

ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF INDIAN LITERATURE

VOLUME VI

**EDITORS
PARAM ABICHANDANI
K.C. DUTT**

**SUPPLEMENTARY ENTRIES
AND
INDEX**



**SAHITYA AKADEMI
NEW DELHI**

Sahitya Akademi

Rabindra Bhavan, 35 Ferozeshah Road, New Delhi 110 001.
Jeevan Tara Building, 23A/44X, Diamond Harbour Road, Calcutta 700 053.
Guna Building, 2nd Floor, No: 304-305, Annasalai, Teynampet, Madras 600 018.
A.D.A. Ranga, Mandira, 109, J.C. Road, Bangalore 560 002.
172, Mumbai Marathi Grantha Sangrahalaya Marg, Dadar, Bombay 400 014.

© Sahitya Akademi, 1994

Rs. 500

**Published by Professor Indra Nath Choudhuri, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi
and printed at Nu Tech Photolithographers, 4759/XI, Pratap Street, 23, Darya Ganj, New Delhi-110 002**

BOAT SONGS (KONKANI)

classified into three types: (a) Nauka baich (boat race) songs, (b) solitary boatman's songs, (c) songs addressed to the boatman.

During rainy season, or at the end of it, when rivers are in full stream, nauka-baich competitions are organized. Thirty to fifty rowers on each long boat row rhythmically. Since unified rhythm is required to attain maximum tempo, there are regular refrains in such songs of men at work. There are persons on boats, especially assigned to singing, lead and encourage the rowers. These songs are characterized by their fast movements. Though 'Sarigan' is typically boatman's song, many other types of traditional folk-songs are also sung on boats. Like in other folk-songs, improvisations take place during performances.

Solitary boatman sings occasionally while on a long voyage. 'Bhatiali' form of folk-songs best suits and represents their mood. The general theme of these songs is metaphysical about life and death, about love and separation. The third type is not typical as boat-song, yet it needs mention here since such songs are closely related to the boat journey and boatman. The young bride separated from her distant parental home, tearfully tells the passing boatman to convey her plights to her parents and brother. Following the folk tradition, Kazi Nazrul Islam and others have composed boat songs in which the theme and image of the boat-journey is metaphorically used to give expression to the poet's world-view. These compositions enriched the urban literary tradition of Bengal.

Seb.Ch.

BOAT SONGS (Konkani). The Konkani homeland stretches along the western seaboard of India facing the Arabian sea. It is full of indentations and creeks alongside its coastline. It is criss-crossed by rivers, rivulets and dotted with islands in abundant measure. On these waterways ply many boats of all sizes and shapes fitted out for various purposes, as means of transportation of goods and people, for ferrying people, and things across a river from one bank to another, as also for conducting various operations of fishing. To relieve their toil and make their harsh work a little more pleasant and endurable, and to draw enthusiasm for their monotonous activities these hardy boatmen engage themselves in giving vent to their pent up emotion in songs of a myriad variety.

Some of these songs have a touch of romance about them as the men call out to their beloveds or wedded wives in saucy and suggestivive language and lilting rythms. Others speak of the concerted efforts made by the fishermen as they struggle in their battle of life against the raging sea in quest of food for us and to eke out a tolerable living for themselves. There are other songs, however, which form

part of the 'Dekhni' song-cum-dance stylisation in the form of an artistic folk-song, in various compositions.

There is, for instance, the famous 'Dekhni' song of the boatman, which has achieved international fame, entitled 'Hanv saiba poltoddi vetam' (I am going across the other bank of the river, Sir). It is an imaginative rendering of the poet-composer in a highly artistic manner, perhaps an expression of the Goan Christian nostalgia for their long-lost Hindu past, where the 'devadasi' or 'kolvont' in Konkani, the temple dancing girl, was an alluring symbol. The original meaning of the 'dekhni' appears to be 'a devil of a female' and it has a rather voluptuous suggestion embodied in it. This is now enacted by sophisticated dancers in swaying rhythm, women who act as the devadasis. As twilight gathers, the dancing girls reach the ferry point on the riverside and ask that they be carried by the boatman to the other side of the river so as to be able to perform at a dance at the wedding of a man called Damu (Damodara). As the boatman, at repeated entreaties of the women, goes on coyly turning down their request, there begins the pleading and coaxing by the women, inducing the boatman finally with offerings of anklets, bracelets, nose-ringlets, by turns, and ultimately clinching the deal with the offer of a kiss, which later the boatman accepts in a willing surrender to their wiles, to ferry them across the river.

Something similar is enacted in another interlude with a boatman in a 'dekhni' song called 'Are tanddlea' (Oh boatman!). The day is drawing to a close and the solitary boatman is awaiting anxiously some passengers for his ferry of a canoe. Suddenly he is delighted to see a bevy of beautiful dancing girls in gorgeous costumes coming towards his boat. They request him to ferry them across the river to the other bank. After a feigned reluctance to their repeated pleading, he finally gives in a romantic movement of the song that is enthralling to the listener both in terms of its words and its music.

The occupational boat-songs sung by the fishermen are more down-to-earth and speak of the anguish of their lives and their families. Of particular interest, that has to be singled out, are the 'Sangodd' songs which have their full flowering in the month of July. 'Sangodd' means a couple of boats yoked together to form one festive vessel with buntings and all sorts of decorations mainly of green branches of the maggo, etc. flowers adorning the boats as well as the men who participate in the rowing during that month when there is water everywhere. This festival takes place in the village of Siolim in particular with great fervour. Sangodd is also performed in the coastal village of Calangute at the time of the fishermen's early trips to the sea for fishing towards the close of the monsoons when they are

BODHISATTVA

able to venture out to sea without fear of storms which normally rack the sea in the rainy season. This festival is enlivened by the Sangodd songs about their occupational hazards and preoccupations.

In the old days, when journeys were performed by boat, when wedding parties were ferried over long distances, there were several boat-songs about the wedding couple and the accompanying retinues of relatives and friends.

O.G.

BODHISATTVA (Sanskrit) is an ideal personality in Buddhist tradition. He is immensely devoted to the cause of suffering humanity. He is always seen exerting for removing the suffering of others and taking them to a state of 'Eternal bliss.' There is nothing self ('sva') in him, but he is always for others ('para'). He is a spiritually elevated person and can achieve the state of 'Freedom' at any moment, but he remains involved in fulfilment of his ideal. The ideal is: 'What shall I gain to emancipate myself alone when other beings continue suffering? I shall make a boat of righteousness and take all beings to the opposite bank of the process of repeated existence.' With this ideal, he constantly continues his efforts for a number of existences with untiring zeal and devotion.

The word 'Bodhisattva' has two component parts, namely, 'Bodhi' and 'Sattva.' The term Bodhi stands for 'Perfect Enlightenment', omniscience, right knowledge, etc. Sattva means a being. Thus, the term Bodhisattva refers to a being exerting for attainment of 'Perfect Enlightenment.' His career starts as an ordinary man, and he goes on fulfilling the ten perfections ('Paramis') in three ways, achieves ten stages of purification and consummates in realisation of Bodhi. During this period, he leads a pious life and inspires others to do the same. He helps them to remove the pollutions and free themselves from the suffering.

For the appropriate appreciation of the Bodhisattva the understanding of the following is essential: 'Abhinihara', 'Vyakarana', ten 'Paramitas' and ten stages of purification ('Bhumis').

Abhinihara means a perfect determination. It is associated with a strong desire, untiring zeal, continued efforts, and complete devotion towards achievement of the goal. It is said that Gautama Buddha was Sumedha-tapasa for a long time. He happened to see Dipankara-Buddha, the first one in the tradition. He was immensely inspired to see him and made a resolution to achieve the state of a perfect enlightenment and become the Buddha. With such determination, the career of Bodhisattva starts.

Vyakarana means auspicious statement. The Buddha sees the man (Bodhisattva) and analyses his future. Marking

the accumulated spiritual potentiality in him, he makes an auspicious statement that 'the man will attain Bodhi and become the Buddha after so many years.' Dipankara-Buddha saw Sumedha-tapasa lying on the road ravaged by water and was happy to see in him the vast treasure of merits capable of achieving a state of perfect enlightenment. A sudden utterance came from his mouth: 'After four Asankheya and hundred thousand years, he will become the Buddha.' This statement is called Vyakarana.

There are the following eight essential stages for fulfilment of Abinihara:

Manusattam: He should be a man. Other species like Garula, Naga or Devata cannot become the Buddha.

Lingasampatti: He should be of masculine gender.

Hetu: There should be the existence of potentiality of the Buddha (Buddha-bija) in him. Dipankara-Buddha marked the Bodhisattva and said, 'Sumedha has the potentiality (Buddha-bija) and the sprout (Buddha-ankura) of becoming the Buddha.'

Sathara-dassanam : The fourth ingredient is the vision of the Buddha. The resolution made before the Buddha achieves a fruition. In absence of the Buddha, it should be done in a 'Chetiya' or under the Bodhi tree.

Pabbajja: The household life is stated to be full of disturbances. It is a path full of pollution. Therefore, the state of a recluse is stated to be essential for it.

Gunasampatti: Further, one should be in possession of eternal qualities essential for it. They are the attainment of five 'Rupa-jhana', four 'Arupa-jhana' and five types of intuitive knowledge (Abhinna).

Adhikar: He should have immense power of sacrifice. His activities should be dominated by 'giving-up' and making sacrifice. This accumulates the strength (Adhikara) within.

The eighth one is the Chhandata or the strong determination for attainment of Bodhi. He always remains devoted and single-minded towards it.

With these essential things, the Bodhisattva moves towards the fulfilment of Paramitas (Perfections). They are called the Buddha-karakaguna. They are ten in number: Dana-paramita or perfection in giving alms, Sila-paramita or perfection of following the moral precepts, Naishkranya-paramita or perfection in giving-up the household life and taking up the life of a recluse, Prajna-paramita or perfection in getting right understanding, Virya-paramita or perfection in acquiring the vast degree of power, Kshanti-paramita or perfection in having forebearance, Satya-paramita or