

Chapter 5: Aesthetical view of folk songs of Rajpipla's tribal area

The tribals of Rajpipla inhabit scenically picturesque stretch of Satpuda mountain ranges located between the banks of Narmada in the north and Tapi in the south. Numerous rivers and streams flow through this hilly region making it bountiful and lush green.

Majestic mountains, lush green foliage, gorgeous trees and mischivious streams, impart this region with a charming environment. One can feel a sort of blithe and cheer in the air.

Music flows from every pore of this wonderful land. May it be the wind whistling through the woods, the stream dancing down the hill or the humming of the numerous birds. Music comes naturally to this land.

Tribal life inherits its music from these natural setting and its elements. The tribals lead a simple life. Day long they toil hard for their sustenance and in the evening s they come back home and jostle with their families. They sing songs and play and dance. The song and dance cleanse them of all their exhaustion and leaves them relaxed. Come festivals and marriages and there is resurgence of the wave of music residing as a constant under current at the heart of these tribals. As if every one, forgetting his/her individual identity loses himself/herself in the vast sea of collective music and dance. Music thus is an integral and inalienable part of the tribal life. Music rather occupies the soul of these tribals.

Simplicity, harmony with nature and freedom are the essential aesthetic elements of tribal life. Same elements are easily traceable in their music. Tribal songs are usually short, frank and to the point. The language used is easy and understandable to one and all. The purpose of expression appears more of sharing of emotion with all rather than intellectual appreciation by a few. Usually the song is constituted of very few short sentences creating rhyme.

The songs are woven in local tribal dialects which hardly care for the literary boundaries of grammar and sophistication. This imparts the tribal literature with remarkable flair of freedom and simplicity at the same time.

The content of these songs are very often inspired from natural settings. Trees, rivers, mountains, birds and wild animals are commonly visiting characters in the tribal songs. The songs thus very subtly partake from the nature and harmony of the surround.

Music and dance go hand in hand in this folk art. Thus the rhythm becomes a very important element of the whole phenomenon. Usually Dadra (દાદરા) and Kaherva (કાહેરવા) are the two taal's (Rhythm's) whose variants are most commonly observed in the tribal songs. As the tribals begin to sing on this rhythm the foot steps of the folks automatically respond to the beats and they begin to dance. To listen to these songs and to witness the spontaneous kindling of the dance is a wonderful experience.

Usually these tribal songs have only 3-4 or 4-5 notes, in spite of that the songs are very melodious. Both the pure and flat notes are used in these songs for example let us study the below mentioned marriage song

Song

Unse Jove bena, Neese jove bena (2)

Kakariyo todo Pujaayva bena (2)

Neese Jove bena, Use jove bena (2)

Kakariyo todo Pujaayva bena (2)

Scale: safed 5 (સફેદ ૫)

Taal: Dadra (દાદરા)

Lay: Madhya (મધ્ય)

Rag: Based on Meghmalhar Ragang (મેઘ મલહાર રાગાંગ)

Notation:

Pa	<u>Ni S'a</u>	S'a	<u>S'a Ni</u>	<u>S'ar'e</u>	<u>S'a Ni</u>
U	<u>Se S</u>	S	<u>Jo ve</u>	<u>be S</u>	<u>Na S</u>
X			O		
<u>Ni</u>	S'a	—	<u>Ni Pa</u>	Ma	—
Nee	Se	S	<u>Jo ve</u>	be	na
X			O		
Pa	<u>Ni S'a</u>	S'a	Pa	<u>Ni</u>	<u>Ni</u>
Ka	<u>Kari</u>	Yo	To	do	S
x			O		
S'a	<u>Ni S'a</u>	<u>Ni Pa</u>	Pa	<u>—Pa</u>	—
Poo	<u>Jaay</u>	<u>Vaa S</u>	Be	<u>S na</u>	S
x			O		

In this song Sa Re Ma Pa and N□i these five notes are used. The song is based on Meghmalhar Ragang and the combination of notes makes the song very melodious (please refer the notation),

This songs are usually sung in higher octave (Taar Saptak) and some times middle octave (Madhya (मध्य) Saptak) is also used. The use of lower octave (Mandra Saptak) is almost negligible. This is because the tribal folk are sturdy people inhabiting the mountains and the wild. This sturdiness is woven into their nature and it is also reflected in their voice quality. On the other hand the tribal folk are a poor lot and cannot afford costly music systems. Therefore in all of their performances they sing in groups with high pitch. The other folks chorus while dancing.

Due to the strong voice quality these songs reverberate into the surrounding without any kind of modern music systems, this is a wonderful experience which I have personally had. During Holi and the marriages, such song and dance continues through out the night.

Now let us study a beautiful song that is sung in the fairs of RajPipla's tribal area,

Song

Joni joni kaay kohu poyra ra, Andaari me ningi salye jaahum re lol

Saduke saduke kaay kohu poyra ra, saduke may dekhili asay re lol

Melo melo kaay kohu poyra ra, sagbara melo pale Jaahu re lol

Scale: F[#], Kali 3 (काँली ३)

Taal: Dadra (दादरा)

Lay: Madhya (मध्य)

Rag: Based on Meghmalhar Ragang (मेघ मळार रागांग).

Notation

<u>S'a—</u> <u>JoS</u> X	— Nee	<u>ReMa</u> <u>JoS</u>	<u>R'e—</u> <u>Nees</u> O	<u>S'a—</u> <u>KaS</u>	— Ya
<u>S'a—</u> <u>KoS</u> X	— hu	<u>R'e—</u> <u>Poy</u>	<u>P'a</u> Ra O	— S	<u>R'e—</u> <u>RaS</u>
<u>S'a—</u> <u>AaS</u> X	<u>S'ar'e</u> <u>daree</u>	<u>M'a</u> me	<u>R'e</u> Neen O	<u>M'aR'e</u> <u>geesa</u>	<u>S'a</u> Lye
<u>S'a—</u> <u>JaS</u> X	— hu	<u>---</u> <u>mre</u>	— Lo O	— S	— I
<u>S'a—</u> <u>SaS</u> X	<u>---</u> <u>duke</u>	<u>R'eM'a</u> <u>SaS</u>	<u>R'e—</u> <u>duke</u> O	<u>S'a—</u> <u>KaS</u>	— y
<u>S'a—</u> <u>KoS</u> X	— hu	<u>R'e—</u> <u>Poy</u>	<u>P'a</u> Ra O	— S	<u>R'e—</u> <u>RaS</u>
<u>S'a—</u> <u>SaS</u> X	<u>S'aR'e</u> <u>Duke</u>	<u>M'a—</u> <u>may</u>	<u>R'e—</u> <u>deS</u> O	<u>M'aR'e</u> <u>kheS</u>	<u>S'a—</u> <u>LeeS</u>
<u>S'a—</u> <u>AS</u> X	<u>---</u> <u>Say</u>	— Re	— Lo O	— S	— I
<u>S'a—</u> <u>MeS</u> x	<u>---</u> <u>doS</u>	<u>R'eM'a</u> <u>meS</u>	<u>R'e—</u> <u>doS</u> O	<u>S'a</u> ka	— Y
<u>S'a—</u> <u>KoS</u>	— hu	<u>R'e—</u> <u>Poy</u>	<u>P'a</u> Ra	— S	<u>R'e—</u> <u>RaS</u>

X			O		
S'a—	S'aR'e	M'a—	R'e—	M'aR'e	S'a
SaS	gaba	raS	Me	dopa	Le
X			O		
S'a—	—	—	—	—	—
JaS	hu	re	Lo	S	I
X			O		

Meaning of words: Joni: a lighted night, Kohu: to say, May: me, Ningi salya: shall go

In this song the girl says to the boy that let us run away towards the Sagbara fair in the star lit night, I have seen all the ways to the fair. This song reflects the free and independent life of the tribals. The tribals believe in straight talk and are far away from graft and shrewdness.

The aforesaid song is filled with simplicity. In the song the girl fearlessly and frankly asks the boy to run away with her

This song is based on meghmalhar Ragang. The combination of swaras is in this song is wonderful

Folowing is the combination of notes in the song

S'a, R'e M'a, R'e, S'a, S'a—, R'e P'a—, R'e

Here the slide (Meend) between Re and Pa is particularly melodious. The simplicity of this song imparts it with tremendous beauty.

Let us look at a marriage song relating to the occasion of departure of the bride from her fathers place after marriage

After the marriage, the bride departs permanently to the bridegroom's house. This is a very emotional moment for everybody, especially for the bride and her family. In the following song the bride is told that while seat at your mothers place is very soft and silky, the one at the place of mother in law is very thorny. The songs related to this rituals are imbued with a sentiment of grief or (Karun Ras)

Transliteration:

Yahako Gaadi Taa Bade

Humaali Neeva Bena

Hahudee Gaadi Taa Badi

Aakari Neeva Bena

Scale: G[#], Kali 4 (કાળી ૪)

Taal: Dadra (દાદરા)

Lay: Madhya (મધ્ય)

Rag: Based on Bhupali Ragang (ભુપાલી રાગાંગ)

Notation:

<u>S'a—</u>	S'a	R'e	<u>G'a—</u>	<u>S'aR'e</u>	G'a
<u>Yaaha</u>	Kyo	gaa	<u>dees</u>	<u>taaba</u>	dee
x			o		
G'a	<u>R'e—</u>	<u>S'aR'e</u>	S'a	DhaDha	<u>Pa—</u>
hu	<u>MaaS</u>	<u>leeS</u>	nee	<u>Vaabe</u>	<u>naS</u>
x			o		
<u>S'a—</u>	S'a	R'e	<u>G'a—</u>	<u>S'aR'e</u>	G'a
<u>Haahu</u>	dee	gaa	<u>dees</u>	<u>taaba</u>	Dee
x		o			
G'a	<u>R'eS'a</u>	R'e	S'a	DhaDha	<u>Pa—</u>
Aa	<u>karee</u>	S	nee	<u>Vaabe</u>	<u>naS</u>
x			O		

Meaning of words: Yahakyo: Mother, Huumali: soft and silky, Haahudi: mother in law, Aakri: tough, Neeva: To take away

This song expresses karun ras, and is based on pahadi Ragang,

The combination of notes in the songs is as follows

Ṣa—, Ṣa Ṛe, G̣a—, Ṣa Ṛe, G̣a, G̣a Ṛe Ṣa Ṛe Ṣa, Dha Dha, P̣a—

just like our society even in the tribal society the departure of bride spreads gloom in the whole environment, This gloom is wonderfully expressed through songs.

This tribal music does not follow any rules like classical music, it is free music and the songs do not have any pure ragas, but some Ragang are found in this songs. Any body can understand and enjoy this simple form of music