

Grindmill songs glossary

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The following are entries marked with an asterisk in song texts.

Aabir - A fragrant powder composed of sandal, zedoary, cyperus rotundus etc.

Abdagiri - Royal ornamental umbrella

Abhang - Religious songs or hymns, a hymn in praise of a deity

Aher - a gift or a present given on an auspicious occasion like a wedding or a religious function, and also given to mark the end of the mourning period. In Aher, there is an implied sense of participation, sharing the joy on happy occasions and grief on sad occasions. Aher is generally exchanged by both parties.

Ahevapan - An unwidowed woman

Ajol - Grandparents' home from mother's side

Arati - Prayer of praise with a ritual of lights waved in front of god; waving a platter with an oil lamp in front of the image of God as a part of worship. Arati is also performed for persons as a symbol of conveying blessings or good wishes

Badave - One of the establishment of Brahmins entertained at Pandharpur temple for the service of God

Bahujan - The masses

Balute - A share of the corn or garden-produce assigned for the twelve public servants of the village who are called Balutedar

Baras - Twelfth day after the full moon (commonly observed) when the Ekadashi fast is broken or after the new moon

Bashing - An ornament of paper worn by the bride and the bridegroom on the head during the wedding

Bhagat - One who practises exorcism

Bhajan - Religious songs or hymns to be sung in praise of God

Bhalari - Work songs

Bhandara - Turmeric powder especially as used in offerings to Malhari (Khandoba). Thrown around also a symbol of prosperity

Bhaubij - The day in Diwali when the sister waves the lamps in a plate of arati around her brother and he gives her a gift in her plate which is called 'ovalani'

Bukka - A powder composed of certain fragrant substances

Chandrahari - necklace made of bits of gold

Chandrakala sari - a black sari with stars woven or printed on it, resembling a starry sky at night, very popular with women

Changbhala - Meaning moon on forehead (a name of Shiva). This word is used in shouting by worshippers of Bhairav.

A prayer to God to give prosperity and happiness to all-also they say this, in the name of God to wish well to each other

Chaturthi - Fourth day in each lunar fortnight. Many observe a fast on the Chaturthi that comes after the full moon. Traditionally this fast is broken after moonrise.

Chavdar Tale - Tasty water tank/pond

Chhatri - a royal ornamental umbrella

Clothier - Dealer in clothes

Chowrie - A fly whisker

Darshan - Looking directly at the image of God

Devbij - Tukaram bij

Dharmashala - A building erected for accommodation of travellers

Dhoti, dhotar - A garment for males worn around the waist and tucked behind

Diksha - Initiation (to Buddhism)

Dikshabhumi - The ground where religious conversion took place

Dindi - Procession of an idol with flags, drums, cymbals, etc.

Divati - A sort of lamp used in the temple of Khandoba, also a torch composed of a stick with rolls of oiled cloth around it

Dorala - See Magalsutra

Ekadashi - Eleventh day in the new moon or full moon fortnight every month

Gaja Dance - A traditional dance of Dhangars, the shepherd community, which they do on Dassera. It is an invocation to all Gods.

Garud Khamb - Pillar of Garud(the eagle) in Pandharpur temple complex

Gaymukh - Gaymukh literally means cow's mouth. Each temple has a Gaymukh of wood metal or stone through which water used for the idol of God is coming and hence supposed to be sacred water.

Ghat - a vessel or a pot. The divinity in the ceremonies of Navratra i.e. nine days and nine night s before Dassera

Godari - The place used for defecation outside the village and near which the Dalits reside

Gondhal - Song and music in honour of a Goddess on a festive occasion

Gosavi - A man who has renounced worldly business, pleasures, etc. He wears clothes of brick-dust colour. It is also the name of a caste that engages itself in religious activities.

Goth - a thick gold bracelet

Gulal - red powder

Gurubahin - Female disciple of the same Guru, considered as sister

Gurubhau - Male disciple of the same Guru, considered as brother

Halad - Turmeric. Also application of turmeric, Haladi ceremony, forms a part of the rites of marriage which generally takes place a day before the wedding

Harinam - Predication with chanting of Hari's, i.e. God's name

Haripath - Abhang-poetry composed in the praise of Vishnu

Itthal/Ithu - Vitthal pronounced locally

Jagaran - Song and dance by Waghya Murali in honour of the Goddess the whole night

Jayanti - Birth anniversary

Johar - Word used by Mahars in saluting their betters or each other

Kadepathar - There are two temples in Jejuri. The first is the ancient temple known as Kadepathar. Kadepathar is difficult to climb. The second one is the newer and more famous Gad-Kot which is easy to climb. Both temples are fort-like structures.

Kakan - glass bangles

Karma - An act or a deed

Kartiki - Ekadashi in the month of Kartik

Katha - A tale about the exploits of some God, accompanied by music and singing

Kerava - a bangle with delicate design

Khan - a room in the context of a house

Khirapat - Distribution of sweets at the end of Katha

Kirtan - Singing the praises of God

Kos - A measure of distance

Kunku - A red spot applied on the forehead by married women whose husband is alive as a mark of good fortune. This powder is also applied to God as a part of worship. It is prepared from turmeric, lemon juice, alum etc.

Langar - An iron chain on a hook. Breaking this chain is a part of the ritual

Lezim - A bow with a tingling chain

Mahar - A low caste people employed mostly as village watchmen, gate-keepers, messengers, porters, etc.

Maher - A married woman's parental home

Makhamal - Variety of Marigold

Mali - A caste whose traditional occupation was plantation of vegetables and flowers

Mangalsutra - A necklace of black beads given to the wife by her husband as a mark of marriage alliance which she always wears around her neck and which is removed only in case she becomes a widow. This is often called 'doral' in the ovis.

Mankari - An important person in the village who has the first honour

Mantra - An incantation; a secret formula

Maratha/Brahman/Vani - In the songs, this word often refers to prestigious people from the village and not to the Maratha caste

Mundaval - Flowers, pearls, etc. tied around the forehead of the bride and the groom at the time of marriage

Murali/Murhali (1) - A person who is sent to fetch and accompany a newly married girl from the parental home or the in-laws' home

Murali (2) - Girls dedicated to Khandoba. They act as his courtesans. (Now the practice of marrying girls to Khandoba is illegal)

Waghya and Murali, both sing and dance in honour of Khandoba and narrate his stories in Jagrans (all night festivals)

Nacha - A performer in Tamasha, a boy who dresses like a man but speaks and acts like a girl

Nachani - A copper coloured millet

Namaskar - Folding hands as a mark of respect

Namdev's step - Among the steps that lead to the shrine of Vitthal, the first step is called Namdev's step. Namdev was a fervent devotee of Vitthal.

Namsmaran - Remembering the name of God ablutions

Nanand - husband's sister

Nandoi/Nanandava - husband's sister's husband

Paisa - A small coin

Panchamrut - The five nectareous substances viz. milk, curds, honey, sugar, butter

Panchang - Hindu calendar or almanac

Pandan - A box or a plate to hold betel leaves, areca nut, lime, catechu, etc.

Path - Recitation of scriptures

Patil - The head of a village, holding an important position in the village

Pativrata - A chaste and dutiful wife who never violates her marriage vow

Pitambar - A yellow dhotar

Pothi - A book telling the story about Gods and deities

Pradakshina - Circumambulation of an object, esp. of an idol by way of reverence

Pradosh - An observance in worship of Shiva in the evening of the thirteenth lunar day

Prasad - Offering of sweets to God which is later distributed among those present

Puja - Ritual worship or adoration of the idol of Gods

Rajgira - A kind of grass and its seed

Rajbarkhi/Rajvarkhi - bangles decorated with gold foil on gold wire

Rakhi - a piece of silk or cotton string with or without a motif in the middle tied around brother's wrist on the full moon day in the month of Shravan

Ramoshi - A fighter caste, also known for dacoity and aggression, but are also engaged in protecting villages and individuals, known to be very true to their word

Rangoli - A design drawn on the floor with stone powder in front of the shrine or in front of the door

Revad - A square made from the threads of an old coarse blanket (Ghongadi)

Ringan - Horses dancing in a circle on way to Pandharpur

Sadu - husbands of sisters, the relation is called Sadu

Sanjai - Crop stolen from somebody else's field as a part of the ritual

Sasurvas - the harassment that a married woman has to suffer in her in-laws' home

Sasurvashin - A girl dwelling in the house of her husband's father. Figuratively, a person absolutely at the beck and call of the in-law family

Satvi/Satvai - Name of the Goddess who is supposed to visit infants on the 5th day after birth and write their destiny or fate

Satyanarayan - A deity which is commonly worshipped by all castes and communities on auspicious occasions, weddings, etc. and also after a vow made is fulfilled.

Savarna - Higher castes (in case of Babasaheb), it means crossing the borders of his caste

Savashin - A married woman whose husband is living

Shilangan - The crossing of the borders in pompous procession on the festival of Dassera

Swayamvar - Choosing, by a female, of a man to be her husband

Sone - Literal meaning gold. In the context of Dassera it refers to leaves of Apta or Shami tree which are symbolic of gold and (sone lutane) which are offered to each other

Take Lakshmi - After the festivities of Gauri in the month of Bhadrapad, the Goddess is kept in the form of thread with knots and taken out at the time of Dassera

Talati/Talathi - A revenue clerk in the village

Tali - Offering of Bhandara, coconut and other things, keeping them on the palm, to Malhari, God of Jejuri. Also called Tali Bhandara

Tatiche abhang - Abhang sung by Mukta for Dnyaneshwar to get over the emotions of anger and worries

Tehsildar - Collector of revenue

Thala - A round plate with a broad edge

Thali/tali - A dish filled with coconuts, fruits, betel nuts, saffron, turmeric (bhandara) and Bel leaves

Tola - Weight of gold or silver, approx. 11-12 gm.

Tulas/Tulasi - Holy or sacred basil

Utane - A paste made from fragrant ingredients to apply on body

Vairal - Bangle-seller

Van - Offering of sweets or dress by persons, under some religious observance, to Brahmans and to married women

Vari - The practice or observance of proceeding regularly (each month or each year) on pilgrimage to any sacred place

Vida - prepared with betel nut leaves and many ingredients in it

Vihar - a dwelling place of the Buddhist monks; Buddhist monastery

Vrindavan - The little tower-form earth and stone erection in which the holy basil is planted

Vihin - mother-in-law of son or daughter

Vyahi - father-in-law of son or daughter

Waghya - Boys dedicated to Khandoba. They act as bards of Khandoba

Waghya and Murali, both sing and dance in honour of Khandoba and narrate his stories in Jagrans (all night festivals)

Yagnya - A sacrificial fire (a religious act)