

Kasturi Dadhe

Anecdotes in the Vāraakarī Kīrtana
folk tradition of Mahārāṣṭra

2012

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

ISSN 1432-6949
ISBN 978-3-447-06743-0

Contents

Acknowledgements	XIII
General Introduction, Aim and Scope of the Study	1
Definitions: Anecdote, Metaphor, Parable	2
Metaphors in Anecdotes	4
Scope of the Literature Review	5
Information on the source material	6
Print Sources	6
VCD sources	8
MP3 Source	9
Some Remarks	9
The informants and interviewees: details	9
Denouement and Preface	12
<i>Santas</i> and Music - <i>Kīrtanas</i> of the Vārakarī <i>Bhakti</i> tradition	16
Introduction	16
Traditional Folk Media and Their Influence	16
<i>Kīrtana</i> and its roots in Mahārāṣṭra	17
Aims of the <i>Kīrtana</i> Tradition	19
<i>Kīrtana</i> and <i>Kīrtanabhakti</i>	20
Vārakarī <i>santas</i> and the development of the Vārakarī <i>kīrtana</i>	21
A Brief History of the <i>Kīrtana</i> (<i>Harikathā</i>): With Special Reference to the Vārakarī <i>Kīrtana</i>	25
The <i>Kīrtana</i> tradition in Mahārāṣṭra	28
Popularity of the <i>kīrtana</i> performance in Mahārāṣṭra	28
The <i>Kīrtanakāra</i> and the Vārakarī <i>Kīrtana</i> Performance	29
A Vārakarī <i>Kīrtana</i> Performance: Rules and Etiquettes	31
Role of Anecdotes in Vārakarī <i>Kīrtana</i>	35
Challenges and Concluding Remarks	37
Edition, Translation, Commentary	40
1. Family, household, kitchen	40
Overview	40
1.1 New wife, tea & milk and the art of serving a husband	41
1.2 Man, his home and his control, and the lack of it	42

1.3 The ascetic, the escapade from home and the clutches of <i>samsāra</i>	43
1.4 A father, his son and the responsibility towards the son	44
1.5 The grandmother, the grandchild and the fitting answer to its childish question	45
1.6 The grinding mill, the stump and the woman grinding the grain	46
1.7 Hunger, delicacies and food for satisfaction	46
1.8 A couple, nose ring and the barking dog	47
1.9 Buttermilk	48
1.10 People at different stages of life and their changing interactions	49
1.11 The husband, his wife and his gift of a <i>candrahāra</i>	50
1.12 Having no son better than having a bad one!	51
1.13 Husband and quarrelsome wife and the solution for her bad temper	52
1.14 The poor family and their rich daughter-in-law	53
1.15 The newly married bride and her longing for her paternal home	55
1.16 The daughter, her ill father and her obsessive attachment to her conjugal home	56
1.17 The <i>gavaḷaṇa</i> and her engrossment with god	57
1.18 <i>Santa</i> Tukārāma and the <i>Gopī</i> having no desire to go home	58
1.19 Husband and wife, Brahman and Māyā	60
1.20 Secular love vs. mystical unity	61
1.21 Mother and son and the <i>kīrtanakāra</i>	62
1.22 Man dealing with fake news of wife's death	63
1.23 Husband as the final destination for a wife	64
1.24 The rich man and the daughter becoming a prosperous wife	64
1.25 Wife looking up at husband, making him proud	65
1.26 Nursing mother and crying out child	66
1.27 The baby and the spoon	67
1.28 The dead wife, the rainy season and the problem of cremation	68
1.29 Woman cooking, son defecating and one's own work!	69
1.30 Daughter, her conjugal and paternal homes	70
1.31 Giving opium to a child, eating chutney as a meal and involved in <i>samsāra</i>	70
1.32 <i>Khicaḍī</i> , poison in sweet rice and the happiness in <i>samsāra</i>	71
1.33 Parents wanting to take over children's illnesses	72
1.34 A stubborn son, the scolding yet loving mother	73
1.35 The constant worry for marriage and a wife	74
1.36 Dreaming of <i>ukaḍīce modaka</i>	75
1.37 The nursing mother and the daughter emulating her	76
1.38 Ill child and the temptation of a <i>lāḍū</i>	77
1.39 Husband –wife relationship- Śiva holding his wife's feet	78
1.40 Angry father and slapped child	78
1.41 Distressed daughter-in-law, troublesome sister-in-law and mother-in-law	79

1.42 Greatest benefit and the greatest deceit of parents and <i>santas</i>	81
1.43 The beginning and the end of <i>samsāra</i> ; the misfit of the urban woman in a rural setting	83
1.44 Woman with no daughter-in-law waiting for one!	84
1.45 Marrying without responsibilities towards wife's family	85
1.46 The dos and don'ts of a son-in-law towards father-in-law	85
1.47 Not marrying one's daughter to an alcoholic	86
1.48 Working girls and wasted husbands	87
1.49 The father with three difficult daughters	88
1.50 The effect of the woman's feet in her conjugal home	90
1.51 The 'right' nutrition of the child	91
1.52 Gossiping of one's own daughter-in-law and son	92
1.53 Rule for married men to eat only at home	93
1.54 The tiff between the mother-in-law and her son-in-law and the case of <i>bāsundī</i>	94
2. Public and Average Life	97
Overview	97
2.1 God, illness, praying and watching a movie	98
2.2 Understanding telephone conversations and conversations with god	99
2.3 Smoking <i>bīḍīs</i> , performing <i>pūjā</i> and gossiping behind god's back	100
2.4 The stuck hand and being stuck in <i>samsāra</i>	101
2.5 The actor, imitating the crowing of a cockerel and the ignorant audience	102
2.6 The debate over the two-sided metallised shield	104
2.7 The priest, the horse; the vehicle and its driver	104
2.8 The restaurant owner, the boy and the case of smelling the aromatic <i>jilabīs</i>	105
2.9 The thief in disguise and the foolish <i>tahasīladāra</i>	107
2.10 The naïve person, the lawyer and the gold coin	108
2.11 The blind, the deaf and the song and dance program	109
2.12 The village headman, six problems and one answer	110
2.13 The two men and the shoe bashing deal	112
2.14 The two quarrelsome neighbours and their boons from Lord Śiva	113
2.15 The man, the temple and the walk over the tree!	115
2.16 The man searching for the milkman in the river Gaṅgā	116
2.17 The office cleaner and the case of dumping garbage carefully!	117
2.18 The stingy man, his clever wife and the case of saving slippers	118
2.19 Dog Biscuits	120
2.20 Rope, Well, and Tree	121
2.21 Politicians, the cremation ground and corpses	122
2.22 Wrestlers, Survival and Memory	123
2.23 Woman, her neighbour and the case around buttermilk	125
2.24 Village headman and his wife's <i>sārī</i> mistaken as a shawl	126

2.25 <i>Puraṇapoṭī</i> as a sign for the guest.....	127
2.26 Varied levels in the reasons for the (non-) consumption of alcohol.....	128
2.27 Escaping the temptation for <i>lāḍū</i>	129
2.28 Grey hair, hair and counting them.....	130
2.29 Fortune/ Misfortune of an orphan	131
2.30 The uselessness of the pot used to relieve oneself	132
2.31 The case of the doomed <i>Pāyasa</i>	133
2.32 Pack of cards and <i>santas</i>	134
2.33 Inter personal interactions and fake trust	135
2.34 The temporary importance of political leaders and the constant greatness of god's name	136
2.35 God as an unwanted guest.....	137
2.36 Human and God transactions	139
2.37 Sacrificing ego and success in the sacrifice	140
2.38 Differences in interactions between different categories of people	141
2.39 Monsoon rains, flooding river and commotion amongst bus travellers ..	143
2.40 Eating <i>jilabīs</i> and enjoying one's wife: controllable desires.....	144
2.41 The huge litany of material possessions.....	146
2.42 The scared man; the case of teeth and chickpeas	146
2.43 The immature lovers	148
2.44 Boys falling in love at the cost of peace and life.....	148
2.45 The 'suspicious' young boy and girl.....	150
2.46 The newly married couple and the comments of the onlookers.....	150
2.47 Serving water to every guest.....	152
2.48 The men dancing and drinking in a marriage procession.....	153
2.49 Critique of the schools and the burden on the school children.....	154
2.50 Critique on the school systems and their teaching	155
2.51 The drunkards competing to become Prime Ministers of the country	156
3. Religious Didactics.....	158
Overview.....	158
3.1 Students, exams and the methodology of study	159
3.2 The old man and his tryst with Lord Yama.....	160
3.3 The man, his clothes and the case of several <i>liṅgas</i>	162
3.4 Auruṅgazeba, the fakirs and the hidden gold	163
3.5 The priest, the sacred thread and the death rites.....	165
3.6 The woodcutter, the sage, treasures of the forests.....	166
3.7 A man, a sage, and the desire to meet God	167
3.8 Eating with shoes on and signs of impurity	169
3.9 The aunt, her buffalo and reason for not performing <i>ekādaśī</i>	170
3.10 A courtesan, a married woman and adorning <i>kumkum</i>	171
3.11 Pseudo <i>santas</i> and subverting mysticism to solve daily problems.....	172
3.12 The guru, his disciples and their false devotion	174

3.13 Thirty crore gods and yet their dearth	175
3.14 Uselessness of presumptive statements.....	176
3.15 Loneliness of god and creation of man	176
3.16 <i>Santa</i> Kabīra, the hand mill and the floured grains.....	177
3.17 <i>Santas</i> and miracles	179
3.18 Lust of the holy man: the case of <i>Santa</i> Sūradāsa.....	180
4. Market Life.....	182
Overview.....	182
4.1 Weighing words, pearls and carrots.....	183
4.2 The price and the changing value of a rupee with changing times	184
4.3 The shopkeeper and his cheap yet unsold sets of dhoti.....	185
4.4 Currency and <i>Santas</i>	186
4.5 Appearances can be deceptive	187
4.6 Appearances can be deceptive: the case of ugly <i>Kasturī</i>	188
4.7 Purity can be achieved only with tremendous effort.....	189
4.8 The lottery winner and the case of the lost money.....	190
4.9 Picture and Frame	191
4.10 Fluctuating prices in business and the price of <i>paramārtha</i>	192
4.11 Unsold wares and getting rid of them	193
4.12 The difference between money and Lakṣmī	194
4.13 Lakṣmī and dishonest/corrupt money	195
4.14 Jobbers taking bribes and then being punished for it.....	196
4.15 Criticising one who worked with honesty.....	198
5. Nature	199
Overview.....	199
5.1 Fire, Warmth, and Fireplace	200
5.2 Salt, Water and the act of dissolution	200
5.3 The sandalwood tree and its surrounding trees	201
5.4 Bitterness of bitter gourd and crookedness of the dog's tail	202
5.5 The earthen pot made of mud and ashes	203
5.6 The mango peel and the body	204
5.7 Sour mango juice and <i>samsāra</i>	205
5.8 The debate of false appearances and true nature within.....	206
5.9 The <i>kīrtanakāra</i> , the shopkeeper and the similar looking aster seeds.....	206
5.10 Presence of water underground and the need of a <i>pāyāḷa</i> to find it	208
5.11 Overflowing the limits of <i>samsāra</i> into spirituality	208
5.12 The fish, the crabs and the jar lid	209
6. Doctor and Patient	211
Overview.....	211
6.1 The doctor, the patient and the necessary hard cure	212
6.2 Sickness and the desire for food that harms.....	213

6.3 Travelling in comfort in Calcutta Mail but no comfort in ill health.....	213
6.4 Doctor, patient and the need for a bitter cure.....	214
6.5 Doctor, Patient, eyesight and illiteracy.....	215
6.6 Ulcers and a surgery as cure.....	216
6.7 Doctor's prescription and lack of trust in the patient.....	217
7. Hindu Mythology.....	219
Overview.....	219
7.1 Daśaratha and Kaikayī.....	221
7.2 Bhīma, King Virāṭa and the case of cooked lentils bringing back one's youth.....	222
7.3 Kṛṣṇa's visit to Pīrajā, Rādhā's anger and the curse of Śrīrāmyā.....	223
7.4 The illusionary wedding and <i>saṃsāra</i>	226
7.5 Kṛṣṇa, Nārada and his stone-stuck <i>viṇā</i>	227
7.6 Kṛṣṇa's wives and his absence, Rukmiṇī's answer referring to his love for the Pāṇḍavas.....	228
7.7 Puṇḍalīka, the three holy rivers and the purity of sage Kurakuṭa's <i>āśrama</i>	230
8. Human Body.....	232
Overview.....	232
8.1 The human body and the constant desire to keep it functioning well.....	233
8.2 The ailments and the medicines: the spiritual practice and the devotee....	234
8.3 Death, old man, and urge to smoke cannabis.....	235
8.4 Feeling the thirst and satisfying it with water.....	236
8.5 The gifted yet taken for granted human body.....	237
9. Kings and Legends.....	240
Overview.....	240
9.1 The ascetic, the king, his minister and the case of the making the elephant sit on will.....	241
9.2 The king, the sage, people of the kingdom evading taxes in the name of god.....	245
9.3 The beggar, the king and the king's undeserving reward.....	247
9.4 The drunken man, the king's canopied seat and its cost.....	248
9.5 The good king, his noble minister and the famine struck kingdom.....	249
10. Animal Imagery.....	253
Overview.....	253
10.1 The elephant, its <i>ambārī</i> and putting it on an ant.....	254
10.2 The Cat-Mouse chase.....	255
10.3 Deer running after a mirage and then dying.....	255
10.4 Gentility of a village bred cow to a jersey cow.....	256
10.5 The case of the mongrel dog vs. the high breed dog.....	258

11. Travel.....	259
Overview.....	259
11.1 The fading of the old road and recognition of its existence	259
Summary and Concluding Remarks.....	261
Glossary.....	263
Note on the glossary	263
Bibliography.....	279
English Literature	279
Marathi Literature.....	282
German Literature.....	283
Web Sources	284
Index.....	291