Trinidad and Tobago, Republic of

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Country consisting of an archipelago situated off the coast of South America. The two main islands of the republic are the most southerly of the Caribbean islands, lying 12 km off the Venezuelan coast. Trinidad and Tobago gained independence from Britain in 1962 and remains a member of the British Commonwealth. Trinidad's so-called plural society (pop. 1,340,000, 2000 estimate) has two main racial groups: African (43%) and East Indian (40%); minorities include Europeans, Chinese, Venezuelans, Syrians and Lebanese. The indigenous Amerindian population (Arawak) died tragically from European-born viruses during the period of Spanish dominance (1498–1797). Tobago was not settled before the arrival of Columbus (1498). During British rule, slaves from West Africa (until emancipation in 1838) and then East Indian indentured labourers (1845–1917) were conscribed to work on the islands' sugar-cane plantations. These immigrants contributed their languages, religions and musics to the modern cultural mosaic. While English is the official language, French patois (Creole) and Bhojpuri (a Hindi dialect) are still popular in song and colloquial speech, particularly in rural areas. The statistics for religion are as follows: Roman Catholic (32%), Protestant (29%), Hindu (25%) and Muslim (6%). The mixed ethnic composition, the multiplicity of religions and the contrasting cultural backgrounds of the islands' peoples have drawn generations of anthropologists and ethnomusicologists to study these popular tropical tourist resort islands.

1. Amerindian heritage.

Archaeological excavations indicate that Trinidad's Neolithic Arawak population engaged in agriculture, ceramics and weaving; no musical instruments have been unearthed, possibly indicating their music was primarily vocal. 19th-century historical sources mention an Arawak dance, the *arectoe*, performed at sporting events and accompanied by choral groups, drums and conch trumpets. Some researchers, with scant evidence, have argued that calypso has its roots in the topical, humorous Arawak *carieto* (*arieto*) songs, but no trace of ancient Arawak music is evident in modern times.

2. Shango and syncretized cults.

The musical history of Trinidad is riddled with contradictions and problems of nomenclature: the ‘Indian’ music of the island is of Hindu immigrants from India, not Amerindian groups; the Hispanic influences derive from recent trade and migration with Venezuela, not from the centuries of Spanish rule; and Muslim music is performed by Asians and Africans alike.

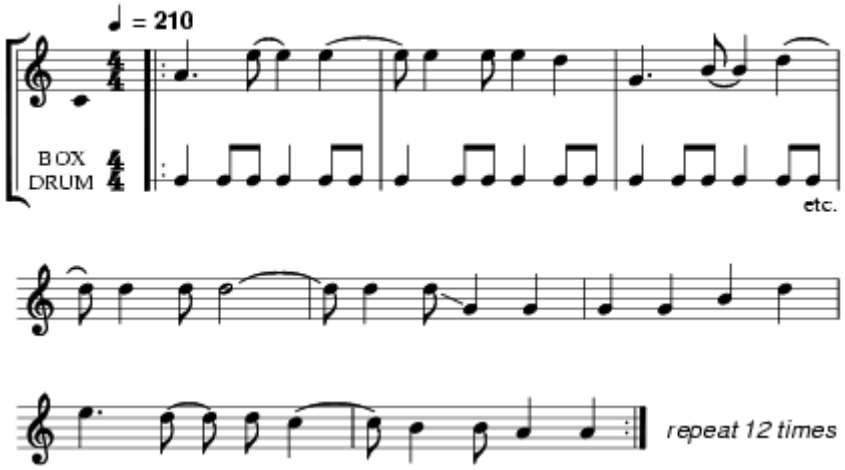
But without dispute, the most well-known and widespread music of Trinidad and Tobago is that of the African-derived population, comprising over half a million creoles, most of a mixed ancestry of black slaves and their white landowners. From the 16th century to the 19th, slaves were brought to Trinidad from the Guinea coast (groups such as the Fon, Ewe and Yoruba), western Sudan (Nupe, Hausa and Mandinka) and the Congo area (Kongo). Following emancipation in 1838, former slaves continued to

migrate to Trinidad from the French and Hispanic Caribbean, and free blacks from West Africa. In the 1940s the anthropologist M.J. Herskovits explained the unique music and culture of these ‘New World Negroes’ in new terms including ‘acculturation’, ‘cultural focus’, ‘survival’, ‘reinterpretation’ and ‘syncretism’, contentious ideas about culture change that spirited the debate of his scholarly generation (and beyond). In *The Myth of the Negro Past* and *Trinidad Village*, Herskovits discussed African musical retentions of the Spiritual (‘Shouter’) Baptists and the Shango cult of the isolated north-eastern coastal village of Toco.

Shango exemplifies acculturation, combining Nigerian Yoruba religion with Christianity. Herskovits grouped Shango with other New World syncretic cults, including Haitian Vodou, Cuban Santería and Brazilian Shango (or Xangô). These worshippers all believe in spirit possession, animal sacrifice and a combination of African and Christian deities. Each deity in Shango is identified by songs and drum patterns: Abatala, Ajaja, Elephon, Emanjah, Eshu, Mama Latay, Ogun, Osain, Oshun, Oya and Shango (of African derivation); Gabriel, Raphael, St Anthony, St George, St Joseph and St Peter (of Christian derivation).

Herskovits emphasized African retentions in Shango song style, including body-swaying during singing, leader-chorus form, the use of rattles, hand-clapping (with cupped, rather than flattened, palms), polyrhythm and double-headed drums which resemble Yoruban *bata* drums. The two larger Shango drums, the *bemba* and the *congo*, are beaten with one stick, the smaller *oumalay* (or *omele*) with two. Drums are usually accompanied by the *shak-shak*, a small calabash rattle. Cult members believe the two larger drums can speak to St Michael and St John the Baptist (Catholic equivalents of Ogun and Shango). Other songs are accompanied with a single-headed box drum (see ex.1).

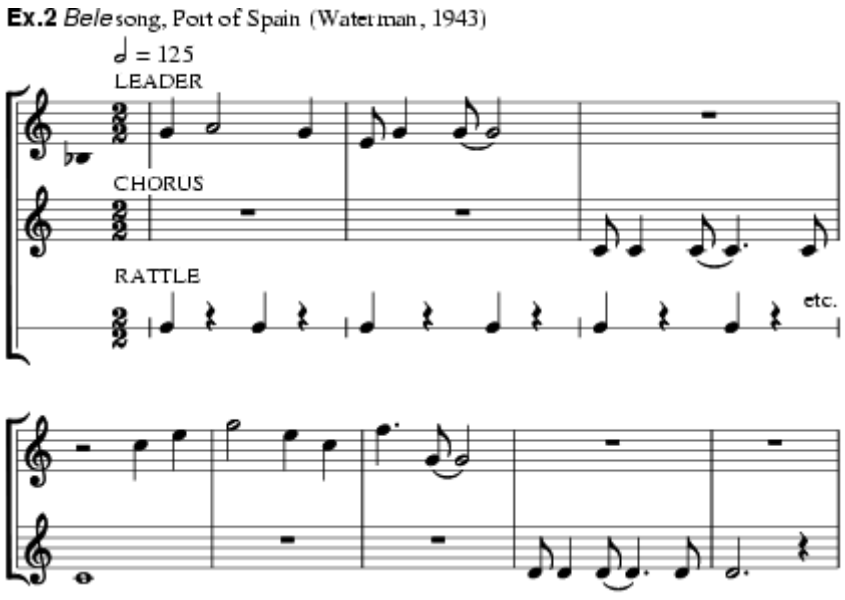
Ex.1 Shango cult song, Toco (Waterman, 1943)



1. Shango cult song, Toco (Waterman, 1943)

Other African-derived Trinidadian genres are the *bongo*, the *bele*and the reel, all dance styles accompanied by creole songs. The all-night performance of *bongo* at a wake is thought to placate the spirit of the deceased; the *bele* and reel are also performed at wakes as well as on holidays. Herskovits noted that *bele* performances were vigorously opposed by local Christian priests: *bele* singing, he explained, is led by a ‘captain’ who makes offerings of rum and rice, then slays a sacrificial goat or fowl

(or both). The drummers, singers and other mourners sip the sacrificial blood while the sacrificial meat is cooked and eaten. *Bele* dance songs (like Shango songs) show the retention of the West African leader-chorus style (ex.2).



2. Bele song, Port of Spain (Waterman, 1943)

Herskovits assumed that most ‘survivals’ dated from the pre-emancipation period. Some Africanisms of contemporary Trinidad cult music, however, were introduced by free blacks who came to the islands in the second half of the 19th century. Alan Merriam, a student of Herskovits, found African traits retained in the music of the Rada cult, a community from Benin (formerly Dahomey), founded in Trinidad in 1855 by a free African *bokono* (diviner). Richard Waterman, also a Herskovits student, analysed African musical survivals in Trinidad (1963), drawing on the concepts of reinterpretation (assigning new values to borrowed cultural forms) and syncretism (similarities between distinct cultural forms providing a basis for their fusion). He pointed out that ‘since there was little reason, in terms of pressure from the rest of the [New World] culture, to change many diagnostic elements of the West African musical style, it changed only through the incorporation of new musical elements that could be reinterpreted to fit it’.

3. Creole music.

(i) ‘Mas’, street marches and the band system.

Calypso, the hallmark of Trinidadian art, developed in the 19th century, blending Hispanic, British, French and African influences to form a uniquely creole expression that has spread from its original source in Trinidad to the entire circum-Caribbean area. The history of calypso is linked with the celebration of Carnival in Port of Spain. During the 18th century Trinidadian Carnival was organized by the European ruling classes. But following emancipation it was taken over by blacks, creoles and Spanish peasants, who transformed the sedate Christian holiday into a rowdy, disorderly festival, introducing *canboulay* (*cannes brûlées*, ‘cane burning’), a night-time torchlight procession including wild stick fights between *batonniers*, and the robust singing of French patois *kalindas*, the antecedent

of the calypso. *Kalindas* celebrated black liberation and the starring singers, *chantuelles* (*shantelles*, *shantwells*), were accompanied by the din of horns, conch shells, rattles and African-type hourglass drums (*doun doun*).

In the 1850s and 60s the white ruling classes suppressed these often violent and riotous masquerades and revelries (‘mas’), protesting against the obscenity of the *kalindas*, with their lewd dancing and noisy instruments. In 1881 conflict between blacks and whites resulted in two days of rioting in Port of Spain and led to the prohibition of torchlight processions. The Peace Preservation Act of 1884 banned African-style drums, but time has proven that these prudish laws could not prevent the growth of Carnival into a national (and eventually international) celebration.

From 1890 to 1900 the ‘band system’ developed. Masqueraders from Port of Spain neighbourhoods organized large groups of revellers wearing highly-styled costumes based on themes from history and current events. To circumvent the ban on African drums, *tamboo bamboo* bands were improvised by raucous groups banging together stamping tubes (various lengths of bamboo), knocking them with pieces of wood or metal, or pounding them against the ground. Late 19th-century songs, in the popular tongue of Creole English, dealt with topical events from the illustrious Port of Spain underworld, the lyrics commenting on political gossip and scandal.

(ii) Calypso and social commentary.

Like many West African songs, calypso has response patterns, litany forms and short repeated phrases. The calypso melodies, however, are mainly European-derived (some 50 melodies are continually being set to new texts). This eclectic genre is accompanied by the Hispanic *cuatro*, a small four-string Venezuelan guitar. Social criticism and satire, a hallmark of West African praise singing, is still the most acerbic trademark of modern calypso. The history of Trinidad and Tobago and the complex social relations within this plural society have, over the decades, been described in calypso. Around the beginning of the 20th century, the fashionable language of the white landowners became the new language of calypso, and artists attacked each other on points of grammar in *picong*, calypso battles. Lord Executor, who began singing around 1890, addressed singer Atilla the Hun in this 1901 calypso (Rohlehr, 1990):

> I admire your ambition, you'd like to sing
>
> But you'll never be a kaiso king
>
> To reach such a height without blemish or spot
>
> You must study Shakespeare, Byron, Milton and Scott.
>
> But I'm afraid I'm casting pearls before swine
>
> For you'll never inculcate such thoughts divine
>
> You really got a good intention, but poor education.

Calypsonians also specialized in mocking the various religious sects of Trinidad; in this pastime no group was spared abuse. Similarly, ‘race calypsos’ singled out the minority populations of the islands and in humorous song released feelings of ethnic tension. Between World War I and II, many calypsos chronicled the development of Trinidad's independence movement.

Beginning around 1930, with the rise of the recording industry, calypso came under criticism for becoming commercialized; but as many calypsonians achieved international reputations (including Lord Executor, Lord Beginner, Atilla the Hun, the Mighty Sparrow and Edward the Confessor), commercialization became another distinguishing trait of this Trinidadian musical contribution. Nonetheless, the Ordinance of 7 December 1934 instituted measures for protecting the ‘public safety’ from calypso lyrics, followed by official censor of calypso records in 1938.

(iii) Steel bands.

Poverty and a local ban on drums dating from the 19th century inspired lower-class rebellious teens to contrive this unique melodiously percussive ensemble. The Steel band (*see* illustration) seems to have evolved from masquerade bands of Carnival processions, particularly the *tamboo bamboo* bands of ‘Hell-Yard’, Port of Spain, that had enlarged by the 1930s to include such ad hoc instruments as soap boxes, biscuit tins, dustbins, gin bottles and odd bits of iron. After World War II, bandsmen developed a technique whereby the discarded American 55-gallon oil drums littering the island could be fashioned into a tuned idiophone whose tempered steel extended the range and musical versatility of their groups. Bandsmen became local stars in their own right as the ‘Bar-20’ players: ‘Batman’, Anderson, ‘Scribo’ Maloney, ‘Red Ozzie’ Campbell, ‘Big-Head John’ Pierre and his brother ‘Bitter-Man’. The ‘band wars’ of 1945 between ‘Hell Yard’ and ‘John-John’ led to widespread street fights between rival bands, a notorious urban problem, whereby membership in a band was thence forward interpreted as hooliganism signalling creole disdain for European norms. A 1963 survey by the Ministry of Community Development reported that steel bands drew their members from teenage groups that mistrusted the upper classes and showed a high incidence of delinquency and unemployment.

The manufacture of pans (steel drums) is a highly specialized skill. Instruments are not standardized, as the fierce competition between rival bands has fostered innovation and experimentation in pan design and tuning. Drums are made in families; bass pans (formerly called tuned-booms), rhythm pans (including double second pans, double guitar pans, treble guitar pans and cello pans; formerly tune boom or kittle), and tenor pans (formerly ping-pongs) for the melody. The layout of the pitches on the surface of the head usually varies from maker to maker.

Modern steel bands have added vibraphones, cow bells, congas, bongos, triangles and other percussion instruments to the basic pan family. In Carnival processions, the small high drums are slung from the player's neck, and large drums are mounted on enormous movable frames.

By the 1970s, an estimated 200 bands with some 5000 players were established in Trinidad. Steel bands no longer have an antisocial stigma, and island-wide, government-sponsored competitions have led to rigorous standards of performance in both village and city groups and to virtuoso overseas performances, with programmes including well-known pieces from the Western art music repertory. Trinidad creoles have introduced their music and lively Carnival celebrations to cities in Britain, Canada and the US, while calypso and steel bands have also permeated most other Caribbean islands, where they have become important tourist attractions.

4. Parang and other Hispanic forms.

Trinidad's Venezuelan minority in the towns of Lopinot, Santa Cruz, Gran Curucaye and Penal maintain Hispanic customs, for instance the *veiquoix* (*velorio de la cruz*, ‘wake of the cross’), which includes the competitive singing of *décimas* and the Venezuelan *fandang* dance. But *parang*, the typical Hispanic Christmas songs of the island, which evolved during the 18th and 19th centuries among the African-Spanish cocoa workers, are popular throughout Trinidad. The term derives from the Venezuelan-Spanish *parada* (‘to stop’ or ‘to put up’), signifying the strolling of four to six men, serenading from house to house and accompanied by *cuatro*, violin, mandolin, guitar and *shak-shak*, with ballroom-style dancing, all-night celebrations and ginger-beer drinking.

The centre of Venezuelan music was Cedros village, at the south-western tip of the island, in sight of the Venezuelan mainland. Traditional *parang* sessions included the Spanish genres, most in leader-chorus style, such as the *aguinaldo pasión* (*serenaldo*, *serenal*) about the birth of Christ, *joropo* with dancing, *galerón*, *estrebio*, *paseo*, *manzanare* and the triple-metre *castillian*. Before Independence, *parang* flourished mainly in the villages of Trinidad. During Advent 1967, the first *parang* competition was held, with five contestant groups; in 1969 the ‘National Parang Champions’ contest was staged in Woodford Square in Port of Spain, drawing big audiences and various groups with commercial sponsorship.

In modern Trinidad, *parang* is growing in popularity, thanks to radio, television, the local record industry and island-wide competitions. With national acclaim from those of both African and East Indian descent, *parang* style has become more unified, including less village serenading, more standardized hit tunes and rehearsed shows on city stages.

5. Music of the Muslim community.

6% of the population is Muslim, and Islamic devotional forms, including the call to prayer and Qur'anic chant, are performed in city and village mosques and in Muslim elementary schools where children sing *kaseeda* (*qaṣīda*), devotional songs.

Around Carnival time, the Muslim festival of Hosay is celebrated in full splendour in Port of Spain, San Fernando and the smaller Trinidad cities. This special ritual, called Ta‘ziye in the Middle East, commemorates the martyrdom in 684 CE of Imam Hussein, the grandson of Muḥammed. The festival is held on the tenth day of the Islamic lunar month of Muḥarram and isa solemn and mournful ritual incorporating breast-beating, wailing and self-flagellation with small whips.

In Trinidad, during the 1850s, Hosay became the outlet for East Indian national feeling (both Hindu and Muslim), culminating in the San Fernando Hosay Riots of 1884. In modern times, Trinidad Muslims have transformed Hosay into a high-spirited season that vies with Christian Carnival and Hindu Holī for colour, drama and excitement. Families or neighbourhoods set up tents, in which they erect elaborate floats of paper rosettes decorating a bamboo frame 3 to 6 m high. These complicated constructions, replicas of the tomb of Hussein, take some six weeks to construct, are decorated with giant birds, columns, turrets and cornices, and are topped with a large dome. They are brought out for between three and seven days, and the festival concludes with a procession to the nearest stream or river where the floats are immersed in the water and pushed out to sea. In modern processions,

trained men carry large shining half-moon cutouts across their shoulders and bedazzle onlookers with swirling dances. The march is accompanied by *gatak* stick fighting, jumping-up and rum drinking, all to the rhythm of *tassa* drummers, the same groups who perform at Hindu weddings. The rhythmic patterns for Hosay, however, are unique, including *sada mahatam*, signifying the preparation for the battle of Karbela, *tin chopa*, indicating the beginning of the battle, *chalta mahatam*, suggesting the full rage of the battle and *nabbie sarrwar*, the solemn pattern that marked the burial procession for Imam Hussein.

Hindu and Muslim festivals were incorporated into the Trinidad national calendar in the 1960s. In this festival-infatuated society, the sectarian nature of these street celebrations has broken down as people of all religions join in for fun.

6. East Indian music.

The abolition of slavery throughout the Empire in 1838 triggered a labour shortage that brought the Trinidad economy to near ruin, a crisis averted with the introduction to the British Caribbean colonies of indentured labourers from India. The forebears of today's 525,000 Trinidadian East Indians (a significant segment of the 8·5 million South Asians living overseas) were brought between 1845 and 1917; many remained, and at the turn of the millennium their descendants still occupied the swamp land along the western coast and the central interior county of Caroni. Nearly all Trinidadian Indians speak English as their first language, yet they sing songs in an Indian language: Hindi, Sanskrit or Bhojpuri (the Hindi dialect that served as a *lingua franca* on the old plantations).

The music of these impoverished immigrants is first described in logs of the ships that transported labourers from the ports of Calcutta and Madras to Port of Spain. Over the 150 years since this community was established in the New World, they have abandoned caste and the *jajmānī* patronage system.

(i) The Bhojpuri repertory.

North Indian village songs in Bhojpuri were still sung in Trinidad as recently as the 1960s and 70s, including *byāh ke gīt* and *lācharī* (wedding songs), *godna* (for the ritual tattooing of the bride), *sohar* (after childbirth), *kajarī* (for the rainy season) and *chautāl* (for the springtime festival of Holī). Vestiges of these songs remain.

The traditional Hindu three-day marriage ceremony includes 30 to 40 unaccompanied *byāh ke gīt*, describing the marriage of Rāma and Sita as told in the Hindu epic, the *Rāmcharitmānas* (‘The Lake of the Acts of Rāma’) by the illustrious Gosvamī Tulsī Dās (1552–1623). The strophic texts of wedding songs are in leader-chorus style, as sung by groups of older women in an older and creolized form of Bhojpuri. The songs typically have undulating melodies of a limited range, in duple metre or an easy swinging alternation of twos and threes (as with *kaharwā tāl*, eight beats, or *dīpchandī tāl*, 14 beats). Women singing at weddings use a full-throated style with a low tessitura, typical of village singing in India.

The Bhojpuri wedding songs of Trinidad are strikingly similar to those of Ghazipur, Gorakhpur, Ballia, Varanasi and Azamgarh districts of Uttar Pradesh, India, including that for the ceremony of *kanyādān* (the giving of the virgin daughter), for the dusting of the blood-red *sindū* (vermilion) powder in the parting of the bride's hair, and for the couple entering the *kohobar*.

Lachārī, amusing and gently teasing songs performed by half-a-dozen to a dozen women, are sung during cooking, the wedding feasts and long delays while the rites are being performed. *Lachārī* derive from a 19th-century Indian genre, and in Uttar Pradesh they are now mostly replaced by *gāli* (rough and funny songs of sexual abuse). *Lachārī* (cognate or corresponding with the north-eastern Indian forms as *lachī*, *nakaṭā* and *jhūmar*) are accompanied by the double-headed *ḍholak* drum, and such simple instruments as *manjīrā* finger cymbals, the *ḍhantāl* stick idiophone, tambourines and *shak-shak* rattles, played by the singers. However these traditional folksong genres are slowly being forgotten in Trinidad, as are some of the ceremonials they accompanied.

Wedding processions and dancing are still accompanied by a *tassa* ensemble of two kettledrums of Islamic derivation, with goat-skin heads (tuned over an open fire), and an extremely heavy cylindrical, double-headed ‘bass’ drum. *Tassa* drums are played with a pair of sticks (‘chupes’) and their repertory consists of a series of ‘hands’ comparable to some of the duple-metre *tāl* of north India. *Tassa* hands are named after song genres, Indian festivals or West Indian matters: *tillāna*, *chautāl*, *kabīr*, *ulārā*, ‘wedding’, ‘one-way drum’, ‘calypso-steel band’ and ‘olé’.

Around Carnival time, East Indian Hindus celebrate their springtime festival, Phāguā or Holī, with lively men's songs, *chautāl*, accompanied by vigorous *ḍholak* drumming and clanging of pairs of *jhāl* (cymbals). *Chautāl* songs proclaim the victory formula (*jaykārā*): ‘Shout victory to King Rāmachandra! This is the happiness of salvation. Oh, as the sun rises, darkness fails, as the bee of the pond was caught out of love, oh, praise Sita and Rāma!’ With rice-planting time and the rainy season, the village women of Trinidad remember *kajarī*, songs of love and longing reminiscent of the oriental monsoon.

Some Bhojpuri songs of Trinidad have been forgotten in north-eastern India, the land of their origin. Certain Indian singers, when listening to recordings of Trinidad ladies, explained that these songs are ‘*bahut purana*’ (‘very old’) and no longer sung, an example of marginal survival whereby old traditions are preserved by isolated immigrant communities.

The *ḍhantāl* (metre-long iron rod, struck with a curved metal beater), used to accompany *lachārī* and local classical songs, is an other example of marginal survival. The *ḍhantāl* is common in Trinidad, but has disappeared from eastern Uttar Pradesh where it was once used to accompany men's *birahā* (song-stories). Although *birahā* singers in north-eastern India recall such an instrument being played formerly, they now use iron clappers (*kartāl*).

(ii) The devotional repertory.

During the ‘Hindu Renaissance’ of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, reformist organizations in India sent Hindu missions to overseas diaspora groups. In 1917, missionaries from the Bombay-based Ārya Samāj (‘Society of Aryans’), including Pandit Mehta Jaiman and Pandit Ayodhya Prasad visited Trinidad with the intent of reconverting Presbyterian East Indians to Hinduism. They taught the Vedic

sanḍhyā and *havan* (*homa*) rituals, together with Vedic chants in Sanskrit (accompanied by drone-producing instruments such as the harmonium or *tambura*) and a new repertory of *bhajan*, Hindu devotional songs.

Beginning in the 1960s, Hindi *bhajan* and Vedic mantras have been taught in the Hindu primary schools. Trinidad *bhajan* have unconventional leader-chorus forms with ‘cue lines’ by the leader to signal the refrain or new verse for the chorus; many praise Rāma while the texts of *nām kīrtan*, a *bhajan* type, repeat the various names and epithets of the deity.

In 1974, the Sai Baba movement of India reached Trinidad and brought another style of worship and a repertory of short catchy *kīrtan* songs. Trinidadians reported miracles in their homes (*vibūthī*, ‘sacred ashes’) and tears of honey flowing from portraits of the contemporary saint, Satya Sai Baba. The energetic, highly repetitive Sai Baba songs emphasize accelerando and crescendo as the excitement of the *kīrtan* builds, then enthusiastic hand-clapping with the loud accompaniment of small percussion instruments as well as *ḍholak* and harmonium, all amplified by an in-house public address system. The melodious tunes and short texts serve well for a Hindu population whose grip on Hindi has deteriorated over the decades (by the 1970s, most East Indians in Trinidad spoke only English).

(iii) Local classical music.

During the early years of the 20th century, a distinctive form of local classical singing developed in Trinidad, with genres carrying such names as *sargam*, *ghazal*, *ṭhumrī*, *dhrupad*, *tillānā* and *dōha*. Most formal singing during the 19th and early 20th century took place at night, with public contests between rival artists sometimes lasting until dawn. Song duels, still popular in Uttar Pradesh villages, were fought out by the early ‘songsters’ (in Bhojpuri, *gayak*, ‘singer’). Each hour of the night had a prescribed song form, just as the theory of classical Indian music assigns each *rāg* to a particular time. Trinidadian scholars explain that the function of the *rāg* as a modal form was not followed in Trinidad, where performers used *rāg* names to identify melodies or well-known compositions, hence ‘a *bhairavī*’ or ‘a *kāfi*’. A ‘Quawal Song’ recorded by Sayyeed Mohammed in the 1940s says: ‘Let us go to a foreign land, my love, without you my heart is trembling, I found myself in the whirlpool of love.’ An unusual example recorded in the 1930s by local star Jugrue Quawal praises the Rajasthani Hindu queen and poet Mirabai and the Muslim prophet Muḥammad in this ‘Quawali Song’: ‘Among all prophets the great Mirabai is the greatest, you drank poison from the blessed bowl. Oh, Muḥammad you are the greatest of God's prophets, the beloved of everyone.’ Another songster, Benny Sewnath, recorded this *bhajan*: ‘You will find Shyām [Krishna] inside, not in your grandfather, nor in stone icons, nor in sacrifice, nor in the corner of the temple. You will find Shyām within yourself.’ European and American scholars who have characterized this ‘local classical’ music of Trinidad as a corrupted or distorted version of the classical music of India (even taunting it as ‘tattered rags’) have missed the charm of New World transformation and mistakenly assumed that Trinidadian composers knew of Indian classical music before it hit the Americas in the 1960s.

(iv) Film and popular music.

In 1935, *Bāla Joban*, the first Indian talkie, opened in San Fernando, inaugurating a wave of local composition and the development of an island music industry. Month by month from the 1940s onward, Hindi films became a source for singers to enliven their repertory, albeit from the glitzy Bollywood studios, themselves much influenced by the Latin American and US pop scenes.

In 1936, the first shipment of Indian records reached Trinidad, together with a new set of ‘light classical’ pieces: *ghazal* and *ṭhumrī*. In 1947, Radio Trinidad (the island's first station) opened, and by September of that year a regular programme of local Indian music was aired. By the 1960s dozens of Indian orchestras played film music arrangements at weddings, parties and bazaars, on radio and on the weekly television programme *Mastana Bahaar*. These ensembles include electric guitars and keyboards, a drum set, sometimes mandolin, *congo* drums, bongos, trumpet, violin and saxophone, as well as the occasional traditional Indian instrument (the *bānsuri* (flute), *ḍholak* and *tablā* drums).

Indian classical music *per se* was introduced to the island in 1966 by artist H.S. Adesh, and tens of students have since studied *sitār*, *tablā* and Hindustani classical vocal music.

(v) Chutney.

The popular hot songs of the 1990s youth culture are Chutney, also known as Indian soca (soul plus calypso); they draw on the old local classical repertory and traditional instruments but with a disco beat and accompany drinking and dancing in a nightclub setting. Sharlene Boodram's 1994 competition-winning hit ‘Chutney Time’ is typical, with its driving intensity, rap style and English text with occasional use of Hindi vocabulary: ‘Tie your *dhōti* man, tie it up cause *chutney* down it extremely hot, we say come down! Form a little ring man, and I do a little thing man, and a wiggle of your body, and I make your waist thin!’ *Chutney* rap, *chutney jhūmar*, *chutney lambada*: the scene is alive with innovation as Caribbean styles are mixed with Bombay film music and US pop, and suggestive titles are commonplace. Disco artists from India, notably the singer Kanchan and her husband Babla, have made hit arrangements of Trinidad soca and of *chutney* songs, adding to them the studio techniques of Hindi film songs. The local recording industry thrives in Trinidad, with many small private labels as well as the widely distributed releases of Windsor Records, Port of Spain. East Indian recordings from Trinidad are available from New York distributors who provide prompt mail-order service for the expatriate Trinidadian East Indian immigrants in the US and Canada.

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