## FOLK-DEITIES OF TAMILNĀḌ. AYYĀNARS AND VEERĀNS

**Sirugamani** on the Tiruchirapalli- Karur trunk road in Tamil Nadu is a village of 500 people, picturesquely located on the banks of the river Cauvery. The cult of *Ayyanar*- which commands adherents in every Tamil village. From distance one can see a huge statue of what looks like a chieftain in full regalia painted in a blue, black, pink, and yellow. A bejewelled pyramidical crown adorn his head and his torso was covers with necklaces and garlands- all worked dexterously in lime plaster, Seated by his side are other, similar statues of a smaller size and standing beside them are a number of over-sized terracotta horses with fat legs and bulging chests.

This entire cavalry regiment seems to excude the air of a long fought- out battle at the end of which the heroes and their mounts are enjoying a much deserved rest.

There is black goat rearing on its hind legs for a nibble at the artifical shurb.

Most tourists who happen to pass by the villages in Tamil Nadu are perhaps unaware that these unusual statues embody a very ancient but living cult. The simple village folk have preserved the belief-God knows for how many centuries--that unseen malefic forces which bring pestilence, famine and discord into the village can be kept at bay by a benign *Ayyanar* and his host of 'veerans' or Knights of valour.

Various myths have come up which build the *Ayyanar* into a mixture of God, a policeman and a compassionate father to the village community. He is really a mythical figure in charge of the security of the village, aggressive in looks, unsparing in battle and at whose very appearance evil forces wanting to enter the village take to their heels. The *veeŗans* seated by his side can be any number, depending on the number and affluence of the donors. They are the *Ayyanar's* bodyguards and knight-companions while the snarling, neighing horses are their ferocious mounts.

The belief has come down from very ancient times among the Tamils that their world is peopled by spirits who are both good and bad. The worship of Mariyamman as the village goddess and *Ayyanar* as the *grama devata* is an integral part of their faith. The *Ayyanar*, the male- deity, is sometimes represented in his equestrian pose or seated on a raised platform or even standing in an open field. He sports an enormous moustache, holds a naked sword, is fully armed and surveys the scene before him with large glaring eyes, a frown and a grin. The *veerans,* two are seated by his side with a spear or two sprouting from the ground in front, while the horses, some as tall as 15 feet and fully covered in battle gear are lined up their side. You may also find a couple of grooms holding the horses by the reins.

An *Ayyanar* values no gift higher than a horse. There are, however, *Ayyanars* in coastal villages, set up by fishermen, who prefer the elephant as a mount, and you can see terracotta elephants there in the place of horses. In these cases, the *Ayyanar* sports the 'benevolent eye' on his chest while his mount, the elephant, carries it on its hauches. These 'good eyes' are believed to scare away the 'evil eye' of malevolent forces which might approach the village.

Speaking of terracotta gifts, we find that they are not always confined to horses. An *Ayyanar* is also offered bulls and it is not unusual to find life size replicas of devotees standing before an *Ayyanar* with folded hands. It is common to find a shrine-usually a small thatched or tiled house of an *Ayyanar* very close to his statue. But you will not find the inmate there as he sits in the open keeping a close watch on the goings on.

Newly married couples go to an *Ayyanar* with offerings of coconuts, bananas, betel and incense to secure his blessing. Mothers bring their children to be blessed. Many village weddings are also performed in the sprawling ground before the *Ayyanar* and other deities. For all I could see, this faith in the *Ayyanar* will persist for several decades to come. The village guardians also, thereby, assure a livelihood for the rural potter-artist.

**AUTHOR: SATYAN, T.S; Source:** *Swagat* Nov. 1990, New Delhi.

## FOLK DRAMA OF KARNATAKA: TĀLA-MADDALE.

In Karnataka, where we have the *Yaķsa gāna*, we have also the form taken out of it called *Tāla-Maddale* in which without parts and Make-up, the participants sit down and sing and go through the play orally.

**Raghvan, V.** *SNA* No.11. Jan-March 1969, New Delhi.

**Yaķşa-gāna Bayalatā**: It is an exqúisite folk-dance-drama played mostly in South and the North Canara district of Mysore State. It has afinity with the various regional forms of dance-drama performed in India like *kathakalī* of Kerala, *Bhāgavata-melā* of Tamilnadu and *Vidhināţakam* of Andhra Pradesh. It is known by different names in different parts of Karnataka. In the plains of North Karnataka, it is termed as *Doddalta,* in old Mysore area it is known as *Moodalapayā,* in the coastal District of Karnataka it is popularly called *Yakşa-Gāna*. Akin to *Yaķsa -gāna* there is another folk art very popular in the South Canara District, namely, *Yaķşa -gāna-Bomalyaatā* (puppet show). It also has hoary tradition of three centuries.

On these various forms of popular dance-drama scholars trace their origin to the Sanskrit dance-drama which was in vogue in India during 4$^{th}$cent A.D. **Ananda Coomra Svami** has opined that Ancient Saivites practising *Bharat-Natya-Śanstha BNŚ* which was in no way inferior to the *BNŚ,* the centre of which was famous *Naţarāja* temple of Chidambram.

The *Yaķşa-Gāna* is essentially a dance-drama with the characters depicting their roles effectively through dance, keeping step with the accompanying music. Scholars felt that like *Gandharva-Gāna*, this form is named as *Yaķşa-gāna*, *Gandharva-Gāna* became *mārga* music while *Yaķşa-gāna* became popular as *Desī* Music.

Those who specialised in this form of *Desī Nāṭya-Śāstra* were known as *Yaḳsas*. In the *Yaḳsa-gāna-Bayalatā*, there is a dialogue but, *katha-kalī, Ottanthullāl* and *Rāmanattaḿ* traditions employ gestures instead. *Kuchī-pūḍī* is particularly full of these. This dance-drama for its subject has ten incarnations of *Viṣṇu*, which is called *Dasāvatāra-Atā*. The theme is, good over evil, right over wrong. Karnataka's *Rāgas* are employed in this dance-drama which are *Ghantarva*, *Bhairavī, Kambodī,* which depict heroic sentiment; *Rāga Nīlāmbarī*, *Ānanda-Bhairavī Toḍī, Sāverī, Mohana-Kalyānī,* depict the emotion of sorrow; *Mdhyamavathī*, *Todī*, *Arabī, Śrī- Shaṅkarābharaṇa* depict pity, *Nandanāmkriyā*, *Mukhavī* depict terrible. There are hundred and eight *Karaṇas,* thirty-three *Piṇḍībandhas,* 32 varireties of *Cārīs* 37 *Nirālamba-Cārīa,* 6 *Sthānas* etc. of *BNŚ* are visible in the *Yaḳṣa-Gāna*. It is only traditional dance-drama which still observes almost all the details given for Pūrva-rańga-Abhinaya by *BNŚ.*

**AUTHOR: UPADHYAYA, K.S.**; **Source:** *Lesser known forms of performing Arts in India'* Ed. Mukhopadhyaya, New Delhi. (No year)

**THE FOLK THEATRE OF TAMILNADU**.

Its folk theatre or street- play of *Yaḳsa-gāna* of Karnataka is similar. Its theme is *paurānic*. It is staged during summer. It is the all night-show. It is enacted in street-Crossings, thence got the name Theru-street+Koothu = play or threshing floor of the fields. Now-a-days Shamiana and lights are provided.

Music of the Classical, Semi-Classical or folk types dominates the show serving dialogues and conversation as well. Occasionally, there are prose rendering. Acting is accompanied by dance of the rustic type. Whatever is a story, the inevitable characters are the *kaṭṭiakaran* (Herald) and *komalī* (Buffoon).The theme generally is derived from *Mbh.*, *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Bhāgavata-Purāna* and others.

Musical instruments are known as *Murkha-veenā* (A small wind-instrument like the *Nāga-svara*), a *Thūthī* (a bag-pipe), *Mṛdaṅgam* and *Tāla* (Cymbals). The front curtain is used only to show feet and head and then is removed at the start like in *Yaḳsa-Gāna*, *Kathakalī, Bhāgavata-melā* and *Kurvañjī Nāṭakas* (semi classical and Classical dance drama). Facial Make-Up is done with indigenous coloured powders known as *Aritharam*. North Arcot, South Arcot and Chingleput Districts in Tamilnadu are famous for this tradional art.

**AUTHOR: BALAKRISHNA, SHYAMALA,; Source:** *Nāṭya Folk-Theatre no.1962* (Theatre Arts Journal published by the **Bhāratīya Nāṭya Sańgh, Indian National Centre** of ITI.

**Bhāgavata-Melā** (Dance-drama) survived in the village of Melattur and five other villages in Taryabur Distt., that is, *sālimaṅgalam*, *Uttukkadu*, *sulamṅgalam*, *Nallur* and *Tepperumalnellur.*

It is of all India importance, because it is found to be an living example of Bharata's concept of Nāṭya and Dance-drama founded 2,000 years ago in the *BNŚ*, which is earliest and most authoritative treatise on the art followed by most of the later writers through the centuries. It came to prominence during the time of *Thīrtha Nārāyaṇa Yogī* the author of *kṛṣṇa-Līlā-Tharangaḿ* in Sanskrit.

Those who sang the praise of gods follow *Bhakti-Mārga* to be called *Bhāgavathāra* and the dance drama enacted by them is titled as *Bhāgavata-Nāṭya-Mālā Nāṭakas.* As Telugu was the court language in Tamilnadu from the time of Vijayanager Kings down to the time of the Maratha princes, Tanjavur, the *Bhāgavata melā* dance dramas were composed in that language. Now as a part, of the annual *Nara siṁha Jayanthī* festival, this is conducted.

These dance-drama are expounded with Music of high class Karnataka tradition, dance and *Abhinayas* in Classical *Bharata-Nāṭya* technique, poetic speeches and appropriates dramatic action. This dance- drama may resemble the *Kathakalī* of kerala which is all night shows, without the stage-setting of the modern dramas with *pāthra-praveśam* (Introudction of characters).Unlike in ordinary drama, every actor in the *melā* drama has to be a dancer trained *Bharata-Nāṭya* Techniques.

As a Classical dance drama, according to the concept of *Nāṭya-śāstra* the *Melattur-Bhāgavaťa-Melā* art happens to be the only surviving link that connect us to the present day with our ancient national theatre tradition. (**Bhavan's Journal** Nov. 1969.)

**FOLK- DRAMA OF TAMILNĀDU**

The play usually beings with an orchestral overture, followed by invocation songs addressed to various deities and, lastly, to the 'Guru' (Teacher). This part of the play will sometimes take even an hour. Immediately after this, the 'Kattiakaran' appears and introduces the play in the form of a discussion with the 'Komali'. Every character of the play appearing for the first time on the stage comes behind the '*Thirai Cheelai'*—a piece of white cloth held by two persons. This improvised curtain does away with the need for a front curtain. The responsibility for providing indigenous lights and 'Thirai Cheelai' for the play belongs to the dobhi of the village for which he is paid in grain or cash. Nowadays petromax-lamps are also used. The manipulation of the 'Thirai Cheelai' is done in a skilful, artistic manner, creating suspense and thrill in the audience. In the beginning "close-ups", *so to say of the character's head or feet, as the occasion may demand, are presented.* The cloth is then removed and the actor is presented fully to the audience. This type of front curtain is used also in *Yaksagāṇa, Kathakalī, Bhagayathamela* and *Kuravañjī Nātakas* (which are semi-classical and classical dance-dramas). The '*Kattiakaran*' unlike the *Sūtradhāra of Sanskrit* plays who appears only once in the beginning, appears on the stage till the very end of the plays. It is he who links the scenes and announces the appearances of characters and scenes in advance. The actor once again announces his own arrival in the form of a song and comes out of the "Thirai Cheelai". He then goes round and round singing and showing gestures to the accompaniment of loud music in the background. The

dancing, though simple, is brisk, and the gestures very lively. Every line of the song sung by him is repeated in chorus by those of the music party. Not only the mṛdaṅga and *tāla* players, but his co-actors on the stage also join in the choral singing! This is indeed very interesting.

At intervals, the '*Komali*' appears on the stage and creates jokes and narrates comic stories by song, speech, grimaces and dance. While he thus spreads mirth and merriment among the audience, he affords opportunities for his co-actors to rest and get ready for the next scene. He also helps to break the monotony or heaviness of feeling if the theme is serious or pathetic. Sometimes an actor known as 'Palavesham' (actor of many parts) also appears, sings and acts and makes the audience laugh. These actors besides other factors mentioned add to the simple charm of the performances. Thus, the play carries on, from about ten in the night to the early hours of the morning. Some plays, like the *Mahābhārata,* drag on for many nights.

Costume and make-up is an elaborate affair. Important characterslike, Hiraṅyakaśipu, Duryodhana, Dharmaputra, Bheema, etc. wear head-gears made out of light wood called the 'Punna' and lavishly decorated with white and coloured mirror pieces and gilt paper. They also wear huge ornaments, all made of the same stuff as the head-gears, on the hands, shoulders, neck, chest, etc. Fecial make-up is done with indigenous coloured powders known as '*Aritharam*'. Female characters are also portrayed by men. Gentle characters use yellow and white, decorated with yellow dots. Red is used for the villain and white underneath red with black dots is also painted. Blue mixed with black is applied on Bheema's face. Blue or Green is used for Kṛṣṇa. Thus, they have specific colours for specific characters which help both the actor and the audience in the appreciation of roles. The make-up, costume head-gears and other ornaments of a *therukkoothu* performer remind us of the *Kathakalī* of Kerala.

Short skirt-like dress full of pleats, pyjamas dhotis, richly embroidered velvet coats, waist coats, *jibbās* are all used. Actors without head-gears wear turbans. Masks are occasionally used as, for instance, in **Hiraṅya Vilāsam**, for **Narasiṁha**.All characters wear ankle-bells on their feet.

The lyrics and dialogues for a play are generally written by a learned man of the troupe. Printed books of such plays are available during village fairs and festivals. The tunes of the songs are popular folk-melodies with occasional touches of classical modes here and there. Once could spot out forms of ragas like *Nattai, Devagāndharī, Chenjuritti* and *Sahana* in their music. There is no voice-lending: the characters themselves sing their songs. When an actor sings he holds the figurative sign.

North Arcot, South Arcot and Chingleput Districts in Tamilnad are famous for this traditional art. There are parties in other districts also, differing slightly in regard to details. A *Therukkoothu* party generally consists of 12 to 16 members. But I should mention here of an interesting party in Coimbatore District consisting of only 4 members who enacted a drama that needed more than 10 persons. The accompaniments were a '*Thūthī*' (bag-pipe), Mṛdaṅgam and 'Tālam which were played' by 3 persons out of the 4. The fourth one was dressed in a woman's apparel and the accompanists played the other roles even as they were playing on their respective instruments! I wondered at the crowd that had gathered and the interest evinced by them in witnessing

To enjoy such folk-arts, one needs genuine love and appreciation of the rustic simplicity of the art and the people participating in it. There may be artificiality in it. But it has to be enjoyed with a child-like faith in its culture and tradition. These arts fully deserve to be preserved for they have been partly responsible for the unbroken continuity of our national heritage.

**AUTHOR: BALAKRISHNA, SHYAMALA; Source:** *Nāṭya Folk Theatre* No 1962 (Theatre Arts Journal published by the *Bharatīya Nāṭya-Sangit* Indian National Centre of ITI New Delhi.

## FOLK DRAMA OF GUJARATA'S *BHAVĀI AND NAUṬAṆKĪ* OF *U.P.*

Some of my ideas concerning the presentation of *Bhavai of Gujarat* and *Nauṭaṅkī* of North India into practice.

**Choice of plays:** There are about 61 Bhāvai *vesha's* (playlets) on record, of which about 20 are still popular with traditional Bhāvai players. Unlike Nautaṅkī, the texts of Bhavai plays are not published. On the basis of a generally accepted outline of a given story, each Bhavai troupe presents its own version. While the relevant songs and verses are selected from traditional stock, dramatic dialogue in prose is improvised by the actors. Depending on the talent and the mood of an actor the performance of the same play may vary, not only from troupe but also from day to day, by the same troupe. This practice has made its form extremely flexible enabling a smooth transition from heaven to earth, from the sublime to the absurd. Actors can comment on a topical event while playing an historical role without appearing incongruous. If a village audience grows restless while watching a long serious scene, a comic episode is brought in without the slightest hesitation, although it may be quite irrelevant to the main story. Many of these scenes are saturated with frank obscenity. After regaining the attention of their audience the actors can glide back into the interrupted main story equally effortlessly. With mediocre players this flexibility can be disastrous to the structure of a play.

I had chosen the *vesha* of *Jasma Odan* primarily because the story has appealed to me since childhood. There is an undercurrent of the dignity of labour and of human values which has significant relevance to our times. It was an exciting challenge to project the universal aspect of the story in contemporary terms for an audience. (Brief resume of the original version given at the end of article in
Notes on Text.

The only Gujarati-speaking cast available in Delhi being untrained amateurs, it became imperative that I write out the entire script, leaving scope for

improvisation within a well-defined framework, so as to afford a sense of spontaneity which is one of the charming characteristics of this form. In doing so I relied on the inherent *rasa* orientation of its structure, however diffuse it may have become. (Brief note on structure of Classical Sanskrit Drama in Notes)

Bhāvai has an organic link with the tradition of the ancient *uparupakas,* like *rasak, vilasika, bhanika* etc. Some elements of one act *rupakas* like *prahasana bhava* and *veethi* also seem to have survived in this form (See Note2).

All performing art-forms developed in the ancient Indian theatre were *rasa*-oriented irrespective of their being classical or folk (See Note 3). When our classical tradition was broken around the 11th century under the impact of historical factors, folk traditions seem to have suffered less damage. As compared to the *rūpakas* the *rasa* structure of *uprūpakas* was simple. It became looser in the case of Bhāvai where *Hāsya rasa* (Humourous mood) dominates even in the *veshas* with serious intent like that of *Jasmā Odan.*

In this *vesh* if the theme of *sati* is to be brought out as is done by the traditional Bhavai players, the *Pradhān rasa* (Prime mood) should have been *Karuna* (pathos). If dignity of labour were to be projected, as it is in my version of this play, then the *Pradhān rasa* should be *Karmaveera* (heroic, based on heroic deeds). *Hāsya rasa* (humourous mood) usually weakens the impact of *Vīr rasa,* (heroic mood). Noble enthusiasm cannot be evoked for something that is ridiculously incongruent. The undue stress on *Hāsya rasa* in Bhāvai is due partly to its struggle for existence. But the fact remains that domination of *Hāsya rasa* has become one of the essential features of this form and any attempt to re-instate Bhāvai must recognise this.

I tried to overcome this problem by restraining the comic obscenities where it could be done without destroying the robust, earthy quality of Bhavai and by balancing it with greater reliance on good humoured digs and satire. After the marriage of Jasma the comic character of Rangla becomes a more direct participant and a commentator in my version.

This inherent ambiguity in the inter-relationship between the various *Gauna rasas* (Secondary) and the *Pradhān rasa* (Prime) of the play have tended to destroy the dramatic structure to such an extent that its impact is often affected. This may have been an additional factor that led to the prolonged indifference of the elite towards this form.

I made some effort to give structural compactness, in keeping with its basic flexibility by the juxtapositioning of contrasting moods and by re-arranging episodes in a more defined pattern so as to help a clearer emergence of the theme of human dignity and labour. Similarly, I altered the balance of different episodes and made a more sustained use of *Nāyaka* and *Rańglā* as linking devices in the tradition of ancient *Arthopķshepakas.* (See Note 4)

Having chosen this play for its contemporary relevance, I re-interpreted some characters without changing their traditional image. Indra is portrayed as an intelligent sensitive man driven by the compulsions of his consuming ambition but who is also conscious of the limitations of a tortuous passion for power. In some of the traditional versions *Indra* is accompanied by his attendants Black God (Kāla Dev) and Red God (Lāl Dev). I replaced them by the God of Time and Rańgdev, the God of Colour respectively. With these three characters I developed an introductory scene before *Indra* confronts *Nala Rishi* with his proposal that the sage should give up his *tapasyā* (penance). This scene has helped to remove an obvious interpolation at the end of the play where a Fakir suddenly appears to bring Jasma back to life in the traditional versions. This organically irrelevant character must have crept in during the Muslim period in Gujarat.

*Nala Rishi* in my version when he is reborn as Rudio (Rupaji in the Hindi version) retains his power of concentration and creative faculty even though his physical appearance is ugly as a result of *Kāmkuṇḍala's* curse. The character of *Nala Rishi* presents a special problem because his traditional image of a comic idiot is too entrenched in the popular mind to make any drastic changes possible. I retained his comic aspect but tried to motivate it differently by making it the result of an excessively one-track mind. His unusual concentration on the subject of his specialisation and interest making him appear a funny, absent-minded oddity, to the common man. If an opportunity presents itself of producing this play with a professional cast, I should like to further reduce the inconsistencies which continue to cling to this character with the help of a capable actor playing this role. I feel that traditional performances have done him an injustice by leaving his rich potentialities unexplored and making him one dimensional.

**Printed Texts:** One is tempted to believe that if a firm tradition of printing the texts of the Bhavai *veshas* was established as in the case of Nauţańkī and a taste for reading this type of popular literature is cultivated among the newly educated rural population the structure of this form would improve. But the example of Nauţańkī soon makes you think twice.

In case of the Nauţańkī play, *Amar Singh Rathod,* I came across problems which were just as serious although they were of a different kind. There are flourishing publishing houses of Nauţańkī plays enjoying the loyalty of lakhs of readers. As a matter of fact the author-cum-publishers actively encourage the small groups of touring Nauţańkī singers to accept their printed versions of popular plays without charging any royalty, as a part of their promotional drive, recovering their investments through the increased sale of the books. Many people go to hear Nauţańkī rather than to see it. This has contributed towards the petrification of this form making its structure extremely rigid. This rigidity, with a tendency to dry up its dramatic potentialities, may come in the way of its further development. This structural peculiarity has influenced the production style of this play decisively.

Of the two styles of Nauţańkī performances, *Kanpurī* and *Hāthrasī,* the latter has taken this process to its

logical conclusion by almost eliminating the scope for improvising in prose. Its text is in verse, at times breaking into a song. Improvised dialogues in between the composed verses of the *Kanpuri* style sound stilted. Basic unit of this form consists of verses written in metres following each other in a definite order, i.e. *Chobola, Bahertabil* and *Daud* with variations provided by metres like *Chānd, Lāvani, Sorthā* etc. This order seems to have become integrated in its texture.

*Amar Singh Rathod* (brief synopsis given in Note 5) is traditionally played on two subsequent nights of five-hour sessions each, to a village audience. This ten hour's duration had to be cut down to two hours, if it was to become a rewarding theatre experience for an urban audience as well. With a rigidly defined structure this became a difficult task. The production was planned with cast selected from professional Nauṭaṅkī singers following the *Hathrasi* style. Available resources in terms of finance as well as talent had to be kept in mind while re-orienting the script. Lack of adequate investment meant restriction on numbers as well as on the quality of singers to be employed. However, after cutting out repetitions and irrelevant paddings from the traditional text, a clearer pattern of *rasa* structure did seem to emerge. The first part of this play centres around its hero i.e. it is *Nāyak Pradhān* with *Veer rasa* its *Pradhān rasa* (Prime Mood). Its second part revolves round its heroine i.e. it is *Nayika Pradhan,* involving *Karun rasa* as its *Pradhan rasa.*

This dichotomy in its *rasa*- structure is unfortunate as it dilutes the unity of impact. In my re-oriented abridged version of the play *Veer rasa* with all its manifestation is the *Pradhan rasa,* strengthened by *Gauna rasas* like *Shrinagar, Vatsalya, Karuna* etc.

There seems to be no scope for introducing *Hāsya rasa* in this particular play, except perhaps by treating villains like Salavat Khan and Arjan Gaud in a lighter vein. With drastic cutting and editing the theme of human dignity which was scattered and buried deep in the traditional versions emerged and added to the cogency of the plot.

While rearranging certain episodes, some verses interlinking them were rewritten to make the exposition of the theme in a specific direction more emphatic. Most of the verses said by Rańgā were recast or freshly written to include relevant reflections on events.

In Nauṭaṅkī, the traditional character of Rańgā represents a detached observer of events, at times linking the episodes, very rarely commenting on them. I have made a cautious departure from this practise by increasing his role as a narrator-cum-commentator. Usually the actor playing this role does not play any other character. I had him play more than one role to introduce some flexibility within the rigid frame-work of this form.

**Style of Production:** With its emphasis on music, acting has completely neglected by Nauṭaṅkī players. There is no movement of characters who become listless as soon as their singing is over. Even while singing, the emotional rendering is generally sacrificed in an attempt to reach higher notes. Having to play to large open-air audiences of thousands, all the subtle nuances are wiped out. This is perhaps sought to be a balanced by the vigour of the *Nakkara* (big drum) which is played at the end of each phrase in a song and also in-between the responses of conversing characters. Depending on the talent, skill and virtuosity of the *Nakkārā* player, the drum dominates the production as a whole. In an attempt to create an aesthetically valid total impact the *Nakkārā* had to be made to serve the dramatic purpose of the play, subordinating itself to the needs of the moment when necessary. This meant controlling the frequency as well as the duration of interventions by the *Nakkārā* player. As a result the singers became more alive to the need of expressing requisite emotions through their own voices.

A new acting style had to be evolved which would be in harmony with the characteristic structure and at the same time be easily assimilated by professionals accustomed to just standing around with expressionless faces when they were not singing. I made them freeze in relevant poses while the *Nakkārā* was playing in an attempt to create a series of pictures in the Bundi style Miniature Painting which was used as a reference in designing both the costumes and a simple transportable set for this play. With insistence on emotional rendering of the songs, inter-relationship of the characters expressed through sustained responses and with the statuesque poses of the living frescoe, made significantly elaborate at vital points, a coherrent style of acting did seem to emerge, to which mobility was given by Rańgā in his different roles.

**Required Restraint:** In the case of the Bhavai play, *Jasmā Odan* the problem had to be faced from exactly the opposite direction. Its over-flexibility had to be contained in a more defined frame-work so as to shape it effectively. This was done by introducing precisely structured choreography at specific junctures in the play, while leaving the characters free in the intervening period. In this form, there is a ritual element, realistic horse-play as well as stylised interludes. An attempt was made to integrate these elements through simple choreographic devices while clearly demarcating one from the other. Throughout the production it was the *Satvik Abhinaya* that controlled the other three i.e. *Aṅgik, Vāchik* and *Ahārya.*

While Nauṭaṅkī has a real potential of developing into a full-fledged Indian Opera, provided its structural rigidity is overcome, Bhāvai can become an effective dramatic form of social comment if it can develop a more defined and polished structure.

As regards the other aspects of production such as costumes, sets, lighting, make up etc. The problems are common to both. The chaotic impact of urban influence has resulted in the use of nylons, cheap tinsels and plastic beads, adding visual vulgarity to the general aesthetic deterioration. Costumes of both these re-oriented productions were based on the historical period from which the stories are taken. In *Jasmā Odan* the point of reference was the Jain paintings of the 11$^{th}$ and 12$^{th}$ century A.D. Over the centuries the costumes of rural folk have not shown any marked change so it was

comparatively easy to balance the claims of the popular image of folk characters and the demands of the chosen period. But, our people being fond of using the whole spectrum of primary colours, to bring out any coherent and meaningful colour schemes does indeed become difficult.

While looking for indigenous fabrics and motifs for the costumes of *Amar Singh Rathod* I was made aware of an unexpected fact that the preference in this respect is community-wise rather than region-wise. The characteristic motifs of different communities are to be found prevalent on the routes of their ancient migrations through centuries, overlapping the provincial boundaries of contemporary political maps; perhaps another pointer towards the inherent unity of Indian culture.

Nauṭaṅkī lovers insist on rich costumes. I had overcome considerable resistance before persuading the singers to wear costumes made out of thick *dosutī* dyed, printed and suitably embellished with gold and silver brocades to create a rich effect. Some of these costumes can be further enriched without taking away from their indigenous character if greater funds are made available.

Both Nauṭaṅkī and Bhāvai are open-air forms. While traditional Bhāvai has retained its informal character, Nauṭaṅkī has been using the proscenium stage with gaudily painted roller curtains for decades, probably under the influence of the Parsee Theatre. For the re-oriented version I used six big boxes which could serve as a multi-level stage during the show and as packing cases for the musical instruments, costumes and set-pieces during travel. Beside this, two portable frames to serve as gates were made which can be used for any Nauṭaṅkī play by fixing relevant cut-outs on them to demarcate two main locales in the play. This set can be put up anywhere on a regular stage, ordinary hall or on open ground. However, Nauṭaṅkī, has a special problem because of its music-orientation. It must have a roof over the head of the singers which could serve as a resounding board for their voices. While playing in the open, some sort of a temporary *pandal* is inevitable.

Available electric lights were used in both cases to enhance the visibility as well as the changing moods of the play. In *Jasmā,* characteristic lighting devices of wooden and cloth torches (*kadas*) were used by individual characters to spot-light significant moments. Electric light was made subservient to this lighting. Make-up in both cases was sparingly used. The rich variety in complexion of our Indian actors creates exciting contrasts.

**Varying Backgrounds:** Apart from these technical pre-occupations, the most rewarding aspect of this experiment for me was the opportunity that I got of working with actors coming from entirely different backgrounds and playing to different types of audiences within a short span of three months. The Gujarati version of *Jasmā* was played by untrained amateur Gujarati actors residing in Delhi. A majority of them had not seen a Bhavai play before but were familiar with the general milieu of the soil which this form has sprung. Its Hindi version was acted by students from different linguistic regions (Kashmir, Punjab, U.P., M.P., Maharashtra, Andhra, Tamilnad, Kerala, Bengal and only one student from Gujarat) under training at the National School of Drama. They were unfamiliar with the form as well as its social background but were better equipped to understand the technical aspects of this form.

For both these sets of actors the major problem was of voice projection. They lacked the specialised training essential for building up necessary peak points of emotional tension. But the uninhibited identification of the first and the neat disciplined acting of the second team of actors helped to convey the basic spirit of the play. Both groups were in enthusiastic agreement with the non-feudal turn given to the value system through this re-oriented version and they projected it with conviction, to the totally different types of audiences ranging from rural to urban, sophisticated elite to building workers and *jhuggī* dwellers. They played to purely Gujarati audiences as well as to non-Gujarati speaking people. They succeeded in evoking a spontaneous response in every case although there was significant difference in the degree involvement and its expression. With the language barrier removed, identification of unsophisticated audiences was spontaneous and the response was overwhelming. The unfamiliarity of form did not prevent them from responding to the essence of the story. This is an interesting contrast to the fact that one community of dancers conditioned to certain types of drum-beats are not moved to join the dance of a neighbouring community, dancing to a slightly different variation of a given rhythmic pattern.

In the case of the professional Nauṭaṅkī players the problem was more deeply rooted in the socio-economic milieu of India. Nauṭaṅkī is played and patronised by people who continue to cling to the feudal values of life even in Independent India which professes to move towards modern scientific rationality. Traditional Nauṭaṅkī plays continues to glorify feudal values. Through change of emphasis the re-oriented version has attempted to project socially liberal and rational values. It took considerable time to overcome the resistance of professional actors with a rural background to these changes. Their resistance was stronger in the case of new social values than in the case of politico-economic values. However they readily entered into the spirit of humanism via universally accepted human values, irrespective of the purposeful selectivity and juxtapositioning of these values. With the technical command over their voices the professional actors succeeded in projecting the values they themselves were not convinced of, with such powerful impact, that they evoked enthusiastic response from the sophisticated as well as unsophisticated urban audiences who were deeply moved.

In the process of the preparation for these productions all the teams were aware that they were under going a new experience. For each performance of *Jasma Odan* two players of the *bhungal,* (a long narrow trumpet like instrument as indispensable to the orchestra accompanying Bhavai as the *Nakkara* is to Nauṭaṅkī)

had to be called from a village in Gujarat. In all, three different pairs came to Delhi for this purpose. They were visibly impressed by the choreographic element introduced in their traditional form. They expressed a desire to include it in their own performances.

The confrontation of artists with different social backgrounds did create a stimulating for all concerned. Such a cross-fertilisation promises to give interesting results both in aesthetic as well as social terms, if the human problems inherrent in such a confrontation can be handled with sensitive care. Sustained effort in this desirable direction involves substantial investment of finance as well as the dedicated energy of talented artists.

**Notes On Text**

**1. Jasmā Odan:** A popular legend of Gujerat associated with Jasma says that in her previous birth she was an *Apsara* (a divine dancer at Lord Indra's Court) named Kāmkunḍala. At the command of her Lord she tried to seduce a sage named Nala Rishi whose successful penance had made Indra feel insecure about his throne. After attracting the sage, when she refused to live with him because of his ugly appearance, the sage cursed her saying that she should be reborn in the community of Od who earn their living by digging and carrying earth for construction works. Furthermore she would have to marry the ugliest man from that community. The proud *Apsarā* was mortified but not brow-beaten. She promptly confronted him with a counter-curse that the sage who could be tempted, should himself be reborn in the same Od community as the ugly man who she would marry.

Thus our folk imagination explains the basic of the unusual love between Jasma and Rudaji (Nala Rishi) in terms of their philosophy which demands that each individual must square his account on this earth, taking as many births as necessary in order to atone for the wrongs he may have done to his fellow beings.

When Jasma goes with her husband to Patan, the capital of Gujarat to dig the famous Tank of the thousand Shivalings (Sahastraling Talav), the king becomes enamoured by her beauty and wants to marry her. Enraged by her refusal to comply with his wishes he orders a general massacre of all the Ods in which Rudaji also dies. Jasma commits suicide after cursing the king with the total destruction of his capital and the fearful disease of leprosy. Finally, a Muslim mendicant turns up who brings all of them back to life and builds a mosque on the site of the Raja's palace.

In the traditional Bhavai play based on this legend, Jasma refuses to leave her husband to marry the king because the greatest virtue of a Hindu woman is supposed to be her chastity and faithfulness to her husband. Traditional Bhavai players, even today emphasise this theme in their improvised dialogues, but the ballad forming the core of this play, which includes the duet in verse between the king and Jasma gives scope for emphasising instead, the dignity of labour. After all, Jasma was a working-woman and the manner of her refusing the king's tempting offers of comfort that his wealth could provide, show her pride in her work and the independence of an incorruptible mind moulded by honest labour.

**2. Sanskrit Drama:** Ancient India has its classical as well as folk theatre developing side by side. The former evolved ten different types of plays with complex and compact dramatic structure and subtle sophistication, classified under the collective heading as *Rūpakas* by our ancient dramaturgists. The ancient folk theatre, on the other hand evolved about 18-24 dramatic forms with looser dramatic structures and broader character, collectively known as *Uprupakas.*

**3. Rasa Theory:** Unlike Greek drama, Sanskrit drama has been indifferent to the concept of Three Unities of Time, Place and Action, but from its very inception it has insisted on the Unity of Impact. Inspite of developing several different moods in the same play it achieved the unity of impact by choosing one of the moods as the dominant or prime mood (*Pradhan Rasa*) of a given play. All the other moods were subordinated to the development of this dominant mood, and were made instrumental in strengthening this process. The subordinate moods were called the *Gauna rasas* of the play.

**4. Arthopḳseps:** Five types of Dramatic devices used by the ancient playwrights to inform the audience of the relevent events off-stage, which are not enacted but knowledge of which essential to follow the story that is unfolding on the stage.

**5. Amar Singh Rathod:** Amar Singh Rathod is a popular tale of Rajasthan from its chaivalrous medieval period. Amar singh is commander-in-Chief at the Court of Emperor Shahjahan, envied by the other courtiers, especially by **Salavat Khan**, the Emperior's brother-in-law. Amar Singh is recently married to a princess of Bundi, named Hadi Rani. He asks the Emperior's permission to go to Bundi to bring her back to his palace. The Emperor is reluctant to part with him but grants seven days' leave of absence on condition that he pays one lakh rupees per day for each additional day he remains away from the court.

On the way back from Būndī while passing through a desert Amar snigh meets Narshahbaz Khan, a Pathan Officer in the Mughal Army, who is dying of thirst. Amar Singh saves his life by giving him water from his own scanty supply. The grateful Pathan swears to give his life for Amar singh if such a necessity should arise. They become life long friends.

Taking advantage of the fact that fifteen days after his return from Būndī, Amar singh absorbed in his new-found happiness, forgets to report to the Court, salavant Khan poison's the Emperor's mind against Amar Singh. Ram Singh, the son of Amar singh's elder brother, is sent to Naumehala with the Imperial firman summoning Amar Singh to the Emperor's presence with the fine of rupees seven lakhs for his seven days of unauthorised absence. Enraged by the tone of this order, Amar singh is rude to the Emperor who in turn confirms the fine which Salavat gleefully tries to collect. Amar Singh kills salavat and challenges the might of the Mughal Armies. The Emperor announces a reward for the capture of the rebellious Amar Singh whom nobody dares to face on

the battlefield. Finally, Arjun Gaud, a brother of Amar Singh's first wife, who is now dead, comes forward to defeat him.

After winning the confidence of Amar Singh and Hadi Rani, Arjun kills the hero on his way to the Agra Fort, through a sly-trick. Shahjahan is enraged at the manner of his favourite Commander's death and punishes the traitor. He is worried about finding a worthy successor to Amar Singh's post. He decides to test the quality of the man before appointing him Commander-in-chief. He declares that if the relatives of Amar singh want his body, they must fight for it, else the Emperor would bury him in Agra instead of burning his body according to the Hindu custom.

Hadi Rani and Ram singh try to mobilise support for this task but fail until Amar Singh's friend the Pathan Narshahbaz Khan comes to their rescue with his young son Nabi Rasool. The Pathan dies during one of battles but the war is brought to a victorious conclusion by his son, side by side with Ram Singh. The Emperor is pleased with their valour and dignity. He makes Ram Singh his new Commander-in-chief and appoints Nabi Rasul to his father's post. Hadi Rani performs *sati.*

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**FOLK-DRAMAS: KARIŃGĀ AND SVĀNGA, NUKKADA DRAMA AND ITS FATHER.**

The folk-dramas namely *kariṅgā* and *svāṅga* are the two dramatic tenets which are older than *Nauṭaṅkī*. From the time of independence to fifth decade of this century .They renowned in villages, Districts and *Tālukās* and even in the big cities like Lucknow and Kanpur in the lower-class people. But from 42 to 47 during the second world-war, they started disappearing. After independence all the residents of *svāṅgī* artistes vacated their places, Even Lucknow, which was very famous for *Nakkālas* and *svāṅgīs* could not save them. The ones who survived, they are living in vacuum in Lucknow.

The word *svāṅga* is used in *Avdhī* dialect for the meaning of deception. It also suggests the meaning of 'imitation' and 'mimicry'. In the western villages of Avadha, specially in Lucknow, sītāpur and Faizabad, It is known as *svāṅgī saṁvāgī* and *Nakalacī* or *Nakkāla*. In Rājasthan, it is known as *Bahurūpiyā,* in Jaipur, they are very rich and got estate in gifts by kings. In the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh they are known as *Bhāṇḍa or Bheḍaitī.* Even today one locality in Benares is infested with these people. These artistes are extempore in their talks, good elacationists, stubborns and efficient in acting. They don't need any script for their dramatic performance.

Every incident, situation or individual can be performed extempore. One actor can do acting of multi-characters of male, female, old or young or a child -a mono-acting. The artistes of *svāṅgas* are so expert in producing the sound of train, whistle, the gallop of a horse or Horn or car, that it becomes difficult to differentiate between the authentic or artifical one. They are apt in producing the sounds of birds and animals and even different musical instruments through their noses and mouths. Even they perform some magical feats to create the *Adbhuta-rasa.* They possessed bag and baggage of their art while they roam. Thus, we can call it **Banjārā-art** also. For royalty, they used golden or silver papers for their costumes. For an expert artiste even there is no need of any costume. They can use their turban for a veil while act like a women and abruptly they change themselves into paunchy person or a dandy or a delicate woman. They surpass in their acting of a lady even to an actress.

They perform their art in any marriage, birth of a son, head-shaven-ceremony or perforation of Ears' ceremony. They mimic so perfectly their proteges. How can they act so proficiently living only in their locality? It is because their *intelligence-agency* collect all the information in advance and convey to them all the subtle-points. Even they collect the too personal and private matters of their proteges to exploit them in more payment, but with happy disposition. In a light mood, they expose the oppressions of the feudal over the people, and their frailties and incapabilities to rule over, sometime these artistes expose even the conspiracy between two kings so artistically that it becomes believable fact as it happened in the case of king **Sawai Madho Singh's** conspiracy in Jaipur. As they crack the conspiracy and privacy which are known as *Bhaṇḍā-Phoḍa* in Hindi language, it might be possible, they became known as *Bhāṇḍa.* They could make weep through their eagle's sharp eyes to expose any social-unjustice through their art. Even they participated in the struggle of independence during 1946 when military Jawans and officers were executed by the Britishers after second world-war of Indian Army, then they in the form of boatmen started to kill Britishers.

In the farmer-movement in Raibareilly which was against the rule of shivagarh, the leader of farmers, Munshi Kālikā Prasad invited *IPTA*(**Indian People's Theatre Association** to Agra) to bring out the rally of the farmers through the medium of Folk-Art of *Svāṅga*.

**Folk-Drama Kariṅgā:** In the Indian, dialects, we find several words which are born in different regions. and one does not know about their roots. The words are like *Ubahani*, (The rope which pulls out water from the well) *Jhaḍavā* (A basket of cane) and *Khurapī (*spade) all these words are derived from regional dialects. *Kariṅgā* is the word of same variety prevalent in Uttar Pradesh. for one of the kind of folk-drama. This drama is prevalent in the Eastern region and Braj-region but in **Avadha** it is known as *Kariṅgā.* In the *kariṅgā* folk drama there are only two or three characters and instrumentalists of the same number. The prominent

instruments for accompaniments are *Mṛdangā*, *Jhāñjā* and *Cikārā* (three stringed *sārańgī*). This folk-drama is pre-dominant for its lyrics and dance. The main aesthetic configuration is humour (*Hāsya-rasa*). It is important to note that there is a satirical expressions of the vices and weaknesses of women which are enacted in this drama. Even **Ańgarej Bahādur** could not escape from its injurious style.

There is a sensitive satire behind the humour. The **Fakkaḍa** language of **kabīr** and lyrics of *karińgā* have a great similarity with each other. The *ulaṭavāsī* of **kabīr** like: *calī ho kula boranī gańgā nahāya*; "A woman who branded her family is going to purify herself after dipping herself into the Gańgā;" is some time become the drone music of *karińgā*.

*Karińgā* is a *moving- drama* from one place to another. There is no need of any stage there. It can be staged even in the street or corner of the street like *Nukkaḍa*-drama, spectators are generally male members of the society but some time females also witness it in the houses of their Balconies, we can call it the father of *Nukkaḍa* street drama.

**AUTHOR: DIKSHIT, YUKTIBHADRA; Source:** *Chāyānaṭa* No.42 Lucknow. (Tr. into English **Padma Sudhi**) A Journal of Sangeet-Natak-Akademy, New Delhi.

**FOLK-HANDICRAFTS OF 15 STATES OF INDIA IN THE FAIR OF 1994,**

Bhaṛtya Hastakalā Mahotsav 94, displays beautiful handicrafts brought by Oxfam-Brij,a Delhi based social service organisation in co-ordination with the 'Social Economic Development Institution', *Kerwādī* in Parbhanī district Maharashtra. At least hundred institution from the various corners of India, display handicrafts like Banana fibre made items from Kochi, cushion covers from Ahmedabad, to Batīk and *Madhubanī Paintings*, wall pieces, sarees and bed sheets.

Rural craftsmen from Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, New Delhi, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Pondicherry, Maharashtra, Bihar and Haryana have for sale embroidered clothes, sarees leather work, pottery, and Banana fibre art work collected.

From Hoshiarpur (Punjab) come the acrylic paintings on Śeesum wood boxes, dressing-mirror stands and teapoys. Acrylic paintings on Jewellery-boxes, chess-boxes, card-boxes reveals the magnificent rural art. The paintings portray pretty women to stories from the Epics.

Teapoys and small tables are sold in range of Rs.2,000 dressing mirror for Rs.1,600 and Chess-boards for Rs.800.

Ahmedabad's *khādī* suits with the embroidered art work is sold in range of Rs.200 to Rs.400 and lovely door mats in a range of Rs.30. Patch-work, cushion covers, are sold for Rs.40 and patch-work bed sheets for Rs.400.

The stall from Lucknow displays chikan kurtas with partial and total embroidery in an array of colours, for Rs.200. Another stall from Lucknow displays excellent patch-work cushion covers, a set of five sold for Rs.225. Other cushion sets are sold for Rs.150 per set of five. This stall too has are pretty churidar suits and embroidered bed covers.

Suzuni-art work on bed sheets and cushion are the attractions at the Bihar stall. From single bed sheets to huge double bed sheets the price goes as far as Rs.1600.

Wax and batīk painting on wall hangings and table covers are the crowd pullers at the other stalls. Depending on the size and quality of wall hanging, the price varies from Rs.100 to Rs.250. The price of napkins varies from Rs.9 to Rs.37.

Banana fibre made attractive hand bags, hand purse and pot-stand in different sizes and designs are to display at the Kochi stall. The pot-stand is available for Rs.15 to Rs.25. Small bags are sold in a range of Rs.15 to Rs.75 and hand purses in a range of Rs.145 onwards. Also there are fibre made carpets in attractive designs.

Carved out in brass are beautiful fish, horses, turtles and elephants in various sizes. Circular boxes, jewellery boxes and even *diyās* and idols of the various gods and goddesses are prices at Rs.20 onwards.

Bowls and plates of bronze are sold in a range of Rs.300 at the stall which has artefacts from Orissa. Paṭṭā-paintings to be hung on walls or to be used as table covers are sold for Rs.17. Attractive Crocodīles, horses and other miniatures in coconut fibre work are priced from Rs.12 to Rs.150. A tea cups set of wood is sold here for Rs.20, along with a wide range of *diyas* and small containers.

Besides these there are cotton *durries* from Purandar, Near Pune, sold for Rs.248 to Rs.281. From Vadgaosheri, there are wall hangings, and salwar suits sold in a range of Rs.45to Rs.150. From *Ambejogai* come the cotton *odhnis* for Rs.30 and letter-pads for Rs.17. Cotton durries from Latur, are sold for Rs.120 to Rs.1,200.

From Karjat, comes exquisite artwork in cane and bamboo. Cane sofa-sets are spacious, elegant as well as comfortable. Cane chairs are available for Rs.300, arm chairs for Rs.160, round chairs for Rs.325, round table for Rs.600. There are sofa-sets for Rs.3200 and a variety of other small utility items in cane and bamboo.

Andhra Pradesh stall displays Jarī saree work costing Rs.330, jacket saree and Kochampalli for Rs.200 and lovely cotton sarees in a range of Rs.200. *Madhubani* paintings on bed sheets, wall hanging and sarees, range from Rs.700 to Rs.1,500.

The Rajasthan stall displays patch work in bed sheets, cushions covers, sarees case files and diaries. All are sold in range of Rs.50 to Rs.220. Cotton durries are sold for Rs.150 onwards.

Greeting cards, candles and table covers from Kodaikanal are sold for Rs.5 onwards. The stall from Uttar Pradesh displays quilt work, sarees, aprons, napkins and bed sheets They were displayed at The New English School, Tilak Road., Pune.

**AUTHOR: KAMBALE, SANDHYA; Source:** *Artefacts or Handicrafts by the institute of Oxfam Brij* New Delhi *IE* May 8. 1994. Pune Ed.

**FOLK-LITERATURE OF INDIA**

By folk-literature is meant the traditional literature of the unlettered mass living in one integrated social group. It is orally transmitted and can be claimed to be 'of the people, by the people, for the people'. It is, therefore, popular literature in the real sense of the term. Before writing was invented, it was the only form of literature that existed in society. It grows and develops with the formation and development of society, and as such it is integrated into it, as it were. It declines when any particular social function with which it is linked ceases to operate.

The existence of folk-literature as such was recognized for the first time in India more than two thousand years ago in the oldest available Tamil grammar entitled *Tolkāppiyam* composed by Tolkāppiyar. The author defined and classified some of the elements of folk-literature more or less elaborately, giving examples from oral sources, and it seems that its tradition had already been well established. Literacy has not spread in India among the masses even today as widely as it should have been therefore, folk-literature is the only vehicle of thought for the vast majority of Indian people even to this day. Life throughout rural India is more or uniform. It still depends mainly on agricultural work which has also a uniform character. Therefore, the way of life throughout the Sub-continent is more or less-identical and the social functions performed are also not very different in various regions in spite of the fact that there are different languages and apparently different cultures. When we analyse the elements of folk-literature, we find that they are basically the same throughout India. Because the creative faculty of each individual living at the folk level is fundamentally the same, and as the way of life is almost identical everywhere, the themes on which folk-literature is based are also mostly not very different from one another. Therefore, in every language spoken in India we come across oral literature of about the same character. They are in form of doggerel verses, folk-songs, folk-tales, riddles, proverbs, myths, legends, ballads, folk-dramas, etc. Even tribal societies have their own literature but they are seldom developed as folk-literature. They have a somewhat different character. In almost every country, folk-literature has been the basis of higher literature. But in India, the natural way of development from folk-literature to modern literature was interrupted since the beginning of the Nineteenth century owing to the introduction of English education and the adoption of Western ideas and thoughts. During the period of the *Renaissance in Europe*, the folk-literature of almost all the countries, except, Russia and a few smaller States, met about the same fate owing to the revival of Classical Roman and Greek ideas in art and literature.

**Nursery Rhymes And Doggerel :**Cradle-songs, game-songs, nursery-rhymes, and other doggerel verses are common all over India. Cradle-songs induce babies to sleep. They are sung or recited in a musical tune by mothers or nurses while putting children to sleep. Such songs serve a practical purpose and are composed orally by the elderly women of the family. Sometimes they have a touch of poetic excellence. A cradle song of Gujarat is as follows:

The swing is so dear to my son,
I give it toys to play with,
Sleep, my baby sleep!
My little son is so wise,
It bathes sitting in a tub.
Sleep, my baby sleep. [1]

An illustration from Madhya Pradesh can also be cited here:

Who would beat you baby?
Swing swing in your cradle.
I am going for water
I'll give you scented oil.
Swing swing in your cradle.
What widow's eye has caught you
That you cry so much?
Swing swing in your cradle. [2]

In this group also come the game songs of children. Little boys and girls recite game songs in the excitement of games. That is why they are more rhythmic than lyrical. They are intergrated into the games themselves, and as a matter of fact, they are inseparable parts of games. Songs vary according to the character of the games, indoor and outdoor. There are mixed games of little boys and girls which have characters of their own. When the boys grow older they form separate groups, and the characters of their games also change. The games of small girls are naturally indoor and less vigorous, but those of boys are otherwise. In game songs, the emphasis is laid only on rhythm and not on any formulated thought or idea. They are nonsense verses in the real sense of the term. A game song form Upper
Assam is cited below. The game concerned is known as question-and-answer game. It is Indoor in character and played by children of both sexes together during their early years:

'O crane, who has taken away your hand?
The mango, when I tried to pick it.
Where is that mango?—It fell into the wood.
What became of the wood? —The fire consumed it.
Where are the ashes? –The washerman carried them away'

Similar game songs are also current in Bengal, Orissa, and Andhra Pradesh. With the introduction of Western games, the traditional ones are being forgotten and the songs based on them are also becoming obsolete. In most of the tribal societies of India there are no organized children's games and hence game songs are seldom met there. There are certain game-songs, specially those of little girls, which are not just nonsense verses; they sometimes express the deepest feeling of domestic and personal life. In the following game song from the Punjab, a little girl is thinking of her future marriage and of its natural consequences:

'O pipal of my birthplace,
Your shade is cool;
Water in your pond is dirty,
The leaf-powder from its surface I set aside,

Lacchi and Banto went to husbands,
Whom shall I tell my story?
Without fire my bones are roasted,
On my spinning wheel I cannot make yarn,
I wish I could go back to father- in-law's
And confine myself within the house'[4]

Yet another type of doggerel verse can be commonly heard in the ceremonial worship performed by elderly women. The verses are not inspired by any intense spiritual feeling, being merely ritual songs and sometimes also magical in character. They are Bengal, the following prayer is offered to the popular goddess known as **Senjuti;**

'Give me a palanquin to come and go,
Give me a golden mirror to see my face,
Let the palanquin of my father's house,
Come to my father-in-law's house,
On the way let the palanquin
Drink honey and clarified butter'.[5]

There is a class of doggerel verses which can be characterized as magical. They have little or no literary merit and are sometimes no more than mere jugglery of obsolete words. They are recited by the exorcists to cure cases of snake-bite, to induce rainfall during a drought, to protect the ripe paddy in the fields from hailstorm, and for various other practical purposes. The following magical verse meant for the treatment of a case of snake-bite collected from the Santal Parganas in Bihar is an example:

*'Hunkā says gaḍgaḍā, kalke* says ashes,
The preceptor looks at the water of *hunkā*
And says, thou art now free of poison.
O the poison of Netāi, the washerwoman,
O the poison of Kālakūṭa,
Go off by the way of the wound,
At the grace of Mother Manasā'.[6]

They are nonsense verses in the real sense of the term. By such nonsense utterances the mystic character of the incantations is believed to be retained intact.

**FOLK-SONGS**

Folk-literature in India has been very much enriched by folk-songs. In every State of India, folk-songs exist in their widest variety. They cover the entire life of an individual, from the cradle to the grave, so to say. Within this wide canvas, nativity songs and funeral songs are the two milestones. **Leopold Stokowski** writes: 'The most typical of all this music should be recorded, as should the folk-music all over the world. Such records will be a permanent monument of the individual culture of many lands.[7] But no appreciable work has been done so far in this field as far as India is concerned. In one sense, the folk-songs of India have a basic unity inasmuch as most of their themes are drawn from the two great Indian Epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata,* especially the *Rāmāyaṇa* which has been exercising very great influence on the minds of the Indian people at large over the centuries. It has a universal character because it has adopted the theme of the discipline of domestic or family life as its basis. Therefore, every child born in an Indian family is considered as Rāma, the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa,* and every brother has his ideal in Lakşmaṇa and Bharata, and so on.

The birth of a child in a family is celebrated, as if it were the birth of Rāma himself, by means of songs sung by the elderly women of the family. A song sung on this occasion by the womenfolk in rural Bengal is given below:

'Ten days and ten months having been completed,
A child with all auspicious sings is born.
The navel-string has been cut by the nurse,
Auspicious sound are made at Kauśalyā's palace,
Messenger carries the news to Daśaratha',
The king sees the face of his son with gems and pearls.[8]

According to the custom of the Oraon tribe in South Bihar, on the ninth day after the birth of a child, male or female, the mother takes the purificatory bath in a river or an embankment. The child is left behind at home. The accompanying women of the family sing the following song:

*'Guñjā* flower is red,
Red is the skit of the cloth,
O mother, whose baby is crying,
Crying alone on the river bank?
Take it, take in your arms'.[9]

The next social function after birth is the sacred thread ceremony of the boys in a Brahmin family. Songs befitting the occasion are sung almost all over India by women on that occasion. Marriage is the most important social function and its rituals are as complicated as they numerous. Each ritual is generally associated with a specific group of songs. The idea of marriage is associated with pleasure and happiness and wherever the mind betrays such a feeling, it gives expressions to it by the usualmarriage songs. The marriage songs are obviously non-ritualistic and secular in character. **A Korku** marriage song collected from Hoshangabad (in Mahārāşţra) is as follows:

'A palanquin of gold they have kept for you,
O bridegroom, be seated,
They have brought a fine turban for you,
O boy, put it on,
Beads of gold they have brought for you,
O darling, adorn yourself,
Printed cloth, gold and red, is also here,
O bridegroom, be quickly dressed'.[10]

The best specimens of marriage songs are the bridal farewell songs. They are sung mostly by the elderly women of the brides' families or even by the Birds themselves. The pain of separation underlines these songs with the deepest sentiment of real life. The following is a specimen from the region of western Bihar:

Father's tears bring tide in Gaṅgā,
Mother's tears reveal all the darkness,
Brother's tears make his dress wet down to his feet,
Only the brother's wife has no tear in her eyes. [11]

A specimen of farewell songs sung by the brides themselves is given below. This is from Orissa:

O God, Thou art throwing off this unfortunate girl,
It is for me as hard as walking on the edge of a knife,
Without Thy kindness.
'Having given me in marriage, O Father,
With a demon of Lańkā,
Thou shalt be free from all anxieties.
It is as if a bull having served Śiva
Gets bunches of grass only to devour.
My case is also the same,
It is in vain that I have served my God'.[12]

Funeral and mourning songs mark the end of the wide span of the ritual songs. They are naturally sung on a different note. Painful memory with a touch of cynical feeling constitutes the theme of these songs. Funeral songs are sung generally by men while the body is carried to the funeral place for cremation and the mourning songs are sung by women at the time of, or after, the death. They are in a sense lamentations. From the following mourning song collected from Chingleput district in Tamil Nadu, it will be obvious that the mother mourns the loss of her son:

O the apple of my eye, my darling, my blissful paradise,
'Apple of my eye, where have you hidden yourself?
My golden bead, my eyes,
My flower, where have you hidden yourself?
Gem-like apple of my eye, my blissful paradise,
I don't know how have you gone away?
Even as a capering deer leaps
You have jumped into the well,
Even as a capering deer
Have you jumped into the lake'[13]

The songs which are sung during the various festivals throughout the year in different parts of India are popular and of a wide variety. There are, for example, the *Bīhu-festival* of Assam, the Gājan festival of Bengal, the Karma festival of Chota Nagpur in Bihar, and so on. These songs are sung according to the scheduled time of the calendar. Almost all festival songs are accompanied by dance, and in some places it is mixed dance also. Therefore, they are more rhythmic than lyrical. An example of a Bīhu song of Assam is given below:

'This yellow bird, lovely are its wings,
Once it flies up it cannot be caught,
This youth, if it goes away,
No more is to be got back'.[14]

*Bāramāsīs* are very well known and widespread folk-songs in India. They are commonly known as seasonal songs, because they express the sentiment of love against the background of the changing features of the twelve months of the year. The following is part of a *Bārāmāsī* song collected from the Simla Hills in Himachal Pradesh:

'The month of Jeṭh has come,
The sun burns me,
Now play your flute to me, my love'. [15]

Though the sentiment of love is expressed through various types of songs, a set of folk-songs can also be classified as love songs. In the more Hinduized societies from Gujarat to Assam, the hero and heroine of folk-songs are invariably Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, but in the less Hinduized and aboriginal societies, they are human being having only genuine earthly feelings. It is also a fact that though the names of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā have been borrowed from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa,* their characters have been humanized to the greatest extent by the illiterate rural composers of folk-songs. Therefore, it has been possible to adopt them as characters of folk-songs. A love song of the Ao Nāgas from the hills of Assam is as follows:

'Countless suitors come to the house where I sleep,
But in this lover only, handsome as a flower,
Do mine eyes behold the ideal of my heart.
Many came to the house where I sleep
But the joy of my eyes was not among them.
My lover is like the finest bead
On the necks of all the men of all the world.
When my lover comes not where I sleep
Ugly and hateful to my eyes is my chamber'. [16]

There is a class of songs integrated with manual work known as work songs. They are generally group songs and sung by a group of workers while performing the same work together such as husking paddy, grinding pulses, reaping the harvest, rowing boats, and so on. The following Marathi grinding songs were collected from the State of Bombay.[17]

1. Rise, my companions, for the drawn grinding, The star of Venus stands above our heads.
2. In the dawn one should fold one' hands in the courtyard, As one looks down, the sun rolls into the sky.
3. The rain falls, sister, the clouds thunder and thunder, The farmer like a king rejoicing begins to sow his land.

**FOLK-TALES**

Folk-tales have been the most important element of Indian folk-literature. They have been collected and studied since the middle of the nineteenth century specially due to the British civilians interested in this subject and the Christian missionaries of various nationalities of Europe and America. At the beginning of the twentieth century, **Maurice Bloomfield, W. N. Brown, Ruth Norton, M. B. Emeneau,** and others examined and analysed their themes and also studied the aspect of their diffusion. But it is not long since the interest of Indian scholars was drawn to this most fascinating subject. Although there has been some random collection here and there, it is only recently that a scientific and systematic study has been undertaken by Indian scholars.

Indian has established a great tradition as far as folk-tales are concerned. some Western scholars are of the opinion that the folk-tales of the world have been borrowed from India through different channels, because India has a very ancient record of folk-tales. Notable works like Guṇāḍhya's *Brhatkathā,* stories of the birth of Buddhā in the *Jataka, Dammakahā* of the Jain, Somadeva's *Kathāsarit-sāgara,* Daṇḍin's *Daeśakumāra-caritaṃ,* Viṣṇu *Śarman's Pañcatantra,* and Nārāyaṇa's *Hitopadeśa*

Have their root in traditional Indian folk-tales. Indian folk-tales have also traveled to such South-East Asian

countries as Malaya, Cambodia, Thailand and Indonesia through Buddhism and Hinduism. Even China and Japan, which adopted Buddhism, were not free from Indian influence so far as folk-tales are concerned. The reason behind this wide distribution of Indian folk-tales is perhaps that any unlike any other from oral literature, these have some universal elements in their motifs and are objective in nature.

The first publication of Indian folk-tales was made by **Sir Richard C. Temple** in 1866. Rev. S. Hislop, who had worked among the aboriginals of the Central Provinces, collected considerable information relating to the folklore

Of the tribal people of the area. **Sir Richard C. Temple** edited and published this material, which contained some folk-tales along with their originals. This was the first attempt at the publication of Indian folk-tales. Unfortunately, the first attempt failed to attract workers into this field because it was marked by technical discussion and deep scholarship to which the Indian reader had not yet become accustomed. Two years later, a fascinating collection of Indian folk-tales was published by **Mary Frere** in her *old Deccan Days or Hindu Fairy Legends Current in Southern India* (London, 1868) which caught the imagination of Indian scholars. It was translated into several European languages within a short time. In 1872 *The Indian Antiquary* started publishing a series of folk-tales collected from Bengal by **G. H. Damant** and it was continued till his death in 1879. Since the first appearance of **Damant's** collection, folk-tales drawn from all part of India were published in *The Indian Antiquary* for a considerable period. In 1883 *Folk-tales of Bengal* was published by Rev. **Lal Behari Dey** from London. In the following year **R. C. Temple** published the first of his three volumes of *The Legends of the Punjab* in Bombay. In 1884 *Wide-awake Stories* was published jointly by **R. C. Temple** and **Flora A. Steel** in Bombay. In the same year, a valuable collection of folk-tales was published in *The Indian Antiquary* by **Nateśh Śāstri.** In 1890 **William Crooke** started the publication of his periodical *North Indian Notes and Queries* in which a number of folk-tales were published from his own and others' collection. In the course of a few years, the Christian missionaries also started the collection and publication of folk-tales from different perts of India. Among those who made outstanding contribution in this field were **Rev. A. Campbell** and Rev. **J. H. Knowles,** who worked in the Santal Parganas (Bihar) and Kashmir respectively. The work was continued during the twentieth century. The first decade of the century was highly productive in this direction and saw the publication of the following titles: **R. S. Mukherjee's** *Indian Folklore* (Calcutta, 1904), **Mrs Dracott's** Simla

*Village Tales* (London, 1906), **Rev. C. Swynnerton's** *Romantic Tales from the Punjab* (London, 1908), and **C. H. Bompas's** *Folklore of the Santal Parganas* (London, 1909). Each publication was remarkable in more than one respect. More collections followed including **W. M. Cullock's** *Bengali Household Tales* (London and New York, 1912), **Śobhana Devi's** *The Orient Pearls* (London, 1913), and **P. O. Bodding's** *Santal Folk-tales* (Oslo, 1929). **Verrier Elwin** a missionary and later on Deputy Director of Anthropological Survey of India, made a great contribution to the study of Indian folk-tales by his collection and analysis in *Folk-tales of Mahakoshal* (London, 1944).

The Swadeshi movement started in Bengal during the first decade of the present century gave an impetus to the revival of the traditional culture of the country. Due emphasis, therefore, was laid on the collection and study stayed in village and who himself made a collection of doggerel verses, also inspired young scholars in the collection of folk-tales. This, no doubt, yielded good results. Since Independence, the study of folk-literature in general has gathered momentum. Many universities have adopted this subject for special study in post-graduate courses and almost all the States of India have already published collections of folk-tales in their respective languages. Not being satisfied with mere collection, Indian scholars have devoted themselves to the analysis of the material they have collected so far in the modern Western manner.

**Riddles:** Riddles are believed to be the earliest and most popular type of formulated thought. Accordingly, they are also considered to be an important element of folk-literature. The answer to the riddle is always disguised in allegorical language. Successful unfolding of the allegory leads to the discovery of its meaning. It is not only an amusement for youngsters, but has also a ritualistic function in the social life of many countries. Sometimes riddles are explained by the exercise of common sense. But only traditional answers to them are accepted and there is rarely more than one answer to a riddle. A riddle from Madhya Pradesh asks:

Touch the plate and the spring gushes out, what is it? [19] The answer is 'the eye'. The reply to the riddle is concealed here under two allegorical words, 'plate' and 'spring', which mean the 'eye' and 'tears' respectively. An example can be taken from Orissa also;

What is the creature that is born first
But grows its legs later? [20]

The answer is 'the frog'. The reply is given here not by unfolding any allegorical term, but only by the exercise of common sense based on observation of natural life. A riddle collected from Rajasthan reads:

From here to there But not in this country
I shall eat a fruit without a skin.[21]

The answer is 'hailstone'. A riddle from Bihar says:

Legs up, head down. [22]

The reply is the bat'. There is also no allegory in it, but the reply is given from observation of natural life.

There are riddle associate with rituals, particularly marriage rituals. These riddles are put by the members of the bride's party to the members of the bridegroom's party when the latter enters the boundary of the farmer's village. They are also sometimes put directly to the bridegroom when he enters the bride's house for the purpose of marriage. The custom is still prevalent in many Indian aboriginal and Hindu societies of the eastern region of India. Here is an example from West Bengal:

Where have you come from?
O gentlemen, where is your home?
To which clump the bamboo belongs?
To which clump the arrow?
How do you cook and how do you eat?
How do you and how do you go about? [23]
The traditional reply is as follows:
We come from the East,
Haridi is the village we live in.
The bamboo belongs to the clump of Rāma,
The arrow belongs to the clump of Lakşmaṇa.
We cook and serve as the wives do
And eat like a man.
We sleep like a jackal
And we go about like a lion. [24]

**Proverbs:** An important aspect of Indian folk-literature can be found in its proverbs. They are the shortest expressions of long experience of long experience of practical life, and as the practical experience of a worldly man is the same almost everywhere, the proverbs have a uniform character both in form and ideas. Clothed in poetic language (sometimes in short prose sentences also), these are in most cases satirical and replete with puns. Although they embody experiences of day-to-day practical life,
they are not without literary flavour.

The credit for the collection of proverbs in Indian languages goes to the *Christian missionaries.* In order to learn the language of the soil, they made attempts to collect the proverbs of different regions and had been editing and publishing them in the forms of dictionaries from the beginning of the last century even before any other element of Indian folk-literature came out in print. As early as 1824 **T. Rosebuck** published in Calcutta *Person and Hindusthani Languages.* In 1832 *Dṛşţānta-vākya-sańgraha,* a collection of proverbs, Bengali and Sańskrit, with their translation and application in English, was published in Calcutta by **Rev. W. Morton,** senior missionary of the Incorporated Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts. It contained 803 Bengali and seventy-two Sanskrit proverbs. This is the first recorded compilation and publication of proverbs in an Indian language. The Christian missionaries continued to present similar collections from different parts of India and, as a result, a number of collections appeared in the course of half a century. The first collection of Tamil proverbs was made earlier than 1874, because the second edition of *Tamil Proverbs* by **P. Percival** was published in Madras in 1874. a collection of Punjabi proverbs was made for the first time by **R. C. Temple** in his article 'Some Punjabi and other Proverb's published in *Folklore,* Vol. II (London, 1883). Telugu proverbs were compiled by **M. W. Carr** in his collection *Telugu and Sanskrit Proverbs* in London in 1868. A collection of proverbs from Kashmir was brought out the first time in 1885 in Bombay by **J. H. Knowles** in his *A Dictionary of Kashmiri Proverbs and Sayings.* The first collection of Sindhi proverbs was made by an Indian, **Rochiram Gajumal,** in his *A Handbook of Sindhi Proverbs* published in Karachi in 1895. The book was issued in two parts; one contained about 500 Sindhi proverbs with their English equivalents, while the other contained about 250 Sindhi proverbs which had no English equivalents as such, but their translations were made by the compiler himself. A collection of Marathi proverbs was made by **A. Manwaring** in his *Marathi Proverbs* published in Oxford in 1899. it is, however, not known whether this was the first collection of Marathi proverbs.

It was only in the twentieth century that the attention of Indian scholars was drawn to the collection and preservation of proverbs in the regional languages, and due to their efforts the number of proverbs on record has increased in every State. About 13,000 proverbs have been collected in Bengali so far. The actual number of Hindi proverbs published may be much greater. The use of proverbs and idioms enriches the style of writing, but today it has become rare in most of the regional languages. Proverbs are now preserved only in the memory of illiterate womenfolk in general or in the pages of dictionaries.

**Legends:** Legends are narrative songs based on the exploits or sacrifices of some heroic or noble characters of history or tradition. These may be classified as heroic and romantic according to the character and achievements of the hero or heroine. The heroic legends of the Punjab, Rajasthan, and Mahārāşţra are widely known. Through English translation the romantic ballads of Bengal and Assam have reached the foreign scholars in this field. The Bengali legend Of prince Gopīcandra, who was asked by his mother Maynāmatī to give up worldly life and embrace asceticism for twelve years at the prime for his life, has spread far and wide in the country and even penetrated into Nepal and Tibet. The legend of Jayamatī is very popular in the whole of Assam. Jayamatī, a princess, was inhumanly tortured to death by an oppressive king because she would not reveal the whereabouts of her husband, a prince who had been a fugitive to save himself from the wrath of that tyrant on the throne. She is a historical character. Her husband **Gadādhara Siṁha** became king A.D. 1681. Her son **Rudra Siṁha**, who succeeded his father in A.D. 1696, built a temple and excavated a big tank in her memory. The suffering undergone, and the ultimate sacrifice made by the lady held as ransom, from the subject-matter of this legend. She is adored as a martyr to wifely devotion and her legend still inspires the poet and playwrights of Assam. The anniversary of her death is observed every year in the whole of Assam. Another legend which is very popular throughout the State is that of **Maniram Dewan**, the 1857 martyr. The Punjabi legend of **Rasālu Kuār** has been done into English by several translators from different oral sources. It was translated into English for the first time by General Abbot as early as 1854. Rasālu, according to the legend, was the son of king **Śālivāhana** of Sialkot, and scholars think that the story gives a hint of the true history of the Indo-Scythian hero who must have flourished between the first Arab invasions of Sind and Kabul and the rise of the **Ghaznavid dynasty**.[25] Both valour and sacrifice for a noble cause are the basic ideas of the legend which is as follows:

Rasālu meets a princess by the side of a well. She has some attendants with her. Rasālu kills the attendants to talk freely with the princess, but fall into danger. He is about to be surrounded by people intending to kill him. He says to the princess:

Here is your mother's house,
But for me it is a foreign land.
For you I will lose my life
And who will send the news back to my home

The princess replies:

I will make a pyre of sandal wood
By my brother Biram, I swear.
If you lose your life for my sake
I will leap into the flames.[26]

Sentiments of love and sacrifice are predominant in the legends of the eastern region and the ideals of heroism and adventure are in those of the western.

**Ballads:** Closely akin legends, ballads are also narrative songs. They are shorter in form but more dramatic character. In ballads the conflicts and problem of life of men and women are more pointed, crucial, direct and acute, and are insurmountable. Themes of ballads both in Western countries and in India end in tragedy. These are invariably based on real life and direct experience. There is no promise of life after death for the characters of the ballads. Losses and gains are limited to the visible world of reality alone. Folk-ballads must have one eventful story running form the very beginning to the end with out pause, diversion, or any other episode in it. One theme only will carry the reader from the beginning to the end. The dramatic suspense is also maintained throughout.

Folk-ballads have been collected from every part of India. There are regional difference in their character and motifs, and most of them do not satisfy each and every point of the definition of ballad in the real sense of the term. The ballads of Assam have been divided into four groups according to their subject matter- historical, magical, realistic, and satirical.[27] The historical ballad *Barphukanar Gīta* is the most important from both literacy and historical points of view. It describes events which occurred during the early nineteenth century in the occupy the territory of Assam. **Badancandra** was an Ahom viceroy of Lower Assam in Gowhati. Other historical ballads of Assam are: *Barphuka Gīta, Padum kurvārīr Gīta, Maṇrāmā Devānar Gīta, Jayamatī Kuvārīr Gīta,* and *Ajan Fakirar Gīta*. Though each of them refer to one or two historical characters, the event and incidents described in them are not, strictly speaking, historical because a lot of unhistorical and romantic elements have entered into them. In the ballads of magic, the emphasis is laid more on the magical than on the realistic activities of life. Three ballads of this type have so far been collected from oral tradition and published. They are *Maṇikuvārar Gīta, Phulkuvārar Gīta,* and *Janāgābharur Gīta.* The last is the Assamese version of the Bengali ballad *Gopīcandrer Gīta.* The realistic ballads deal with the affairs of day-to-day life. Sometimes they express deep sentiments of love and affection *Dubalār Śāntir Gīta, Sāudar Gīta, kanyā Bāramāhī,* and *pagalā Pārvatīr Gīta* are few ballads of the realistic group. These ballads are generally available in Lower Assam and Kāmrūp District. The satirical ballads of Assam are compositions of class of village buffoons known as Bhāurā or Bahnā. Strictly speaking, they cannot be called ballads in view of the fact that they have no story in them. Bengal is particularly rich in ballads. A number of ballads have been published in English translation by the University of Calcutta. Western scholars were greatly impressed by them and bestowed on them their highest praise. These were mostly collected from the district of Mymensingh (now in Bangladesh) and they were published under the editorship of **Dr Dinesh Chandra Sen** with the title ***Maimansiṁha-gītikā*** by Calcutta University in 1923. Another volume was also brought out by the same editor under the title *Pūvavaṅga-gītikā* (Calcutta University, 1932); this contain a collection from the districts of sylhet, Noakhali, and Chittagong, all now in Bangladesh. Selected ballads were also rendered into English by **Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen** and published under the title *Eastern Bengal Ballads*(Calcutta,1926). Some of these are the finest specimens of Indian folk-ballads. They express the deepest sentiments of love and sacrifice based on the realities of human lives. Love is the motif of almost all the ballads collected from this area, and they have, therefore, a universal appeal. They have been justly classified as 'love ballads' by a European scholar .[28] Though the basic sentiment of folk-ballads all over the world is love, it must be admitted that this sentiment predominates in the ballads from **Mymensingh**. They are also intensely lyrical in character. Of a ballad entitled *Mahuyā* it has been remarked by a foreign scholar that 'lyrical points from the most characteristic feature of the ballad and, I do not hesitate to say, its most valuable artistic achievement. We could call it the *art of poetic* abbreviation,'[29] The ballad describes the story of love and sacrifice of a gypsy girl and a boy of a high family. In the ballads from the Punjab, Rajasthan, and Kashmir, heroic sentiments predominate, but sentiments of love and sacrifice are not altogether lacking in them. Ballads of Andhra Pradesh are generally full of pathos. The episodes of **Kāmamma** and **Sanyāsamma** who sacrificed their lives on the funeral pyre of their husbands, have been dealt with in these ballads. There are also ballads of **Vīra Rājamma, Lakṣmamma,** and **Pal Thāṅgā,** who had to undergo physical tortures by their mother-in-law and to sacrifice their innocent lives just because of suspicion about their character by their husbands. The ballad of **Bāla Nāgamma**, who was tortured by her step-mother, is very famous and is full of pathos.

**Myth:** Myth, which is also considered by Western folklorists as one of the aspects of folk-literature, has been defined by some as 'a story, presented as having actually occurred in a previous age, explaining the cosmological and super-natural traditions of a people, their gods, heroes, cultural traits, religious belief, etc. The purpose of myth is to explain is to explain… matters in the "science of a pre-scientific age"[30] Man's eternal quest to know the basic truth of the natural

phenomena led to him to invent myths. This is universal in its core and India, being an ancient country with a long and continued traditional heritage and culture, has also inherited a rich storehouse of myths written and unwritten. There are, for instance, creation myths is which the origin of the world and mankind is described. An example form Madhya Pradesh is:

'When the world would not remain steady, Mother Earth caused birds to be born. The first birds had four legs. But after they were born Mother Earth took two legs from each and set them below the earth like the pillars of a house. Resting on the leg of cores of birds the world became steady.[31]

There are also myths about the origin of the sun, the moon, and the stars, which tell how these objects originated and were ultimately set into the sky permanently. There are animal and bird myths also in which the origin of various species of animals and birds has been described.

**FOLK-DRAMA**

Folk drama is another element in folk- literature which can be found in some form or other in the various States of India. In Bengal this form folk-literature attained a high level of maturity. The older type of folk-drama in Bengal is known as *Kṛṣṇa-yātrā* and the more modern type as only *yātrā.* In most cases *yātrā.* plays used to be performed on the occasion of religious festivals as the themes themselves had always a religious appeal. Folk drama in every part of the country used to adopt themes from the popular Indian epics and the Purāṇas. With the passing of time, folk drama is gradually becoming more and more secular in character and spirit, and traditional subjects and techniques are being replaced by current social and political themes and modern stagecraft. In Madhya Pradesh folk drama is known as *mach*, in Gujarat as *bhāoyāni* in Assam as *aṅkīyā,* in Karṇaṭaka as *bayalaṭā*, in Tamil Nadu as *terukkūttu*, in Andhra as *Kuravañji* and in Mahārāṣṭra as *tamāśā*. In spite of linguistic differences, the folk-dramas of India have something in common which is found in their spirit.

Though modern civilization based on science and industry is posing a great threat to these unsophisticated forms of rural culture, the spirit of the simple rustic people still persists. The drive against illiteracy after Independence may have distribed the continuity of the 'oral' tradition of this culture, but folk-literature remains an integral part of India's social life to this day.

**AUTHOR: RAY, NIHARANJAN**; **Source:** *The cultural Heritage of India* Vol. V Ramakrishna Mission Institute of culture, Calcutta. 1941

**Foot Notes:-1.Madhubhai Patel**, 'Folk-songs of South Gujarat' *Journal of the Indian Musicological Society,* Vol .V No3 (Baroda, 1974), p.20.

**2**. **Verrier Elwin and Hivale Shamrao**, *Folk-songs of the Maikal Hills*(Oxford University Press, London, 1944), p.227.

**3. prafulladatta Goswami,** *Folk-literature of Assam (*Department of Historical and Antiquarian studies in Assam, Gauhati, 1954), pp. 42-43.

**4. Devendra Satyarthi,** 'My Village Still Sings', *Man in India,* vol. XXIII (Ranchi, 1943), p. 45.

**5. Asutosh Bhattacharyya,** *Bāṁlār Loka-sāhitya,* Vol. I (calcutta Book House, Calcutta, 1962), pp. 139-40.

**6. P. O. Bodding,** 'The Santal and Disease', *Memories of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* Vol. X, No.1 (Calcutta, 1929), pp. 113-22.

**7.** *Music for All of Us* (**Simon & Schuster,** New York, 1943), p. 291.

8. **Asutosh Bhattacharyya,** *op. cit.,* p. 303.

9. **Asutosh Bhattacharyya,** 'Songs in Oraon Culture', *The Quarterly journal. of the Mythic Society,* Vol. XLVI (Bangalore, 1946), p. 5.

**10. Durga Bhagat,** 'Korku Marriage Song', *Man in India,* Vol. XXIII, p. 27.

**11. Krisnadev Upadhyaya,** *Bhojpurī Aur Uskā Sāhitya* (Rajkamal Prakash, Delhi, 1957), p. 59.

**12. Asutosh Bhattacharyya,** *Bāṁlār Loka-sāhitya,* vol. I, p. 692.

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**AUTHOR: RAY, NIHARRANJAN; Source:** *The cultural Heritage of India* VOL V. Ramakrishna Mission Institute of culture, Calcutta,1941.

**FOLK-LITERATURE-THE *JANAM- SĀKHĪS* OF PUNJAB AND FOLK-PAINTINGS**.

The 500th century of **Guru Nanak**'s birth has been marked by voluminous research on the facts of his life. Scholars have agreed that the source material from which his biographies have been constructed in

inadequate, unreliable and contradicted by contemporary records; all we are really left with are the **Guru**'s hymns incorporated in the **Ādi Granth** in 1604 A.D. But these are largely songs of praise with scarcely any reference to events. As a matter of fact the one historical event which the Guru mentions three or four times is the invasion of Mughal, Babar. Even this is wrongly placed by ancient biographers who go into some detail about the Guru's arrest and confrontation with the invader. The Mughal conqueror does not record any such meeting in his Babar Nāmā.

Nevertheless, a large corpus of biographical literature called *janam Sākhīs* (life stories) has grown over the centuries. The one from which most of the episodes of Guru's life were derived, narrated by generations of Punjabi mothers to generations of Punjabi children and subsequently painted by sikh, Hindu and Muslim artists is based on the *janam sakhi* of **Bhai Bala**, Jat peasant of the **Sandhu** subsect who claimed to have accompanied the **Guru** on some of his travels to distant parts of India and the Arab countries.

Most pictures of Guru Nanak depict him with two companions- the Muslim rebeck player, Mardānā, who was an old family retainer, and **Bala** waving a fly-whisk made of peacock's feathers. The late **Dr. Bhai Vir Singh** examined **Bala**'s *Janam Sākhī* in detail and came to the conclusion that it was spurious. He went as far as to question the claim of **Bala Sandhu** to have been a contemporary of the **Guru**.

The second **Guru**, **Angad** (1504-1552), who had known **Nānak** for at least 25 years had apparently never heard of **Bala**. **Bala**'s name does not appear in the list of the first Guru's companions and disciples complied by the celebrated divine **Bhai Gurdās** (A.D.1629). Some of the expressions in **Bala'**s *Janam sākhī,* e.g. the form of salutation used by Sikhs, belong to a much later time and many of the hymns that **Bala** ascribed to Guru Nanak are in fact the compositions of **Guru Aṅgad** and the fifth **Guru**, **Arjun** (A.D. 1606).

However **Bala**'s *Janam Sākhī* became a kind of primary reading on the life of **Guru Nanak**. Temples were raised to commemorate different incidents and the Guru**'s** hymns were given setting invented by **Bala**. Being a semi-literate rustic, **Bala** filled his narrative with miracles (the **Guru** himself disclaimed miraculous powers; "The only miracle I claim is the name of the Lord", he said and fairies, demons, leviathans and flying machines.

Most *Janam Sākhīs* that followed were based on **Bala**'s narrative. Three deserve to be noted.

In the year 1880s, the German scholar, **Dr.Trumpp**, took it upon himself to write the lives of the Sikh Gurus and translate the *Ādi Graṅth*. *The India Office Library in London* found a *Janam sākhī* in its archives and forwarded it to him in Amritsar. This was said to have been written by one **Seva Das** in 1588 A.D. It came to be known as the *Vilāyat Wālī Janam Sākhī* or Colebrook's *Janam Sakhi* after the name of the donor.

Although it differed very little from Bala's, **M.A**. **Macauliffe** based his monumental six volumes *The Sikh Religion* (Oxford University Press) on it. Many later Sikh biographer also based their accounts on this manuscript. **Dr. Trumpp** despaired of ever finding anything reliable on the life of Guru Nanak. He was also irritated by the liberties, the Gurus had taken with Sanskrit grammar. His foray into the field of Sikh research had a dramatic finis. While examining the sacred *Graṅth* he lit his cigar. All the Sikh the hooligans assigned to help him walked out in protest.

A manuscript about the same period as **Mr.Colebrook's** *Janam Sākhī* was unearthed at Hafizabad in 1885 by one of **McAuliffe**'s collaborators, **Sardar Gurumukh Singh** of Oriental College, Lahore. The *Hafizabad Wali Janam Sākhī* is almost a carbon copy of **Colebrook**'s manuscript. Many other *Janam Sākhīs* have since been found in the private possessions of Nawabs and Sikh chiefs. The celebrated Sikh historian **Karam Singh** mentions half-a-dozen that he came across in his travels in the Punjab.

The exodus of Muslims from East Punjab following the partition riots of 1947 yielded a bumper harvest of Janam *Sākhīs, Graṅths and Gutkās (*prayer books) which had been carefully and reverently preserved by Punjabi Muslim families. Many were presented by them to their Sikh friends before they left for Pakistan. They can now be seen in the bibliotheques attached to the **Golden Temple** and **Khalsa college** at Amritsar and in Archives at Patiala and Chandigarh.

A *Janam Sākhī* was recently discovered in archives of the **Khalsa College** at Amritsar. It has been edited by **Dr.Kirpal Singh** and has attracted a great deal of attention of sikh scholars. It is ascribed to *Sodhī Mehervan*, a kinsman of the fifth Guru, Arjun, and is claimed by Dr.Kirpal Singh to be the oldest and most reliable literature on the subject.

There is little doubt that this *Janam Sākhī* stands apart from the others in the excellence of the language. But after narrating Nanak's childhood, marriage and renunciation, it simply becomes an annotated explanation of Guru Nanak's hymns.

Its contribution to recreating the facts of the Guru's life is very meagre. Its real value lies in the interpretation of the Guru's hymns and some memorably beautiful passages describing the Punjabi landscape and the advent of the monsoon in India.

**Sodhi Mehervan** was evidently a very learned man who placed little credence on miracles. But even he has a charming description of God and His angels which corresponds to a Punjabi peasant's notion of a wealthy zamindar. God is depicted as an elderly man with a flowing white beard; He is seated on an ornate charpoy in the middle of a spacious courtyard. Many angles attend on him, fanning away flies and massaging His feet. Also in the courtyard are tethered herds of buffaloes bursting with milk.

*Janam Sākhīs* are essentially folk literature of the Punjab. They are a compendium of popular religious beliefs strung on the life of its greatest son. Thus all the miracles ascribed to **Kabīr** and **Nāmdev** and the Sūfī Saints are lovingly incorporated as events in the life of their Guru. They reveal more of what went on in the

mind of the **Punjabi** rather than what came to pass with **Guru Nanak**.

All the *Janam Sākhīs* have been examined by **Hugh Mcleod** in his *Guru Nanak* and *the Sikh Religion(*Oxford University Press) published last year. **Mcleod**'s conclusions are disturbing. Not only does he conclusively prove that the earliest of them was written over 80 years after Guru Nanak's death and based on hearsay but also that they contradict each other in details and therefore cancel out all possibility of credibility. Thus the tales of Guru's travels to Assam, Ceylon, Tibet, Mecca, Medina and Baghdad are questioned. Others evidence- tablets, monuments and tradition- is not conclusive. All we really know about the Guru are his parentage, birth, marriage, family, mission, and message. And no more.

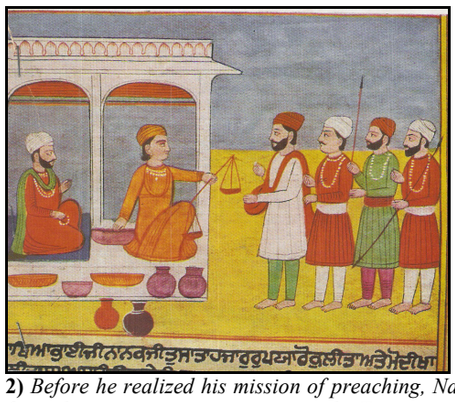
The pictures illustrating this article are taken from a *Janam Sākhī* in the possession of **Dr. Pritam Singh**. It is ascribed to one *Paira Mokha* whose name appears in several *Janam Sākhīs* as a companion of the Guru in some of his travels. It is based on the *Janam Sākhī* of **Bala** and consequently suffers from the same shortcomings as a historical document. The opening lines state its origin and authorship.

'There is one God; By the grace of the Guru
He is the Truth
He the Creator is without fear and without hate'

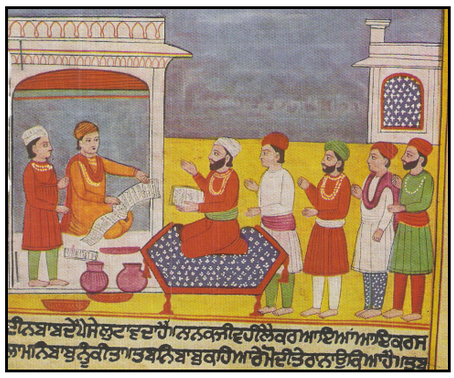
After this conventional invocation from the *Mūla mantra* (root belief) it goes on to state that the "*Janam Patrī* of **Baba Nanakji** has been written in Samvat 1582(fifteen hundred and eighty-two) Baisakh Sudī panchamī- written by **Paira Mokha Khatri** resident of Sultanpur. Writing ordered by **Guru Aṅgadji** executed by **Paira Mokha** according to the version of **Bala Sadhu** Jat of Rai Bhoi Talwandi". The manuscript has 101 painting mostly of very indifferent quality. They depict not only the legends associated with the life of Guru Nanak but also pictures of the Hindu gods- Rām and Sītā with Hunumān, Kṛṣṇa, with Rādhā and other Gopies. The manuscript ends with a panel of pictures of all the ten gurus.

The last conclusively proves that the manuscript though perhaps begun in Saṁvat 1582(1551A.D.) (which is most doubtful) could not have been finished until after the death of **Guru Gobind Singh** (1708) when the succession of Gurus was declared at end.

*1) The sign of prophecy ,Rai Bular, Muslim Zamindar of a village , witnesses a miracle. Nanak once fell asleep while grazing his father's buffaloes. As the tree's shade gradually turned away with the sun ,a king cobra provided shadewith his huge hood. Bular was later to become Nanak's first Sikh discipline.*

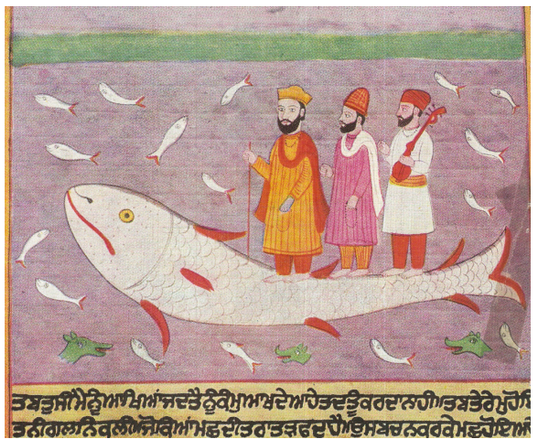


**2)** *Before he realized his mission of preaching, Nanak worked for a short time as an accountant in the Treasury of the Afghan Nawab of Sultanpur.He is seen here rendering account to his patron.*



**3)** Nanak distributes rations to the Nawab of Sultanpur's employees. It was here at Sultanpur when he was 29 years old that Nanak had his first mystical experience and renounced the world to take to preaching.

**4.** *Nanak as bridegroom. He was married at the age of* 13 *to Sulakhni, daughter of Mulchand Chona of Batala. Two sons were born to him.*



**5.** *Accompanied by his two discioples, the Muslim rebeck player Mardana and Guru, Hindu Bala, Guru Nanak travels to a foreign land on a leviathan. Bala's Janam Sakhis are full of such mythological monsters.*

## FOLK-LORE AND TIME-BEATS (*TĀLAS)* OF GOA AND WESTERN GHAṬ

The regional six-eight folk-rhythm begot the *dulpod,* and the latter begot the mando,which is only a slow version of *dadra* rhythm.The *mando* is now popular with the middle-class village gentry, and is only 150 years old.

The word mańḍo, meaning an "earthen Vessel", is cognate with anḍo and *bańḍo*. These words designate the same thing, with difference only in the size and substance of the vessel.

The real origin of the term *mańḍo* had long been a matter of conjecture, and ethnographists had in fact attributed its derivation to foreign ethnic sources. My own recent investigations, however, have revealed that *maṇḍo* is only a Konkani word for an earthen vessel, *gummoṭṭ* or drum, which eventually lent its name to the rhythm of the song and dance.

That the name of the earthen vessel has now become a transferred epithet given indiscriminately to the folk-rhythm, folk song as well as folk dance, is evident from the fact that the *maṇḍo*, per se, as earthen vessel is itself used as a substitute for the *gummott*. When so used without the lizard skin, the earthen vessel which has only one curled up cup-opening, is alternately pressed and released on the mouth by the right hand palm, thus making the air resonate like the *gummott* diaphragm.

Now, it appears that this six-eight folk rhythm, known as *dadra*, which is otherwise fairly prevalent today all over India, is not Hindu in origin at all but was imported here from foreign countries, probably from Arabia.

Most Indian time cycles are derived from song, and formed by adding units of 2 or 3or 4, and not by multiplying or taking multiples of a unit, which is the characteristic of Muslim or European rhythms derived from the dance.

Genuine Indian *tālas* are quantitative, since they are derived quantitative poetic metre, which is formed by adding various quantities or *vibhāgs* to form *āvarta* or time cycle. Muslim or European time-cycle or rhythmic periodicity is accentual as it is formed out of the recurrent time units of 2or 3 multiplied so many times to form a large time measure.

Arabic rhythms, drums and musical instruments were imported across the Mediterranean into Europe, particularly into Spain in the Iberian Peninsula, by Muslims in the 8th century A.D. It was also in the 8th century that the impact of Muslim culture was first felt in India.

In Ceylon and Kerala however, Arabic rhythms seem to have been introduced in the pre-Christian era, during the earliest Indo African maritime trade and commerce. As a matter of fact, there is still prevalent in Ceylon, an ancient folk song based or *dadra,* rhythm, known as *Kafrinha* which clearly tells the tale of its origin.

There is an ancient Hindu *tāla* known as *rūpaka*, still used in India. Like *dadrā* (3+3) it has six *matras*, but *talis* are on *vibhags* of 2+4 the old rhythms known as *jāti tālas* were of 7 species, namely:- *(1) Ektāla, (2) Rūpaka, (3) Jhampā, (4) Tripūta, (5) Mathya, (6) Atha and (7) Dhruva,*

Each species consisted of various time-cycles depending on the number of *matrās* added. The present day tendency, however, is influenced by Muslim rhythmic conventions. Barring a few old *tālas* based on 5 and 7 most classical music *tālas* today, tend to simplify the cycles by adopting multiples of 3and 4.

Now, to come to the second most common folk rhythm of Goa, the *kheravā;* this lively rhythm lends itself wonderfully to a lovely Goan folkdance known as *dakni.* It is sent in the common time*, kherva*, with a throng accent on the fourth beat.The *khervā* is also used to beat time for the *dhālo*, a community women's chain-dance and song.

This folk rhythm is also used at organdie night parties to play the central core of Goan folk songs known *as bond-lāvanis* or *bhajans* .These are everywhere by traditional groups of folk –drummers, either amongst the *kunbīs*, or today-toppers or sea-farers ,

Chroniclers use this rhythm to sing ballads about past heroes, kings and saints. They narrate to posterity, from memory, the unwritten record of Goa's social, religious and martial history. The percussion instruments used are the *madhiem* and *gummott,* made of earthen, wooden or brass barrels--and cymbals. Sometimes the *ektār* or *tuntune,* which is usually used by wandering minstrels, is also included.

The *bhajan* session usually begins at night, with the ceremony of fixing the *bond*, a rice-and-charcoal black adhesive attached to the middle of the drum-skins and heated on the central fire round which the drummers are seated. Only *madhiem* and *gummott,* sometime as many as 10 in number, are usually employed. The percussionists chart out a sort of concerted way of drumming the ensemble, as though joining in for the drummed out chorus of the refrain, every time the leading bard solemnly intones and sings out a verse.

The common time folk rhythm is also used for the colorful song and dance during the Spring Festival in March, known as the *Intruz.* Somewhat in the *tamāshā* style, the countryside suddenly goes merry and there appear hundreds of round dances of gaily attired boys and men, dancing the *khel*, in riotous revelry.

Besides the *intruz,* there is another spring festival of *Holī*, locally known as *Sigmo*, wherein the common time rhythm prevails and is almost done to death. This rhythm is beaten with sticks to a deafening din on huge drums that look like tympani Copper hemispheres., big and small. are covered with skin and provided with tension-screws and leather braces.

*Sigmo* parties sometimes march in procession through the main village roads to the sonorous accompaniment of folk instruments like *shing. Shehnai* and *dhol,* thus providing much-longed-for amusements and diversion to the people around who follow them. Crude folk-versions of *shehnai,* are played in pairs, the chanter and drone alternating with each other, as the players march along in the *Sigmo* procession.

Varieties of traverse bamboo flutes are found among the cowherds and tribals of the Western Ghats. Their primitive songs seem to have a limited compass and descend to a fourth and even a fifth. They sing thirds that are neither major nor minor but neutral, somewhere in-between. Whether by accident or design, these 6-hole flutes are pierced for a complete scale. The fourths and fifths are fairly true, but thirds are indeterminate. It is not known whether their faulty intonation has conditioned the boring, or whether the wrong boring has distorted the musical intervals. The matter calls for investigation.

Behind the corpus of regional folklore that has survived to his day. There has been the impact of Western culture for a period of 450 years. As at a folk dance by peasant groups in Europe, so in Goa, the violin and the guitar pass off as folk instruments when the villagers' crude fiddling and guitar- twanging
provide accompaniment to a country dance.

Besides the folk dance mentioned above, there are other folk songs such as cradle songs, reapers' songs, ceremonial songs, *ovio, zoti*, occupational songs, milkmaids' songs and mythological story chants that are sung without the rhythm of folk-drums or the accompaniment of musical instruments.

**AUTHOR: MISRA, B.K. Source:** *SNAJ NO 11 JAN-MARCH 1969 N.D.*

**FOLK THEMES IN SCULPTURE**

The sculptural panels that crowd the columns of the pavilions and corridors of our temples are veritable treasures of ancient folk-art and movements. But it took a long time for the secular and folk themes to gain their proper place in the sculpture scheme. In early Pallava or chola sculpture, purely non-religious themes were extremely few. By and large, it was the sculptures depicting gods and goddesses, the *parivāradevatās* (subsidiary deities) of the Purānic episodes that dominated the entire plastic art of early temples.

It was during the Vijayanagara times (15-16$^{th}$ century) that we see the emergence of a new and dynamic spirit, making a bold departure from convention and introducing many popular folk-themes, like sculptures of clowns, court-jesters, folk-dances, gypsies, street-dancers, acrobatic scenes, etc.

**AUTHOR: RAMAN, K.V. Source:** *J I H (Journal Of Indian History L. Ft* 3. 1972, Trivandrum

**FOLK OR TRIBAL ART OF RAJASTHAN**

Rajasthan has for centuries been the centuries been the repository of old traditions of classical arts, thanks to the patronage given by the Princes to some of the best musicians and dancers of the State. The atmosphere of the *Darbārs* was quite congenial for the development of these arts and some of the most difficult experiments in music and dancing were conducted during the reign of Princely rulers. Though ruling families were quite conversant with these experiments in arts, the masses were ignorant of them, with the result that a wide gulf existed between the art of the court and that of the masses. Thus two types of entertainments came in to vogue; one of the courtiers and the other of the masses.

This divergence slowly got mixed up with the rigid caste system and the refined art became the property of the higher caste and the art and entertainments of the masses become the property of the low-caste, the downtrodden.

In this way the folk arts which were once the common property and a common medium of self –expression for all people become confined to the backward castes for entertaining the caste Hindus on special occasions.

Rajasthan can be divided into three parts as regards the tribal arts are concerned.

**1.** Hill tracts of Udaipur, Dungarpur, Kotah, Jhalawar and Sirohi;
**2.** The desert areas of Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer;
**3.** Eastern Rajasthan consisting of Shekhawati and Jaipur.

Hill tracts inhabited by Bhil, Mina, Banjara, Sahria and Karad tribes are rich in community entertainments. Natural surroundings give them a mirthful and gay life and ample opportunity expressing their feelings in the form dance and music.

The desert areas have a very scanty population and because of dearth of natural resources the average man has to engage himself more in earning his livelihood through hard and strenuous labour than in enjoying life through entertainment. They do not find much time for merry making and so community entertainments have very little place in their life. Most of the entertainments are provided by professional folk dancers like Sargaras, Nats, Mirasis Bhats and Bhands, The people of these tracts have great love for colour and they compensate the lack of colour in nature by the colours of their costumers.

The eastern part of Rajasthan particularly that of Shekhawati is rich in professional folk dancing. The people here have plenty of resources for earning their livelihood and nature too has not been so cruel as in the western desert areas of Barmer and Jaisalmer. People

here have enough money to spend on entertainments and a number of classes of professional entertainers like the Kathputli Nats, the Kamads, the Kachighodiwala and Bopas are making a good income out of their profession.

The border areas of Rajasthan adjoining U.P. have the influence of Uttara Pradesh and entertainments like Ras Leelas, Ramleelas, Rasiyas and Navtankies are in vogue. The culture of the Braj-Bhumi has great influence over these areas.

**The Fribal Art Or Elthmic Art Of The Hilly Areas Of Rajasthan :** Most of the dancing and singing prevalent in these areas are of a community type; The Bhils and Minas of this area lead almost a free life and are much reaver so nature than the other people living in these areas. Music and dancing from a very important part of their life and on almost all ceremonial occasions, they dance and sing collectively. They have not yet developed any prejudice or inferiority complex about these arts. Men and women take part in almost all the dances. The following varieties of entertainments are popular among the Bhils of Dungarpur and Banswara.

**1) The Ghūmrā:** This particular dance is performed on all ceremonial occasions like marriages and festivals. Men and woman form one full circle and dance together singing. The songs are often composed on the spot. There is no musical accompaniment with the dance. The rhythm is very simple but the monuments are forceful and graceful.

**2) The Ger:** This dance is held during Holi and only men take part in it. A big dhol with thalis is played and the Bhils dance in a circular motion with sticks. This is a comparatively vigorous dance and at the same time it is graceful too.

**3) The ceremonial Ghūmrā :** This particular dance is performed during Holi when the Bhils and their women folk are in a gay mood. It is almost a combination of the Ger and Ghumra and it is by far the most fascinating dance of the Bhils and Meenas. Men and women are in their most attractive and gay dresses. The whole dance is really a feast for the eye.

**4) The marriage dance of Meenas and Bhils:** This particular dance is a part of a procession on the occasion of the departure of the bridegroom and the bride from the later's home. Bhils dance with swords all the way with 'thali' and 'madal' and the aunts of bride dance with baskets and a broom in their hands.

**5) The Neja:** It is a very interesting dance game performed on the third day of Holi and is usually prevalent among the Meenas of Kherwārā and Dungarpur. The tribes living in the interior of the hills do not have this variety. A big stick is fixed on ground and on the top a cocoanut is tied. The women surround the stick in a circular fashion with small sticks and twisted cloth in their hands. The men who stand at some distance try to climb over the stick and carry the cocoanut away. The women try to drive them away by thrashing them with sticks and twisted cloth. It is a very interesting game and thousands of people collect to see this rare sight.

**6) The Gourī dance of the Bhils living in the neighbourhood of Udaipur:** The Gouri is performed in the month of July and August in worship of their deity lord Bherav. This is a purely religious dance. The Bhils of a particular village leave their home and go out of their village in a ceremonial way to perform this drama based on the life of their deity. They are out for more than a month. The show lasts from morning till evening and displays the best talents of Bhils in a series of episodes connected with the life of Budia (the popular name for Lord Shiva). The dances are full of variety and colour and are vigorous and forceful in their rhythm. The whole show reminds us of the Kathakali drams of the south. There is no monetary motive behind this dance and the Bhils join the dance-groups in order to perform their religious duty towards the Deity. Some of the most interesting episodes and dramas of the show are Bhinyavad, Banjara, Khadliya Bhut and lion-boar fight. All these
dramas are symbolic in their meaning.

**7) The dances of the Banjārā:** Banjārā is a nomadic tribe and its chief profession is to carry heavy load from one place to another. These days due to the progressive increase of motor transport this tribe has almost been thrown out of employment. There was a time when some of these people used to earn Lakhs and were called Lakha Banjaras. Their nomadic nature too has changed considerably and most of them have settled down and have taken to other professions like road building, labour and construction work. This unfortunate change in their life has very much curbed their spirit of joy, mirth and playfulness. They usually dance in pairs and while dancing they almost forget themselves. Their dresses are very artistic and attractive, particularly those of ladies. The main instrument of accompaniment with the dance is generally dholak but some times in the absence of it they improvise music with thalies and katories also. The chief occasion on which they dance is the Gangore festival during the month of March and April. The main areas where Banjaras have started seeting down are that of Banswara, Kushalgarh and border area of Gujrat. The Banjaras have choosen these hilly tracts for their Permanent settlement because they can still get some work for transporting load from one place to the other. The following are some of the villages where the Banjārās have settled down: Bead Ka Knead near Fatehsagar, Kana Kheda near Bhipal Sagar, Baldeon ka Kheda, and Dariba near Fatehnagar.

**Rūpsingh Banjārā** was an important figure 50 years back. He was well-known for his heroic deeds. He died in Bara Bamnia six miles from Bhupalpura where a small memorial is built and hundreds of Banjaras collect every year to pay homage to their leader.

**8) The Naţs and their feats:** There are generally three types of Naţ: **1.** Raj Naţ, **2.** Deccanī Naţ and **3.** Bhat Nat. They originally belonged to one sect but on account of change of profession and professional jealousies they have separated from each other. The Raj Naţ had the patronage of the princes and used to have royal engagements for their feats in the past; but since long that patronage has been shifted to other types of entertainers and they are al most thrown out of their employment. They have gradually become penniless and

are in a deplorable condition these days. Jats are the only people who patronize them on ceremonial occasions. They are considered to be one of the most inferior castes and are allowed to live only on the outskirts of a village. The Natnies these days have taken to begging and the Nats exhibit their art a very low charge.

**The chief feats are:** (1) Walking on a rope in some of the most difficult poses.

(2) Holding a man on the top of a bamboo, which rests on the body of the man walking on the rope, without any support.

(3) Moving on the rope on ones head.

(4) Walking on the rope both feet resting on one thālī.

(5) Balancing the body while sitting on a chair of which only two legs are resting on a loose rope.

(6) Holding a heavy plough on the tongue without any support.

(7) Somersault of various types.

All these feats create a curious sensation on the minds of the onlookers because of their unusual and nature. Some of the feats are beyond human imagination. The drumming and singing with accompanies these feats are also fascinating.

**Their social life:** They are generally out for eight months in a year and for the rest of the months (that is in the rainy season) they almost sit idle in their homes. Their trips, these days are not at all profitable and the general tendency is to seek some other method of livelihood. They have no land of their own for cultivation and they are also not allowed, socially to own land.

**Sajan Khan Ka Kheda** near Nimbaheda is the chief seat of Raj Nats of Rajsthan. **Sajan Khan** (A Hindu) who assumed a Muslim name only for fancy was one of their Chiefs nearly 400 years back. This particular village is named after him. The Nats have settled down in the hilly tracts long ago and some of the best performers are found in the following villages Kanadohi, Parchi, Canchdia, Banchad, Vagria, Chanlets, Mogiya, Bondina of the Madhya Bharat and Rajasthan border.

**Chaman Singh** was one of their greatest leaders fifty years ago and was very well-known for his physical feats

The Deccani nats, who are also known as Gandia naţs, are nats by name only. They do not have any trait of naţs. They dance in a clumsy way, just for begging. They lead a most miserable and deplorable life, because of their poverty. They get some work on the construction of roads in famine-stricken areas, otherwise their chief profession is begging for the men prostitution of worst type for the women.

The Bhat nats about whom we shall deal in other pages are not found in the hilly areas .They have altogether a different occupation.

**9) The Bagrias:** They are generally found in almost all parts of Rajasthan but some of them have settled down in the hilly tracts, specially where date trees grow in abundance. Their chief profession is to make broom of date leaves, and sell them in the neighbouring villages. They have practically no home life and generally move from one village to another. They are considered one of the most inferior scheduled castes and besides broom-selling, begging has been their favourit profession recently. The women dance while begging. The chief musical instrument they use while dancing is Chang. The men generally do not dance but they freely allow their ladies to become vulgar while dancing just because it would fetch them more money. The dances are very rhythmical and musical. Holi is the chief occasion when they dance and sing from door to door. Some of the permanent homes of Bagrias are Gogathala, Hakroda and Bagrion ki Batoli near Kuanria.

**The Dances of Garasias:** The Garasias are akin to the Bhils of Mewar and culturally they have the same traits as other aboriginals of Rajasthan. They are also rich in community dancing like Ghumar, Ger and Garba. They have acquired some of the culture of Gujarat which is manufest in almost all their ceremonies

Holi is the Chief festival when they dance for days. Almost all their dance are mixed dance and are not very much associated with any particular festival. Very often after the day's hard labour they sing and dance for joy and mirth.

One of their most fascinating dance is Garb, in which only women participate. It is a little deferent form the garba of the middle class families of Gujarat. It is more forceful and has created variety of movements.

The Garasias mostly live in the jungle of Sirohi and Abu.

**The dances of Karvelias:** The karvelias ( Snake Charmers) are one of the most interesting tribes from many points of view. Their life can be a separate subject for research and study. Both socially and culturally they have their peculiar traits. The technique of snake-charming itself can be a subject of study.

Snake-charming is based is not only on their skill but their qualities of singing and dancing also. Only a good singer and player of the Pungi (pipe) can be a successful snake charmer. There are certain tunes like Panihari and Idoni which have special qualities of charming snakes. There are some particular tunes for charming different types of snakes. I had a chance of analysing such tunes and have tried to record them with our sound recording machine. The Pungi is a very fascinating instrument which they themselves make with a dried Tumba (gourd) or an oblong Loki. It is a great art to make a pungi. The ground has to be prepared by a special technique.

An average snake charmer has a great musical talent .He has to go from door to door and village to village and so this wandering habit has taught him great skill in attracting people. The Katvelia women are also clever enough to earn their livelihood through singing and dancing. Sometimes the men also join their dances and add to their earnings. The following are their favorite dances:

**1.** Indoni. **2.** Panihārī. **3.** Shankaria.

The Indonī and Panihārī are two very popular songs of Rajasthan witch are sung in almost all parts of the state. The Indonī is a mixed dance and is performed in a

circular fashion. The main instruments accompanying are Pungi and Khanjari. The ladies are artistically dressed in their original skirts and cholies with embroidery of beads and other indigenous stuff. The males also look well in their original turbans twitted in red and white.

**The Shankaria**: The Shankaria is one of the most fascinating duet dances I have ever seen. It depicts the story of a young man making love to a young woman who is already in love with another young man. The tunes of the song sung with this dance is charming. The steps and the movements of the dance are very graceful. The general effects of the dance is rather erotic but there is great are in it

**The Panihari:** This dance is based on a very famous song known as Panihari. It is also a duet and has a fascinating effects on the onlookers. The karvelias, in fact, are really art minded and have a highly developed imagination. The following are some of the villages where Karvelias have found a permanent home.

**1.** Ghuti near Kuanria. **2.** Rekmanganj near Kotharia and **3.** Agaria near Sardar Garth.

Holi is their chief festival when Karvelia women go from door to door with their Chang for singing and dancing.

**The dances of Adbhopas or Rangaswamies:** The adbhopas are traditional palmists and it is said that once they were masters of their art. But these days because of their precarious financial condition they have to big for their livelihood. They are almost dressed in rags but they have great talent in music. They possess many varieties of tunes and have a fine voice also. The ladies dance while singing but they don't feel any joy in this art as they have to do for their livelihood. Their condition is very deployable. Most of them have no home and find shelter under some trees or some shade in the remote corner of a village.

The following are some of the villages where they have found shelter:

Rajiyavas and Bhatiya Gaon near Kankroli.

Gunjol and Vagundda near Nathdware and Kankaroli respectively.

## FOLK ENTERTAINMENTS OF THE DESERT AREAS

The desert areas are not rich in community entertainments except on ceremonial occasions like Holi when almost all the classes celebrate Hoil collectively. In Bikaner Holi has very ry special significance. People almost forget themselves whe they play with colours and sing and dance without any distinction of caste and creed. Singing has more importance than dancing and very artistic processions are taken out with lot of mirth and play in them. Except this collective entertainment no other type exists in this area except in some communities about which special mention will be made below.

**The Jhūmar of Ghūmar:** The Jhūmar or the Ghūmar is one of the Ghūmar is one of the most popular dances of Rajasthan and is prevalent in almost all the families in different forms. It is purely a feminine dance and is generally performed in the middle class families on ceremonial occasions like Gangore, Holi and Diwali. It is similar to the Garba dance of Gujarat and has a soft and soothing effect. It also takes the form of a duet some places when both men and women dance together. There are three distinctive types of this dance. One is prevalent in Udaipur the other in Jodhpur and the third near Kotāh and Būndī. The Ghūmar of Udaipur is more akin to the Garbā of Gujarat with all its musical and rhythmic qualities. The Jhūmrā of Jodhpur too is artistic but there is not much of unity and uniformity in the movements The Ghumar of Kota Būndī is very colorful and mirthful. Very rich traditions of Ghūmar still exist round about the royal families.

The Ghūmar of Rajasthan can be considered a national dance for the ladies of Rajasthan. It is a community dance for ladies and hundreds of them can join together with some set songs. The ladies move in a circular fashion. The movements are simple but graceful.

Besides the three types of Ghūmar mentioned above there are some more varieties. The one is the Ghūmar done with small sticks. The other is done in pairs. The third one is done with veils on and with circular motions of terrific speed. In Bikaner and the distant desert areas this dance is purely confined to royal families and aristocratic people. It is a somewhat sophisticated dance but at the same time it has great cultural value. There is generally no musical instrument used with the dance. It is accompanied with some of the most fascinating songs. The Ghūmar songs have a special singni- ficance in the life of Rajasthan. Kotāh and Būndī have a rich of Ghūmar songs in Haḍotī

**The fire dancers of Bikaner :** In the remotest part of the Thar desert there lives a study tribe Known as Sidh Jats. They are the disciples of the famous Guru Gorakhnath and follow the Gorakh Panthī religion. This particular sect is well-known for its Yogic feats. One of the latest Gurus in this line was Guru Jasnath. His Samādhi still exists in the suburb of *Bikaner*. The Sidh Jāts are staunch followers of the Guru. They all put on Bhagwa brown clothes and observe the discipline of their religion very strictly. Along with many other Yogic feats, one of the most astonishing feat is that of dancing on fire. According to the interpretation offered by them, this particular trait is acquired by them through some mysterious power.

They light a huge fire, using a few hundred maunds of fire wood. Big drums with pipes are played and a typical song with humming sound is sung. As soon as they are inspired by the accompanying music a group of these people, consisting of old men and children jump in to the fire and dance perfectly in normal way. Their dance grows more and more vigorous as they get into the spirit of the whole environment. While dancing they pick up a few pieces of burning charcoal and throw them on each other without damaging any body in any way. The whole dance does not take more than an hour but it presents a sensational singht .I have witnessed this dance in the course of my study tour and tried to examine the after-effects of the dance on their body but I

was surprised to find that they are not the least damaged on this account.

They don't put on any special dress for this dance and only men take part in it. The dance itself has not much artistic value.

This dance is performed in the month of March and April on the occasion of a mela held in memory of Guru Jasnath. It is a community dance, which sometime takes the form of a professional dance also. The late Maharaja of Bikaner Shri Ganga-singhji was one of the greatest patrons of this dance and paid the dancers handsomely by inviting them on special ceremonial occasions. The villages where these fire-dancers mostly reside are Katariasar, Bhamlu. Dikamdesar, Poonerasar and Likhamdesar. Some of the prominent leaders of this sect are Chettanath, Bholanath and Baunanath.

**The Drum Dancers Of Jalore:** The other professional folk dance which is well-known in the desert area of Rajasthan is the drum dance of Jalore District. The credit for bringing this powerful dance to light goes to our Chief Minister **Shri Jai Narain Vysa**. He in the course of his official tour, saw this dance in the remotest corner of Jalore district and took a few shots with the help of his film unit. When he came over to Udaipur, he was very much delighted to give information about this unique dance to me. Since then I had bee looking forward to seeing this dance personally with my group of dancers I was invited to participate in the Republic Day Celebration at Delhi and was given charge by the Government of Rajasthan, to train and present these dance to the public of Delhi.

This particular dance is not confined to one class only: but it is performed by a group of people consisting of nearly four castes namely "**Sargarās**" "**Ḍholies**" "Palies" and "Bhils" It is a professional folk dance and is performed, specially on the occasion of marriage. It is purely a male dance and is a combination of three or four varieties of dances of similar types. The drumming is done by "Sargarās" who are akin to Dholies of Udaipur. There are usually four or five drums played together. The leader of the drum starts playing it in a particular style known as "Thakna". As soon as this "Thakna" concludes, the other dancers, one with a sword in his mouth, the second with sticks in his hand the third with hanging Kerchiefs on his arms and the rest in smile rhythmic movements start dancing in a picturesque style.

The "Sargarās" and the "Dholies" are professional folk singers and drummers of Rajasthan. Though they belong to the Backward classes still they are masters of there art and have maintained the best traditions of folk are. Their main profession is singing and drumming and they earn their livelihood by it. The rest of the participants of these dances are not professional folk dancers but they casually join this professional group to earn extra income.

This particular dance is prevalent in Jalore and its neighbouring area of Surānā, Bagrā and Ane Some of the main dancers are Nena Sargara Bhabūta, Sonā Sargara, Dholi Kesrā: Mirāsī Akbariā and Bhil Bagālī.

**The Terah Tali Of Didwana And Pokhran :**This particular technique is more of a physical feat a folk dance The Kamads are the entertainers of Bhomias also known as Balais. Once they also belonged to the Bhomia community, but because of the change of their profession they prefered to be called Kamad. Their chief occupation is to maintain historical records of the Bhomia fames and sing and dance for them on special occasions of night vigil before their deity Shri Ramdev. The whole group of Kamad entertainers consist of two men and two women generally belonging to one family. The men play on 'Iktara' and the women on the 'Majiras' tied all over the body in a peculiar manner. The men do only the singing part of the whole show and the woman play on Majira in some of the most unimaginable and difficult poses. Some of the action that they perform through the playing of Majiras are as follows :

1. Cleaning corn.
2. Thrashing corn.
3. Cutting corn.
4. Grinding corn.
5. Cleaning the flour
6. Mixing the flour of wheat with water.
7. Preparing Chapatti of wheat flour.
8. Mixing the Bajra flour with water.
9. Preparing Bajra roti.
10. Preparing Ghee out of curds.
11. Separating butter from curds.
12. Spinning on Charkha.
13. Winding the yarn.

The Kamads earn a lot by making engagements of Terah Tail during night vigils, arranged by some of their Yajmans(patronisers) in connection with the fulfillment of their obligations towards their beloved deity.

Kamads are found in almost all parts of Rajasthan but all of them are not equally talented. The Kamads of Didwana and Pokhran need special mention as regards their art of playing Terah Tail. My Research Unit came across many such people but the Kamads living in Didwana and Pokhran belonging to the sub-caste of 'Gokhi" and "Dhanka" are by far the best of the whole lot. Their financial condition is comparatively sound and they own their own land, given to them by some of the local Jagirdars.

**Mirasis Of Jaisalmer:-** Jaisalmer situated in the remotest part of Rajasthan far away from the influences of modern life has very little of folk art worth the name, except a few musicians and dancers patronised by the Ruler. Some of them are Mirasis. We had the opportunity of meeting and seeing their work. They have maintained the best traditions and types of "Māṇd singing." We had the occasion of hearing nearly six such types dealing with the luxuries of princely life. This particular style of singing, though little akin to classical style, comes in the category of folk-music.

The female folk of Mirasis are also good at singing and it is their profession to entertain aristocratic families on ceremonial occasions. The are Musilms by caste but have acquired all the traits of Hindu Dholies. The ladies are good at dancing too. The dance though a little

obscene has the beauty and the vigour of folk dance. Jaisalmer, as we all know, is very thinly populated and the population is engaged more in earning their bread rather than singing and dancing, except a few stray individualistic dance here and there. The whole of the desert area including the district of Barmer is without any mirthful activity worth mentioning.

**The Kachighodi Of Marwar:-** Quite unlike the other desert towns Kuchhanman, Prabatsar, Didwana and Nimbod are rich in professional folk entertainment. One of them is "Kachighodi" of Marwar. This peculiar dance is danced by Bavarias, Kumhars and Sargaras of the backward classes. Kachighodi means the mare of Cutch which is well-known. The Kachighodi is an art by itself. Two bamboos are tied with two baskets with some space left between them. An artificially made head of a horse is fixed on top of one of the basket and a bunch of flax fibre is tied over the other. The head of the horse is decorated with embroidery. The dancers, lavishly dressed in the dress of bride-grooms adjust the Kachighodi in between their legs and cover the two baskets with their loose garments. The whole adjustment looks like a real horse with its owner riding over it. The dancers have swords in their hands and dance with the accompaniment of Dhol and Turohi in such a way that the whole dance presents a picturesque sight of horse riding. There are usually four or five such pairs and the dance is performed on the occasion of marriages.

The Bavrias used to be traditional robbers in the past and were a great nuisance to the society. The Government had to spend a considerable amount of money in encircling them. They have, since a couple of years settled down to normal life and have taken to farming and keeping watch.

The dance of Kachighodi is prevalent in almost all the parts of eastern Rajasthan. It is also in a decaying condition and when I went in those areas with my unit for a survey I found this dance almost extinct. I had to persuade all these three castes to perform for me on payment and with great difficulty only the Bavrias accepted my request.

**Source:** From the courtesy of **Bhāratīya Lok kalā Mandir,** Udaipur, Rajasthan

**FOLK OR TRIBAL LIFE-STYLE OF THE NORTH-EAST INDIA** (Its Gallery in National Museum New Delhi, 1993)

The collection of ethnographic materials in the National Museum started sometimes in nineteen fifties. From the very beginning ardent attempts were made to collect cultural materials systematically through field-work from different states. Dresses ornaments, apparels, object connected with performing arts and other traditional items of day to day life became the core of the anthropological collection. The acquisition of the **Dr. Verrier Elwin** collection in 1964 consisting of tribal art materials from the remote areas of North-Eastern Indian, Bastar (Madhya Pradesh), Koraput (Orissa), Santhal Paragana (Bihar) etc. have undoubtedly enriched the **National Museum** as a whole. ubsequently, gift items from Arunachal Pradesh and other such valuable samples of ethno-history received from time to time from generous donors further increased the number of exhibits to considerable accumulation of individual objects representing tribal as well as folk lifestyle. During eighties a good number of rare tribal art object from Nagaland, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Ladakh and other Himalayan areas were acquired through the **Art Acquisition Committee**.

The very first **anthropology gallery** was set up in the **National Museum** as early as 1961. This was followed by the gallery of musical instruments in 1962. The Anthropological exposition at that time covered certain aspects of dresses and apparels including head-gears and foot-wears mostly from the folk-culture along with some sort of visuals of physical anthropology and distribution of ethnic groups in India. For a period of 30 years the gallery had few changes. With the accumulation of new and varied materials it became a necessity to rehaul and redesign the gallery on a micro thematic approach. Thus present gallery has been conceived to recapture the life style of the tribal people of the little known North-East.

This region comprises of seven small states, namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura.

The most significant feature of this region is the predominant tribal population. There are approximately seventy five distinct tribes including sub-tribes in this area. Some of the major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh are: the Monpa, Sherdukpen, Nishi, Apatani, Adi, Mishmi, Nocte and Wancho. The Ao, Angami, sema, Lotha, and Konyak hail from Nagaland while Tangkhul, Kabui, and Kuki belong to Manipur. The Khasi, Garo, and Jayantia are inhabitants of Meghalayah and Riang, Jamatia, Halam, Tripuri etc. are from Tripura. The Mizos are the dominating tribe of Mizoram.

Inspite of the hetrogenity, the numerous tribal groups here form a mosaic of cultural spectrum. The life style of the tribes as such emanates from the constant interaction with bountiful nature.

The tribal life style in the North-East is intimately connected with the environment. The very ecology of the region is pivotal in shaping the material culture and socio-economic pursuits. Agriculture, fishing, hunting, herding etc. are still the hub of all the activities supported by simple technologies. Craft-practices are age old but astonishingly useful in harnessing the limited raw material provided by the nature.

In the mundane world of harsh reality, the nostalgic sense of distinctiveness is reflected through the peculiar life-style of the individual tribe. In this gallery a glimpse of the typical material culture of the tribes of the North-East is being encapsulated by assembling a host of authentic exhibits of dresses, apparels, jewelleries and personal adornments etc. While presenting the material, necessary care has been taken to highlight the significance of the objects.

Starting from the items of natural materials such as grass, vegetable fibre, reed and fur followed by the gradual unfolding of exhibits of common crafts are woven together in the story of everyday life.

Dresses and costumes which are peculiar to different tribes such as the Naga, Mizo, Khasi, Adi, Mishmi, Rabha and Karbi have some commonness inspite of the distinctiveness. The ordinary day to day dresses can be discerned easily from the special type signifying the social or political position of the person or dresses used on festive occasion. Individual items of apparel showing the artistic acumen and taste such as head gears can be appreciated when juxtaposed against the environment and cultural pattern.

The textile weaving is one of the most important craft practices of the tribes of the North-East. Beautiful shawls, skirts, sashes, coats jackets and bags are woven in small loin loom or suspension loom, specially by the womenfolk. Composition of the bright colours is a speciality supplemented occasionally by geometric patterns. Some of the geometric patterns are symbolic signifying the status of the owner. Naga shawls with typical motifs at times reveal the identity of the user complete with clan and village name.

The traditional ornaments and jewelleries are excellent *object-de-art* of the region. The use of coloured beads, semiprecious stones, shells, ivory, metal cylinders, bells, dyed hairs, etc. in their typical head-bands, necklaces bracelets and wristlets, shows the taste and sensitivity of the tribal artist. There are a number of minor exhibits such as tobacco pipes, tobacco pouches, combs, containers which need special emphasis as they represent the amusement and leisure time activities.

Tribal life-style is governed by certain values. The status of a man is intimately connected with his personality created by special type of apparels, weapons of offence and personal decorations. *Daos* (bill-hook), daggers, spears, scabbar have become symbolic items in a society imbibed with main tradition.

The nature, which is at time severe, is responsible for number of craft items such as the haversacs, rain-shields baskets. Inspite of their artistic value, these objects not protect man from the natural hazards but at the same time boost his personality.

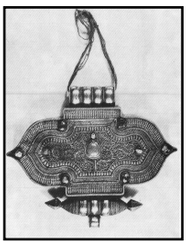
The dance and pantomimes of this region are of singular importance. By nature the tribal people of this region are care free and simple, which is reflected in numerous dances and other performances. Some of the dances, sacred by nature uphold the ethics of life. The worldview which is the essence of tribal life and death with colourful stylistic masks specially found among the Buddhist tribes such as Monpā, Membā, Khambā, Khamti and Singpho all from Arunachal Pradesh.

In a society governed by the value of collective approach towards life, there is no scope of introvert action. That is why the Karbīs of Karbī Anglong, District of Assam, find time in their day to day busy schedule to come together once a year to uphold their clan solidarity. The clan festival is part of the life style of the karbī people and the sweet feeling of togetherness is manifested in the *jambuliathāng*- the clan festive pole- a fine example of tribal aesthetic sense.

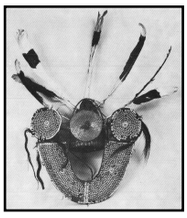
The Buddhist tribes are inspired by the monastries from time immemorial not only in their philosophical approaches towards life but also in esthetic creativity. *Bapusāṅg* among the Khamtī and Singpho and *Gompā* among the Monpā Membā, Sherdukpen are no doubt the treasure houses of the art and craft. A portion of the monastry's little known treasures are exhibited here with a focus on the life-style of the Buddhist groups.

**Photographs of North-East Tribal States:**

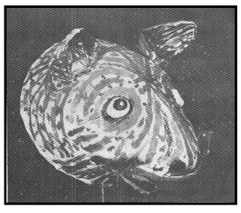
**1.** *Couple, Naga, Nagaland,20th century*



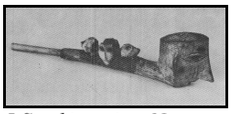
***2.*** *Gao, Monpa, Arunchal Pradesh, 20th Century*



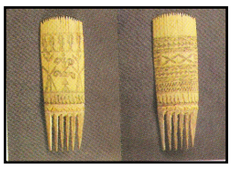
***3.*** *Ceremonial head-gear, Naga, Nagaland, 20th Century.*



**4.** *Tiger Mask, Khampti, ArunchalPradesh,20th Century*



***5.****Smoking pipe, Naga, Nagaland, 20th Century*



**6.** *Comb,Bamboo,Khowa Arunachal Pradesh,20th Century*

**7 .** *Monkey mask, Monpa, Arunachal Pradesh, 20th Century*

***8.****Mask, Monpa, Arunachal Pradesh, 20th Century*

**9.***Necklace, Adi, Arunachal Pradesh 20th Century* **.**

**Contributors of Gallery set-up.**

Curatorial Associate (Design) Ranjit Banerjee; Dy keeper (Anthropology) Jayashree sharma; Technical Assistant, **Anju Sachdeva**. Photo-

Officer; **Nimatullah; U.Dass**- keeper (PR).
**National Museum**
**Gallary** New Delhi 1993

**FOLK-MUSIC OF BENGAL**

Some authors have defined folk songs as songs of the peasants. This may be true in other lands, but this definition does properly apply to India. Because here villagers in different spheres of life have evolved different types of songs suited to their particular occupation. The song of a cowboy therefore, naturally differs from that of the boatman or the woodcutter or the fisherman or the nomadic Badya (gypsy), while all these are different from the songs sung on the occasion of a marriage ceremony or a Pūjā. The village story-teller has his own way of singing songs inserted in folk-lores, as interludes. The Bāul is certainly not a peasant either in occupation or in spirit, but his songs are some of the best specimens of the folk songs of Bengal. It is a significant fact that Carol singing in Europe subsequently more used as Christmas Carol borrowed its tunes mainly from the songs of the peasants. Tunes of humorous and even vulgar folk songs were freely introduced in Carols. This poverty of melodic compositions has never been experienced by the composers of the innumerable types of folk music and religious songs in India in their attempt to create new melodies whenever they have felt necessity for them.

Confining ourselves within the boundaries of Bengal, we find that the villagers have always tried to find out means of entertainments suitable to their life and consequently can in their own way arrange for a programme as varied as any concert of entertainments organized by a society living in a town. As we have seen above they have their parlour music, their out-door music, their dramatic performances of many kinds, their humorous and light songs, the solemn Kirtan, Gazīr Gān, Rāmāyaṇa Gān or Durgā Pūran performances boat races and a number of interesting sports attended with music, and instructive and informative songs. In fact every possible occupation or activity in village life has music peculiar to it.

Tunes have been found out to suit these activities and each tune has evolved a particulars character quite in accord with the activity or occupation of life it serves. An analysis of this characteristic of our rural songs will easily account for their peculiarities and at the same time indicate the existence of a definite system or at least plan in their musical construction.

Before I take up this work of analysis I Propose to rive home to all that in spite of so many differences in their musical forms these tunes also indicate a unity, which represents the unity of culture among the various sections of the people residing in different parts of the province and which never fails to impress even the most casual visitor to Bengal. One such visitor, a European thus describes his experience:

"Stopping one evening in a Bengal village we heard on every side of us different kinds of music. There was nothing discordant and it all blended together into a pleasing harmony. Our boat had drawn up by a small landing stage, while the boatmen went to their food. Out in the stream were other boats, their occupants singing love-lyrics or devotional songs, as they rested for a time after their meal. In one boat was a musical party with Tambūr (Dotārā?) and drum. As we strolled round the village, we heard from after house the sounds of melody. Here a woman was singing to her baby. There a man was chanting the story of an ancient hero. In another house we heard **Esraj**, the Bengali Sārańgī, being played. In another a Muhammadan was playing the harmonium and singing to the music. The voices were sweet and composed and the melodies were as a rule simple melodies that the village people loved." (**Rev. Popley**.)

The most interesting and important experience of this visitor was that in spite of all these diverse elements of music there was nothing discordant. The reason for this absence of discord is that the Bengal villagers have lived for a long time in complete unity and understanding. The landlord and the ryot, the Hindu and the Mussalman, the Brahmin and the non-Brahmin never treated each other with the same amount of exclusiveness as we hear of elsewhere. The comparatively free intercourse between the seemingly antithetic sections of people has been clearly reflected in the unity among all the divergent forms of the folk songs of Bengal without impairing the free growth of each individual type. Compare this picture with that of Europe. Where art music has been cultivated in all the countries almost on the same line and spirit and therefore points towards a unity. But it is not the same case with regard to folk music there. "German Folk songs are on the whole somewhat square and solemn;…… English Folk songs are more varied, those of Hungary have very striking rhythm, while Russian Folk songs are on the whole gloomy. The finest Folk-songs are Irish, while that of some other nations is often monotonous, the phrases being short and too often repeated, so that few opportunities occur of 'putting' expression into it." (**R. T. White**.)

In fact if you want to enjoy a 'Bhatiali', for instance, in its pristine beauty, you must go to the remote village on the banks of the 'Meghna' or the 'Surma'. It is a widely known fact ninety per cent. of the people of Bengal lead a through village life and the rest ten per cent. also are inseparably connected with the village. The change of conditions of life due to modernization or rather industrialization has very little effect on the life of the Bengalee because of the fact that the huge majority of workers in the industrial sphere of Bengal are non-Bengalees.

**Class (B):** Under Class (B) we generally have the following main types:

**Bhatiali:** The word Bhatiali is often confused with Bhatiari or Bhatiar, a Raga name with which it has nothing to do. It literally means a flow motion downward. It may mean the downward flow of the river or the downward motion of the sun towards the western horizon. In fact these two natural phenomena are the most helping factors in creating the true atmosphere for Bhatiālī songs. It is perhaps for this reason that Bhatiālī

has flourished in those parts of Bengal where both these elements are abundant. It is generally a cowherd on the pasture land or a boatman sitting on his boat with an idle look who sings a Bhatiali. Bhatiālī is a solo song in the truest sense of the term, for it requires no accompaniment not even a drummer. A special feature of true Bhatiālī is its complete freedom from rhythmic timing. This corresponds with the non-rhythmic occupation of the singer in contrast to the action of Sari singers which is perfectly rhythmic.

**Bhāwalā:** This is akin to Bhatīalī and is current in the district of Rangpur and its immediate neighbourhood due to the peculiar conditions of that district Bhāwaiā is heard mostly in open fields and in rivers which are comparatively few. The spirit of the compositions also is a bit different for the same reason. The absence of rhythm is also not there.

**Sārī:** Sari means things arranged in a line and the term is well used in these songs because they are sung by oarsmen sitting in rows on the two sides of a boat. The rhythm is in accord with the actual action of rowing and hence very well-marked. These songs in a sense may be regarded as songs—though not like those in infant classes according to the Kindergarten system. Similar to the Sari is the Chhatpetar Gān.

**Chhatpetār Gān:** In this a man accompanied usually by a violinist leads a song and is followed by labourers singing and beating in rhythm mortar on the terrace. The strenuous work on the terrace of a new building is thus lightened and music helps the employer in exacting more work from the labourers, who otherwise might not be so willing.

**Peasant Songs Or Songs Of Peasant Life:**

**(1) Cattle Songs:** There are songs, specially describing the miseries of the cattle, who are the immediate friends and helpers of peasants. Bengal being almost exclusively an agricultural province her people should naturally look to the welfare of the cattle almost as much as to that of themselves. Whatever may be the actual state of things, we find that this spirit has at least unconsciously set the village composers to compose a number of songs, such as Garur Dukkher Gan. One such song was collected by me in Chittagong.

**(2) Planting Songs; (3) Reaping Songs**.: These songs are sung at the time of planting tender tufts of rice-plants or at reaping time as the case may be. The songs are sung both as also and in chorus as required and the action of the labourers regulates the rhythm of the music.

**(4) Tang-Changer Gān:** Tang is a raised platform beyond the reach of wild beasts and covered with thatches looking somewhat like a cottage supported on bamboo poles. Peasants live in it during night to protect their cornfields from animals. The drudgery of living in a lonely place like this during the whole night has been sought to be ameliorated by songs known as **Tang-Changer Gān**. The Tangs are generally constructed near hill sides. Consequently these songs also are sung only in those places. The word Chang is perhaps derived from Burmese and is synonymous with Tang. Both these words are widely used in several districts of East Bengal (Tang or rather Tong—Chāng or Machang—a raised wooden or bamboo platform. Chāng or chong also means a ladder used here for climbing to the Tong.)

**(5) Jūmer Gān:** This is a kind of peasant song of hill people. These people grow paddy and other corn on the flat portions or slopes of hills and reap them just like the peasants of the plains and like them have their own songs with their own peculiarities and rhythmic order.

**Hati Khedar Gān:** These songs are connected with trapping of elephants. There are a number of ways in which elephants are trapped along the whole eastern hilly boundary of Bengal and the labourers connected with this work are compelled to live a peculiar life. This peculiarity is responsible for introducing this particular type of songs.

**Hill Songs Or Paharer Gān:** The Himalayas on the north; the Assam and Chittagong hills on the east and the Chhotanagpur hills on the west have provided Bengal with Mongoloid and Dravidian (?) hill tribes as her nearest neighbours. These tribes have their own music quite distinct from one another. But as is well-known the common elements in all music, namely the pentatonic structure and abrupt angular movement hold good everywhere. These elements have always lent colour to the folk songs of Bengal. As a result we have a class of folk songs known as Jhumur which is now regarded as open-air music. There are other kinds of Bengali songs which are purely hill songs and may be heard particularly in the eastern hills sung by travelers, wood-cutters or peasants working on the hills.

**Banagīti:** These are jungle songs and are popular among the hunting people and woodcutters. The influence of the tunes of hill tribes and aboriginals is distinctly marked in these songs. One may hear them only in the outskirts of Bengal in the neighbourhood of hills and jungles.

**Tusu:** Tusu is principally connected with Pause Parban celebrated on the last day of the Bengali month Paus. This occasion is celebrated in a wide variety in different part of the province and Tusu with its peculiar songs is confined to the western districts of West Bengal.

**Neto:** Neto or Leto or Netua or better Natua is an open air musical operetta generally preformed under a tree or in a similar place. One would have the chance to be present at its performance in Birbhum or Murshidabad and sometimes marvel at the improvisation of the singers or at the excellence of the composition of a Leto-writer. **Kazi Nazrul Islam** was once such a composer. The word Natua means an actor and here it means an actor-singer.

The history of the folk music of Bengal as of any other country is obscure and it is not my purpose to try it here. Casually however, I may have to say a word or two at times regarding the development or influence of the folk music of Bengal in particular periods on our rural life or its having been influenced by particular incidents or circumstances.

According to many masters of music, some of the finest of folk songs of Europe are no more sung and peculiarly enough can be traced with difficulty in the towns and not in the villages. Fortunately for this

country such songs are still as much alive in our villages as they were, perhaps, hundreds of years ago. In towns like Calcutta, people sometimes try to imitate these songs with result that the spirit of folk songs is adulterated by the touch of sophistication.

Folk music can be studied from two view points: **1.** Literary and **2.**Musical. I do not intend to dwell on the literary side of it here, because enough has been written and published in the shape of books and articles including few heavy volumes published by the Calcutta University such as, **Mymensingh Gītikā**, Pūrba Benga Gītikā, etc.

With regard to the musical side of folk songs again, I can not but feel some hesitation to lay down the principles, as such principles are very widely believed to be totally absent in folk music. Folk music is believed to be a spontaneous growth absolutely untouched by the grammarians of music. But I think this version has its own defects for, as we shall see later on, principles do lie in our folk songs as a matter of course, although perhaps they were never thrust in by expert. I think it will be unjust to deny such principles in the folk songs of Bengal at least, simply because they are not apparent and it will be my endeavour to find such of them here as will explain the peculiarities of different type of them.

**Classification of Types:** All these types may brought under two broad categories: **(a)** Those that are meant for parlours, for courtyards, and **(b)**Those that are heard in the open fields, on rivers, hillsides etc.

**Classification of Folk music of Bengal**.:**Class (A):**Under the first classification will fall -

**Kirtan:** Then are songs or rather intonated recitations with an immense variety of rhythmic order and Tālas peculiar to them. These songs deal with the Leelā or the heavenly deeds of Śreekrishna and Śree Rādhā. The usual accompaniment is Khole, a kind of drum, and cymbals. Though originated in the village, Kīrtan is a highly developed and systematized type, so much so that its tempo and Tāla system is often found to be more complicated and difficult than those of the classical Hindustani music. There are generally four kinds of Kīrtan, namely,--(1) Garanhatī, (2) Manoharsahī, (3) Mandārinī, and (4) Renetī.

In course of its development Kīrtan has introduced in itself quite an amount of folk music. But as this is hardly regarded as a type of folk songs, I mean to record my reflections on it in a separate Note at the end of this article.

**Jātrā:** This is more or less an open-air opera or musical play with dialogues introducing more characters than is generally found in stage plays and containing very many songs often in season and out of season, interluding the dialogues. The subject matter is mostly mythological. The duration of a play is generally six to eight hours. The tunes of the songs are more or less based on classical music though the Jātrā way of presentation is nowhere impaired. As accompanying instruments the Dholak, Violins Cymbals and of late the harmonium and a few blowing instruments of Europe are more prominent. The Jātrā has afforded in a way a good opportunity to villagers to appreciate, learn and cultivate Rāga—music in many forms as solo, duet and community singing.

**Dhap:** Dhap is similar to Jātrā. While in the latter all the characters, male and female, are played by male artists, in the former they are played by females only. For a subject matter a Dhap party often takes a dramatic version of a kīrtan subject. It is then called a Dhap Kīrtan. While it takes up a well known Jātrā subject, it is often known as Meye Jātrā or female-Jātrā.

**Kābī:** The Kābīs or Kābīwāllas are rural composers ended with more or less education in Indian Mythology. In a soiree, two such Kābīwāllas meet together and enter into a debate regarding a knotty and brain-teasing problem chosen from mythology and each of them pours out his arguments in verse improvised then and there. Though in a sense this is a substitute for what is known as Mushairā in Hindustanī, the superiority of the talent of a Kābīwālla will be easily understood if one considers the very difficult circumstances under which he has to perform. The success of a member of a Mushain depends perhaps on the excellence of his composition but a Kābīwālla must be a good poet and at the same time very clever and resourceful in order to proved his success. Some of the Kābīwāllas have been immortalized in the history of Bengalī literature and music.

**Tarjā:** *Tarja* is akin to *Kābi*, though inferior in quality and show. Beside the two debators, *Tarja* has no other interest, while in a *Kabi* party the musicians apart from the composers, who are also known as Sirkārs, have their own peculiar technique. The chief accompanying instruments in both these type are the Dhole and cymbals.

**Pūran Gāns:** This heading includes more than one type:

**(1) Mānasar Gān:** Though strictly speaking a kind of Pūran Gān, this particular type have been cultivated in different districts in different techniques, as a result of which the form which heard in *Barisal* is quite different from the form current in *Sylhet* or **Mymensigh**. This is mostly sung in the month of *Sravana*, though its tune have nothing to do with the spirit of the rainy season.

**(2) Rāmāyaṇ Gān:** While Mānasar Gān is based on the

**(3)** incidents described in the

**Ghatu Gan:** Ghatu is a kind of dance music in which the Ghatu or the leading singer, usually a boy attired as a girl takes his stand in the middle and is followed by a number of people who sit in a circle around him. It is very popular in the northern districts of East Bengal and is held both in courtyards and in big boats. The Ghatu is perhaps one of the few types of rural songs which though introducing subject matters related to religious incidents, are meant for entertainment, pure and simple. Ghatus present some indigenous *Mudrās* which even **Rabindranath**
introduced in the Santiniketan style of Dance.

**Gambhira Gān :** Gambhira songs are connected with Shaivite ideas and are performed in the second month of the Bengali year. These are very popular in Malda and neifhbouring districts. Many of the songs are humorous

criticisms of social political incidents of the year terminating. It is a treat to be acquainted with the critical views of villagers presented under the garb of Gambhira songs. The performance of these songs two serves two purposes, first, as far as this critical side is concerned Gambhira is a entertainment, and second, in its relation to the Charak festival, it is a type ceremonial song. In this latter aspect, Gambhira may be regarded as akin to **Bihu** songs of Assam. The Siva of Gambhira is not the great God of the Hindu Trinity but is just an old cultivator and regarded by villagers almost as one of themselves.

**Philosophical And Mystical Songs:**There is a large variety of such songs. The more important types are mentioned here:

**(1) Baul:** The *Bauls* of Bengal are more or less mystics. They have composed songs containing very deep spiritual meanings covered under very ordinary and common place words and phrases. Often the songs have double meanings, firstly, the meaning which one would directly accept from the language as it is, and secondly, the underlying meaning or truth sought to be hidden behind and only to be appreciated by those who possess an instinctive spiritual insight. Baul songs have perhaps played an important part in shaping the Bengali mind. There have been *Bauls* both Hindu and Muhammedan (Sufi Bauls) whose compositions have been equally accepted. The Baul is said to have his origin in the *Sahajīya*—a mystic cult emerging from the downfall of Buddhism.

Generally *Bauls* sing in a group while they dance to the rhythm of the songs.

**(2) Dehatattva:** The wording of Dehatattva songs lay down principles of spiritual Sādhanā or practice. In this sense these songs may be regarded as songs of practical philosophy. It is however difficult at times to differentiate between a *Baul* song and a Dehatattva song due to their similarity in wording and rhythmic arrangement. Sometimes there is a story in the song quite like a parable.

**(3) Hakiatī (4)Shaiatī (5)Marfatī:** These songs are just like Dehatattva or Baul songs and are composed by Muhammedan Fakīrs laying down in them the principles of spiritual Sadhana or practice according to sufistic theories.

There have been Fakīrs who introduced particular tunes in which their songs were to be sung and these tunes were named after them, such as **Fakīrchandī Sur** or tune of **Fakirchand Fakir**. Theses tunes have been as popular as those of Ramprasad, Kamalakanta and others who gave new tunes in Shyama Sangit.One such other type is:

**6) Maijh -Bhandārī:** A very popular type which had its origin at Maijh-Bhandar, a village in Chittagong. This village was once a seat of Muhammedan Fakīrs whose influence has left the village as a place of pilgrimage even to this day. The type of songs apparently had its name derived from that of the place. The songs are generally in praise of Pirs.

**(7) Ramprosadī:** As mentioned above Rāmprosadī a great mystic who lived about two centuries ago composed songs both devotional and philosophical and gave his own tunes to them. These are a variety of Shyama Saṅgīt or songs concerning the Shakti cult. The tunes are known as Rāmprosadī, in which a little *Tappā* has been very ably mixed with folk tunes without impairing the spirit of the latter.

**Batţhakī:** A Baiţhakī means a sitting. Baithakī songs are those that are sung in a Baiţhak-Khānā or sitting room. Villagers have hardly any drawing rooms as they are understood an urban areas, but the villagers have their unfurnished Baiţhak-Khānās or even verandahs where small musical soirees not a rare phenomenon. The illiterate villager has his own way of entertainment and when he feels like having some music, which is not purely devotional or spiritual, he arranges for such music as Baithak or rather Baithak-Khārī. Traces art music can be some times found in these songs, yet the stamp of folk tunes can hardly be hidden.

**Ulţā -Baul:** *Ultā Baul* literally means anti-*Baul*. The term is evidently derisive to Baul. These are humorous songs and the person who invented the term must have borne in his mind the comparison between the lightness of these songs and the grave and serious meaning of Baul compositions. Several *Ulţā Baul* songs, which I collected in Chittagong struck me with the quality of their humour, which compare quite favourably with some of the compositions even of cultured poets. The tunes of these songs are mostly the same as those of *Baul* songs and therefore when sung help to justify the name *Ulţā Baul* in a humorous way.

**Bhaţţa Or Bhater Gān:** A *Bhatta* is something like a Ballad poet of Europe or similar to a Charan poet as described in **Todd's** Rajasthan. He composes poems on important incidents political and social, and recites them in tunes from house to house. Very few of them are available except perhaps in places of *Sylhet*. Whatever the length of the poem be the same tune is repeated in all the stanzas. The catchword, if it might be called, of every line, is necessarily the last phrase of the preceding line. This peculiarity easily distinguishes such a song. The Bhats are a distinct class of Brahmins who compose and sing these poems professionally.

**Kavitā:** A *Kavitā* means a poem and its singing is almost like Bhater Gān, the only important difference being that its composition or singing is not confined to any particular class of people.

**Historical Songs:** Bengal villagers have provided themselves with information about historical incidents through the medium of these songs. To quote one instance I personally heard a lot of songs in Chittagong which gave me such informations as incidents of piracy by the Portugese pirates two centuries ago, the onslaught of the king of Arakān, the death of Sūjāh, a brother of Emperor Aurangzeb, the story of the imprisonment of Sūjāh's consort in the harem of Arakān King etc., etc. Even historians can have valuable information out of these songs, which have been handed down from generation to generation. The songs about the Portuguese pirates have become a class by themselves in the rural music of Chittagong and assumed the title *Mag-Firingir-Gān*.

**Padmāvatīr Gān :** Although this particular song or rather collection of many songs naturally fall within the type just mentioned, it has a distinct value and position of its own, due to the fact that Padmāvatī is a big book written by the great saint and poet **Alaol**, who besides narrating the historical incident of Padminī of Chitore and Emperor Allauddin of Delhi, cleverly inserted a very deep mystical meaning into the poems. Consequently when this book is sung interpreters are requisitioned to explain and clarify its mystical side. These interpreters though exclusively Muhammedans call themselves Puṇḍits.

**Ballad Songs Or Badyār Gān:** These songs have developed mostly in **Mymensingh**, **Tipperah** and *Sylhet* districts. Besides their musical value, these compositions have clearly proved the genius of rural poets in giving very true and lively pictures of men and women of different occupation so much so that some of them have been readily accepted in urban areas as perfect pieces of drama. The most notable pieces are Mahuā, Malua, Kamalā, etc. The Badyās are similar to the gypsies of other lands and there was a time when they used to perform these musical plays professionally. This type of performance became almost obsolete during the last fifty years. Recently Calcutta University has collected and published a good number of such compositions and there has been signs of revival of these ballads. It is reported that already parties have been formed not of the gypsies but of illiterate villagers to perform them and the type of singing has been renamed as Chhanger Gān.

**Jhūmur:** *Jhūmur* is intensively sung in the westernmost districts of Bengal bordering Chhotanagpur such as, Birhum, Bankurā and Burdwan. Evidently this type has been inspired by the music of the Santals with which it has a number of similarities. The music is attended with dance and the usual accompanying is the Madal. The tempo is generally quick and arresting. Consequently in many other type of songs those portions in which there is a sudden of quick tempo and louder beating of drums are known as Jhūmur effects. Jhūmur is a happy combination of the music of the plane and that of the hill and stands in bold relief in the seeming monotony of our folk songs.

**Hanola:** This is very rare except in Chittagong and neighbouring districts and is equivalent to what is known as **Sahelia** in Hindustan, from which this word Hanola is derived.

**Fulpat:** This is a kind of musical drama in its rudimentary form performed by peasants. The story is generally that of Brishaketu of Hindu Mythology. Its performance is supposed to be auspicious to expectant mothers.

**Bāromāshī :** The word signifies a cycle of twelve months of the year. Big incidents including long stories of the epic compositions are condensed into twelve short songs or stanzas, each describing a part of the story in succession and without any break in its sequence and associating at the same time the seasonal influence of the twelve months of the year in cycle. Baromashi is one of the most important types of our folk songs.

**Ceremonial Songs:** Almost all social ceremonies, such as marriage, and religious ones, such as pujas of different deities are attended with songs almost invariably sung by village women. Some of these songs are very good specimens which are absolutely untouched by art music. From time to time the Calcutta Station of the All-India Radio broadcast a number of such songs related to marriage ceremony and were widely appreciated. A few of such songs have been recorded by one of the gramophone companies.

**Dance Songs:** Some of these are festivity songs performed by men while others are confined to women. A few types of folk dance have been adapted and cultured recently through the efforts of Mr. **G.S. Dutt.** The song-value of these are definitely inferior to their dance-value. A few other types performed by females which I myself withnessed in my boyhood, viz., **Nāginī Khelā, Gopinī Khelā** etc., are fast disappearing.

**Rhymes:** Rhymes are more intonated recitation than songs. Nevertheless, they have been accepted as folk songs in every country. The Bengal rhymes may be classed as follows:

**(1) Nursery Rhymes:** Commonly known in Bengal as *Chhadas*. These are mostly nonsense rhymes.

**(2) Lullaby:** There is a great variety in this, each district or geographical unit having its own peculiar and traditional lullaby songs.

**(3) Religious Rhymes:** These are chanted on particular occasions in solo or in chorus. There are several kinds of these, for instance, (a) 'Gorak Sevār Gān', sung in front of the cowshed on the 21st day from the birth of a calf so that Gorakhnāth, the protector of cows may be pleased, (b) 'Bāgh-Bandir Gān', intended to please the deity controlling tigers so that the villagers might not be molested by his jungle followers etc.

**(4) Rhymes of Social instruction:** These are fast vasnishing. Even now one or two beggars are found in Calcutta chanting Lakshmīr Gān, instructive of hygienic, domestic, and social ettiquette for ladies. 'Pater Gan' was once a very fine way of instructing illerate villagers but unfortunately it is no more heard. 'pat' means a picture. On a big sheet like a wall map a picture. On a big sheet like a wall map a mythological or historical incident was painted in small blocks showing its successive stages and singer while chanting his narrative rhyme used to mark those pictures with the help of an indicator, usually a long stick.

**Pañchālī:** Pañchālīs are serious compositions but chanted like rhymes. There may be Pañchālī portion in Kaviwalar Gan or other types of songs, or there may be independent Panchalis composed or improvised on particular social or religious subject-matters. Many poets of Bengal both cultured and illiterate, have become famous by their Pañchālī compositions. Daśarathī has secured an unrivalled position among Panchali composers of the last century. Pañchālī is supposed to have been derived from Pañchālikā or puppet dance in which music is an integral part.

**AUTHOR: CAKARVARTI; SURESH CHANDRA, Source:** *SNA No.2* 1956 New.Delhi.

**FOLK-MUSIC OF KUMAON**

**"***Season will continue changing; bees will continue flying in this land of Kumaon"*- thus sings the folk-poet of Kumaon, expressing his deep delight at the ever-changing phenomena of Nature. This note of optimism is not all that finds expression in his melodies. They are expressions of varied emotions depicted in different shades and colours. Deeply responsive to the changing mood of the seasons, he has moulded and coloured of his song accordingly. In them emotions of many centuries live an eternal life in forms polished to perfection.

The region of Kumaon and Garhwal extends about a hundred miles East to West and one-hundred-and-ten miles North to South along the southern slopes of the Himalayas, beyond which lies the land of Tibet, from which the region is separated by the snowy ranges. In this part of range, there are several peaks exceeding 20,000 feet in height. The whole region consists of an intricate maze of mountain and glens, through which flow several rivers and innumerable streams, all tributaries, either directly or indirectly of the Gnages. The hilly ranges of this sub-Himalyan region vary in height from 8,000 to 5,000 feet, the valleys often descending to a level of only 2,000 or 3,000 feet above sea level. Towards the south the higher ranges of hills abruptly descend, being succeeded by a narrow stretch of low broken country called the Bhabar and then by a gradual slope towards the great plain of upper India, which is named the Tarai. This lower belt is from 2to15 miles broad, and is part of the regions having always much in use by the hill people, who drive their herds of cattle thither for forage during the dry month.

Kumaon and Garhwal may generally be called forest land. After and during the rains, the grass-covered slopes and verdant valleys are a lovely sight. The landscape is distinguished more especially by its vastness; range after range of mountain fade away into the blue distance, crowned towards the north by the towering Himalayas, with their well defined peaks of Nandā Devī, Pañcha Chulā, Triśula and *Badrī Nāth*. The mingled charms of forest, cliff, glen and distant snowy peaks combine to form landscapes of singular beauty.

It is related that a certain Rājā named Kāṇapāl belonging to the Lunar Race visited Garhwal in the 7th century with his followers on a pilgrimage to the scared shrines of Kedār Nāth and Badrī Nāth, and afterwards conquered the country. At the time, kumaon was broken up into a number of warring petty Khāsā kingdoms, until a dynasty was founded in the 10th century by Som Chand, said to be a scion of a Royal family residing at Jhānsi.

The Chand dynasty attracted many Brāhmin families from the plains who settled in Kumaon, and have multiplied exceedingly so that this region contains an unusually large proportion of the Brāhmin caste. This dynasty reigned in the country till the end of the 18th century, when the Gorkhālies of Nepal invaded the country and established their rule in Kumaon. In 1816 the British took possession of the region. Kumaon and Garhwāl were included in general administrative system, while Tehrī -Garhwāl was allowed to be ruled by a local dynasty which continued to rule it till the amalgamation of the princely States in the Indian Union.

The coming of spring is a matter of joy to every one. In Kumaon it is announced by traditional bards, who, roaming from place to place, sing songs dedicated to its beauty and charm. Characterised by long melodic lilts, archaic note pattern and a slow tempo, these song express sentiments of love. No young heart can remain unaffected for long while listening to the bard's singing of such lines as, "*Oh my bee, Oh my beloved, spring has surreptitiously crept in. Quickly take me to the valley of flowers where we will play phāg together."*

The blazing red of the rhodondendron flowers is symbolic of that excitement and warmth spring brings in its wake. It is the same riot of colour which inspired **Sumitra Nandan Pant** in his younger days to compose the following lines,

*The lighting dwells in clouds,*
*the red rhodonendron flowers,*
*have set the forest ablaze; as*
*you have my heart.*

The Holī festival comes as a fitting climax to this mood of gaiety and abandonment. Forgetting their worries and their hard struggle for daily bread, the entire people join in festivity which lasts in Kumaon for over a month. During this period hundreds of songs both of semi-classical as well as folk variety are sung by both men and women, to the accompaniment of *harmonium tablā, dholak* and *manzīrā* revelry which continues day and night.

The theme as well as music of all these Holī songs is quite unlike the one prevalent in the folk songs of that region. The language chosen is *Brij* and *KharīBolī,* and the *rāgas* of the Indian classical music form the basis of the melodic structures.

Spring fades into long lazy summar days. A deep stillness pervades the atmosphere. The monotony of the season is typified in the sad desultory notes of a wind instrument, called *algojā*. Made of two flutes joined together, its music has a haunting quality. It is a languous music often heard in deep forests, lonely hill tops and deserted valleys.

This monotony is, however, broken by the beats of drums and shirll intonations of the wind instruments called *turi and ransingha* which are heard when marriage processions thread their way across the hills.

Soon the rains come, and with them a period of intense agricultural activity. Among other operations, the transplanting of paddy is accompanied by songs. Heroic deeds performed by ancient heroes are recalled. Stories of love, great feats of valour and wisdom are sung in a vigorous style with a view to accelerating the tempo of work. *Hurkiā-Baul* is the traditional name given to this form of singing which is performed in the fields of every farmer by turns. A small drum called *hurkā* is the only accompanying instrument. The other purport of this singing is to propitiate the god of earth locally called *Bhūmiyā or Bhūmīyal*.

Rains are followed by a period of respite. It is again time for merry making and revelry. People assemble in a

temple courtyard, or in open field and sing and dance for sheer pleasure. It is a free-for-all in these fairs when emotions are freely expressed without any restraining power of traditions. The tunes are gay, brisk and colourful and are sung with great verve and abandon. Flexibility and variability characterise the tunes as well as the texts of these songs. Romantic themes are mostly chosen and there is full freedom to improve. In the famous *Nandavī* fair of Almora, this singing and dancing continues for three consecutive days and nights.

Among the forms of singing widely prevalent in these fairs, *Bair* is, however, the most typical. It is a poetic contest in which singers gifted with the power of improvising verses alone can participate. The contest takes the form of questions and answers with wit and repartee as the main weapons. It is a continuous duel, lasting for the whole day and night. There is no instrumental accompaniment in this type of singing. The poet-singer is assisted by two persons who join him in the melodic refrain. It helps the singer in regaining his breath and keeping up the continuity. In every form of recitational singing prevalent in Kumaon, the singer is always assisted by his two assistants, locally called *heniwārs.*

*Jhorā* and *chhapelī* are the other two form widely sung and danced in these fairs. *Jhorā* is a community dance always accompanied by songs sung by men and women in the form of a duet to the beats of the *hurkā* and clang of cymbals. Except the main refrain there is no fixed text to these songs. The body of the song grows as it is sung, the leading singer providing the next line which he improvises on the spot. A regular time cycle is maintained.

*Chhapelī* is perhaps the most popular variety of Kumaon folk songs. In every fair one can see a number of Chhapelī song-groups spread out in the field or the temple courtyard vying with each other in winning listeners who cluster around their favourite singers and listen to them with wrapt attention.

The *Chhapelī* tune is guy, brisk and bright. *Hurkā, manzerra* and flute are the accompanying instruments. The bagpipe, introduced by the British Army sometime ago, has also become a part of the instrumental repertoire. It can heard in these fairs with its characteristic drone. The refrain of the song is sung in chorus while the solo part through which the song is developed, is performed by three or four leading singers who compete with each other in the art of improving romantic verses. The tempo combined with a romantic content accounts for the appeal and popularity of *Chhapelī* songs. *Chhapelī* may or may not be accompanied by a dance.

Autumn comes to this region with its brilliant moonlit nights. There is a mellowness in the atmosphere, a sense of fulfillment in the human heart. This time of the year is perhaps best symbolised in the reposeful notes of a small string instrument called *bīndī.* Holding it between his teeth, the player softly plucks at all small copper flap attached to the head of this instrument with his fingers, breathing in and out at the same time. Though it has a limited tonal range, the intonations are characterised by a soft and delicate drone.

**Operatic Drama:** The chief attraction of this season, however, is *Rāmleelā*- the enact-ment of the story of the epic, *Rāmayaṇā*- which is staged at a number of places in Kumaon Performed in an operatic form, it runs of its through ten consecutive nights attracting large audiences. This form of its presentation is unique to Kumaon. There are more than four hundred songs and recitations set to semi-classical modes of singing. The entire melodic and rhythmic material, although extraneous to Kumaon, has been distinctly re-shaped to suit the needs of this opera. Tunes have been borrowed from the old Parsee Theatre music, and other folk plays such as *Nautańkī* and *Maach.* Introduced in Kumaon some eighty years ago, it has now become an integral part of its musical tradition, interfering in no way with its original stock of melodies and rhthms. Harmonium and *tablā* are the main accompanying instruments.

Autumn gives place to winter which is a season of chilly winds, biting frost and snow. People gather round well-lit fires and listen to the singing of folk-ballads, epics and legends sung by some of their most capable singers. These legends, epics, and ballads contain the most ancient elements of the folk music of this region. There are different styles to their singing, each style differing from the other in matters of text, rendition of the melody, rhythmic patterns and instrumental accompaniment.

**Ballad-forms:** From the point of view of theme and occasion of their singing, the legends and ballads may broadly be divided into three categories-heroic, romantic and religious. The first type is sung during the agricultural operations while the second and third types are mainly sung during the long winter nights. The religious ones are called *Jagars* and are connected with certain exorcist ritualistic practice prevalent in that region.

Life stories of indigenous gods and goddesses, ghosts and fairies are sung and their spirits invoked. Through recitational singing punctuated by exotic drum-beats and the shrill sound of the *thālī* (bronze plate) the musical crescendo is built up, throwing the more devout into a state of trance. In a fit of ecstasy they leap, shout, tremble and jump, tearing off their clothes sometimes. At the end the main singer called the *das* bids farewell to the invoked spirit and sends it back to its abode in the Himalayas, and thus the ritual ends. A big drum (*ḍhol*) a smaller drum (*damuā)*, *hurkās* and *thālī* are the accompanying instruments.

The most popular romantic ballad is *Malushahi* which describes the love story of a prince named Malushāhī and Rajulā, is girl from the borderland. Among the Kumaon ballads, it has got the most variegated melodic and rhythmic patterns. *Hurkā* and *thālī* are the accompanying instruments.

Thus spending their days amidst joys and sorrows, labour and leisure the people of Kumaon sing and dance, always hoping for a richer and fuller life.

The day of fulfilment might still be distant, and hazards to prosperity seemingly insurmountable, yet the dream

always finds its expression in their enchanting melodies and rhythms.

**AUTHOR: UPRETI, MOHAN; Source:** *SNA* No12 New. Delhi. 1957

**FOLK-MUSIC OF MATHURA AND VṚNDĀBANA**

It is said that Satrughna the youngest son of king Daśaratha, freed the tract adjoining 'Madhuban' alias 'Madhurā' from the depradations of Lāvaṇāsura' and gave it over to his son 'Sūrasena' to establish a kingdom of his own. The land of 'Madhura' or 'Mathura' was more popularly known as 'Vraj Dham'. Again the term 'Vraja' means a pasture for cattle.[1] Indeed the existence of number of rivers and rivulets and an abundant seasonal rainfall made this locality very fertile. Simultanously the chain of hills situated nearby were littered with big forests. Hence this region was most suited for both agriculture and animals husbandry.

In the Vedic Purāṇas and Śāstras like Bhāgavata, Harivaṁśa and Manu smṛti, or the Budhist and jain literature like Jātaka and Bṛhat kathākośa, there are practically no adequate basic materials from which history of Vrindāvana and Mathura could be resurrected. Attempts could also be made from the writings of **Al-Beruni**, **Manucci**, **Herbert** etc. to have some idea about that locality. But from them we can hardly get a complete picture of the social life of the people residing in those areas. Naturally we have to depend on the folk-lores and folk-songs associated with this region which, while depicting the life of Lord Krishna, his consort, and his friends and neighbours, also reflect the popular customs and social structure. Based on these sources an endeavour has been made to colate, the hopes and aspiration of the common people living in the medieval era and their financial condition together with their social customs and festivals.

It is evident from such folk songs that the ladies of the locality attended to their household duties as well as supplied milk, butter and curds regularly to customers in the neighbourhood.

Dadhi Kī Maṭakia Śīsa Calī becan Gvālanī

While their men-folk attended to cultivation and to other work requiring physical strength and the young boys took the cattle to the forest but supplemented their income considerably by rearing cattle.

The residential buildings of these places were well ventiated and strongly built with porticos Jharokhā over looking adjoining localities-

Rādhā Hare Jharokan bāṭ,
Hamai Kou Ṭerata hai,
Rādhā kahakai

The ceilings of these buidings were of very good height and well deocorated bunks jutted out into the rooms to accommodate additional guests during festivals and celebrations.

Even people of moderate means had well laid cottages which, again were fairly furnished with khatiyā, Pattulī Chaukī, palaṅg and richly decorated Takiyās.

Those inhabitants were very choosy about their dresses and ornaments as well. The ladies for example, were found of Lahaṅgā, Chunar, Dakhini Chīr and Pañchraṅgī Sārī,

Dakhinī Cīra
Jū Māṅge,
sughaḍa Paṭavāniyān

During festival they would wear saffron or yellow coloured garment. Men, on their part, wore Kambal pagrī, Jhāgā and the boys used to wear Topī and Kurtā.

Jhil Mil Kurtā Sir Kī Ṭopi, Cakamata Hīrālāl

From the folk-lores mentioned before, it is also noticed that ladies liked to use liberally cosmetics like Kajal, Bindi, Mehendi, Mahābar,chobā,Chandan, Keshar etc.

Pair Mahāvār hātha
mai Mehandī, Laheṅgā ghūma
ghumānā.

That apart sixteen varieties of ornaments were in use in Mathura region in those days- Māthe bīca ira unī sohai,
Bendā Kī Chavi nyārī
Kāna Khāre tarkulā sohai, Jhumakana kī
Chavi nyārī. Etc

Their men-folk also did not lag behind in this respect as Mukuṭ, Kanṭhī, Bājuband, Kardhanī, Kuṇḍal Jhāñjan and Pearl necklace used to be freely worn by them during festivals.

That they were affiuent people could be conjectured from the following list of their dietary habits. They normally took milk, curd and butter along with chapati.

Sweets like Misree, Mevā, Fenī, Jalebī or Laddu would be prepared generally to satisfy their palate. Betel-leaves were also widely in use after dinner.

It was custom with the rich to eat sitting on an elevated platform of wood.

Some special varieties of delicacies would be prepared in connection with different festivals eg. during Vasant Pañchmī they would prepare Reorī, during Karna Purī Chauth Pua and Halwā and during Gaṇeśa chauth *Til Kā Laddu*, during' 'sta Annak' they would be offering one-day-old Purī, Papri and other ed piaaessttea deity. It is also seen that during Govardhan pūjā and 'Diwāli fiftysix verieties of offering used to be prepared and thrity type of cooked delicacies made ready for the God.

Besides ordinary pots and vessels the following varieties of Kitchan untensils viz. Matkī Mathānī, Dohanī, Thāla, Kelās, Gāgar, Jhārī, Kamorī and Indurī were in use by most of the rural folk over there.

An idea about their economic condition could be had from the description of large number of social functions and religious festivals observed in Mathura and Vrindaban throughout the year.There is a pitchy saying there in this respect, which means that. nine festivals in one seven consecutive days used to performed by them of the many celebration Basant Pañchmī, Shiva Chaudas Holī. Phuldol, Chaupai, Gangaur, Devī Pūjan, Laṅguriā etc. used to be performed in the spring. In the summar they would perform Aḳsya Tritīya, Jānkī Nabamī whereas during the rainy season Ras Leela, Hindola, Janmāṣtami Rādhāṣtami etc. used to be performed with all solemnity and gradeur. Of the festivals observed in the winter Navarātī, Dasherā, Diwālī, Bhaidūj, Gobardhan etc, were worth mentioning.

Rituals of some of these important festivals are detailed below;- Holi;-with the plantation of the religious pole the holi festival started and continued for about fortyfive days,All day to day calling would be suspended on that occasion to enable the villagers to arrange for the celebration in a befitting manner. On the eve of the proper holī a huge prye used to be erected and Holikā Dahan would be performed. On the following morning the entire locality would start sprinkling colour on one another amdist beating to tomtoms and music. This mirthful revelry would continue throughout the day.

**Rās Leelā:** Rās Leelā was the next important celebration. Various village ministrels wrote special songs and ballads depicting the life of Lord Kṛṣṇa and these were sung by groups of dancing boys who had been specially trained for the purpose.[6] As mentioned in Rās-Sarbasswa' some professional organisations would arrange for different open air performance in this connection.[7] 'Chaddya Līlāyen' written by **Vijay Sākhī** and "**Braja Bilās**" written by **Vrajabasi Das** are some such plays written for Rās Leela. These are famous for their literary qualities. The Standard of dances and songs sung on those occasions were also of a very high order and had classical overtones. Poet **Priya Das** while describing one such show remarked.

**Hindolā:** During *Hindolā* festival, swing would be slung on every prominent tree in a village and would be profusely decorated with flower wreaths for the young people of the villages to swing and sing appropriate songs accompanied by suitable musical instruments commemorating the episode as depicted in the Bhāgavata.

A reference to the *pāras* below will indicate that simultaneously with the above religious festivals many social functions relating to events originating from birth to death of a person used to be held with all pomp and grandeur.

Right from the moment a child was born in a family, social celebrations started and the good news would be conveyed in person by the family barber to the in-laws with turmeric pot in his hands-

Near releatives and neighobours would also visit the place to take part in some social rituals and receive rich presents in lieu from the head of the family.

On the sixth day of the babies birth *chhathi* festival used to be performed. Its aunt (paternal) would bring new dresses for the babay and Jagomohan Lugra a rustic ritual would be gone through with all gusto. The naming of the child on the twelveth day of its birth and the *Annaprāsana ceremony* when it would be six month old, used also to be performed with pomp but the functions and celebrations connected with a marriage surpassed all the extended over quite a number of days. It involved also huge expenditure.

From the details given above it may not be out of place to conclude that the village folk of 'Mathura' and 'Vrindaban' were fairly affluent and led a happy life and that they had apperantly no purdā-system. Hence the villagers enjoyed unbridled social freedoms more or less like those prevalent in the West. Naturally this would lead to some excesses but the village fathers would not tolerate any frivolity and hence any attempt at love-making before marriage would be frowned upon. That may be the reason why, quite opposite to the Gauriya belief, Rādhā the consort of Krishna was not recognised in Mathura as a lover before her marriage.

This does not however mean that there was no inequality and consequential injustice in their family life. As a matter of fact the eternal quarrel between the in-laws was as rampant as it is in rural areas now-a-days. In such an event the daughters-in-law were always at the losing end, since their husbands could marry with impunity more than once and the discarded wives and many a time to quit their fathers-in-law's place for good. That apart, suppositious rituals also brought about untold sufferings to some of the members of a family as the told of these superstition was very firm on most of the villages there.

The spontaneity in their social life, it is needless to mention, had been broken occasionally by the invasion by Muslim invadors like **Mohammad Ghouri** or Sultans like **Firoz**, **Tuglaq** and **Sikandar Lodī**. Their onslaught left a deep scar in the social structure by destroying and desecrating temples, by forcible conversion of high caste Hindus and by prohibiting pursuance of native religious customs. This led to the tightening up of the caste system and growth of religious bigotry on the one hand and spreading of Bhakti-cult and bringing in all people including non-Hindus under it's fold on the other.

Thus, such religious persecusions could not root out Hinduism or, in the process, destroy the social structure of the people living in Mathura and its adjoining localities. Naturally the social customs enunciated here seem to have been followed to a great measure for centuries thereafter.

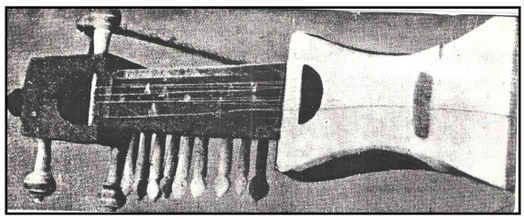
**AUTHOR: MUKHERJEE, LILY, Source** I H*C* 43rd Session 1982. Kurukshetra.

**Sources:**

(1) *Uttara Pradesh ke lokgīta* ***Misra vidyanivas***
(2) **Gupta, Jagdish** *Gujarati aur Brajabhāśa Kṛṣṇa-Kāla*
(3) ***Bhaktv āJāmiā;*** *Braja Ke Loka gīta*
(4) ***Dr Satyendra;*** *Braja-loka Sahitya Kāadhyayana*
(5) ***Poddar*** *Abhinandana grantha P.* 724
(6) ***RādhaKrishnaji;*** *Rāsa-Sarvasva*
(7) *Priyadāsajī Kavitta, Saṁvat* 432
(8) **Dr. Malik Mohammad** *Vaisnava-Bhakti-Andolana Ka Ādhyayana* by

**Gujarātī Sāraṅgī:**

The bow of the *Sindhi sarangi* moves with a jerk to



bring out the rhythmic pattern of the song. The bowing is just a transformed rhythm pattern derived from the accentuated time-unit of song. The use of the classical Sārańgī and its mode of bowing hardly established the rhythmic structure of the song or piece of music. The Classical *Sārańgī* player would not use a jerk while bowing up and down with emphases to establish rhythm. Here the bowing is expected to follow the long breath of the singer and the bow moves in a slow prolonged movement. One movement may include as many time-units as possible by the efficacy of the instrumentalist. But the *Sindhi Sārańgī* or folk instrumentalists not possess an evolved musical consciousness and consequently remain bound to rhythmic structure.

**Gujratān Sārańgī:** The shape and size of *Gujrātan Sarangi* is smaller than that of *Sindhi Sārańgī.* It has four main strings—two steel wires and two guts—tuned to *Sa-Sa-Pa-Sa* and a set of eight sympathetic strings (*Jeel*). It does not have the *Jhārā* set of strings mentioned with *Sindhi Sārańgī.* Rest of the details are common between *Sindhi* and *Gujrātan Sārańgī.* A fact has also to be kept in mind that the main string which gives the melodic notes is made of a steel. Indian Classical *Sārańgī* and a few other folk *Sārańgīs* use a main string of *gut*. Steel string is always tuned to a higher pitch as compared to *gut* string and this results in a singing style with a difference—based on a higher tonal note. This is why the caste-musicians always sing full-throated.

It may also be interesting to note that Rajasthan's folk songs utilize only three types of rhythm patterns, i.e. 4 *mātrās,* 6 *mātrās* and 7 *mātrās.* Classical terminology will designate them as *Kahrawā, Dādarā* or *Rūpak* or *Chachār* or *Tewār.* But it is very rarely that such classical division or stress can serve the need of a folk song. A thorough study has revealed.

**Musical instruments and Caste:** Lańgās are not only *'Sārañgī'* players; a sub-caste of Lańgās is solely devoted to aerophonic instruments like *'sarnai'* and *'murlā'* (a type of *'puńgī,* a bagpipe of ground). It may be interesting to note ethnologically that sub-castes of Langas are divided on the basis of the instrument they play. One sub-caste is known as '*Sārańgīyā Lańgās*' who play the *Sārańgī* and sing. The other sub-caste is *'Surńiyā Lańgās'* who mainly play *'surnai'* and *murlā'* with the accompaniment of '*surindā'* (a chordophone instrument played with a bow). Both the sub-castes can eat and drink in each other's home but they cannot marry into the other group. '*Surnaiyā Lańgās'* do not sing; they only play the tune of folk songs and embellish them to a great extent. A detailed study of '*Surnaiyā Lańgās*' shall follow when we prepare another set of records from their musical repertoire. It should suffice here to know that the '*Surnaiyā Lańgās*' use the *surindā,* a chordophonic instrument for the essential purpose of delineating the rhythmic structure and musical accompaniment. The bow of the *surinda* is provided with tiny bells (*ghunghroos*) which are capable of emphasizing the time-unit, with a beauty of sound-texture which emerges from the lightest jerk on the bow.

**AUTHOR: KOTHĀRĪ, KOMAL, FOUNDER OF RŪPĀYAN; Source:** *Organisation,-'Folk-lore Institute. Borunda' in Jodhpur District cf. SNA* No. 27 New Delhi.

**FOLK-MUSIC OF INDIA**

It is a fact, that first note of folk- music was exploded from the nature and its different charging aspects, charging from second to second. This impetus made man so care-free from his hellish life that the folk-music in a true sense has the innocent feelings of the freed hearts of the folk-people. These folk-songs contain all perspectives of human-life and its interaction with the nature. He talks with the dump nature. He hears the sound of trees, breeze, mountains, rivers, animals and birds and shape them with his life. This is what romanticism trend is the most popular in the folk-songs. They give the glimpses of their aesthetic configuration of all feelings inter charge between nature and human. That's why they are untouched by materialistic world. The honesty of feeling, life is imbited in the folk-music of folk-people where no malice, no competition, no hatred except love in all aspects is expressed by them. Their material possession is their feelings in music. They release their sufferings through it, which give them sweetness of creativity, happiness and peace in their simple life. They are self-contended people, thus their music is also the message of less possession and more contentment.

Folk-music is the cultural tenet of particular region of the country. There are writers in India who compiled the songs or lyrical parts of this folk-music but could not discuscab out their musical notes.

This musical aspect is left over by all the compilers of India consequently we get the literary aspect of this folk-music where tune of music are lost.

According to **Mahatma Gandhi**. "The earth sings in the folk-music, mountains chant, rivers humming, crops trill, ceremonies, seasons and conventions whistle-folk-music is contiguous to human life."

**Pandit Omkar nath Thakar** expressed his views like this: "whenever race of any country and its subtle sensibility of the heart express its emotion and feelings, it is the opportune time when musical notes are self-born with the interrelationship of Nature: gradually, they came under the category of Classical music and became known as *Desi* music. It is my opinion that even to day it we do research the folk-music of India, we would find that many melodies of Classical music have their source in the folk-music. He adds that who tells peacocks to dance when clouds enshroud the sky? When lust green nature marks the advent of spring, why the nightingale

sings? It is only changing aspects of nature which give varied melodies of Indian *Classical Music.*

**AUTHOR: SHARMA JANG BAHADUR; TRANSLATE FROM HINDI PADMA SUDHI. Source:** *Cf Chāyānaṭa,* Lucknow No.22,

**FOLK-INSTRUMENT MUSIC**

The tribal world is unique in it outward and inward setting where dance-Music is very important. That tribal caste can not survive which neither sings nor dances. Every tribe expresses its happiness and misery though the medium of dance and music. The Dance-music is greatly connected with the Instrumental music.

There are enumerable musical Instruments, prevalent among the tribes. But pre-historic picture give us clue that in that period musical Instruments like *Mādala, Ḍholā, Turahī, Ghuṅghurū, Kaḍā, Morbāzā, Bāṅsurī, Nagāḍā* etc. were long back in vogue.

*Mādala* or *Mānara*: It is the most important musical Instrument of tribal people often it is seen that it is made by the *Ghāsia tribe.* They take clay and knead it. After softening the clay they made *Mādala* by inserting the clay in the mould of *Mādala* shape. This mould of a wood is dried in the Sun then baked in the furnace. Then they mount on it the skin of a goat which is half inch thick. To prepare on *Mādala,* the hide of one goat is needed. On the two edge of a *Mādala,* the paste of rice-flour is cemented, so that there a effect of resonance is created while *Mādala* is played.

*Mādala* played with all the dances, acted during the festivals like marriage, *Dussera, Holī, Ekādāśi, Vijaya-Daśamī* and *Ananta-caturdaśī.* Though, *Mādala* is played by every tribes but it is specially prevalent among *Kol, Karbār, Baigā, Dhāṅgara, Ghasia* etc. *kol, Kharbār* and *Dhāṅgare* are the hunter tribes while *Baigā* are priest-class *Agariā* is a artisan class which does carpentry and Iron-smithy. *Morbāzā* is made of iron which is played throwing and blowing with the air of mouth.

*Morbāzā* played with *Sailā-dance.* It used to belong to ***Gauṇḍ*** caste who were kings and farmers both, and renowned for their heroic deeds.

*Niśāna* is another Instrument which is made of my particular type of wood known as *Hordār* or by the hide of goat or *Sāṁbhar.* The wood is made hollowed then it is polished inside by oil, or paste of flour, Turmeric and oil. After this process it is mounted with hide and studded with the horns of a deer, etc.

*Veṇu* is a flute of tribe. It is made of bamboo but it is the shape of *Shahanāi.* It is the instrument of *Dharkāra tribe,* who plays it while take *Ālāpa.* After the weariness produced by whole day's routine, this tribe gathers in one place and enjoys singing, dancing with the accompaniment of *Veṇu.*

This is made after smoothening the bamboo of foot long is made followed from inside. Then after heating the iron-rod, the holes are made inserting that hot iron rod. A tongue is attached on the top edge and then is blown with the air of mouth. *Dharkāra tribe* which calls itself as *Kşatriya* or belonging to *Veṇu*-dynasty.

*Ḍaphalā, Ḍaphalī* or *Ḍapha* is a one of the most famous tribal musical instruments among the urban people also. It is made of a strip of fibrous, elastic wood which can be bent to the shape of a circle. Then it is holed all around and studded with the goats hide in side that circle. It is similar to *khañjaḍī* but bigger than that It is also mainly the instrument of *Dharkāra* tribe. It is played to give inspiration and create the heroic emotion during war. When army is arrayed and ready to go to the battle-field, it is played to produce the feeling of nationalism. But now due to poverty, it is played for begging, roaming around the urban area, During the time of marriage, it is played during different ceremonies.

*Kasāvara* is another musical instrument which is 20-25" long and 4" in width, made of the feathers of peacock and studded with *ghunghūrus* and bells (metallic) and is worn in the waist-line like a belt. It is worn by a dancer or an actor. In the beginning it was worn by the dancers of dancing tribe known as *Naţuā,* but now cobblers and washer-men tribes also adopted for their dance,

*Turahī,* a tribal instrument also belongs to a tribal-race which is made of chopper or brass-sheet. It is uneven and played with the accompaniments of other blowing instruments. It is thin toward blowing mouth but thick at the other end, it is made by the *Agariā-tribe.* The *Karamā* and *Dharakaharī* tribes play it while dance.

*Chaḍal* is known as *Karatāla* and *Ḍeḍhatāla.* The tribal people play it during their worship to a deity, it is made of four feet long strips of iron and played by generally *Kol, Kharbār, Vaisvār, Vaigā* and *Agariā* sub-caste-people.

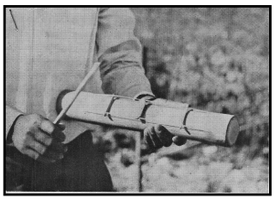
*khañjaḍī* is the instrument of which is commonly played by *Ghasiā* and *Harijana* castes. It is made of a clay-pot which is studded on its mouth with a goat's hide. Probably, **Tablā** an urban drum has taken its birth in its modified form from ***khañjaḍī*** musical instrument. It is played with the fingers and different sounds are produced.

*Nagāḍā* is known in tribal language as *Ţaiñā.* It has wider mouth than *khañjaḍī* and is made with the same process of a bigger clay-pot. It is played after striking with wooden sticks, and is worn around the neck after being tied with a rope. It is generally played during bride-groom's procession which is proceeding to the house of a bride. It is played by *Ghasiā* and *Harijana* tribes.

*Mahuhara* is played during the show of a serpent which is known as *Bīna* also. It is made of the two strips of bamboo and then is blown by mouth. *Ḍholak* and *Sārańgī* also are instruments for the accompaniment of a dance. *Kaḍā* is worn in the feet to give rhythm-beats to a dance.

**AUTHOR: KESARI, ARJUNDASA.; Source:** *Chāyānaţa No.22.* Lucknow. (Hindi) *Tr.* **PADMA SUDHI.**

**FOLK AND TRIBAL INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC**



Gintang

**Fig.1.**

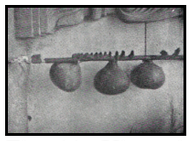


**Fig. 11. Kinnari vina,fretted, Karnataka**

**Fig. 12 Abneri with out ground**

**Fig.3. Kharram lute Nakuli, Halebid, Karnataka**

**Fig.4. The 2 –stringed**

**Fig. 13Single –stringed vina with broad frets. Note partial fretting of finger-board and endbridge,Chennakesar temple, Belur.(**photos of sculpture ,courtesy Archaological Syrvey of India)

**Fig. 5 Khuranrajan (after Elwin0 guddalavani**

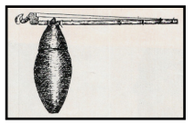


**Fig.6. Nune Burra,Andhra.**

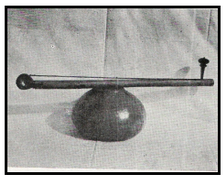


**Fig. 7. Buang of the Santals, Orrissa**

**Fig. 8.** alapini (?) vina **Lakshidevi Temple, Duddagaddavalli Karnataka**

**Fig. 9 Eka tantri with Kamrika**

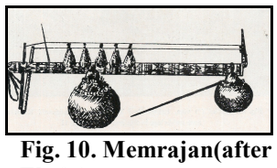
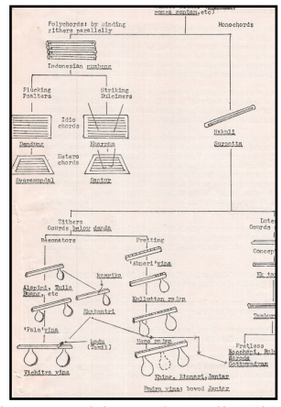


**Fig. 10. Memrajan(after Elwin)**

Scheme of probable development of stringed



instruments,except harps and lyres, in India.The scheme is diagrammatic and not to scale.From the *eka tantri* there are two branches – one to the *vichitra vina (a zither) and the other the gottu- vādyam* (a lute).

**Addition of resonators:** This is a process that has taken place in almost all stringed instruments. The addition of resonators naturally the sound louder and adds further qualities to the sound. Before the advent of **Helmholtzian Resonator**-the one where the upper plank has one or two holes, as in the *tamburā* and the *Karnataka vīṇā*--the simplest process would have been to just tie a full or half a dried fruit. And what can be more natural than attach a gourd or pumpkin? A very simple example is the *Kuranrajan* of the Savaras who live on the borders of Orissa and Andhra. (Fig.5.). (Elwin,1955). Note that it is used to keep time and key; and that the resonator has a *cut end*. This finds greater use in the *tuilā* to which we will turn later.

Another equally interesting example is the *buang* of the Santāls. Indeed, it is in a way even more simple than the *Kuranrajan*, though constructed similarly and bigger in size. A noteworthy fact is the use of the word *buang*. In one of the place our party visited, a Santal dancer had tied a rubber strip (taken from a lorry pneumatic tube)

across the mouth of an earthen pot and was twanging to the rhythm of the dance. When asked what its name was, the boy replied '*Buāńg*'. Perhaps, the name was *onomatopoeic* and the *buang* had only a rhythmic function-not even an integrative one. (Fig.6) (Deva, 1973)

A simple dance-cum-rhythmic instrument is the *nune-guddalavani-burra* of Andhra. It is a small bamboo tube of about 60cm.length. A resonator is tied at the center *below* bamboo. The gourd is opened out at the bottom. (Fig7).

The *chonku* of Gujarat is another example. The *ektar* of the same kind has two gourds but no frets and is again not a melodic instrument.

The instruments so far mentioned had no melodic function at all; they drones and/or rhythmic in function.

We now come to a few others which are melodic. The *nakuli* was already noted. There are a few with single gourds which draw our attention.

The simplest of these is the *tuilā*, a simple monochord of Orissa (Deve, 1976). Here again note that the gourd has been cut and pressed against the chest. Note also the playing position: *across the chest* (Fig. 8a).

Belonging to the same family are two very important zithers: the *alāpinī*, without or with frets. (Fig. 8b) (**Taralekars**, p. 40-41) (The *alāpinī* seems to have been also called *aghati* by some) (p.49).This zither also finds references in Someśvara's *Māanasollāsa,* Parśvadeva's *Saṅgīta Samaya Sāra*,

**Source:** *Sangeeta Natak Akademi Journal* No44. April-June 1977.

**FOLK MUSIC OF INDIA.**

*Karmā* is the dance-music renowned in the world. It is the dance-music of hard labour when a crop is shown then harvested. It has taken the religious form and became the worship-dance also. It is the dance-music which has four forms in Mirzapur when performed by four sub-castes like, *Dhāńgara, Khardar, Ghasiā and Bhaithāra* respectively. It is accompanied with *Mādala* musical Instrument. Women, men children and old people gathered to-gather and join their hand to hand and dance in delight. It goes on and on for 24 hours continuously. It is combined with the opportune songs of different occasions with acting likewise.

*Koladahakī* is the dance-music of *Kolī tribe* where men-folk play on *Ḍhola* while women dance, It is known as *Koladādarā* also, it is celebrated either during marriage or shedding the weariness of every day work to relax in the night. It does not need any decoration or equipment except *Ḍhola* while they dance, they jump down to the representive art of drama also. It exhibits the life-style and religious beliefs of *Kolī* tribe, where is shown how in sorrow even one should be happy and contented. Life is like that but peace comes from the inner contentment.

***Dharakaharī*:** It is the dance-music belonging to *Dharakāra* tribe. It is accompanied with *Ḍhaphalī* and *Niśāna* instruments. It goes well with flute also. (*Bāńsurī*). It contains dramatic feats also in the dance, in the small songs a folk-lore is mentioned by a 70 years old women. More folk-lores are depicted in the different dance-music.

***Agarahī Devī worship-dance*:** It is performed by *Agariā* sub-caste. It is performed after having a fire-furnace on the palm to levitate *Devī.* The dancers along fire-furnace on their palms, dance and move toward temple in a procession. In this dance-music they sacrifice also. This is sung by *Kharbār*, *Māñjhī, Vaişvāra* and *Vaigā* sub-castes and in its culmination, the dancer does tatoo in his tongue and starts sorcery.

*Homakach* dance-music is performed by *Homo*, *Dharkārī* and *Musaharī* tribes during festivals of *Holī*, *Nāga-Pañchamī* and *Dīvālī* and other unimportant festivals of India, with the accompaniment of *Ḍaphalī.* The dancer wears *ghuńghurūs* in the feet and waist with bells and coweries.

***Sailā-Dance*:** This dance-music is celebrated during Nāga-Pañcamī and *Dīvālī.* During this dance, the tribal people stuff saw-dust in the hides of tiger, leopard, boar etc and stand them in the middle. Seeing that the alive animals get excited and tribal people shouts the slogans like-*Kurrī, Purrī, Kalaiyā*. It is the dance music of heroic sentiment. It is accompanied with *Jughāru* instrument. Another modified dance-music has been derived from the same dance which is known as *Binvaţ* where shields and swords are used. It is a martial dance.

***Godanahī*:** It is the ancient custom is the tribes that they do tatooing on their limbs. This *tatooing* is done by the women of *Vāḍhī tribe*. During tatooing, the women and unmarried girls dance with music and some time they perform dramatic acting also. This dance, musical dance predominates the comic sentiment and ward off the pain of the tatooing.

***Karagahī musical-dance:*** It used to be performed by *Ābhīra* and *Bhuratiyā* tribes which is quickly disappearing in India. It used to be performed with musical folk-fore of *Lorikāyan* (heroic-lores). It is akin to the musical dance of *Gaḍathaiyā* belonging to God *Śańkara*. It is accompanied with *Ḍhola*, *Nakkārā* and *Turahī* instruments.

***Lalahī-chaţha*:** It is a main festival of the tribal people. In it, women-folk of tribal people keep fast and in the evening they gather together and make *Prasādaṁ* of *Mahuacurd* and ignite the lamp for the levitation of their gods. They sing and dance. They take bath in the Laua river and wear new clothes and ornaments. They worship *Mahādeva* and circumambulate around *Bhūtanātha*.

***Udhavā* folk musical dance** belongs to the tribes of Mirzapur. It is imbibed with erotic sentiment between hero and heroine. It is dialogue musical dance.

***Jhūmar*:** It is performed by *Dhāńgara, Kols*, *Vaińgā.* It is performed like *Karamā dance*; men and women standing opposite each other. As this dance is performed in circling gesture which brings the effect of drinking wine, (*Jhūmanā* in Hindi means rolling like a intoxicated person) that's why it is named as *Jhūmar* dance. It is accompanied with *Mādala* and *Ḍhola* instruments.

***Morabāzā Dance*:** The peacock bird is the symbol of delightful and happy feelings. Seeing the monsoon cloud after scorcling heat every heart in India starts dancing. The Tribal people also are incited by this feeling. *Gauṇḍa tribal* people play *Ḍaphalā* and wear the bend of *ghuńghuras* and bells on their waist-line, and peacock-feather on their coifturs. They dance after jumping like a peacock and *Morabāzā* is played along with dance.

Besides this dance, there are innumerable occasions when various folk-lores are narrated according to the festivities of different Hindu *Saṁskāras*, with the different aesthetic-configuration (Rasas) in this eventful life of the tribal people. These musical songs of dance include religion, hunting, seasons, nature, femine, draught and all types of sorrowful and happy dispositions of life.

It is difficult to understand the folk-arts of the Folk-people unless one lives with them.

**AUTHOR: KESARĪ, ARJUNDĀSA; Source:** *Chāyānaṭa* No.38, Lucknow (Hindi) : **PADMA SUDHI . T.T**

**FOLK MUSIC OF JAUNSĀRĀ BAVAR**

*Jaunsārā Bavār* is the region of northern hills of Dehradun. Geographically it covers the area of hundreds of square miles. A few people admit that is the part of Garwal, while culturally and conventionally it is different from it.

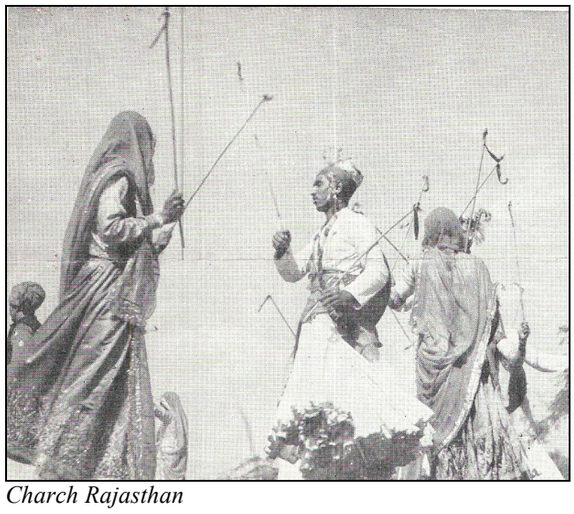
The folk music of *Jaunsār Bavar* is very special. As it represents the character, behaviour, interests and custom, nature and vegetations of the people of that region. It is derived in a way from the local culture and music of that area. The Hill folk-music is varied due to the varied colours and hues of nature in totality. There is a presence of *Classical-music* in the folk-music in some or the other forms. And *Jaunasār Bavar* folk songs are predominated by this trend. It has often the essence of some of the melodies like *Malkauns, Durgā, Pahārī, Sārańga* and *Bhairavī* in lesser and greater degrees. Most of the songs are sung in haly octave (*Ardha Saptaka*), thus, it is difficult to tell definitely which song is set on which Indian melody?

Though the folk music of Garwal kumaon and Himachal Pradesh is similar with each other and so also in notational process and emotional contents the *Jaunasār Bāvar* folk music it follows the same tradition. But its difference with other Hill folk-music, lies in the difference of language, and pronounciations of words and in the ascent and decent of musical notes, which separate it form other hilly regions.

Carving of notes (*svara-śilpa*) in its folk-music and elasticity of music-are two principal characteristics of this music, fast and medium rhythms suggest the *Lāsya* or tender quality of folk-dance during its music. The folk-dance is full of facial expression when is accompanied with *Jaunasār Bavar* folk music which gives it, its own individuality and originality and naturalness. The topics of their lyrics are generally based on love or Eroticity, compassion and heroism. The songs written on love are so delightful that they universally create rapport of hearts. The songs composed on compassion, are sung with the long improvisions with varied *mūrcchanās* with vibrations. In the heroic lyrics the Ascent of the notes is prominent (*Āroha*).Thus these lyrics are classified according to different sentiments in to three divisions due to three predominant *rasas.* The tunes are imbited with the notes of folk musical trends. They have propriety of words and notes to express different sentiments according to *Laya* and *Tāla.* There are a few dances which are performed with these *Padās*, *Jańgabāzū*, *Ghuṇḍyā* - *Rāso*, *Jhentā, Hārūla* are a few of the folk-dances which depict heroic sentiment of even 'quit-India'. These songs are always connected with the folk-lores of the area, there fore, together with singing, there prevails the trend of story-telling through music.

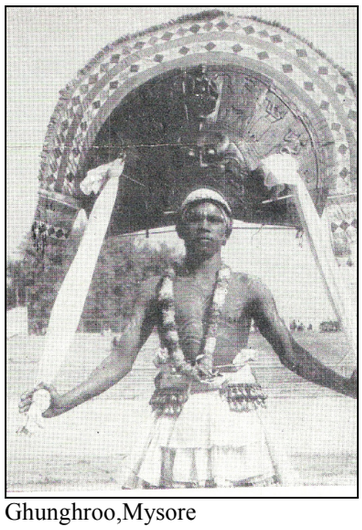
**AUTHOR: JAUNSĀRĪ, RATAN SINGHI; Source:** *Chāyānaṭa* No 38. Lucknow (Hindi)**:**
**TRANSALOR: PADMA SUDHI** .

**FOLK MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF INDIA**



*Charch Rajasthan*

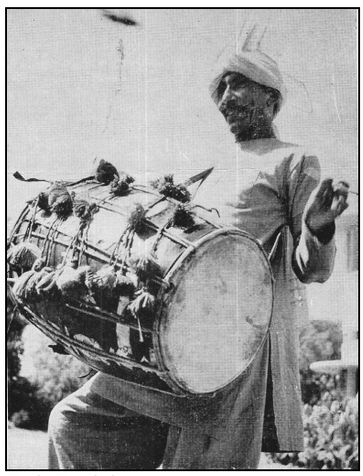
Kartal, Gujrat



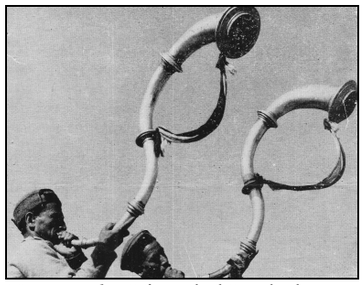
Ghunghroo,Mysore

Pambai-Madras

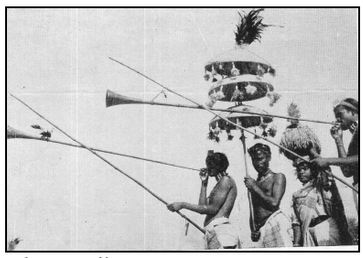
*Gharra*, Kashmir



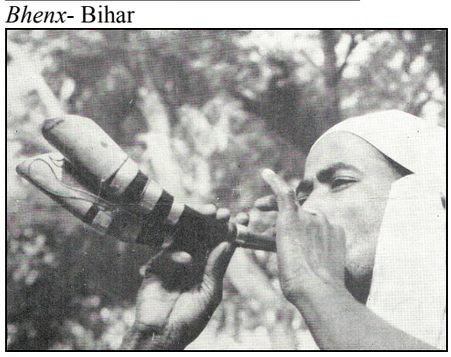
Dol, Punjab



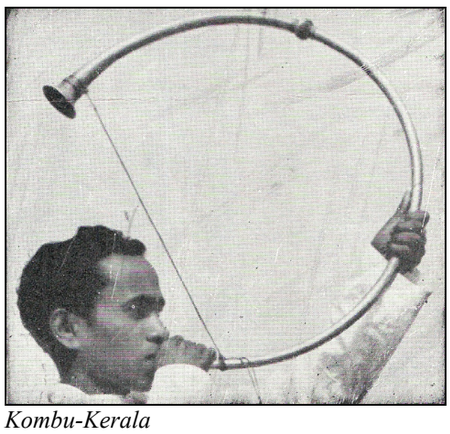
*Narasingha*-Himachal Pradesh



*Bhenx*- Bihar

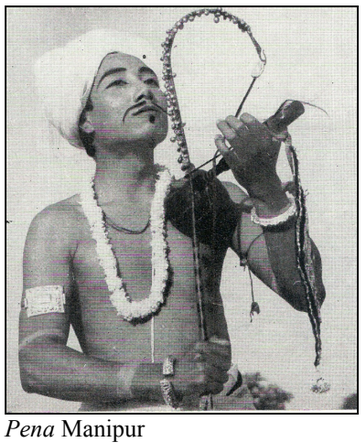


*Pepa*-Assam



*Kombu-Kerala*

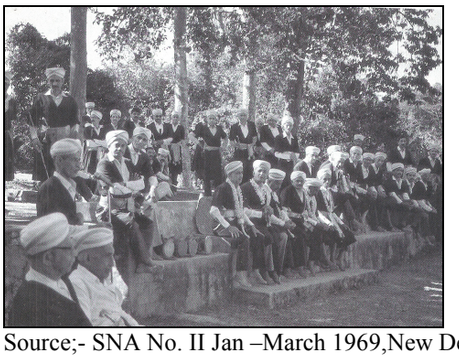
*Bhung*- Bihar



*Pena* Manipur

*Kamicha* -Rajasthana

*Kaorgi* Harvest Dance



Source;- SNA No. II Jan –March 1969,New Delhi.

**FOLK- MUSIC OF PUNJAB**

Whenever **Malkiat** sang *Uaaja tutaan wale khu te...*thousands in the audience would join in with *Hai jamalo*! Never mind that he was performing in Europe or in the Far East and that his listeners did not understand a word of Punjabi. This is the kind of response that makes **Malkiat Singh** supremely happy. With a bashful smile he says, "I'm nothing. I'm grateful to those who like my songs."

His full name is **Malkiat Singh Boparai** and he has come a long way from Hussainpurā in Jalandhar district to become a cult figure in Punjab. He has not only introduced Punjabi folk music to the world but has done so much in such way that it is vigorous without being vulgar. Among the many songs in his repertoire, his own favourite is the sensitive and sentimental *Mavaan thandivan chhawan,* a song that recalls the loneliness of sons far away from their homes.

"People may think that he wants to be great commercial success and becomes a millionare. But that is not true", He wants to make Punjabi folk music popular among people all over the world. Let people hear the songs just once. This music has a haunting quality. Even those who do not understand the lyrics will want to sing these songs.

However, **Malkiat** does not approve of westernising his folk songs for the benefit of non-Punjabis. According to him, he does not want mixing the two styles of music to the point where they are mutually damaging", he says. "In their presentation there is a way to make such songs accessible to people who are not familiar with a particular cultural style. Musical common sense is the key to fixing the limits here."

The first songs he sang were learnt from his parents. "But Jāts sing only to amuse themselves and call professional singers *mirāsīs*- a rather derogatory term for a caste of traditional performers once common in rural Punjab. He had deliberately set out to become a whole time professional singer. Initially he wanted to become a lecturer in Punjabi and sing too. And if fate had allowed to realise his ambition .He would have been happily teaching in some small college in Punjab instead of trying to make Punjabi folk music popular among youngsters all over the world.

When it comes to Punjabi folk music, **Malkiat** is a 'believer' and loves to explain the greatness of its melodies and rhythm at length. It is this intense love for his music that makes him determined to make it popular in the whole world. Although he continues to draw inspiration from traditional old songs and use them, he makes certain changes both in lyrics and tunes to attract the modern listener. His favorite lyricists include poets like **Sahir Ludhiānvi**, **Shiv Kumār Batlavī** and **Swaran Siviā**. And his favourite singer is **Nusrat Hateh Ali Khan.**

While it is true that **Malkiat** has found fame and fortune as an entertainer, there is also a serious streak in him. "He wants to sing songs with a message also. He has seen the sorrow of poor farmers of Punjab and the frustration of the state's youth, both in their villages and when they go aborad." His initial experience in Britain too has not been very exciting. "After graduating in Arts from Layalpur Khālsā College, Jalandhar, in 1984.He went to Brimingham (England) in search of a job, just like any other ordinary Indian. He struggled for a livelihood and worked as a supervisor in a mill. It was only after a year that he was able to form his band, "Golden Star." Since then there has been no looking back for **Malkiat**.

Ever since lady luck has smiled on him, **Malkiat** has started visiting Punjab several times a year, occasionally singing for the elite clubs in Chandigarh. Recently he returned to India to make a video of his new songs. In fact, **Malkiat** already has 13 cassettes to his credit which have found a ready market in India.

**Malkiat** is optimistic about Punjab's future. Yes, things are improving, "but I wish that the late night long stroll from Nakodar to Jalandhar, and the singing sessions by village wells until the early hours, would return." His parents are still middle class farmers.

The star has been lucky to find **Gurinder Singh**- a Chandigarh- born energetic organiser in the UK- to work as his agent in Britain. Although **Gurinder** has been in show business for the last 12 years, he took up **Malkiat's** assignments only five years ago.

According to statstics, **Malkiat's** cassette, *Tutak Tutak Tuian* (HMV) has sold almost 4.5 million copies in India and more than 50,000 in England alone. Not bad considering the fact that the biggest-selling single in British history, Band Aid's *Do they know it's Christmas* sold 3.5million copies and **Bryan Adam** hit, *Everything I do*, sold only 1.5 million. However, **Malkiat's** actual sales may be much higher.

But what matters is not the sales figures, nor official recognition. **Malkiat** has sparked off a process of making folk songs of Punjab a trendy musical phenomenon around the globe. And his success is only a part of the larger scheme of things, as designed by the *Tutak Tutak* star himself.

**AUTHOR: MOUDGIL, RAKESH; Source: *IE*** July 4 1993 Pune, Edition,

**FOLK-ROCK ART AND ITS ANTIQUITIES IN THE GLOBE**

Primeval man's unbridled creative urge manifested itself in the form of rock paintings, bruising and engravings, which are found scattered all over the world. Rather than categorising these rock art sites as the cultural property of particular nations where they are found, these sites should be deemed as the collective heritage of humanity. We can with interlink it with the living arts of India as well as those of other cultures.

A host of common animal forms, wild as well as domesticated, have survived in these 'dateless' art manifestiations across the world. One such commonly found motif is that of the deer, and irrespective of the species or environmental variations, the deer has attracted the imagination of man from time immemorial.

How universal Appeal of the animal deer in the rock as well as Pottery folk- Arts is continued in the world shows the integral reasoning of a man. The

characteristics of rock-Art are common all over the world if studies are done of prehistoric period of world-culture, then it would be concluded in different heads the commonality of world-cultures.

(1)Universality in terms of act, themes, and cosmological worldview; (2)Descriptive country report from China, Egypt, India, Jordan, Makedonia, Saudi Arabia, Russia and Northern Asia; (3)Cross-cultural comparison of rock art in India and China, comparison between rock art and painted pottery, and new approach in rock art through cross-cultural comparison; (4)Geological problems and palaeoecology, conservation and management documentation; (5) Classification, chronology, and standardization of Chinese, French, Indian, Italian and African rock art; (6)Conservation of contexts in the description, interpretation and recording of rock art, primitive art and virtual environments; (7)Language of symbols- example from China, India, Libya and Spain; Religious themes- examples from Australia, Bolivia, China, India; Musical subjects- examples from Central Arabia, China, Czech Republic, India, Italy, Middle Asia and Slovakia; New ways of rock art studies, comparative morphometric analysis, and hermeneutical view-point;

The survival of this tribal art with its cosmic dimensions explains that colours of the people, or different sub-continents is the concept of divided man and not of an integral culture.

**AUTHOR: PADMA SUDHI; Source:** Excerpts are taken from the IGNCA organised seminar from Dec7-Jan7, 1993-94 New Delhi.

## FOLK-SONGS OF RĀJASTHAN

The contribution of Rajasthan to the music of India is considerable. It has a rich heritage of folk songs which have been preserved among its different communities. The songs, as most folk songs, deal with human relations of everyday emotions and beliefs of people, and the varied experiences of their lives. Not only is the poetic element beautiful and meaningful, but even the musical element is most delightful. To a trained ear, it is a very systematic music, taking in its fold, hidden intricacies, glissand and nuances of the human voice. To a person knowing classical music, the folk music of Rajasthan, depicts a systematic arrangement of notes, with special stresses, giving the impression of *vādī, saṁvādī,* notes *āroh, avroh,* of our Indian classical music. Yet, with all the depth and richness it has, it is a spontaneous, free music.

In order to understand the different forms and styles, I shall divide the songs in two regions of Rajasthan.

(1) Songs of Marubhūmi, (Desert-area)

(2) Hilly area.

In the first, is included Jodhpur, Alwar, Bharatpur, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Shekhavati, Jaipur and the surrounding villages. In the second, songs from Mewar Dhungarpur, Pratapgrah, Abu and Sirohi.

In *Marubhūmi area*, one cannot help thinking that the credit of preserving Rajasthani folk music, goes to the professional singers, belonging to different communities. Some of the names of these communities are, Lańga, Mangiyad, Kamad, Bhope, Sarangade, Mirāsī, Pātar, Kalāvant. The Lāngas and Mangiyad communities specialise in singing song known as *Jańgda.*

This is a metrical composition. The Lańgas sing *Jańgdas* with the accompaniment of *Sindhi* or *Gujarati-sarangi* (a string bowed instrument,) while the Mangiyad community sings with *Kamayacha (*a string instrument with twenty-seven strings). It is only with these two instruments that *Jańgda* is rendered. The rhythm for *Jańgda* is established with the handling of the bow.

The theme of *Jańgda* is always that of love. The wife or lover always looking forward to her husband's or lover's visit. Amazingly enough, the text of *Jańgda* proves that the singer always looks ahead- never backwards. Its remarkable feature is that this form of song is always sung by men alone.

The Lańga community has given names of different *rāgas* to different *Jańgdas.* As far as I have been able to examine, they are seven in number,

1. *Soob* 2. *Maru* 3. *Sorath* 4. *Guṇḍ Malhar* 5. *Toḍī*
6. *Kājī* 7. *Khamayāchi*

Before a *Jańgda* is sung a couplet denoting the *rāga* is sung and the name of the *rāga* is constantly heard in the song. The *Jańgda* in seven types of *rāgas* is given at the end of this article.

After hearing these seven types of *Jańgdas,* it is concluded, that the rhythm used consisted of a division of seven beats. It was neither *Roopak* nor *Teevra tala* of our classical music but at gathered, while the musician played on the *dholak,* it was like this!

Tī- Trak Thī. dhā dhā ---

Intricate patterns of notes, turning into short *taans* are in abundance in this form. The short *taans* turns into lengthy ones, moving, uninterrupted, in the way of words or rhythm, of the song.

One aspect, which one should not overlook, is that though some of the names of the *rāgas* are similar to those we have in our classical music, they have no similarity in the structure or mode of the *rāga.* But at the same time, when the folk singers sing the particular *rāga* it has remarkable uniformity.

The next form of song *Marubhūmi* is *Maaṇḍ. Maaṇḍ* connotes the area of Jaisalmer in Rajasthan. There are four types of *Maaṇḍ* prevalent in Rajasthan, 1. *Soob Maand* 2. *Samerī ra Maaṇḍ* 3. *Āsa ra Maaṇḍ*
4. *Shudh Maaṇḍ*

Some of the famous *Maaṇḍs* are:

**Soob Māṇḍ**

MP GM PD N- NṜ NṠ- NN ṠṘ NN, DN, DP S G MP
DN PD M P G M PDM PGM – S G M P D G

**Samerī**

S R M P DN S- DN ṠṘĠṘ Ṙ--- Ṡ N D P Ṡ, N DP DPM PG (S R NS) PPN—P D M P R M

(*The note of rest is Nishad. In some places Komal Dhaivat is used*).

*Asa*

N N Ṡ, ND PD MP R M P D MP G R RS, R- M P D Ṡ

*In Āsa, only Bhajans are sung and they are sung only in the mornings.*

*Shudha*

S GM PD NṠ N NN ND, NS, NṠ, D DN̲ PṠ DP MG SR GR GS

*Tāla*, in *Maaṇḍ* is confined to *Dādrā* (6beats) *Chanchar* (7 beats), *Teevra* (7 beats) and *Kaharva* (8 beats).

Regarding the style of singing a *Maaṇḍ* one could compare it to the *Thumrī* style sung in Northern India. In some portions of the song even the *Tappā* style is noticeable.

The third form of folk songs in Rajasthan, I should like to put under the heading of "Uniformity of tune but variety of words." *Panchira,* songs sung by children or *Rām Bhanat.* These are some examples of this form.

**Song of Adivasis:** These songs are always sung in chorus. Really speaking this is spontaneous music. People find the words and tune on the spot. The refrain is the same but the words of the keep changing. In other words these simple village-folk, are both poets and musical composers. Whether in school or at harvest, these songs are very popular.

*Bhanat* songs are sung at harvest time. When a farmer has to cut the crop, he distributes sugar to his fellow workers and then they all sing and help in the cutting process.

Songs sung by the Ādivāsis are very simple, the range of notes is very limited. Usually, only *sthai* (the first line) of the song is sung. *Antrā* is used in very rare cases.

The fourth form heard in Rajasthan comes under the heading of *Māṅglīk.*

*Māṅglīk* songs are sung on auspicious occasions, like weddings and festivals. They denote good wishes for the occasion. *Bannā-Ghoṛī* are some of the themes. These songs can be described as "Logogenic Music." One word, based on one note, is the usual practice. There is no *tāla* in these songs but only rhythm. The range of notes is only from three to five notes. Chorvases are more popular, hence the style of singing is very simple, though meaningful.

The fifth form, is "Religious Music." There is a variety of these songs. The main ones are (1) *Vānī* (2) *Heli* (3) *Harjas.*

Religious songs are sung by all but there are a few communities who sepcialise in this field.

*Gadaliā* are popular singers of *bhajans.* Songs are based on Shiva, Parvatī, Lakshmī, Saraswatī and different gods and goddesses. In *Harjās* and *Prabhātī,* songs are based on Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. *Dhūjī* songs, connected with *Rāmāyaṇa,* are in plenty. These songs, as far as the tunes are concerned, are not very developed, but the religious element is so great that people sing them great with love.

Some of the famous songs are sung by women alone.

In the same way there are a few songs, known as *Nirguṇ Bhajan* which are rendered by men alone. This type of *bhajan* describes the transistory nature of human life. Songs by Mīrābaī and Kabīr are also popular.

**FOLK BALLADS**

The sixth form is *kathāyen* or Ballads.

These are historical tales and songs. *Pabujī- Kī – Khathā*, *Bīja Sorath, Bhanwārā-Bhanwārī* are well known ballads. The entire *Bīja Sorath* is in *Sorath raga* and *Bhanwārā-Bhanwārī* is in *Guḍ Malhār rāga.*

The seventh form is Nāṭya *Sangeet,* Dramatic Songs.

The dramas or dances are staged with the accompaniment of songs known as *Khyāl. Khyāls* are many in number, about three hundred have been published.

The literal meaning of *Khyāl* is imagination. There are different versions and meanings of this word. According to **Devi Lal Samar**, (*Rajasthan Ka Lok Sangeet* Pp. 29). According to **Shri Ram Lal Mathur***,* in his paper' "*Rajasthānī Lok geetāu men Khyāl,"* songs sung with Ger *Nṛtya* on the occasion of Holi, are known as *Khyāl.*

Some well known *Khyāls* are 1. *Gopīchand Rājā Ke Khyāl,* 2.*Chailā Panihārī,* 3. *Ath Kheeve Aamāl Ko Khyāl,* 4.*Prahlād Bhakta Ko Khyāl,* 5.*Khyāl Dayāram Madvī Ko,* 6. *Nene Kasham kī Khyāl,*7. *Khyāl Bīram Singh Nauṭaṅkī Ka Khyāl* 8.*Khyāl Rājā Risālu Ko.*

The language of *Khyāls* is always Mārwārī. They are always based on folk melodies. Singers are expected to sing in full- throated voices. The style of singing is more difficult than *Maṇḍ.* Rhythm is slow in this form. Only experienced people are able to sing in the correct way. The accompanying instruments for *Khyāl* are *shahmar and naqqārā*.

There are a few songs known as *Rammaten.* There are also a variety of *Khyāls.*

*Khyāl* from Bikaner is very popular. Participants wear pleated skrits and high turbans. Names of some of the famous *Khyāl* writers are **Shri Motilal** of Bikaner, and **Nanoo Rānā, Ujira Telī** from Shekhyatī.

*Khyāls* plays an important part when *Nauṭaṅkī* or *Rāsdhārī* are staged, themes are historical or religious.

Another form of Nāṭya Sangeet Lāvaṇī

According to shri **Komal Kothari** who has one Lāvanī research on folk music of Rajasthan there are twelve different types of Lāvanī According to **Shri Devīlal Samar** the word Lāvnī means becoming. As far as I can gather four types of Lāvnī are in vogue sādhāraṅ, Jaymal, Laṅgḍī and vashikaran.

Some of the famous songs of this form are,

**1.** Lāvṇī Rangar *Vashikaran*.

Jis dam me dam Adam ko
nikala Jāve hai ,Kañcana
Kāyā phir Kaun Kāma āve hai
Is liye Rāma kā nāma bhajo pyāre.

**2.** *Lāvnī Sadhāran.*

Mora-dhvaja se- Rājā Jagata me kat yo.
Majalīsyānā dharā sam
takā rūpa chanala ko āye śrī bhagavānā.

**3.** *Laṅgḍī Lāvnī.*

Bādalon kī Faug saja Indra Hastī pe asvāra hai.
Lolana Kā golā garajatā vo bijalī tavavāra hai.

**4.** *Jyānaki Lāvnī.*
Ab rānī bichāvai, nahī saramāve.
Yā mada kā dekar pātā muse khināvai.
(Words of above mentioned *Lāvnī* are from **Shri Devī Lāl Samar's** *Rajasthan ka Lok Sangeet* Pp. 27)
*Lāvnī* is rendered in different *lokrāgas.*

We shall now take folk songs of the hilly or the *Pahāḍī* area of Rajasthan. This consists of Udaipur, Banswara, Serohi, Doongarpur and Abu.

Considered from both angles i.e., musical and the textual form, the songs of this area are very simple. There is lack of imagination both in notes and words. There is no ornamentation or melodic feature. The sphere of notes is very limited only three to four notes are used.

**AUTHOR: KHURANA, SHANNO; Source:** *SNA* March 1969 New Delhi.

**FOLK-SONGS FROM RAJASTHAN FOLK LEGACY NO I**

**The Lańgās:** The twelve folk songs presented in '**Rajasthan Folk Legacy No1.'** belong to this desert region. The songs have been sung by three traditional folk singers from the Lańgā community who are inhabitants of this area. The singers use a chrodophonic instrument known as *Sārańgī*- a type of improved fiddle which is played with a bow. Lańgās use two types of *Sārańgī* the *Gujrātan sārńgī* and *Sindhī sārańgī.* The adjectives 'Gujarat' and 'Sindh' denote the importance of two contiguous areas of Rajasthan. Gujarat and Sindh are two separate states on the south-west and west of Rajasthan's border. Gujarat is in India, whereas Sindh now forms a part of Pakistan. The qualifying terms for the Sārańgī as *Gujratan* or *Sindhi* may mean that these musical instruments were once made in these areas. However, the *Sindhī Sārańgī* is currently available and played in the Sindh area of Pakistan, but the same cannot be said for the *Gujrātan*. The folk singers recall that both the *Sārańgis* were at one time made in Gujarat, but nowadays there are no craftsmen there making *Sārańgīs*. The use and style of *Sārangi* playing has left its distinct mark on the style of singing and on vocal embellishment.

**The Sindhi Sipāhīs:** It is important ethnologically to note that Lańgā is caste whose main profession is to sing for the families of their patrons. The group of families who have patronised the Lańgā singers are known as 'Sindhī Sipāhī'. The Sindhī Sipāhī live in *dhānīes* or small villages where they have barely six to thatched houses. Each *dhānī* is known by the name of the leader of the group or by the name of one of the sub-castes of the community. We find only a few families of Sindhī Sipāhīs living in the main village which acts as a small market and includes a cluster of different castes. Sindhi Sipahi are mainly cattle-keepers or herdsmen. They own a good number of cows and calves, or sheep and goats. The *dhānī* provides them with the facility of big fields as grazing land for their animals. Arid conditions do not allow them to develop their economy through agriculture. However, they do own a substantial area of land which they can cultivate, if a monsoon is favourable. A good monsoon in this area would mean 2 to 3 inches of rain which enable them to raise enough natural fodder for their cattle, as well as providing millet (*bajra*) for at least two to three years consumption. However, every third year there is a cycle of famine, and people have to leave their homes or habitat with their herds in search of new pastures.

**Conditions of Life:** The conditions of life of the Sindhī Sipāhī are not comfortable and they belong to a low stratum of the social heirachy. The Lańgās sing for this group of society and receive renumeration in the form of cash or kind Cattle or camels are common gifts from the patrons to the professional singers. The Lańgās, as a matter of duty, have to attend functions connected with child-birth, marriage and funeral ceremonies of their patrons. They have also to attend other ceremonial functions on request or invitation. The Lańgās are respected and are given all the hospitality of a guest by their patrons. They are provided with the best available food, sleeping accommodation and other residential comforts. They are expected to sing during the ceremonies and for longer periods during the nights. The Lańgās sing songs or narrate folk tales which have excerpts from traditional ballads in the form of sung-couplets, rendered to music. During marriage ceremonies they are expected to lead the procession to the bride's home, singing. A Lańgā singer, a time during the ceremonies, is expected to sing either standing or walking. The instrument (*Sārańgī*) is strapped on to him with the help of a band across the shoulders and he plays dexterously accompanying his song. Exacting patrons sometimes expect them to sing even while travelling on camel-back. There are interesting musical competitions between the singers from the bride's and bride-groom's side. The winner is the one who has the largest and the most varied repertoire of songs competently rendered and using all the typical musical nuances. New songs are composed or improvised at the request of patrons who may demand a variation of the song to be rendered in another style or rhythmic pattern. It is said that a song known as *Balochan* was composed or improvised in such a manner. The patrons are hard task-masters regarding the style and purity of traditional songs. They have necessary knowledge of the tune, the text and style of singing and insist on its being sung in authentic manner. They express their displeasure if a song does not follow the known rules of the composition. This has resulted in the preservation of songs in their typical form and has also made it necessary for new learners to adhere to the purity of the traditional song.

**Religion and Genealogy:** Both the Sindhi Sipāhīs and the Lańgās are Muslims. It seems that both castes changed their religion from Hinduism to Islam sometime during the period of Aurangzeb's reign. It is also conceivable that the Langas underwent conversion at a later period when they found that their patrons had accepted the new faith which changed their social position to a great extent. The Lańgās could not continue with their vocation of singing without indentifying or aligning themselves with the patron's social group. We

collected the genealogy from one of the singers of these records. He gave the names of his family tree as follows:

Noor Mohmad (present)—Khaju, Khan-Jharu, Khan-Surtan, Khan-Ali, Ummed, Kalyan-Jalo-Pancho-Jasso, Thakarsī-Raisi-Dungarsī, Ajayapal-Joganīdas, Devīdas.

Noor Mohmad informed us that Devīdas was the person in their family to take to singing and was an outstanding singer. He also competently played on the *sārańgī* and *surnai.* Lańgās also relate a legend about Devidas who was a great warrior and fought bravely alongside his master. He was beheaded in a battle but he continued fighting even without a head. It was his *kabandh* (headless-body) which continued to crush the enemy. It is said that it really became difficult to put him out of action or to enemy. It is said that it really became difficult to put him out of action or to pacify the dead body. His family members urged that some water of a brown colour, prepared by boiling tree-bark (known as *guli)* sprinkled on him might help to emancipate his spirit. This was done and Devidas left his earthly abode. However the result was that the colour brown became taboo in the Lańga community which never uses this colour in their costumes or garments. It is believed that wearing this colour may inflict hardships or invite disaster in their lives. This superstition persists to this day.

**Cross-culture:**The conversion of the Lańgās from the Hindu way of life to Islam brought about a new diffused culture in its wake. All the Muslim ways of life and rituals were accepted but there also remained many ceremonies and rituals of non-Muslim social texture. Corss-cousin marriage was accepted but matrimonial ceremonies remained as they were. The male folk continued wearing the *dhotī* which was considered a non-Muslim way of dressing. The females continued wearing *chuda*, set of bangles worn from the wrist to elbow and from elbow to arm-pit. Among Hindu families *chūḍā* is the sign of a married woman who will discontinue wearing *chūḍā* only after her husband is dead. Muslim religious practice is against this custom but it has not only survived among the Lańgās but is strictly adhered to. There are many other ceremonies, rites and festivals which have their source in Hindu customs and are piously followed by the Lańgās.

**Style of Singing:** Lańgās have a distinctive style of singing which is quite different from the style of professional singers of other castes. Rajasthan has many such professional social or caste groups whose livelihood is singing alone. In the desert area, Mańganīyār is an important caste which has preserved an absolutely different style of singing. They mainly play on a chordophonic instrument known as *kamayacha.* This instrument is played with a bow. The shape and size and playing mode differs from that of the *sārańgī.* Some important professional caste groups of singers are: the Bhopas of Pabooji, the Bhopas of Dev Nārāyaṇ, the Ravlās of Charans, the Bhavai of different peasant communities, Dholī, Mirāsī, Fadalī and Kamad etc. Each of these castes has preserved some important instrument. The Bhopās of Paboojī have the *rāvaṇhatha*, the Bhopās of Dev Nārāyaṇ have the *jantar*, the Ravals the *ravaj* and a type of drum called *mardang,* distinctive in its shape, size and mode of playing, the Dholies have *nagara* and *dholak,* and the Mirāsīs have a different type of *sarangi.* It is very important to note that musical instruments have been preserved through such castes, which adopted them through a social process, preserved them and continue the practice of teaching the mode of playing to following generations. It is difficult to say whether so many instruments could have come down to us without this peculiar adoption by a professional caste in general social organisation for a professional purpose, sanctified by tradition.

**Training Methods:** To maintain that Lańgā songs have their own style and that each professional group of singers has its own style, we shall have to go into the details of the process of learning the songs among these communities. Lańgās*,* for one, have a regular tradition of teaching songs to the new generation. The same tradition can be traced in the training process of Indian classical music through the *guru-shishya paramparā* i.e. teacher student relation. The teacher is expected to orally transmit the music lessons to his disciple. The faithful presentation of a melody is directly supervised by the teacher. A similar method is utilised for training a student in Indian classical music. India has no tradition of written music which can serve as a basis for lesson in our musical heritage. Every lesson has to be orally transmitted. A Lańgā teacher also teaches a few songs to his student and keeps him under his guidance. He supervises the rendering of the song to a certain fixed text and particular melody. If the father of a Lańgā boy is proficient in singing he is the natural *guru* or teacher for the boy. In case the father feels that he can find a better teacher, he may send the boy to another Lańgā singer who will take the responsibility of imparting lessons in singing and instrument playing. There is a regular rite or ceremony for this occasion. The parents of the boy will have to invite caste members and serve *sharbat* (soft sweet drinks) to the assembly. The expected teacher will be given sweet-water by the eldest person present. The teacher will drink half-a-glass and pass the other half to the student who will drink the rest. The boy will present a shawl to his teacher and start learning the *sārańgī* and the songs.

How many lessons in *sārańgī*- playing and singing are given? The reply which we receive from the Lańgā singer is that a teacher gives lessons of a few ‘songs’(or tunes) on the *sārańgī* and expects the student to be able to play efficiently other tunes and songs also. The song-tunes are not more than two or three. During the learning session a student also participates in singing with his teacher and can learn as much as he can imbibe or remember. The Lańgās are illiterate and consequently have to memorise the text, which becomes second nature to them. The period of training is never more than a few months to a year. Then the boy is left free to learn songs from wherever he can pick them up. Music lessons are entirely based on the teaching of songs for tunes and not on the notes or musical scale. The Lańgās cannot name their notes which are classically known as

*Sargam* or the Solfa system of Indian music. However, they have their own style of recognising notes based on the two names of *Sa* and *Pa*. *Sa* is known as *Dādar* and *Pa* as *Agorā*. The other notes will be recognised as first, second and third from *Dadar* (i.e. *Re, Ga Ma*) than *Agora* (*pa* and again first and second from *Agorā* (i.e. *Pha*, *Ni*) and finally *Dadar* recurs. All the eight notes are thus completed. It is necessary to add that the discussion regarding the nomenclature of notes is limited to *sarangi* playing and never enters the field of singing. The songs are never structurally understood by the compositional notes or cognizance of *swara-sthān*. The need for names for *swarās*, or musical notes, is only felt when a Lańgā musician is expected to tune his *sārańgī* which has no less than twenty-nine strings. He has to tune all the strings to some desired pitch and here he cannot do without recognising them, whereas songs do not present this problem to him.

**Evolution of Style:** The teacher-student relationship and the tradition of transmission by way of oral lessons has its own impact on the preservation of songs and their musical structure. The general folk songs sung by the people have not been learnt by a conscious process of teaching a song and hence are more liable to new influences and changes. Here the process of transmission is on an unconscious plane, whereas in professional singing communities there is a regular practice of consciously cultivating or preparing a boy or person for musical performance. As the qualitative and quantitative efforts on the part of the teacher increase, the musical lessons start systematizing themselves and create the possibility of law and logic. However, although the Lańgā style of singing follows the *guru-shishya* tradition in giving lessons to new-comers, the training is merely at an elementary initial stage and does not come up to the level where we can catagorise it in the classical sense. The Langa teacher never involves himself in giving lessons in musicology but limits his efforts to passing on the melody with its rhythmic structure to the student. And this also for a few songs, he then leaves the student to learn from anybody or anywhere he likes.

Thus, the Lańgā songs have attained their present form through a process of semi-conscious transmission. This has definitely resulted in stylistic improvisation in songs which mainly abound in small *tanas* (a rapid succession or variation of notes) and *murkies* (embellishment of light type) within the text of the song. These songs have not remained in a logogenic state but have come to a stage of melogenic songs.

The Lańgā songs can be divided into two parts according to the occasion of singing. They sing during certain ceremonies and they also sing for the entertainment of their patrons. Ceremonial songs have a direct bearing on the occasion, whereas the other songs reflect the urges of human emotions in general.

The songs related to the marriage-ceremony deal with either the marriage procession, presentation of ornaments and clothes for the bride, benefaction from other relations or joyful ridicule of either of the parties against each other in matrimonial alliance and other ritualistic subjects. The same holds true for child-birth and other initiation ceremonies.

The songs sung as a matter of general entertainment are related to love, heroic and benevolent themes on the one hand, and the seasons, months and festivals, on the other. The legendary episodes and romantic narratives find a large place in the repertoire of Lańgā lore.

**Volume of Records:** The twelve songs presented in the 'Rajasthan folk legacy No 1' represent these two types of songs. '*Kotal Ghurhlo'* and '*Toranio'* are marriage songs. *Kotal Ghurhlo* gives a vivid picture of the bridegroom's joyful arrival at the bride's home and his auspicious welcome by the hosts. There is a ceremony known as *Toran marano* i.e. the bridegroom is expected to strike a beautifully made triangular wooden frame (*Toran*) with his sword or with a tree-branch. The occasion has been picturesquely described in the song.

*Savania-ro-hindo* is a seasonal song sung during the rainy season. Sāvan is the month when the rains begin in Rajasthan and on the third day of this Indian month, the women go to a garden or a grove and make arrangements for community swinging. The song describes the occasion and its gay atmosphere.

*Kurjan*, *Jalālo- Biālo*, *Hichkī*, and *Neendarhli-lag-rahī* are four songs which deal with the subject of the anxious heroine waiting for the arrival of the lover or husband.

*Kurjan* is the name of a bird which flies in migratory flocks, forming different patterns in the sky. The waiting heroine tries to send her message through the birds to her lover or husband who has been away for a long time.

The song *Jalalo-Bilalo* thematically refers to the blinking of the eyes of the heroine-a sign that indicates the hero's imminent arrival. The heroine complains that her lover has not proved to be wise since he is losing the opportunity of enjoying the youthful game of love at the right moment in life.

*Hichkī* means hiccup; symbolically it has come to suggest that we get the hiccups only when someone remembers us from a far off place. The heroine complains in this song that she never wanted her husband to leave the village, but now that he has gone and is trying to remember her, she has to suffer the agony of hiccups. She says, 'why dont you return and enjoy a full life? Every moment of life is wasting my youth as the bird pecks away the millet-grains one by one. Come soon and do not merely remember me, so that I suffer hiccups.'

*Neendarhli-lag-rahi* is a song about a different type of heroines. The hero has gone and the heroine is trying to tempt him to return. She will prepare a swimming pool and request him to come for just one bath. She has made an appetising meal; he may come to taste it. In this song, we feel that the hero has left the heroine after a lover's tiff and the heroine is trying to make up the quarrel with loving gestures of reconciliation.

*Soraṭh*, *Badila-bega-ajo* and *Lawarjī* are parts of various folk-ballads or love tales. It should be mentioned here that these ballads are not rendered completely in song or music. There are only certain portions of the stories which are sung, the rest of the tale

is narrated in prose. *Soraṭh* is the heroine in a love episode with her maternal uncle *Beenjha*.

*Badila-bega-ajo* is part of *Dhola-Maru*, a famous love story.

*Lawarjī* is different from the two above mentioned tales. There is a nomadic community in Rajasthan known as *Jogī.* This caste has a rule that if a person from any other caste falls in love with a woman of this group he must leave his caste and become a convert to the *Jogi* community. Each person who joins caste is immortaālised in a song about him. Lawarji was a man from another caste. He took to the life of a roaming *Jogī* and thus this song came into existence. The Lańgā singers in the present recording, say that they have met Lawarji in a camp of Jogis and it was not long ago that he was living amongst them. There are lots of other songs which have dealt with the same theme. *Ismail Khan* and *Varda charan* are two compositions which have achieved popularity.

*Gobandh* and *Charkho* are two songs which are not sung on any particular occasion but are rendered joyfully with musical and textual embellishments by the singers any time while entertaining their patrons. *Gorbandh* explains the feelings of a woman who has lost *Gorbandh*. The *Gorbandh* is an ornament decorated with cowries (shells) and colourful beads and is a camel's necklace. It hangs from the neck to the knees of the camel and swings swiftly when the camel gracefully walks. The woman has lost this 'precious' ornament which was made with immense care and labour. Now, who can bring it back? It was so good, so beautiful, it swung so gracefully that she can never forget it. The rhythmic and swinging effect of the *Gorbandh* can easily be felt in the music.

*Charkho* gives another instance of a humorous situation. The woman says, 'while spinning at my spinning-wheel, I have earned so much money that I could purchase a gold necklace and could arrange for the expenses of the marriage of my husband's sister (*Nanand*). See, on the other hand, my husband had gone to another land to earn his daily bread. He has come back with one rupee as his savings and even that was a counterfeit coin when carefully examined by the womenfolk. The husband's younger brother also took a journey for his livelihood but he returned without any money. He came back smoking a *hukkah* and eating *chanā* [gram]. The song ends with a metaphorical expression that life is like a spinning-wheel which is made of sandal wood and spins the thread of life incessantly. The spinner of life goes on spinning.

The Lańgā repertoire of songs runs into hundreds and each song has its own message, its own implications regarding the mode of life to be lived and its own poetic imagery to beautify certain moments of life.

**Rāga-names:** It may be surprising to scholars that these folk singers use *rāga*-names for their compositions. It is generally and correctly held that the classical *rāga*-system has nothing to do with the rendering of folk songs. The *raga* system is a highly cultivated concept of Indian music with its own laws and logic or measure and reckoning. It is true that the Lańgā singers use the names of *rāgas* in a certain sense but these can hardly be compared with the modal or sonal structure of *rāgas* as understood in the classical system. The folk *rāga* cannot stand close scrutiny by way of ascendance and descendance of notes or the typical motifs or catch notes of a classical *rāga.* Classical *rāgas* will not accept any note outside the gamut of their fixed structure or even allow the sequence to change in a manner which may intrude in other similar *ragas*. This test cannot be applied to the Lańgā concept of a *raga* which is absolutely liberal and the singer is free to move anywhere in the same of notes or the tune. The rāga names which occur in Lańgā songs are as follows:

*Māṇḍ Soob Māṇḍ , Asa Māṇḍ , Sameri Māṇḍ , Toḍī Kāfī, Sālaṅg, Sindhi Bhairvī, Māru, Khāmayāchī, Janglā, Gooṇḍ Malhar, Dhani and Syām-Kalyān.*

*Māṇḍ* and its four musical forms are peculiar to Rajasthan. *Māṇḍ* has also found its place in classical music. Names like *Toḍi, Kāfī, Sālaṅg, Khāmayāchī, Gooṇḍ Malhār,* and *Śyām Kalyān* are found in the classical system too. But a general comparison will immediately establish that these folk melodies and names have nothing to do with the classical compositions. However, *Sorath, Māru, Janglā, Māṇḍ,* and *Sindhī Bhairvī* present a different picture. They have many musical features in common with the classical *rāga* and are fairly similar to classical composition. All these *raga* names are derived from the names of geographical regions of Rajasthan. *Māṇḍ* is the name of Jaisalmer region, *Māru* of Mārwār, *Jaṅglā,* the Bikaner region and *Sorath* and *Sindh* represent regions from other states, i.e. Gujarat and Sindh. This might give us a clue about *raga* compositions in the classical system and also explain, to some exent, the essential similarities in folk tunes and the *ragas*. All the compositions which are sung under the nomenclature of a *raga* name do not have separate titles or proper names of songs in practice. It is simply stated that they are singing *Dūhās* (a typical couplet) or song in *Soob* or *Khāmayāchī* etc.

All the twelve songs of 'Rajasthan folk legacy no.1' are not *raga* songs or named after a *rāga* except *Soraṭh-ra-Dūhā.* However, it is said that *Badila-bega-ajo* is in *Māru*, *Lawarjī* is in *Sindhī Bhairavī*, *Sāvaniā-ro-hindo* is in *Sālaṅg*, *Jalālo-Bilālo* is in *Sameri Māṇḍ* and *Neeendarhli-lag-rahī* is in *Soob-Māṇḍ.*

**Musical instruments:** The *sārangī* used by the Lańgās as an accompanying instrument has its own story to tell and requires some explanation in order to understand the folk content of the musical form as opposed to the classical content or the culture of higher society. It has been said time and again that folk singers do not possess a knowledge of musical scale as it is understood by students of classical music. For a folk singer the tune matters. Anatomy of musical scale has no relevance for the folk musician.

It is here that a problem arises. The tuning of a musical instrument puts an essential demand on the cognizance of a note and its relative pitch. Does this not mean that a folk instrumentalist has to recognise the intervals and difference between the pitches and thus is

conscious of the musical scale? The Langa musician and other chordophone instrument players are aware of a musical scale, but at the same time they have their own independent method of recognising the notes of a scale. As has been explained earlier, the word *Dādar* stands for *Sa* and *Agorā* for *pā.* The rest of the notes are counted first, second and third from *Dādar* and then *Agorā* followed by the other set of first and second notes. The repetition of *Dādar* completes the octave.

**Śarańgī-its features**

The *Sindhī sārańgī* has the following features:

**1.** There are twenty nine strings on *Sindhi sarangi*.

**2.** There are four main strings on which the bow plays. No other strings are directly played by the bow. The first two strings (from left to right) are made of steel and the following two strings are made of locally prepared gut. Both the steel strings are tuned to *Sa* (known as Twins) and the gut strings tuned respectively as *Pa* and *Sa* of the lower octave.

**3.** There are only two proper nouns for notes, i.e. *Dādar* for *Shaḍaj* and *Agorā* for *Pañcham*. The rest of the notes are explained in sequential numbers.

**4.** The division of all the 29 strings is: 4 main strings (*Bājā*), 8 sympathetic strings just below the main strings (known as *Jhārā*) and another set of 17 sympathetic strings below the '*Jhārās*' (known as *Jeel).* The difference between '*Jhārā*' and '*Jeel*' is important. The *Jhārā* strings are tied to the bottom of the *Sarangi* and pass through both the upper and lower bridge and are fixed to the pegs at the head of the instrument. This will suggest that the head of a *Sārańgī* has twelve pegs on it. The *jeels* are also tied at the lower end of the *Sārańgī* but they pass through the lower bridge only. Each string is tied to a peg at the side of the instrument. The instrument has small holes in a diagonally drawn line on the middle part of the body and the strings (*Jeel)* pass through it to the pegs. The *Jeels* do not utilise the upper bridge. The Classical *Sārańgī* does not have the *Jhārā* i.e. middle set of strings. *Jhara* strings are made of brass. The *Jeel* set of sympathetic strings are made of relatively thin steel wire. Conception of *Jhārā* is a peculiarity of folk chordophonic instruments.

**5.** The lower bridge contains 4 main strings on its head, *Jhārās* have parallel holes in a small curve, followed by the still lower set of 17 holes which are provided for the 17 *Jeels* or sympathetic strings.

**6.** While playing the *Sārańgī* as an accompaniment, the singer is able to utilise the main strings as a drone and the other notes by touch of his knuckles. For playing in the lower octave, he has to utilise the first gut string provided at the third place on the *sarangi* which is tuned to *Pañcham.*

**7.** The Langās follow a rule about the juxtaposition of all the twenty-nine strings. They insist that all the upper set of main strings i.e. *Sa-Sa-Pa-Sa* must have *Jhārās* so arranged that *Sa* must come under *Sa* and *Pa* under *Pa*. The horizontal distance between them should be able to accommodate the rest of the notes. Similarly the *Jeel* should also keep the same position i.e. *Sa* and *Pa*. *Jhara* strings must have the parallel note under them. The acoustic and resonance principal in the structure of the *sarangi* depends mostly on this rule.

**8.** There are sets of rules for tuning the instrument. They are known as *Adi*, *Bhelani, Kharhi Bhelani* and *Rāga-Rāganī-rī-Bhelanī*. In all cases the main strings maintain the *Sa-Sa-Pa-Sa* but the *Jharas* and *Jeels* change. *Adi Bhelanī* utilises two *Madhyams*- the normal and sharp- and avoids Sa at the end. The *Jeels* in this set again utilise two octaves for its 17 strings. Two *Madhyams* is the distinguishing feature.

In *Kharhī- Bhelanī Komal Nishād* is used on the *Jhārā* followed by two *komal-nishāds* in the set of *Jeels*.

The *Rāga-Rāganī-rī-Bhelani* is an improved understanding of the musical instrument and it is potential help to the singer. The third *Bhelanī* is arranged according to the need of the composition. Whichever notes