A *lathi* is a long stick, usually made of bamboo.

²⁷ Zulphukkar (Zulfikar) is the name of the Prophet's horse. The names of these two horses stir deep emotions in the hearts of Muslims, especially Shi'ah Muslims, because they symbolize the occurrence of so many sacred events in Islamic history and legend.

²⁸ He is speaking of carrying banners in battles.

²⁹ "*Bishmilla*" is the short form of "*Bism-illa-hir-rahman-ir-rahim, Al-hamdu L'illah* (In the name of God, the most Compassionate, the Merciful, All praise be to God). These are the opening words to a principal prayer of the Muslims.

³⁰ Rasul is one of several titles of the Prophet; It means messenger of God.

³¹ *Bari'tala* may be a form of *bari-wallah*, house-owner, landlord.

³² *Muri* is puffed rice.

I have no fear. I have a knife in hand.
I will cut out your intestines and I will pull them outside
all together."

Hearing these words, the monster was afraid.
"In what place are there boys who talk so boldly?"

The monster said: "Oh, young man! I say to you,
Who is your father, your mother? Tell me, brother, their names." 130

Hanifa said, "Monster, if you wish to listen,
I am the son of Hazrat Ali³⁴, the nephew of Rasul³⁵.

When he heard in his ear the name of Hazrat Ali,
The monster rubbed his nose on the ground and gave a
thousand "salams."³⁶

Hanifa said: "Monster, if you wish to eat (me for) your food,
Why do you give (these) greetings to me?"

(The monster replied:) "Once I made a quarrel with Hazrat Ali.
(But) he held my neck, spinning it around fifty times.

After receiving a blow, I fell to the ground.
I became his follower, making (my) apologies (to him). 140

He gave such blows as my own brother has not given;
As if the hail of *Jaistha*³⁷ month were falling on my back."

Bhuban monster said: "Hanif, listen to all (I say).
Wearing the clothes of war, tell me where are you going?"

"In a town of Hindustan there is a princess Tilekban.
Allah has given a command (for me) to get her married."

Bhuban monster said: "Hanif, be seated.
I am going to do your match-making."

Having said these words, the monster went for an encounter.
He proceeded to the house of Tilekban until he reached it. 150

He called loudly while standing at the door.
On hearing the loud call, the princess came out.

On seeing the princess, the monster said quickly,
"I come bringing good news for you. Please listen to the matter."

³³ This expression suggests some kind of threat.

³⁴ Hazrat Ali is the son-in-law of the Prophet and the father of Hasan and Husein.

³⁵ Hanifa is a step-brother of Husein.

³⁶ "Salam" is the short form of the greeting "*As-salamu-alaikum*" (May God bless you).

³⁷ The Bengali month of *Jaistha* by the Western calendar extends from mid May to mid June. Sometimes in Bengal large hail stones come with sudden storms.

Bhuban monster said: "Lady, you have a good task to do.
Sister-in-law, I give you (my) *salam alaikum*. Let us talk
about marriage."

Tilekban said: "Monster, such an insult!
If you call me sister-in-law again, I will cut off both your ears."

Bhuban monster said: "Lady, if you wish to cut off my ears,
I will kill you by giving (you) two blows from my fists." 160

Hearing these words, the lady became angry.
Saying "Strike! Strike!," she hit the monster on his body.

She struck the monster with her club so strongly,
Bhuban monster catching (her) blows ran away.

The monster said: "Oh, God-Allah, to whom shall I speak?
I have not seen with my eyes such a fighter!

(Let me) stay far from making this marriage; (my) life cannot
survive the peril."

Quickly the monster returned to Hanif.

Hanifa said: "Monster, be seated.
I will go to see Tilekban (to find out) what kind of a lady she is." 170

Saying "*Bismillah*" and giving his foot to the horse, (Hanifa)
mounted it.

The horse of Hanifa went forth calling on Allah and Rasul.

Calling loudly (on Allah), the horse goes to the Hindustan town.
Going to Tilekban's house (Hanifa) called to her.

Hanif calls again to her loudly, like a strong wrestler.
From inside the house the heart of the lady flew about.

The lady putting on her war dress went outside.
Hanifa standing at the door saw her.

Hanifa said: "Lady, hear my words.
I have come to make a marriage. Let us talk about marriage." 180

(She answered:) "If holding me by force you make me marry,
I'll knock out your teeth one by one.

I will break all your teeth. You will be toothless.
How will you be able, happily or sadly, to eat chicken?"

Hanifa said: "Lady, if you break my teeth,
In the morning people will say that your husband is toothless."

Hearing these words, the lady flew into a rage.
Here, there, the two people started quarreling.

In this way the two people started to fight.
 They fought for thirteen days and thirteen nights. 190

Neither could defeat the other. Both were of equal strength.
 Hanif said: "Allah, I have been insulted."

Hanifa said: "Lady, stand on the ground.
 Let us see who is stronger.

By holding (each other's) waist and tugging, we two will wrestle.
 We will see who is the strongest."

Hearing these words, the lady got down on the ground.
 Hanifa clasped the waist of the lady.

Hanif, the wrestler, was striking (her) and pulling (her) hard.
 He felt that the lady was like a mountain. 200

Not able to conquer her, he cried loudly:
 "I think I will die this time at the hands of a woman!"

Tilekban said: "Hanif, you are strong.
 By pulling your waist now I will stretch it."

Saying these words, the lady held him by the waist.
 She lifted him into the sky like a doll.

Throwing him on the ground, she sat on his chest.
 Taking a knife into her hands she showed it to him.

Tilekban said: "Don't you see with your eyes,
 There is no enjoyment in marriage in the house of Jom." 210

When Hanif heard these words, he began to laugh.
 "If my Allah protects me, tell me who can kill me?"

I do not feel pain when you sit on my chest.
 Do not move, lady. I feel very happy."

Lying on the ground, Mamud Hanif holds onto her.
 Looking at Hanif the lady began to laugh.

Tilekban said: "Hanif, you have no brains.
 The edge of your clothing is tickling my body."

Saying these words the lady started to laugh.
 By the command of God, the lady's strength diminished. 220

Having flung her (up), Hanif throws her on the ground.
 Going (to her) angrily, Hanif sat on her left side.
 Taking her knife in his hand he showed it to the lady.³⁸

³⁸ Exceptionally there is a three-line verse here.

"Tell me truly whether you agree to marry or not.
If you do not agree, lady, you will go to the house of Jom."

Tilekban said: "You have won.
I will go to Madina,³⁹ to your house."

On hearing these words, Hanif was very happy.
He got down from her chest and raised the lady up.

Hanifa said: "Lady, be seated. 230
I am going to arrange a palanquin⁴⁰ for you."

In that country there were two palanquin bearers: Adam and Tom.
There was no one more niggardly than they in all the earth.

At the time Adam had three brothers.
The mother was more stingy than they were.

The three brothers had three wives in their house.
The three wives used to eat a lot.

Unexpectedly the mother of Adam died.
The three brothers said together: "The burden of (our)
house has gone!"

The younger brother rose and said: "Maid-servant of the oldest wife, 240
Put a half *maund* of rice (to cook) and prepare *khir*⁴¹

On hearing these words, (the maid servant) went into the kitchen.
She put half a *maund* of rice (ready) for the *khir*.

When the cooking was almost done,
The dog of *kaji*'s⁴² house (happened to be) moving about.

When the cooking was finished, (the wife) went to take a bath.
The dog broke the partition⁴³ and entered the kitchen.

Crying out, the dog complained to the *darbar*⁴⁴ of Allah.

"If you give me a piece of cloth,
I could wrap up the *khir* and take it to my house."⁴⁵ 250

³⁹ Madina (Medina) is sacred as the city to which the Prophet migrated with his followers and where Hasan and Hosein grew up.

⁴⁰ The word palanquin is of Indic origin. It is a small, enclosed platform for a passenger or two to be carried on poles on the shoulders of men, the palanquin bearers.

⁴¹ *Khir* is rice pudding.

⁴² A *kaji* is a lawyer or judge.

⁴³ Cooking frequently takes place in a rural home in a space on the verandah with a protective wall of matting around it.

⁴⁴ *Darbar* means throne room or court.

⁴⁵ Here is another three-line verse.

Saying these words he started to eat the *khir*.

When the three wives had finished their bath, they came into the house.

Crying, the youngest wife said: "Eldest wife,
(That) hound Piri has eaten (some of) the *khir*."

Crying, the middle wife said: "Throw out the *khir*!"

The eldest wife said: "What an idea is this!

Serve it to the guest on his plate, he who sits in the waiting room
outside the house.

Three or four persons could have this amount which we give to the guest."

When she gave the *khir* (enough for) three-to-four people,
The guest looked at it and began to ponder.

Mamud Hanif saw this. He became angry and said:

260

"They have given the guest the *khir* that was eaten by a dog!

There is no miserliness like this in the world.

I will teach (them) a lesson⁴⁶, wrestling them all with force."

Hanifa also said: "In what direction do I not wish to go?⁴⁷

Holding it firmly, I will now read the *kalema*."

(Before leaving) that country he conducted a court case.

Taking the lady (Tilekban), he journeyed to his country.

When he reached his country, fetching a *molla*⁴⁸ without more delay,
He quickly gave Tilekban in marriage.⁴⁹

[*Dhua*]

Allah, Allah, say, oh, say (his name)!

This kind of day will not pass by again.

⁴⁶ The term here is *hedayet*.

⁴⁷ This phrase may mean: "Until I teach them a lesson, where else do I wish to go!"

⁴⁸ A *molla* (*mullah*, *maulana*) is an Islamic religious leader.

⁴⁹ It should be recalled that Allah sent Hanifa to woo Tilekban for Prince Kumin.

তিলেকবান

মেঘু বয়াতি

টোপাখোলা, ফরিদপুর।

দিশা: নাচে রে বুইড়া নাচে বুড়ী নাচে নাচে বুইড়ার বউ,
ফোকরা দাঁতে মাজন ঘসে তা'দেখে না কেউ।

বাজে কথা বলতে আমার অনেক হবে দেৱী,
মন দিয়া শোনেন কিছু তিলেকবানের জারী।
শোনেন শোনেন ভাই সকল রে শোনেন দিয়া মন,
তিলেকবানের জারী গাব তাই করেন শ্রবণ।
হিন্দুস্তান শহরে ছিল দক্ষ রাজা নাম,
তার ঘরে ছিল কন্যা—নামে তিলেকবান।
সেই যে নারী তিলেকবান কি করিত কাম,
শুনলে মুসলমানের কথা কাটিত গর্দান।
একদিন আসমান রাজার বেটা ছিল কুমিন রাজা নাম,
ডাক দিয়ে সে দাসীর কাছে করেছে ফরমান।
“শুন দাসী, প্রাণ প্রেয়সী, দেলে ভালোবাসি,
তিলেকবান সে কেমন নারী তারে দেখে আসি।”
কুমিন রাজা বলছে, “দাসী আমার কথা মান,
শিকারেতো যাবো যখন জলপান কিছু আন।”
ঐ কথা শুনে দাসী আর করে না দেৱী,
জলপানের জোগাড় দাসী করে তাড়াভাড়ী।

প্রথমে আনিল দাসী বাইশ মণ খই,
চৌদ্দ মণ আনে মুড়ি, পনের মণ দই।
তাই লইয়া কুমিন রাজা বসে রইলেন তিনি,
চৌদ্দ মণ দই-এর মধ্যে তের মণ চিনি।
তাই খাইয়া কুমিন রাজা করিল জলপান,
ডাক দিয়া কুমিন রাজা করিল জলপান,
ডাক দিয়া কয় দাসীর তরে, “ভাত চাইরড়া আন।”
ঐ কথা শুনে দাসী পাকের ঘরে গেল,
বাইশ মণ চাউলের ভাত দাসী দ্যা পাকাইল।
বাইশ মন চাউলের ভাত, পনের মন খাটা,
নয়টা দিল মইষের মাংস, আঠারটা পাঁঠা।
খেয়ে লয়ে কুমিন রাজা বেড়ে হইল খাড়া,
ডাক দিয়া কয় দাসীর তরে, “দেখে যা তোরা।”
হাতীতে চড়িয়া রাজা মেলা দিয়া যায়,
আচমিতে তিলেকবানের সঙ্গে দেখা হয়।

ধূয়া: তালপাছে শালিক নাচে, ঘুরিয়া নাচে পেচা,
মেয়ের কাপড় মিনসা পরে ঢুলিয়া বেড়ায় কোঁচা রে।

কুমিন রাজা বলছে, বিবি আমার কথা নেও।
তোমার রূপ দেখিয়া হইলাম হত বিয়ের কথা কও।
তিলেকবান বলিছে, “রাজা বুদ্ধি আমার ধর,
আমার রূপ দেখে চাও বিয়ে করতে নোচখানি তোর বড়।

জোরেতে ধরিয়া যদি বিয়া করবি মোরে,
একটা একটা করিয়া দত্ত সকল দিব তুইড়ে।
দাঁত কয়ড়া তোর ভাইসা দিব বোকড়া হইয়া যাবি,
পাঁঠা খাওয়ার সুখ-সুবিধা এইবারই পাবি।”
কুমিন রাজা বলছে, “বিবি দাঁত ভাসিলে মোর,
রাত পেহাইলে লোকে বলবে, বোকরা স্বামী তোর।”
ঐ কথা শুনে বিবি জুলিয়া উঠিল—

“মার মার” বলিয়া তখন গদা উঠাইল।
এছ্যা জোরে গদা মারে কুমিন রাজার ছেড়ে,^১
সামলাইতে না পারে, ঘেরে জমির উপরে।
যখন কুমিন রাজা জমিনে পড়িল,
ছুরি হাতে ক'রে বিবি তার বক্ষেতে বসিল।

তিলেকবান বলিছে, “রাজা দেখাবো তোমারে,
বিয়া করা দূরের কথা পাঠাইব যমের ঘরে।”
ঐ কথা শুনে রাজা কাদিতে লাগিল—
বিয়া করা দূরের কথা, মা বলিয়া ডাকিল।
“মেরো না—মেরো না বিবি, ধরি তোমার পায়,
আমার বিয়ে করা দূরে থাকুক, মা কইলাম তোমায়।”
এই কথা শুনিয়া বিবি রাজাকে ছেড়ে দিল—

তিন কাঠা বুইড় কুমিন রাজা ছেঁইড় পেড়ে গেল।
তিন কাঠা বুই দূরে যাইয়া কৃত-কৃতাইয়া চায়,
আমারে দেখিয়া তুমি পেয়েছিলে দায়।
আমারে দেখিয়া তোমার হইছে বড় আড়ি,
হানিফা আসিলে তোমারে ভাসিবে চেড়বেড়ী

ধূয়া: আমগাছ সইলের পুনা শৃগালেতে খায়,
তাই দেখে কবরেজ চাচা পলো ল'য়ে যায়।

তিলেকবান বলিছে, রাজা করো না ফুটানী,
তোর মক্কা থাকে হানিফ নেড়ে তারে আমি চিনি।
নাইড়া মইড়া বলে বিবি যখন গালি দিল,
আরসে বসিয়া আল্লা বেজার হইল।
আল্লা বলে, জীবরাইল শোন মন দিয়া,
জলদি কইরা হানিফারে খবর দেও গিয়া।
হাওয়া রূপে কইয়া এস হানিফার কাছে,

^১ ছেড়ে = ছেরে, শিরে।

হিন্দুস্তান শহরে তিলেকবান নামে এক বিবি আছে।
 আল্লার হুকুমে তুমি সেইখানেতে যাও,
 নবীর কলেমা দিয়া তারে মোছলমান বানাও।
 ঐ কথা শুনে জীব্রাইল আর করে না দেরী,
 হানিফার কাছে গিয়ে কয় তাড়াতাড়ি।
 আল্লার হুকুম যদি হানিফায় পাইল,
 আল্লা আল্লা বলে নিশি প্রভাত হইল।
 কৈ গেলি কালোয়া সহস ঘোড়া করো জিন,
 হামকো হুকুম যেতনে কুটন মূল্যে লাগাও জিন,
 ঐ কথা শুনে কালু সাজ করিল ঘোড়া,
 দুলদুলকে খাওয়াইয়া আনিল খাড়াখাড়া।
 ঘোড়ার চার পায়ে তুলিয়া বান্দে চারি হীরার নাল,
 পিঠিতে তুলিয়া দিল চিতা বাঘের খাল।
 ছাড়িয়া চামর বান্দে করিয়া সুন্দর,
 ঘোড়ার পায়েতে বান্দে সোনার ঘোঙর।
 হিম্ হিম্ ডাকে ঘোড়া মহিমার^২ লাগিয়া,
 হানিফার মন খুশী হইল ঘোড়ার দিক চাইয়া।
 ঘোড়ার সাজ দেখিয়া হানিফার খুশী হইল মন,
 ঘোড়ার সাজ দেখিয়া হানিফা সাজিল তখন।
 চল্লিশ হাত পাগড়ী মিয়া তুলিয়া বান্দে ছেঁরে,
 তার উপরে সোনার লবুরা বান্দে ধীরে ধীরে।
 মুক্তিকা কাঁপাইয়া কেঁরে আইটয়া বান্দে কোমর,
 সকল জায়গা পোষাক পইরা হানিফা হইল তৈয়ার।
 সাজ করিয়া হানিফা যখন ঘোড়ার কাছে গেল,
 ডাক দিয়া দুলদুলিকে তখনি বলিল,—
 হানিফা বলিয়াছে, “ঘোড়া কার দিকে চাও,
 ছয় ছয় দন্ডের মধ্যে নিয়া হিন্দুস্তান পৌছাও।
 তাই যদি না পার ঘোড়া বলি যে তোমারে,
 এক লাখি মেরে দেব তোরে দুনিয়া ছাড়া করে।”
 ওই কথা শুনে ঘোড়া কান্দিতে লাগিল,
 “বুড়া কালে দাগ হানিফ আমার অন্তরে লাগাইল।
 আমার ভাইয়ের নাম জুলফুকার আমি তো দুলদুলি,
 আমরা এক সময় জন্মিয়াছিলাম দুই ভাই মিলি।
 আমার উপর চড়ে নবী যখন দিত হাঁক,
 আঠারো হাজার আল্লার আলম ঘুরাইছি আড়াই পাক।
 বুড়া কালে দাগ হানিফ তুই লাগাইলি অন্তরে,
 ছয় দন্ডের মধ্যে নিব হিন্দুস্তান শহরে।”
 বিসমিল্লা বলিয়া ঘোড়ায় পাও দিল তুলিয়া,
 চলিল হানিফার ঘোড়া আল্লা-রসুল কইয়া।
 ঘোড়া হাঁকাইয়া গেল বাঘ রাজার ময়দানে,

ভুবন দেও নামে এক দেও ছিল সেইখানে।
 দেও বলে, “বারি’তলা তোমারে জানাই,
 ছয় মাস ধরিয়া খাই না খানা আজ কিছু খাই।
 ছোকরারে খাইয়া আমি থোব এক পাশে,
 ঘোড়াটা মুড়ি বলিয়া খাব অবশেষে।
 আকাশ পাতালে ঠোট দিয়া করলাম হাঁ,
 ঘোড়া-ছোড়া সুন্দা আমার পেটের ভিতর যা’।
 পেটের ভিতর গেলে ছোকরা থাকবি কত সুখে,
 আমার পেটের ভিতর দেখলো কত হাট-বাজার মিলেছে। ১২০
 দোকানী-পশারী কত আছে ঠাই ঠাই—
 সব জিনিস খেতে পারবি অভাব কিছু নাই।”
 হানিফা বলে, “দেও, তোর পেটের ভিতর যাব,
 আকবাড়ি যাইয়া তোমার পাঁচবাড়ি দেখাব,
 কোন মতে নাইকা চিন্তা, ছুরি আছে হাতে,
 নাড়ী-ভুড়ী কাটিয়া বাহির করিব এক সাথে।”
 ওই কথায় দেও-এর মনে হইল ভয়,
 কোন জায়গার ছোকড়া এমন তেড়া কথা কয়।
 দেও বলে, “ওগো ছোকড়া, তোমাকে জানাই,
 ৯০ কি নাম তোমার মাতা-পিতার পরিচয় দাও ভাই।” ১৩০
 হানিফা ব’লেছে, “দেও, শোনবার চাইলে যদি,
 হজরত আলীর হই বৈটা, রসুলের নাতি।”
 হজরত আলীর নাম যখন কর্ণেতে গুলিল,
 খত লইয়া দূরে যাইয়া হাজার ছালাম দিল।
 হানিফা বইলাছে, “দেও, তুই খাবার খাইলে খা,
 কিসের জন্য করিস ছালাম আমার কাছে ক।”
 “আমি একদিনেতে আলীর সাথে করেছিলাম তেড়ী
 আমারে ঘাড় ধ’রে ‘মুইনা’ মারছিল আড়াই কুড়ি।
 কিল খাইয়া যখন আমি জমিন ধরিয়া পইলাম,
 ১০০ তোবা করিয়া আলীর কাছে মুরিদ হইয়াছিলাম। ১৪০
 এমন কিল মারছিল ভাই না দিছিল ঢিল,
 আমার পৃষ্ঠের উপর পড়ছে যেমন জৈষ্ঠ মাসের শীল।”
 ভুবন দেও বলছে, “হানিফ, শোন সমাচার,
 যুদ্ধের বেশে কোথায় চলছ, তাই বলা আমায়।”
 “হিন্দুস্তান শহরে আছে তার নাম তিলেকবান,
 আল্লায় হুকুম দিয়েছে তারে বিয়ে করে আন।”
 ভুবন দেও বলছে, “হানিফ, ব’সে থাক তুমি,
 তোমার বিয়ের ঘটকালীতে আগে যাব আমি।”
 ওই কথা বলিয়া দেও তখন মেলা দিল।
 ১১০ তিলেকবানের বাড়ি গিয়া উপস্থিত হইল। ১৫০
 দরজায় দাঁড়াইয়া যখন হাঁক দিয়াছিল,
 হাঁকের আওয়াজ শুনে বিবি বাহিরে আসিল।
 বিবিকে দেখিয়া দেও তাড়াতাড়ি কয়,

^২ মহিমার = যুদ্ধের।

"তোমায় শুভ-সংবাদ নিয়ে আসছি শুন তার বিষয়।"
 ভুবন দেও বলিয়াছে, "বিবি, কাজ তোমার ভালো,
 সালাম আলাইকুম্ ভাবীসাব, বিয়ার কথা বল।"
 তিলেকবান বলছে, "দেও, এত অপমান!
 ফের যদি তুই বলস ভাবী, কাটব দুইটা কান।"
 ভুবন দেও বলছে, "বিবি, কান কাটিতে চাইলে,
 তোর জান বাইর করে দেবো মোটে দুইটা কিলে।" ১৬০
 ওই কথা শুনে বিবি জুলিয়া উঠিল—
 "মার মার" বলিয়া সে দেওকে মারিল।
 এ্যাছা জোরে গদা মারে ভুবন দেও-এর ছেঁরে,
 মাইর খাইয়া ভুবন দেও উইড্যা দৌড় মারে।
 দেও বলে, "খোদাতালা কার কাছে জানাই,
 এমন পালোয়ান আমি চোখে দেখি নাই।
 বিয়া করা দূরে থাক, জান বাঁচান দায়"—
 তাড়াতাড়ি দেও গিয়া হানিফারে কয়।
 হানিফা বলে, "দেও ব'সে থাকো তুমি—
 কেমন নারী তিলেকবান দেখে আসি আমি।"
 "বিছমিত্রা" ব'লে ঘোড়ায় পাও দিল তুলিয়া,
 চলিল হানিফার ঘোড়া আল্লা-রসুল কইয়া।

ঘোড়া হাকাইয়া গেল হিন্দুস্তান শহরে,
 তিলেকবানের বাড়ি যাইয়া ডাকিল তাহারে।
 হাঁকিল হায়দরী হাঁক হানিফ পাহ্লোয়ান,
 বাড়ির মধ্যে থেকে বিবির উড়িল পরাণ।
 যুদ্ধের পোষাক পরে বিবি বাহিরে আসিল,
 দরজায় হানিফা খাড়া দেখিতে পাইল।
 হানিফা বলিয়াছে, "বিবি আমার কথা নেও,
 আমি আসিয়াছি বিয়া করতে, বিয়ার কথা কও।
 "জোরেতে ধরে যদি বিয়া করবি মোরে—
 তোর একটা একটা করে দত্ত সকল দিব তুইড়ে,
 দাঁত কয়টা সব ভাইস দিব—বোকড়া হইয়া যাবা,
 মুরগী খাওয়ার সুখ-সুবিধা এইবারই পাবা।"
 হানিফা বলিয়াছে, "বিবি, দাঁত ভাঙ্গিবা মোর,
 রাত পোহাইলে লোকে বলবে, বোকড়া স্বামী তোর।"
 ওই কথা শুনে বিবি গুজড়াইয়া উঠিল,
 কথায় কথায় দুই জনায় কাইজা জুইড়া দিল।
 —এইরূপে দুইজন লড়িতে আছিল,—
 তের দিন তের রাইত যুদ্ধ করেছিল।
 কেউ পারে নাহি পারে সমানে সমান,
 হানিফা ব'লেছে, "আল্লা হইলাম অপমান।"
 হানিফা ব'লেছে, "বিবি জমিনে দাঁড়াও,
 কার কেমন মর্দামি এখন দেখে যাও।

কমর ধ'রে টানটানি করিব দুইজন,
 কে কেমন পাহ্লোয়ান করিব ওজন।"
 ওই কথা শুনে বিবি জমিনে নামিল,
 বিবির কমর গিয়া হানিফা ধরিল।
 এ্যাছা জোরে টান মারে হানিফ পাহ্লোয়ান,
 বিবিকে বুঝিল যেমন পাহাড়ের সমান। ২০০
 শূনি না করতে পেরে কান্দে জারে জার,
 "মেয়ে মানুষের সাথে বুঝি মরিলাম এবার।"
 তিলেকবান বইলাছে, "হানিফ শক্ত হও তুমি,
 তোমার কোমর ধরিয়া এখন টান দিব আমি।"
 ওই কথা বলিয়া বিবি কোমর ধরিল,
 পুতুলের সমান শূনিতে তুলিল।
 জমিনে ফেলিয়া তারে বক্ষেতে বসিল,
 ছুরি হাতে নিয়া তখন হানিফারে দেখাইল।
 তিলেকবান ব'লেছে, "হানিফ, দেখনি নজরে,
 তোমার বিয়ার সাধ মিটাইয়া দেই যমের ঘরে।"
 এই কথা শুনে হানিফ হাসিতে লাগিল,
 "আমার আল্লা যদি রক্ষা করে, কে মারিবে বেলো?
 যে চোটে বইসাচস বিবি ব্যথা না পাইলাম বৃকে,
 নড়াচড়া করিস না বিবি, আছি বড় সুখে!"
 তলে পড়িয়া মামুদ হানিফ জড়াইয়া ধরিল,
 হানিফার দিক চাইয়া বিবি হাসিতে লাগিল।
 তিলেকবান বইলাছে, "হানিফ, বুঝি নাই তোর মোটে,
 তোমার নাইড়া-দাড়ি লাগলে গায় গুরসুরিয়ে ওঠে।"
 ওই কথা বলিয়া বিবি হাসিতে লাগিল,
 আল্লার ছকুমে বিবির গায়ের জোর কম হইল। ২২০
 পটকান মারিয়া হানিফ তলে ফেলাইল,
 কুদাইয়া গিয়া হানিফ বিবির বামেতে বসিল,
 ছুরি হাতে নিয়া তখন বিবিকে দেখাইল।
 "বিয়া করতে রাজী কি-না বলো সমাচার,
 রাজী না হইলে বিবি দিব যমের ঘর।"
 তিলেকবান বইলাছে, "কইরাছ কাবার,
 মদীনাতে যাব আমি, চল তোমার ঘর।"

ওই কথা শুনে হানিফ মনে খুশী হইল,
 বক্ষ হ'তে নেমে তখন বিবিকে তুলিল।
 হানিফা বলেছে, "বিবি বসে থাক তুমি,
 তোমার জন্য পালকির জোগাড় করিব এখনি।"
 সেই দেশে ছিল ভায়া 'আদম-তোম' বেহারা,
 দুনিয়ার মধ্যে বড় বখিল ছিল তাহারা।
 আদমের তিন ভাই বর্তমান ছিল—
 আদমের মায় তার চেয়ে কৃপন ভালো। ২৩০

তিন ভাইর তিন বউ বাড়ির মধ্যে ছিল,
 ভাতে ভাতে তিন বউ রে কাবু করে ফেলল।
 আচম্বিতে আদমের মা মরিয়া গেল,
 তিন ভাই উইঠা বলে, “বাড়ির বালাই গেল।”
 ছোট ভাই উঠে বলে, “বড় বউ-এর ঝি— ২৪০
 দুক্ষে চাউলে আধ মণ দিয়া খির পাকা দি।”
 ওই কথা শুনিয়া তখন পাকের ঘরে গেল,
 আধ মণ চাউলের খির চড়াইয়া দিল।
 রান্না যখন কাছাইয়া গেল,
 কাজী বাড়ির ছোলা কুকুর ঘুন্না জড়াইয়া নিল।
 রান্না শেষ করিয়া তারা স্নান করিতে যায়,
 বেড়া ভাইয়া ছোলা কুকুর ঘরের মধ্যে যায়।
 কুকুর কেন্দে নালিশ করে হক আল্লার দরবারে,
 “এমন সময় একখান কাপড় যদি দিত মোরে,
 মনের মত খাইতাম খির বাইন্দা নিতাম ঘরে।” ২৫০
 ওই কথা বলিয়া খির খাইতে লাগিল,
 স্নান করে তিন বউ তারা ঘরে ফিরে এলো।
 ছোট বউ উঠিয়া বলে, “বড় বউলো ঝি—
 খির খাইয়া চলে গেল কুতুবুল পীরি।”
 মাইজা বউ উইঠা বলে, “খির ফালাইয়া দে।”
 বড় বউ উইঠা বলে, “বুদ্ধি দিল কে?
 বাইর বাড়িতে অতিথ বেটা তার পাতে দে।”
 তিন চারজনার খির যখন একজনারে দিল,
 দেখিয়া অতিথ বেটা ভাবিতে লাগিল।
 ওই দেখিয়া মামুদ হানিফ রাগ হইয়া কয়, ২৬০
 “কুকুরের খাওয়া খির মানুষেরে খাওয়ায়।
 এদের মত বেইমান নেই এই দুইনার উপরে,
 হেদায়েত করিব আমি জোর করে ধ’রে।”
 হানিফা বলছে আর, “কার দিকে না চা’ব।
 জোরেতে ধরিয়া এখন কলমা পড়াব।”
 সেই দেশ হেদায়েত করিল তখন—
 বিবিকে লইয়া দেশে করিল গমন।
 দেশে গিয়া মোল্লা নিয়া আর করে না দেৱী,
 তিলেকবানের সঙ্গে বিয়া দিল তাড়াতাড়ি।
 ধূয়া: আল্লা আল্লা বল রে মনো রে
 এ ভাবে দিন যাবে না।

JARIGAN ON THE DEATH OF A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

"*Sangsad Sadasya Marhum Nazrul Islam Sarkarer
Akal Mrityur—Jarigan*"

Composed by Hatim Uddin Sarkar
Gouripur, Mymensingh, ca. 1992

The *jarigan* text below is an example of a modern *jarigan* song composed by the singer Hatim Uddin Sarkar of Gouripur, Mymensingh. I interviewed him on May 31, 1995, at which time I also recorded his singing. He was about fifty-five years old. He sang at length the *jarigan* song from which I notated an excerpt under the title "*Banu [re], Joynal shopilam tor hate...*" which can be found in the collection of notations in Appendix B. Hatim Uddin also performed in the Gouripur *jarigan* competition which I describe in Chapter Four on *jarigan* performances. The text of the song below was published in Gouripur in 1992 or 1993 and is priced at two takas.

The *jarigan* was composed in honor of an "M. P." (Member of Parliament) from Gouripur who died as a result of a road accident in 1992. The song tells particulars of his childhood and youth, and about how often he was elected to local positions in the area of Gouripur, and even to Parliament. The accident is described. The descriptions of the grief of relatives and local people resemble the texts of *marsiya* songs. In the last lines, Hatim Uddin mentions Sheikh Hasina, the leader of the Awami League Party, whose party won the national election of 1996.

The text is in traditional *jarigan* prosody and was no doubt sung in public by Hatim Uddin himself. The first two couplets furnish a refrain. At intervals in the text, the expression "*Allah [go]...*" indicates probably the "hinge" phrase linking the end of a couplet to the refrain, as in the "*Banu [re]...*" example mentioned above. The refrain, "*Nazrul [re] Nazrul tumi Gouripur charila!*" (Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul, you have left Gouripur!), enters the song at irregular intervals. The text is a good example of how such mundane details as the exact dates of events, precise names of places, etc., are worked smoothly into the meter of the poetry. The opening *bandana*, the refrain line, the exclamation "*Allah [go]!*", the frequently repeated phrase "*Shunen diya mon*" (Listen, paying attention), the designation of audience members as "*bhai*" (brothers), and the inclusion of the poet's own name are characteristic of *jarigan* poetry.

Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul, you have left Gouripur.
You left Gouripur and went to the city of Dhaka.
After attending the budget meeting, you returned home.
Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul, you have left Gouripur!

Oh, Allah!

First I will sing a little *bandana*.
Then I will praise the Angel of God,

Mother, Father, (my) progenitors, (my) *ustad*¹ and *Pir*².
 To all of these I bow my head.
 At this point I end (my) *bandana*. Please pay attention.
 Now I will sing about the life of Nazrul.
 Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul, you have left Gouripur!

10

Oh, Allah!

In the year 1950, listen to the story,
 Nazrul was born, as I am telling you.
 Day by day Nazrul grew increasingly handsome.
 When he reached the age of five,
 He passed the Primary School.
 (Later) he entered Char Nikhora High School.
 After passing Matric in 1968,³
 He joined the Mukti Bahini.⁴
 He returned to his *desh*⁵ and fought for freedom.
 After much hardship the country became independent.
 He became a Post Office Master.
 A few years passed in this way.
 In 1970 he passed the I. A.⁶
 After this, people approached Nazrul.
 "Will you stand for the U.⁷ election, brother?"
 "With what means can I run for election? I have no money.
 The Holy Lord placed my birth in the house of the poor."
 Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul you have left Gouripur!

20

Oh, Allah!

If I do not narrate the story of his early life,
 Errors will be recorded in writing.
 His father A. Karim was at his home in Shainati.
 Nazrul sat with his father.
 "Listen, listen, oh, father. I say to you,
 I wish to run for the next election by the people's request.

30

¹ Hatim Uddin's singing teacher and preceptor.

² A *pir* is a Muslim holy man who is respected as an outstanding teacher and leader of a community.

³ "Matric" means matriculation, a standard examination that is taken after class ten.

⁴ The Mukti Bahini (Liberation Army) was formed in 1971 to fight the Pakistani occupation forces and win the freedom of Bangladesh.

⁵ A person's *desh* (literally, country) is the area in which he or she grew up.

⁶ "I. A." stands for Intermediate of Arts. Today this degree is called Higher Secondary Certificate.

⁷ "U." stands for Union, a district subdivision like a county.

If I obtain your permission,
I will run for election, in the name of Allah."

"May Allah grant your wish."

Getting the permission, Nazrul submitted the money.⁸

By the grace of Allah he was elected.

40

In this way five years went by, brothers.

There was no limit to peace in Number 5 Shainati Union.

The Chairman⁹ mixed with the people, smiling all the time.

The Chairman sat with the people.

He comforted the poor and distressed, sitting (beside them) and
comforting them with his hands.

Now came the time for the second election. Pay attention, brothers.

He passed the election with a large number of votes.

Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul, you have left Gouripur!

Oh, Allah!

When the third election came again,

Then even this time he passed.

50

In this way, Oh, brothers, he spent his days.

Day after day, Oh, brothers, month after month.

For the election of the *upazila*,¹⁰ brothers, there was grave danger ahead.

He abandoned the position of the E. U. Chairman.

He ran for the election as well.

He failed by a narrow margin of votes, but he was not upset about it.

Taking the name of Allah, he went to Shainati for the election.

He passed, by the grace of Allah.

Five years went by. Listen, brothers.

The fourth election of the Union, brothers, was held.

Even this time he passed, taking the name of Allah.

60

Nine months passed by, brothers, while he was Chairman.

The *upazila* election again came up.

Leaving the Chairmanship, he went again to the *upazila*.

He ran for election taking courage.

In a hard contest he failed in the *upazila*, brothers.

Thinking that he might pass (this time). What else can I say, brothers!

He passed five years in the Union.

It was time for the Union election, brothers.

He passed this time as well. There was no worry.

70

⁸ The money is for seeking nomination.

⁹ Nazrul held the position of Chairman.

¹⁰ The *upazila* is what was once called the *thana*, the area within a police station's purview.

When two years had gone by,
 The M. P.¹¹ election was going to take place.
 Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul, you have left Gouripur!

Oh, Allah!

The people said: "Mr. Chairman, please listen carefully.
 We urge you to run for the M. P. election."

Taking courage with the name of Allah,
 He received the nomination from the Awami League.
 Then the days passed well, brothers.

80

He went about his people smiling.
 (In somewhat the manner of poets I sing a *jarigan* song.)
 Along with the M. P. Saheb I go to the city of Dhaka.
 Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul, you have left Gouripur!

Oh, Allah!

When he reached the city of Dhaka, taking the name of Allah,
 He attended the budget meeting. This was his job.
 He held meetings. Days passed. Listen, audience.
 At last, when he became M. P.,
 A few of his schemes, brothers, were passed.
 He (saw to) the bridge of the Gouripur-Shahaganj Bazaar which
 passes Khandar.

He saw to another scheme through the Bhuiya's Bazaar.
 Six kilometers of road, brothers, would be constructed of pitch.
 He got other projects done.
 He returned to his *desh*. He was smiling with happiness.
 Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul, you are the precious son of your gracious mother!
 You are the precious son of your worthy mother, you are the
 precious son of your worthy father.
 Your death in Dhaka has pained the heart of everyone.

Oh, Allah!

In 1992, listen, my friends,
 To what happened on the fourth of August.
 The Hindus were going about blowing on the conch shell,
 The Muslims were going to the mosque.
 The birds sitting on branches were singing.
 M. P. Saheb woke up, taking the name of Allah.

100

¹¹ "M. P." stands for Member of Parliament.

He said his prayers, kneeling on his *jaynamaje*.¹²
 After saying prayers and reciting the *doa*,¹³
 Smiling he went to the *seloon*.¹⁴
 He received a shave, taking the name of Allah.
 After that the M. P. went to a restaurant.¹⁵
 He ate *nasta*¹⁶ along with his friends. 110
 Having eaten *nasta*, he took *pan*¹⁷.
 Rising (to go), he stood like a full moon.
 Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul, you are the precious son of your worthy mother!

Oh, Allah!

He got on a Honda¹⁸, smiling all the time,
 Having decided that he would return to his *desh*.
 Soon after he left the city of Dhaka,
 He came to Joydevpur. Listen, paying close attention.
 A bus behind, a truck in front. Fate was against him.
 The M. P. Saheb wondered "What will I do?!"
 He pressed the brake, going to the left. 120
 And stretched out his right foot. I tell this gathering.
 Crying out "Allah! Allah!" the M. P. rolled on the ground.
 He became unconscious. There was no sound.
 A female officer was passing by.
 She saw that M. P. Saheb was lying on the ground.
 She put her hand on his nose and on his chest.
 She felt that he was still breathing.
 She found 15,000 takas, Oh, brothers, in his pocket.
 She collected the takas for herself¹⁹, brothers,
 Quickly taking the number of the Honda, brothers, 130
 She made a wireless call to the Parliament, brothers.
 "I have seen that M. P. Saheb has had an accident."
 She quickly took him to the army hospital.
 The doctor examined him and amputated his leg.

¹² Prayer mat.

¹³ *Doa* is a prayer for blessings.

¹⁴ The barber shop.

¹⁵ The text says *hotel* which is what restaurants are often called in Bangladesh.

¹⁶ *Nasta* is a morning meal.

¹⁷ *Pan* is betel nut which is chopped up and wrapped up in a betel leaf touched with lime paste, for chewing. The process is a social ritual as well as a personal pleasure.

¹⁸ Honda is the company name of motorcycles made in Japan.

¹⁹ This line probably does not mean that she stole the money, but took responsibility for its safe keeping.

Four hours later the M. P. regained consciousness.
 He lamented over it, crying and crying.
 This news, brothers, reached Gouripur.
 I saw thousands and thousands of people praying for him.
 In this way four days passed. 140
 Last Friday (passed), on the night of Saturday,
 The M. P. was in great pain.
 "Where are you, Oh, Roushan²⁰? Come and have a look,
 How I have met my end by coming to Dhaka!
 Give up your claim of Maharana²¹, please.
 Give the news to my mother, please,
 Who suffered pain to bring me up.
 Will the people of Mymensingh-3 Area forgive me?
 My father worked so hard to rear me.
 I cannot give him a share of my earnings. 150
 Give him food or make him eat with my earnings.
 Where are you, Siraj, the words from my mouth, brother of my life?"
 The two brothers weep, holding each other.
 "I am leaving you just now."
 Siraj says: "Brother of my life, permit me (this).
 I will fall under a car to go with you."
 The leaves on the trees fell due to the misery of the brothers.
 The receding waters of the river surge over.
 And the M. P. Saheb says: "Oh, brothers, in your hands, 160
 I leave my Nadira and Rajib and Moni.²²
 They have become orphans living in this country.
 Look after them as if they were your own children.
 Look after (my) Begam (wife) as if she were your older sister.
 Try to comfort Father and Mother."
 Saying these words, the M. P. passed away.
 "Inna Lillahi²³," everyone says.
 Nazrul, Oh, Nazrul, you are the precious son of your worthy mother!

 Oh, Allah!

 Shiraj cries. Begam cries. The children cry.
 Mother cries. Father cries. What can I say now?

²⁰ Roushan is Nazrul Islam's wife.

²¹ Maharana is money that a groom agrees to give the bride. If she agrees to wait for the payment, it becomes money he owes. Nazrul Islam asks her not to make the claim.

²² Nadira and Moni are daughters. Rajib is a son.

²³ *Inna Lillahi* is a short form for '*Inna Lillahi wa inna ilaihe Rajeun*', a prayer with a wish that is recited after the death of a Muslim.

What other words of grief will I say?
 The pen does not seem to move. Listen, audience.
 Nadira and Moni cry, calling: "*Abba! Abba!*"²⁴
 To whom, alas, shall we go, calling him *Abba* only"?
 Rajile does not realize that his father is dead.
 Crying, "*Abba!, Abba!*" he does not let go of his neck.
 Begam Nazrul cries with her children.
 "You will go home, golden child, the glory of this area.
 Without you in this world who is one's own?"²⁵
 Saying these words, the Begam's heart trembled. 180
 At this point I put an end to my mournful *jari*.
 Forgive my errors and mistakes, my listener brothers.
 Folk poet Hatim says this to all:
 "The M. P. Saheb will not come back even if you cry.
 Let us go and bury him, brothers, with state honors."
 We will send the body with a helicopter.
 First they hold the *janaja*²⁶ in the Parliament. 190
 Then the *janaja* is arranged attended by the people of Dhaka.
 After that doing the *janaja*, listen, audience,
 With the helicopter,
 Having flown above the playground of Gouripur, it landed.
 At five o'clock it landed on the field of Shahaganj.
 They took (the body) to the bazaar of Pachar. Brothers, pay attention.
 They made the end, Oh, brothers, of his life.
 You have died a successful death, Nazrul, I say.
 You are in every heart. You are not dead.
 At this point I put an end to my *jari*. 200
 The grieving people of Gouripur cried out loud.
 Later, looking to the orphans of the family,
 The people's leader, Sheikh Hasina²⁷, made Begam Nazrul
 Run for the election to complete the unfinished tasks of Nazrul.
 To each person I, Hatem, make a request.
 To help the orphaned family to survive,
 The public is requested to seek the blessing for this election.

Jabanika patan.²⁸

²⁴ An affectionate term for Father.

²⁵ "Who is one's own". There is nobody left who is dear to me.

²⁶ *Janaja* is the funeral prayer.

²⁷ Sheikh Hasina is the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the leader of the Bangladesh liberation movement, 1971. She is currently Prime Minister.

²⁸ "*Jabanika patan*" means "The curtain comes down".

সংসদ সদস্য মরহুম নজরুল ইসলাম সরকারের অকাল মৃত্যুর জারীগান

সৌজন্যে—আবদুল জলিল মাস্টার, ৪নং মাওহা, গৌরীপুর।

বয়সি ও সরকার হাতিম উদ্দিন সরকার (প্রা: মেঘার)

সাং—পালুহাটি, ডাকঘর—মুখুরিয়া, থানা—গৌরীপুর,

জিলা—ময়মনসিংহ।

নজরুল রে নজরুল তুমি গৌরীপুর ছাড়িলা

গৌরীপুর ছাড়িয়া তুমি ঢাকার শহর গেলা

বাজেট মিটিং করিয়া তুমি বাড়ীতে ফিরিলা

নজরুলরে নজরুল তুমি গৌরীপুর ছাড়িলা

আল্লাগো ...

প্রথমে বন্দি নু আমি আবে করতান

দ্বিতীয় বন্দি নু আমি ফেরেস্তা খোদার

মাতা পিতা জন্মদাতা উস্তাদ আর গীর

সকলের কাছে আমি নোয়াইলাম শির

এই পর্যন্ত বন্দনা খান্ত শুনে মন দিয়া

নজরুলের জীবনী আমি এখন যাইগো গাইয়া

নজরুলরে নজরুল তুমি গৌরীপুর ছাড়িলা এ

আল্লাগো ...

১৯৫০ সনে শুনে বিবরণ

নজরুলের-ই জন্ম হইল জানাই নিবেদন

দিনে দিনে বাড়ি নজরুল দেখিতে সুন্দর

৫ বছর বয়স যায় হইয়া তখন

৪ বছরে প্রাইমারী যে পাস যায় করিয়া

হাই স্কুলে ভর্তি হইলেন চরনিখোলা গিয়া

১৯৬৮ সনে মেট্রিক পাস করিয়া

মুক্তি যে বাহিনীতে গেলেন চলিয়া

দেশেতে ফিরিলেন তিনি মুক্তিযোদ্ধা হইয়া

বহু কষ্টের পরে দেশ স্বাধীন গেল হইয়া

মাস্টার হইলেন তিনি পোষ্ট অফিসে গিয়া

কয়েক বছর গেল পরে এই ভাবে চলিয়া

১৯৭০ সনে গেলেন তিনি আই.এ পাস করিয়া

এর পরে বলে লোকে নজরুলের ঠাই

ইউ: ইলেকশান করিবেন ভাই

কি দিয়া ইলেকশান করি টাকা পয়সা নাই

গরীবের ঘরে জন্ম দিলেন পাকসাই

নজরুলরে নজরুল তুমি গৌরীপুর ছাড়িয়া এ

আল্লাগো ...

প্রথম জীবনের কথা না করলে বয়ান

ভুল ত্রুটি থাকিয়া যাবে কাগজে প্রমাণ

উনার পিতা আ: করিম সইনাটি হয় বাড়ী

পিতার কাছে নজরুল সাহেব বসিলেন তখন

শুনে শুনে ওগো পিতা বলি আপনার ঠাই

জনতার অনুরোধে ইলেকশান আমি করিতে চাই

আপনার হুকুম যদি আমি যাই পাইয়া

ইলেকশান করবো আমি আল্লামার নাম লইয়া

আশা পূর্ণ করুক আল্লামা তোমারও লাগিয়া

টাকা দাখিল করলো নজরুল হুকুম পাইয়া

আল্লামার রহমতে যেন পাস করিলেন তাই

এই ভাবে ৫ বছর গত হইলো ভাই

৫নং সহানাটি ইউনিয়নে শান্তির সীমা নাই

লোকের সাথে মিশে চেয়ারম্যান হাসিয়া ২

গরীব দু:খী বুঝায় যেন পায়ে হাত দিয়া

দ্বিতীয় ইলেকশান ভাই আসিল এখন

ইলেকশান করলেন শুনে দিয়া মন

পাস করিলেন বিপুল ভোট পাইয়া

নজরুলরে নজরুল তুমি গৌরীপুর ছাড়িলা এ

আল্লাগো ...

তৃতীয় ইলেকশান আবার আসিল যখন

এবারও পাস করিলেন তখন

এ ভাবেতে দিন ভাইগো চলিল যখন

দিনের পর দিন ভাইগো মাসের পর মাস

উপজেলার ইলেকশান ভাই সামনে সর্বনাশ

ইউ: চেয়ারম্যানী দিলেনও ছাড়িয়া

উপজেলা ইলেকশান করিলেন ও গিয়া

অল্প ভোটে ফেল করিলেন মনে ব্যাথা নাই

আল্লামার নাম লইয়া সহনাটি গিয়া করেন ইলেকশান

পাস যেন করলেন তিনি আল্লামার মেহেরবান

৫ বছর গত হইলো শুনে শোভাগন

চতুর্থ ইলেকশান ভাই ইউনিয়নে যায় হইয়া

এবার ও যেন পাস করিলেন আল্লামার নামও লইয়া

৯ মাস গেল ভাই চেয়ারম্যানও হইয়া

উপজেলা ইলেকশান আবার যায় আসিয়া

চেয়ারম্যানী ছাড়িয়া তিনি উপজেলায় গিয়া

ইলেকশান করলেন তিনি সাহসও করিয়া

৩০

৪০

১০

২০

৫০

৬০

হার্ড কনটেস্টে ফেল করিল উপজেলায় ভাই
 পাস যেন করলেন তিনি কি বলিব আর
 ইউনিয়নে ৫ বছর হইয়া গেলেন পার
 সময় ইলেকশান ইউনিয়নের ভাই
 এবারও যে পাশ করিলেন কোন চিন্তা নাই
 দুই বছর গেল ভাই যখনও চলিয়া
 এম পি ইলেকশান আসিল চলিয়া
 নজরুলরে নজরুল তুমি গৌরীপুর ছাড়িলা এ
 আল্লাগো ...

৭০

মোসলমানে দেয়গো আজান মসজিদে যাইয়া
 ইস গান গায় পাখি ডালেতে বসিয়া
 এম পি সাহের উঠিলেন আল্লার নামটি লইয়া
 নামাজ পরিলেন তিনি য়াননামাজে বসিয়া
 নামাজ পড়িয়া তিনি দোয়া পড়িয়া
 সেন্নুনেতে যায়গো তিনি হাসিয়া (২)
 শেইভ যেন করেন তিনি আল্লার নামটি লইয়া
 এরপরে যায়গো তিনি এম পি হোটোলেতে
 নাস্তা যেন করলেন তিনি বন্ধু-বান্ধব লইয়া
 নাস্তা খাইয়া তিনি মুখে দিলেন পান
 উঠিয়া দাড়াইলেন তিনি পূর্ণিমার চান
 নজরুলরে নজরুল তুমি ধন্য ধন্য মায়ের সন্তান এ
 আল্লাগো ...

১১০

লোকে বলে চেয়ারম্যান সাহেব শুনে মন দিয়া
 এম পি ইলেকশান করেন আমরা যাই বলিয়া
 আল্লার নাম লইয়া তিনি সাহসও করিয়া
 আওয়ামী লীগের নমীনেশান গেলেনও পাইয়া
 হার্ড কনটেস্টে পাস করিলেন জানাই নিবেদন
 আল্লারও রহমত ভাই হইল তখন
 সুন্দর ভাবে দিন ভাই চলিল তখন
 লোকের সাথে মিলেন তিনি হাসিয়া হাসিয়া
 কবি বলে মোটামুটি ভাবে জারীগান গাই
 এম পি সাহেব লইয়া আমি ঢাকা শহর যাই
 নজরুলরে তুমি গৌরীপুর ছাড়িলা এ
 আল্লাগো ...

৮০

হোভাতে উঠিলেন তিনি হাসিয়া হাসিয়া
 দেশেতে ফিরিবেন তিনি মনেতে ভাবিয়া
 দেখা-দেখি যায়গো তিনি ঢাকা যে ছাড়িয়া
 জয়দেবপুর গেলেন তিনি শুনে মন দিয়া
 পাছে বাস সামনে ট্রাক বিধি হইল বাম
 এম পি সাহেব ভাবে মনে কি করিব কাম
 ব্রেক যে ধরিলেন তিনি বাম দিকেতে যায়
 ডান পা বাড়াইয়া ছিল সভায় বলে যাই
 পায়ের উপর দিয়া কোষ্টার চলে যায়
 আল্লা আল্লা বলে এম পি ধুলোতে লুটায়
 অচেতন হইলেন তিনি মুখে কথা নাই
 অফিসার মেয়ে একটি যাইতেছে চলিয়া
 দেখিলেন এম পি সাহেব আছেন গো পড়িয়া
 নাকে বুকে হাত তখন দিলেন যেন গিয়া
 দম যে আছেন ভাই ফেলিলেন বুঝিয়া
 ১৫ হাজার টাকা ভাইগো পকেটেতে পাইয়া
 টাকা যেন জমা করে নিজের কাছে ভাই
 হোভার নাঘর ভাই তাড়াতাড়ি লইয়া
 ওয়ারলেস করলেন তিনি সংসদে ভাই
 এম পি সাহেব এক্সিডেন্ট আমি দেখতে পাই
 তাড়াতাড়ী লইয়া গেল আরমি হাসপাতালে
 পরীক্ষা করে ডাক্তার পাও ফেলে কেটে
 চার ঘন্টা পরে এম পি চেতনও পাইয়া
 আফসোস করেন তিনি কান্দিয়া কান্দিয়া
 এই সংবাদ গেল ভাই গৌড়ীপুর চলিয়া
 হাজারে হাজারে লোক দেখিলাম চাহিয়া
 এই ভাবে চার দিন গেল যে চলিয়া
 শুক্রবার দিনগত শনিবারে রাত

১২০

১৩০

ঢাকার শহর গেলেন তিনি লইয়া আল্লার নাম
 বাজেট মিটিং করবেন তিনি এই হইলেন কাম
 মিটিং করেন দিনও যায় শুনে শ্রোতা
 অবশেষে এম পি যখন গেলেন হইয়া
 কয়েক দিনের মিটিং ভাইগো গেলো হইয়া
 কয়েকটা স্কীম ভাই লইলেন পাশ করাইয়া
 গৌরীপুর-শাহাঙ্গজের বাজারের পুল খান্দার যায় হইয়া
 আরেক স্কীম পাশ করাইলেন ভূইয়ার বাজার দিয়া
 ৬ কিলো মিটার রাস্তা ভাই পিচ যাবে হইয়া
 আরো অনেক কাজ তিনি যাবেনও করাইয়া
 দেশেতে ফিরিবেন তিনি হাসি খুশি হইয়া
 নজরুলরে নজরুল তুমি ধন্য মায়ের সন্তান
 ধন্য মায়ের সন্তান তুমি ধন্য বাপের বেটা
 ঢাকার শহর এন্তেকাল সবার মনে ব্যথা
 আল্লাগো ...

৯০

১০০

১৯৯২ শুনে বন্ধুগন
 আগষ্টের ৪ তারিখে কি ঘটে তখন
 হিন্দুরা যে শংখ ঘন্টা যায় বাজাইয়া

১৪০

দারুন যন্ত্রনায় এম পি হইয়া গেলেন কহিত
কোথায় রইলা রওসনা গো দেখনা আসিয়া
আমি যেন শেষ হইলাম ঢাকাতে আসিয়া
মহরানার দাবী তুমি দেওগো ছাড়িয়া
সেই খবর কইও তুমি জননীও ঠাই
আমারে পালিতে মায়ে পাইছে যত তাপ
ময়মনসিংহ-৩ এলাকাবাসী আমায় করবেন মাপ।

আমায় পালিত বাপে কত কষ্ট করে
কামাই করে খাওয়াইতে না পারি বাপেরে
আমার মুখের বাণী না শুনিবেন আর
কোথায় রইলা প্রানের ভাই সিরাজও আমার
ডাক শুনিয়া সিরাজ মিয়া আসল যে আর
দুই ভাইয়ে কান্দে তারা গলা গলি করে
আমি যেন ছাড়ি যাইগো তোমারারে এখন
সিরাজ বলে প্রানের ভাই আমায় দেও ছাড়ি
গাড়ির তলে পড়ব আমি তোমার সাথে চলি
দুই ভাইয়ের কান্দনে বৃক্ষের পত্র ঝড়ে
ভাইটাল ছিল নদীর পানি সেওত উজান ধরে
আর বলে এম পি সাহেব ভাইগো তোমার সাথে গিয়া
নাদিরা আর মনি যেন রাজিবকে যাই থুইয়া
এতিমও হইল এরা এদেশে থাকিয়া
নিজেরও সন্তান যেন যাইবা দেখিয়া
বেগমকে দেখিবা তুমি বড় বোনের মতন
পিতা ও মাতাকে তুমি বুঝাইও এখন
এই কথা বলে এম পির ইন্তেকালও হয়
ইন্না লিল্লাহি সবাই যেন কয়
নজরুলের নজরুল তুমি ধন্য মায়ের সন্তান ঐ

আল্লা গো ...

সিরাজ কান্দে বেগম কান্দে কান্দে শিশুগন
মাতা কান্দে পিতা কান্দে কি বলি এখন
কান্দনের কথা আমি কি বলিব আর
কলম যেন নাহি চলে শুনে শোভা দার
নাদিরা আর মনি কান্দে আঝা আঝা বলে
কার কাছে যাব মোরা আঝা যে বলিয়া
পিতা যেন ইন্তেকাল রাজিব বুঝে না
আঝা আঝা বলে ধরে গলা ছাড়ে না
কান্দে কান্দে বেগম নজরুল লইয়া শিশুগন
বাড়ী যাবে সোনা বাচ্চা অঞ্চলের ধন।
তোমায় বিনে এই ভবেতে কে আছে আপন
এই কথা বলে বেগম হাট ফেল গেল হয়ে
এই পর্যন্ত করুন জারী বারণ রেখে যাই

ভুল ক্রটি মাফ করিবেন আমার শোভা ভাই
পল্লী কবি হাতিম বলে সবার গোচরে
কান্দিলে যে এম পি সাহেব না আসিবে ফিরে
চল এখন দাফন করি সবাই যে মিলে
৭টা যেন বাজে ভাই ঘড়িতে যখন
সংসদে মিটিং ভাই হইল তখন
দাফন করিব মোরা রাত্তরীয় মতে গিয়া
এম পি'রে পাঠাইব মোরা হেলিকপ্টার দিয়া
প্রথমে জানাজা করে সংসদে গিয়া
তার পরে জানাজা করে ঢাকাবাসীগনে
এর পরে জানাজা করে শুনেন শোভা ভাই
হেলিকপ্টারে দিয়া
গৌরীপুরের খেলার মাঠে গেলও নামাইয়া
৫টার সময় নামাইল শাহগজের মাঠে
পাছারের বাজারে নিল ভাই শুনে মন দিয়া
শেষ করলেন ভাইগো জনমের লাগিয়া
সার্থক মরা মরছ নজরুল আমি বলে যাই
সকলের অন্তরে আছ তুমি মর নাই
এই পর্যন্ত জারী খাস্ত ইতি দিয়া যাই
কান্দিয়া উঠিল গৌরীপুরের শোকাহত জনতা
তারপরেতে এতিম পরিবারের দিকে চাহিয়া
জননেত্রী শেখ হাসিনা বেগম নজরুলকে দিলেন
ইলেকশানে দাঁড় করাইয়া
নজরুলের অসমাপ্ত কাজ করিতে সমাপ্ত
সকলের কাছে আমি হাতেম করি নিবেদন
এতিম পরিবারকে বাঁচাতে যত সর্ব সাধারন
নৌকায় দোয়া চাইতে করি নিবেদন।

যবনিকা পতন

১৭০

১৮০

"BANGLADESHER JARI"

Jarigan song by Ahmed Sofa
Dhaka, 1995

Ahmed Sofa is a born *kabi*—a wise man, a poet, novelist, journalist, and, naturally, a teacher. He is well-known in these roles as well as being a cordial host who can entertain listeners with gentle parables and provocative ideas for hours on end. Born in a village near Chittagong in 1943, he was educated at Dhaka University where he took his Master's degree in Political Science. Prior to this he studied Bengali language and literature and later he worked as a Research Fellow at the Bangla Academy and Dhaka University. During this time he also did some lecturing.

Always concerned with the rights of neglected communities, he has been active in various organizations and in projects on his own initiative. He was the founder president of the Bangladesh Lekhak Shibir Forum (The Bangladesh Writers' Group Forum) for progressive writers. Formerly related with a radical political movement, he is at present actively involved in such movements that promote tolerance and human rights, especially in the case of poor communities receiving insufficient attention. He has several books published in Calcutta. The well-known Indian film maker, Satyajit Ray, selected one of his novels for making a film.

In 1963, when Sofa was guarding the house of a Hindu friend during the communal riots of that time, by chance he came across an English translation of Goethe's *Faust*. This incident influenced his life deeply. It inspired him to learn German and to study Goethe's works, later translating *Faust* into Bengali. His translation was published in Calcutta and Dhaka. He was later invited to lecture in Germany and he has been working for the Bangla-German Sampreeti (Bangla-German Friendship) organization in Dhaka for several years.

When this group was invited to the Philippines in the fall of 1995, Ahmed Sofa listened to the song performances that would be presented there. When he heard the proposed *jarigan* singer, he was so upset by the mediocrity of the proposed song that he immediately dictated a *jarigan* song of his own, the one cited below. It also exists on an audio-cassette recording.

Although Ahmed Sofa's *jarigan* song is an imitation, not a folk creation, the following composition illustrates how the *jarigan* format can be used by urban as well as rural poets as a vehicle of commentary as much as for expository storytelling. Although the language of this *jarigan* song is refined (standard rather than dialectal), Ahmed Sofa employs traditional prosody and *jarigan* formulae. He begins with a typical *jarigan* call for attention: "*Shonen, shonen ... shonen diya mon*, (Listen, listen... listen paying attention)," then addresses the Philippine audience with a short *bandana* in which he introduces the country of Bangladesh. He continues with a description of its physiognomy, products and culture, stressing the value of education and the need for education among the poor who bear the brunt of labor. He ends with a call for recognition that all humans have been created equal and for

women to take their rightful place in society. His hope for reforms in society is based on improvements that he says are beginning to make an appearance.

For non-Bengali speakers a couplet from Ahmed Sofa's *jarigan* text is quoted in roman transcription below in order to provide an idea of the rhythm, rhyme, assonance, and diction in his poem that are typical of *jarigan* poetry.

*Juge juge, kale kale, ei deshere chele,
Deshar lagi, lorai kori, pran diyechhe dhele.*

(From generation to generation, time to time, we children of this country,
Love our country, fight (for it), and give our lives for it.)

* * *

Listen, listen, brothers and sisters. Listen, paying attention.
I will describe joys and sorrows of our country.
Through affection and love we are close,
We two countries, two nations in Asia.
Children, women, old folk, sisters and brothers of the Philippines,
In my heart I think of you as relatives.
(In) the great plains of Bengal, bounded by the sea,
There we dwell; there we make our house and home.
Full of heart-felt love we have come (to you),
We sing and dance to the music of Bengal. 10
Our Bangladesh lies beneath the Himalayas,
The waves of the Bay of Bengal play on our southern (shore).
(Among) the rivers and tributaries, hills and valleys, and plains,
Here we have dwelled for generations.

Our golden Bangladesh abounds in *mango* and *kathal*;¹
There is no limit to what I can say about the (country's) beauty.
From generation to generation, time to time, the people of this land,
Have fought for their country and sacrificed their lives.

Oh, brothers! I will tell you the story of seventy-one².

It's terrible to hear.

The foreign brutes killed millions of people. 20
The enemy shelled, bombed, and shouted their battle cries.
At that time the call to fight for freedom was raised.
This soil of Bengal, the mother of all our people,
Became independent through the blood-bath of (her) sons.

¹ The mango fruit of Bangladesh is especially sweet. *Kathal*, jack-fruit, grows to exceptionally large size.

² "Seventy-one" refers to 1971 in which year the population of what was then called East Pakistan fought for independence from Pakistan and became the nation of Bangladesh.

This sun, this moon, as long as they shine on all,
 (We) Bengalis will all speak (our) Bangla language³.
 In the blood of martyrs is written the name of golden Bangla.
 We offer *salam*, (we offer) *salam* to our motherland.

Children, women, young and old people, sons and daughters,
 One hundred and twenty million people live here. 30
 (We are) a new country, a new nation, with new hope in our hearts.
 We have an endless thirst for education and knowledge.
 We have grief, we have hardship, and there is hunger and
 thirst, brothers.

We long for a way to end all these problems.
 These (Bangladeshi) people, these golden people, have
 great capability;
 (The creator) has given intelligence, wisdom and common sense.
 In our natural state due to lack of means, we suffer grief and
 poverty, brothers,
 Miseries are drowning us because we have no appropriate
 education (with which to fight them).

If this nation, brothers, gets appropriate education,
 It can stand erect and hold its head high. 40
 The nation is rising, making the Himalayas tremble.
 We have a great thirst for knowledge and learning; it
 burns in our hearts.

In this world the Creator has provided (us) with many gifts;
 (Among these) a strong, handsome body takes first place.
 You can talk about wealth, reputation, and faith, brothers,
 But there is nothing comparable to well-being.
 Let there be happiness, let there be peace in every one's heart.
 Let children be born without disease in each home.
 This country of ours is full of pleasure and peace, brothers.
 For world peace we ask for the kindness of the Creator. 50

In this country we live by rice and fish,
 Fishermen, farmers, blacksmiths, potters, all dwell side by side.
 This country depends on agriculture, the farmer is the
 breath of this land.
 The farmers with their toil and care cause our pride to grow.

³ During Pakistani rule, when Bangladesh was known as East Pakistan, the Pakistani government tried to institute Urdu as the state language. In 1952, students and citizens rioted against this effort and many of them were martyred in the rioting. February 21 is a national holiday in memory of these martyrs.

The farmer ploughs the land while the wife works at home.
 She cooks, washes the clothes and brings the water home.
 Through the care of (our) farming men and farming women,
 the country thrives,
 In the fields, in the land, the golden crops flourish.
 There are fields, there are crops, but the old days are no more.
 To live in the new age we need new thinking. 60
 The farmer was happy in the days of King Mandhata⁴;
 But the happy dreams of the old days are gone.
 To lead a new life, many different things are needed.
 The world of our grandfathers now is no more.
 The blood of the farmer is very sweet and everyone wants
 to taste it;
 Middle-men, traders, bureaucrats, everyone.

 The weaver, the carpenter, the blacksmith, the potter, all
 are poor people.
 Their breath is trapped in their breasts.
 We (the present group) are the workers of B. G. S. (Bangla-German
 Sampreeti).
 Within our hearts we are all full of joy and our expectations run high. 70
 Whether we are Hindus or Muslims or Buddhists or Christians,
 In this world, as the creations of the Creator, we are all equal.
 We are human beings; so are we all, my brothers;
 One blood, one breath; no one is big or small.
 No one is big or small.

 As we make a group and travel in the villages and markets,
 We say: "Wake up and rise up, brothers and sisters!"
 "Wake up, rise up, brothers and sisters. Have no fear.
 We are eager for you to join in our efforts.
 Wake up. Rise up, brothers and sisters. Have no regrets.
 Organize yourselves, form groups, plunge into work. 80

 Mothers and sisters are confined to their homes without rights;
 They spend their lives like inanimate things.
 "Wake up! Rise up, mothers and sisters! Understand your situation.
 Say in unison: "We are also human beings!"

 Women and men have equal rights in society.
 When women are rejected, society remains handicapped.

⁴ King Mandhata is a character from the Sanskrit epic, the *Mahābhārata*. His name, therefore, represents very ancient times.

If women do not rise up along with men, how can men face
this earthly world?

Whichever way we direct our ears, we hear messages of hope.

We see in villages and markets a fresh hand beckoning.

90

Enough words! Enough words! The main thing is work.

To all our friends in the Philippines we send our *salam*, our *salam*.

বাংলাদেশের জারি

আহমদ হুফা

ঢাকা। ১৯৯৫।

শোনে শোনে ভাইবোনেরা শোনে দিয়া মন
দেশের সুখ-দুঃখের কথা করিব বর্ণন
প্রীতি আর প্রেমধর্মে অতি কাছাকাছি
দুই দেশে দুইজাতি এশিয়াতে আছি
ফিলিপাইনের শিশু নারী বৃদ্ধ বোন ভাই
মনে মনে জ্ঞান করি আত্মীয় সবাই।
সমুদ্র মেখলা ঘেরা বাংলার প্রান্তর
সেইখানেতে বসত করি, সেখা বাড়ী ঘর
প্রেমপূর্ণ প্রান নিয়ে আমরা আসিয়াছি
বাংলার গীতিছন্দে গান গাই নাচি।
এই আমাদের বাংলাদেশ হিমালয়ের নীচে
দক্ষিণেতে বঙ্গোপসাগর ঢেউ খেলিতেছে।
নদ-নদী পাহাড় টিলা সমতল প্রান্তর
এই মাটিতে বসত করি যুগ যুগান্তর।

আম কাঁঠালে ঘেরা আমার সোনার বাংলাদেশ
যতই বলি রূপের কথা হবে না তার শেষ।
যুগে যুগে কালে কালে এই দেশেরই ছেলে
দেশের লাগি লড়াই করি প্রান দিয়েছে ঢেলে।

ও ভাই একান্তরের কথাবলি শুনতে ভয়ংকর
লক্ষ কোটি মানুষ মারে বিদেশী তঙ্কর।
কামান মারে বোমা মারে শত্রু দেয় হাঁক
সেই সময়ে উঠল বাজি মুক্তি যুদ্ধের ডাক।
এই আমাদের বাংলাভূমি সর্ব লোকের মাতা
সন্তান রক্তে সিনান করি পাইছে স্বাধীনতা।
এই সূর্য এই চাঁদ যতদিন জ্বলিবে (সবাই)
বাস্তালীরা বাংলা ভাষা সকলে বলিবে।
শহীদের রক্তে লেখা সোনার বাংলা নাম
এই আমাদের মাতৃভূমি সালাম সালাম।

শিশু নারী বৃদ্ধা যুবা সন্তান ও সন্ততি
বার কোটি মানুষ করে (এই দেশেতে বসতি) (২)
নতুন দেশ, নতুন জাতি বুকে নতুন আশা
শিক্ষা দীক্ষার লাগি মনে অনন্ত পিপাসা

দুঃখ আছে, কষ্ট আছে, ক্ষুধা তৃষ্ণা আছে ভাই
সর্ব মুশকিল আসানের (আমরা একটা পছা চাই) (২)
এই যে মানুষ সোনার মানুষ সব ক্ষমতা আছে
আক্কেল বুদ্ধি হুঁস জ্ঞান সমস্ত দিয়াছে
স্বভাবে অভাবে দুঃখে দারিদ্রেতে মানুষ ভাই
আকষ্ট ভুবিয়া আছে (কারণ কারো শিক্ষা নাই) (২)
এই জাতি যদি ভাইরে সঠিক ভাবে শিক্ষা পায়
মস্তক তুলিয়া ভাইরে সোজা জগতে দাঁড়ায়
জাগিয়া উঠিছে জাতি হিমালয় টলিছে
বিদ্যা শিক্ষার মহাতৃষ্ণা (অন্তরে জ্বলিছে) (২)

৪০

এই জগতে যত আছে স্রষ্টার অবদান
বলিষ্ঠ সুন্দর শরীর পাবে তাতে প্রথম স্থান
ধন বল মান বল ধর্ম বল ভাই
সুঠাম স্বাস্থ্যের চাইতে দামী বড় কিছু নাই
সুখ চাই শান্তি চাই সকলের অন্তরে
নীরোগ শিশুর জন্ম হোক সকল ঘরে ঘরে
সুখানন্দে পরিপূর্ণ আমার এদেশ ভাই
বিশ্ব শান্তির লাগি আমরা স্রষ্টার কৃপা চাই।

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৫০

এই দেশেতে আমরা সবাই ভাতে মাছে আছি
জেলে চাষী কামার কুমার মাটির কাছাকাছি
কৃষি জীব এইদেশ আমার কৃষক দেশের প্রাণ
কৃষকেরা শ্রমে যত্নে বাড়াইছে মান।

কিষণ মাঠে লাঙ্গল চষে ঘরেতে কিষণী
রান্না করে কাপড় কাচে বয়ে আনে পানি
কিষণ ও কিষণীর যত্নে এই দেশটি আছে
ক্ষেতে ক্ষেতে মাঠে মাঠে সোনা ফলিয়াছে।।
ক্ষেত আছে ফসল আছে কিন্তু পুরানা দিন নাই
নতুন কালে বাঁচার লাগি নতুন চিন্তা চাই
কৃষক আ-ছিল সুখী মাকাতার আমলে
অতীত কালের সুখ স্বপ্ন কখন গেছে চলে।
নতুন করে বাঁচতে হলে নানান কিছু চাই
দাদার দিনের সেই পৃথিবী এখন তো আর নাই।
কিষণ রক্ত বড় মিঠা সবাই খাইতে চায়
জোতদার মহাজন আমলা সবাই।

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৬০

তাতী ছুতার কামার কুমার যত দুঃখী আছে।
হৃদযন্ত্রে তাদের প্রাণ বাঁধা পড়িয়াছে।
আমরা হইলাম বিজিএস-এর কর্মী দল
অন্তরে আনন্দপূর্ণ আকাঙ্ক্ষা সবল।

৩০

৭০

হিন্দু কিংবা মুসলমান বৌদ্ধ কি খ্রীষ্টান
বিশ্ব স্রষ্টার সৃষ্টি সবে সকলে সমান।
মানুষ সকলে বটে সবে মোরা ভাই ভাই
একই রক্ত একই প্রাণ ছোট বড় নাই। (২)

আমরা যখন সংঘ বাঁধি গ্রামে গঞ্জে চলি
জেগে উঠ ভাইবোনেরা এই কথাটি বলি
জেগে উঠ ভাইবোনেরা কোন শংকা নাই
আমাদের এই কর্ম যজ্ঞে তোমাদেরও চাই
জেগে উঠ ভাইবোনেরা ছাড় পরিতাপ
সংঘ বাঁধি একজোটে কর্মে দাও ঝাপ।

৮০

মা বোনেরা ঘরের কোণে অধিকার হীন
জড় বস্তুর মত সবে কাটাইতেছে দিন
জাগি উঠ মা বোনেরা সব মনে আন হুঁস
এক জোটে বল সবে আমরাও মানুষ।

নারী পুরুষ সমাজেতে সমান অধিকার
নারী না জাগিলে ঘটে সমাজে বিকার
নারী যদি না জাগিবে পুরুষের সনে
পুরুষ কি করে জিতে সংসারের রণে
যেই দিকে কান পাতি শুনি আশার বাণী
আমরা দেখি গ্রামে গঞ্জে নতুনের হাতছানি
কথা নয়, কথা নয় আসল হল কাম
ফিলিপিনো বন্ধুর সব সালাম সালাম।

৯০

FAMILY PLANNING JARIGAN

Cited from *Rural Development in Action; the Comprehensive Experiment at Comilla, East Pakistan (1970)*¹

I cite below a portion of the above mentioned book by Arthur F. Raper, explaining the use of *jarigan* singing in the 1960s for a practical purpose and quoting in translation a part of one such *jarigan* song. The descriptions of when and how the songs are sung give evidence of *jarigan* singing as an ongoing tradition with large audiences in attendance.

PUBLICIZING THE PROGRAM

Various types of publicity are used. Local *zari* singers are employed to learn about family planning and then write and sing songs about it in the market places and villages. Portable tape recorders have recently been used to play some of the songs to the village women who, because of *pardah*², cannot attend the market shows. The results to date have been encouraging.

Here is an introductory song a family planning team leader, a *sardar*³, sings (after each line a chorus chants a repetition of the main thought):

Let me explain why a man should plan in his life, and why family
 planning is important.
 How does God create human beings?
 God has made a plan, so man should plan in every sphere of his life.
 If a man builds a house he has a plan.
 The plan is made first of all, and after that the builder is called in.
 Then the work can begin.
 Such planning is necessary in every sphere of life.
 In Family life the husband and wife should first make a plan, and then with
 this plan build a family

¹ Arthur F. Raper, assisted by Harry L. Case, Richard O. Niehoff, William T. Ross, and Edgar A. Schuler, *Rural Development in Action; the Comprehensive Experiment at Comilla, East Pakistan (1970)*: 180-181 and 230-231. I am grateful for the passages cited which were supplied to me by Peter J. Bertocci, Professor in the Department Sociology/Anthropology, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, U.S.A. When we met at the annual Bengali Studies Conference, May 3-5, 1996, he remembered that he had seen the mention of *jarigan* songs in the above book by Arthur F. Raper and associates and sent me photo-copies of the above passages.

² *Pardah* (literally, curtain) means the seclusion of women at home and in public. In public a full-length coat and head-piece of light cloth is worn. When I lived in Dhaka in the 1960s, women were rarely seen even in *pardah* on the streets. Those who traveled in public wore *pardah* dress, generally black in color. Today, many Bangladeshi women travel in public without *pardah*.

³ A *sardar* is a leader or chief.

Without planning a man is quite helpless in this world.

A planned family brings happiness to man's house, to his home.

In April 1966 the Comilla folk-singer team was invited by Radio Pakistan to record some songs on family planning. Three such songs were recorded and since then have been broadcast on different programs ...

... As has been mentioned, the family planning program has made regular use of a group of *zari* singers to publicize its activity. The singers studied the program and then developed songs that set forth the economic and social values of family planning, the places where supplies can be purchased, asserting that they are easy and healthful to use and that it is religiously permissible to use them. A three-hour show at a local market usually attracts 300 to 500 men, and a five-hour show in a village may draw a thousand or more men and children. The songs are tailored to the audience, and new ones are constantly being made up from the cumulative understanding of the program by the song leaders and their associates. The *kabigan*⁴ style of singing is generally employed, whereby song leaders present conflicting arguments, one in favor and one opposing the topic being discussed. The leaders are supported by a harmonium player, a drummer, and three assistants.

By mid-1966, the *zari*-singing team was being used to publicize other Academy programs also. It was the team's success in publicizing family planning over a two-year period that led to this decision. There were four or five village meetings held each week except during the height of the monsoon ...⁵

⁴ For an explanation of *kabigan*, see the Glossary descriptions.

⁵ An acquaintance working for a development organization told me that surveys showed that radio and television were reaching larger audiences in rural areas than the three-hundred or so listeners to a *Jarigan* recital.

MARSIIYA

The following *marsiya* is from a paper-back booklet, *Bangala Marchiya*. It contains an introductory page by Mohammad Mohachen Ulla of Nator, Rajshahi, printed in Naogaon, Rajshahi (no date). I acquired the booklet in Calcutta in the late 1960s.

The text of this *marsiya* refers to Hosein's tribulations during the battle of Karbala, probably at the end when he is the last surviving fighter. He longs for his brother, Hasan, who was poisoned about ten years before the Karbala tragedy. The "kafers", the infidels, to whom he refers are the soldiers of the caliph, Yezid, sent to ambush and capture Hosein and his followers at Karbala.

This *marsiya*, like all the others from the same booklet, is printed in the layout of *tripadi* meter, although the syllable count is less than is traditional for this meter.

কাতরে হোসেন কান্দে
 ভাইয়ের শোকে দিশাহারা ।
 বিপদ কালে ভাইয়ের পিছে
 ভাই বিনে কে হয় খাড়া ।
 "হায়রে আমার দু'নে অন্ধকার
 কে দাঁড়ায় আমার পিছে ।
 কোথারে ভাই দেখে যারে
 কাফের আমায় ঘিরছে ।
 তুই কেন ভাই ছেড়ে গেলি
 আমায় দিয়ে কাফেরে ।
 বিপদ কালে ডাকি তোরে
 বারেক আসি দেখা দে ।"

Katare Hosene kande,
Bhaier shoke dishhara:
Bipad kale bhaier pichhe,
Bhai bine ke hoy khara.

"[Hai re!] amar du'ne andakar,
 Ke danray amar pichhe?
 Kotha [re!], bhai? dekhe jare,
 Kapher amay ghirachhe!

Tui keno, bhai, chhere geli,
Amay diye kaphere?
Bipad kale, daki tore,
Barek ashi dekha de."

In distress Hosein weeps,
Being at a loss, in grief for his brother.
In time of danger (looming) behind a brother,
Who can stay upright without his brother?

"Alas for me darkness is in the world.
Who (will) stand behind me?
Where are you, brother? Seeing those
kafers who surround me?

Why, brother, have you gone leaving me?
 Giving me to the *kafers*?
In this time of danger I call you;
 Allow me to see you once again."

NAOHA 1

This *naoha* is number 3 in a first volume of a series of paper-back booklets called *Ashru: Bangla Naoha o Matam* (*Tears: Bengali Naohas and Matams*), composed by Shyed Baker Reza ("Majlum"). The booklet was given to me on May 23, 1995, by the poet's father, Shyed Mohammad Qasim, an eighty-five year old Shi'a scholar, formerly in the British army, who lives near Hoseini Dalan in Dhaka. S. M. Qasim has a large collection of books on Shi'a history and religion, some written by him. He continues to write although confined to bed by a broken hip due to a rickshaw accident early in 1995.

In this song, the speech of Sokhina, the daughter of Hosein and the widowed bride of Kasem, expresses her anxiety and grief during the last days of Karbala, perhaps the last hours. Chronological imprecision is part of the emotional, as opposed to rational, tenor of the text. The refrain line which is repeated after each narrative line is typical of *jarigan* songs when sung in performance by a *boyati* with *dohars*.

কেঁদে বলে বালিকা সখিনা সন্ধ্যা ঘনিয়ে এলো
কখন আসিবে বাবা, সন্ধ্যা ঘনিয়ে এলো

পানি আনতে চাচাজান গেল এখনো ফিরে না এলো
এসো চাচা পানি চাহি না, সন্ধ্যা ঘনিয়ে এলো

সীমার আমায় চড় মারিল মাথার কাপড় কেড়ে নিলো
কেমাও জ্বালীয়ে ফেলিল, সন্ধ্যা ঘনিয়ে এলো

আম্মা ও ফুফুরা সবাই বন্দী হয়ে কুফায় যাই
সবাইকে দড়িতে বাঁধিল, সন্ধ্যা ঘনিয়ে এলো

এসো মোস্তফা এসো, এসো মুর্তজা এসো
এসো ফাতেমা জাহেরা, সন্ধ্যা ঘনিয়ে এলো ।।

Kende bole balika Sokhina:
(*Shonddha ghaniye elo.*)

"*Kakhan ashibe baba?*
(*Shonddha ghaniye elo.*)

Pani an'te chachajan gelo; ekhono phire na elo.
Esho, chacha; pani chahi na.
(*Shonddha ghaniye elo.*)

Shimar amar chor marilo; mathar kapor kere nilo.
Khemao j(w)aliye pherilo.
(*Shonddha ghaniye elo.*)

Amma o phuphura shobai bandhi hoye Kufar jai.
Shobaike darite dandhilo.
(Shonddha ghaniye elo.)

Esho, Mustafa! Esho, esho, Murtaza, esho!
Esho Fatema Zahera!"
(Shonddha ghaniye elo.)

Weeping, the young woman, Sokhina said:
 (The approaching evening has come.)
 "When will my father¹ come?
 (The approaching evening has come.)

My dear uncle² went to fetch water; even now he has not returned.
 (The approaching evening has come.)

Come (back), uncle; I do not need water.
 (The approaching evening has come.)

Shimar³ has struck me. He has snatched away my head covering.⁴
 (The approaching evening has come.)

Burning up my joy, he has cast it away.
 (The approaching evening has come.)

My mother, my aunts, all my relatives—we (all) go to Kufa.⁵
 (The approaching evening has come.)

They have bound us all with rope.
 (The approaching evening has come.)

Come, Mustafa⁶, come! Come, Murtaza, come!
 Come, Fatema Zahera!"⁷
 (The approaching evening has come.)

¹ Sokhina's father is Imam Hosein, the hero of the Karbala stories.

² The uncle that Sokhina refers to here may be Hosein's right hand man, his brother, Abbas Ali.

³ Shimar is the warrior on the enemy side who beheads Hosein at the end of the battle. Like the Caliph Yezid, he represents the epitome of evil. In the *ta'ziyeh* of Iran and in the *Bishad Sindhu* (*Sorrow Sea*) drama of Bangladesh, the role of Shimar is particularly dramatic and terrifying.

⁴ When the women were taken captive, their head-pieces were snatched away, including, no doubt, the face covering. This act violates the women almost as seriously as if they were raped.

⁵ Kufa is the city to which Hosein and his followers were headed when they were ambushed at Karbala by the Caliph Yezid who instigated the battle there.

⁶ Mustafa is Prophet Muhammad and Murtaza is Hazrat Ali.

⁷ Fatema Zahera is mother of Hasan and Hosein, wife of Hazrat Ali.

NAOHA 2

This *naoha* comes from the first booklet of the series called *Ashru: Bangla Naoha o Matam (Tears: Bengali Naohas and Matams)*, by Shyed Baker Reza ("Majlum").

The song describes Hosein's leave taking from Medina as he sets out with his followers for Kufa. He predicts events at Karbala while he remembers the death of his brother, Hasan, caused by a plot of the Caliph Yezid. Hosein predicts the death of Ashgor Ali, his infant son who will die in his arms at Karbala.

বিদায় দাও হোসেনকে আজ খোদা হাফেজ
ও নানার মদীনা খোদা হাফেজ ।

ছেড়ে চলি তোমায় খোদা হাফেজ
ও নানার মদীনা খোদা হাফেজ ।

থাকতে দেয়নি আমায় নানার উম্মত
কারবালায় চলি আজ খোদা হাফেজ ।

বাবাকে ছাড়তে হয়েছে তোমায়
শান্তি পায়নি ও মা খোদা হাফেজ ।

চক্রান্তে বিষ দিয়েছে হায় ভাইকে
লাশে ও মারল তীর খোদা হাফেজ ।

ইসলামকে রক্ষা করতে চলছি সবাই
শিশু আজগর ও আজ খোদা হাফেজ ।

কারবালায় সাথী বন্ধুদেরকে হোসায়ন
বললেন যাও তোমরা সব খোদা হাফেজ ।

কাল প্রভাতে জবাই হবে আমি
রক্তের বন্যা হবে খোদা হাফেজ ।

কাল আলী আজগর মরবে বুকে আমার
মারবে তীর তাকে হায় খোদা হাফেজ ।

বিবি জয়নব, সখিনা ও কুলসুম ।
বন্দী হবেন সবাই খোদা হাফেজ ।

অগ্নি তাবুতে দিবে কাল তারা
নবীর ঘর জ্বলবে হায় খোদা হাফেজ ।

বন্দী হয়ে যখন যান কুফায়
জয়নব বলেন ও ভাই খোদা হাফেজ ।

গারীবুল বেওয়াতান শাহীদ ও আসীর
আসসালাম মজলুমের খোদা হাফেজ ।

Biday dao Hosayonke aj (Khoda hafez).

O nanar Madina (Khoda Hafez).

Chhere choli tomay (Khoda hafez)

O nanar Madina (Khoda hafez).

Thak'te deyani amay nanar ummat.

*Karbalay choli aj (Khoda hafez). **

Babake chharete hoyechhe tomay.

Shanti payni, Oh, Ma (Khoda hafez).

Chakrante bish diyechhe [Hai!] bhaike.

Lashe o marlo tir (Khoda hafez).

Islamke rakkha, kor'te chol'chhi shobai.

Shishu Azgor o aj (Khoda hafez).

Karbalay shakhi bandhuderke Hosayon,

Bol'len jao tomar shob (Khoda hafez).

Kal probhate jabai ami

Rokter bonna (Khoda hafez).

Kal ashi Ashgor morbe buke amar.

Marbe tir take, [Hai!] (Khoda hafez).

Bibi Jainab, Sokhina o Kulsum,

Bondi hoben shobai (Khoda hafez).

Agni tanbute dibe kal tara,

Nabir ghor j(w)ol'be [Hai!] (Khoda hafez).

Bondi hoye jokhon jan Kufay,

Jainab bolen o bhai (Khoda hafez).

Garibul beoyatan shahid o ashir,

Assalam majlumer (Khoda hafez).

Say farewell to Hosayon (Hosein) today,

*(Khoda hafez!)*¹

And to, Madina², (home) of (my) grandfather.³

(Khoda hafez!)

I go leaving you,

(Khoda hafez!)

¹ *Khoda hafez.* means may God bless you. It is often used in Muslim society in saying good-bye (God be with you).

² Madina is Medina, the city to which the Prophet led his followers from Mecca. In *jarigan* texts it is sometimes called "golden Medina" because of its holiness as the refuge of the Prophet.

³ Hosein's grandfather is the Prophet himself, father of Fatema, Hosein's mother.

And Madina, (home) of (my) grandfather.

(*Khoda hafez!*)

The *ummat* (community)⁴ of (my) grandfather does not allow me to stay.⁵

Today I go to Karbala.

(*Khoda hafez!*)

It was necessary for you to leave your father⁶.

And my mother gets no peace.

(*Khoda hafez!*)

In a secret plot (the wife of Hasan) gave (my) brother poison⁷.

And an arrow pierced his corpse⁸.

(*Khoda hafez!*)

Let us all go to save Islam.

And today the child Ashgor⁹.

(*Khoda hafez!*)

Hosayon has said to his followers, men and women:

"All of you go to Karbala!"

(*Khoda hafez!*)

Tomorrow at dawn I will be killed.¹⁰

There will be a flood of blood.

(*Khoda hafez!*)

Tomorrow Ali Ashgor will die in my embrace.

An arrow will pierce him.

(*Khoda hafez!*)

Bibi Jainab, Sokhina and Kulsum,¹¹

Friends will all be there.

(*Khoda hafez!*)

⁴ *Ummat* in Arabic means community and in Bengali means followers. Here Hosein is saying that his followers have urged him to join his supporters in Kufa and strengthen the Shi'a cause against the caliph.

⁵ Perhaps Hosein refers here to the Shi'a Muslims who begged him to become the rightful leader of the Muslim world instead of Yezid.

⁶ Hazrat Ali is the father of Hosein, but he died before the battle of Karbala. It is not clear to whom Hosein is referring here.

⁷ Hosein is remembering how his brother, Hasan, died from poison administered by his wife who was a pawn in a plot by the caliph Yezid who wanted to marry her.

⁸ In the play, *Bishad Sindhu* (*Sorrow Sea*), three attempts are made on Hasan's life. The first and third are by poisoning and the second is by stabbing.

⁹ Ashgor Ali is the infant son who died in the arms of Hosein when Hosein sought to move the enemy to pity. The enemy shot arrows at Hosein and one pierced Ashgor Ali fatally.

¹⁰ Knowing the future is characteristic of the Karbala cycle of stories. Statements about the dire future heighten the drama as projected by the poetry.

¹¹ Jainab is Hosein's sister, Sokhina is daughter, and Kulsum is another sister.

Tomorrow they will put fire to (our) tents.
The house of the Prophet will burn¹², alas!
(*Khoda hafez!*)

When the women captives go to Kufa¹³,
Jainab¹⁴ cries "Oh, (my) brother!"
(*Khoda hafez!*)

Of the destitute and homeless martyrs,
Receive the "Assalam"¹⁵.
(*Khoda hafez!*)

¹² Because Hosein is the grandson of the Prophet, his tent represents the "house of the Prophet."

¹³ After the battle at Karbala, the women in captivity were taken to Kufa where Yezid had his throne.

¹⁴ Jainab is famous for the way in which she spoke out fearlessly about the cruel treatment of her brother by the caliph, Yezid. She was not afraid to mourn for Hosein in front of Yezid. It is said that her speeches in which she told about the events of Karbala form the origin of the Karbala episodes recounted in the Persian *taziyeh* and in *jarigan* songs.

¹⁵ *Assalam* is short for the greeting "*As-salam-u-alaikum*" (May God bless you).

“ধর্মের কাঁটা বাতাসে নড়ে”

বাঙ্গালা মর্চিয়া

—:::—

মুনশী মোহম্মদ মহছেন উল্লাহ
প্রণীত

খরিদা সূত্রে মালিক
ধোন্দকার রফিউদ্দিন
“কোহিনূর লাইব্রেরী”
পোষ্ট নগরী, রাজসাহী

—:::—

মূল্য ৪০ পয়সা

Fig. 39. A booklet of Bengali *Marsiya* by Munshi Mohammad Mohsen Ullah.