

An Analytical Study of Some Artists of Indian Tribal Musical

Dr. Vineet Goswami
Faculty of Music and Fine Arts
University of Delhi, Delhi

Nikunj Ved
Research Scholar
Email: nik.v1238@gmail.com

Reference to this paper
should be made as follows:

**Dr. Vineet Goswami,
Nikunj Ved**

*An Analytical Study of Some
Artists of Indian Tribal Musical*

Artistic Narration 2023,
Vol. XIV, No. 2,
Article No. 13 pp. 94-103

Online available at:
[https://anubooks.com/
journal/artistic-narration](https://anubooks.com/journal/artistic-narration)

Abstract

Have we ever thought that the Indian classical instruments that we play today have a connection to the tribes and tribal musical instruments of our country? Many of the Ghana Vadya, Avanaddha Vadya, SushirVadya and Tat Vadya that we play today resemble the tribal membranophones, chordophones, idiophones and aerophones.

We have read many stories about the origins of the instruments, one of them is about the origin of tabla in which there was a saint named "Swati Muni" who was once bathing in a pond and suddenly a light rain shower happened in that pond, so during that rain shower when the water drops of the rain dropped on the big petals of a plant, they created an unusually different sound which grabbed the attention of Swati Muni, he listened to those sounds very carefully, and suddenly went to his home(kutiya) and made the TripuskarVadya with the help of sand and animal skin which included the Urdhawak, Alingayak and Ankik which were mostly like the today's pair of table and pakhawaj/mridangam.

So similarly, we have many accounts about the stories of the origins of all other instruments that come under different categories, but the closest examples of the ancient instruments that we have already found are the tribal musical instruments, and now also those instruments are being played in some of the regions of our country.

Keywords

Artists, Indian, Tribal, Musical, Instruments, Playing, Vadya, Music, Tabla, Sitar.



Actual Indian Tribal Wind Instrument
Name – Turhi
Place of Origin – Rajasthan and Orissa

Sculpture of Turhi Instrument
Medium – Stone
Sculptor - Asurvedh

In our ancient scriptures, various arts, their significance, aims and objectives are deeply discussed. That's why, our culture is highly appreciated from times immemorial. This reflects in its continuity and being a part of the social milieu, it shows its strength. Noted Sanskrit Poet... Bhartrihari too in his "Nitishatkam" indicated the importance of music, art literature in human life...

It's again worth mentioning and also a matter of pride to learn that the form of a symphony or musical art, in its very spirit, goes beyond the rigid boundaries of momentary bliss alone, and at many times, it is not just a source of amusement, but in its true sense, carries a wider perspective within, that imbibes many tales.... sagas... spirit and mythological nuances.

It also deals with the beliefs, values of life, understanding of surroundings, fabricating a rational relationship with the local atmosphere and co-existence.... keeping pace with Mother Nature. So, let's just not forget.... if the heritage is preserved and kept safe, mankind gets safer automatically.

From the time when we were Tribal and may have accidentally created a GhanVadya i.e., striking two stones together till the present when we humans have created Tabla, Sitar, Ghatam etc. We have come a very long way. In our Indian Classical Musical Books also we have studied that Bharat Muni created the TripushkarVadya which were Alingyak, Urdhavak, and Ankik, which are now Tabla, Mridangam or Pakhawaj. Similarly, there are stories about all the categories of the Instruments that we play and listen to today.

The art of instrument-making has developed a great deal over the centuries. However, the introduction of new technology and the usage of new materials have changed the method and tonal quality of many Indian instruments in the recent past. These innovations have taken place side by side with the arduous continuation of traditional skills and the use of materials. I hope that this study helps to disseminate information about the tangible evidence of the development of music in India and paves the way for generating fresh interest in the varied traditions of Indian music.

Now, in today's world, we may need to revisit the categorization of the instruments because now electronic instruments are being mixed with traditional instruments, one of the finest examples is about "Kuljit Bhamra" who is the CEO of Keda Music, made an electronic table which consists of two touch-sensitive plates which look similar to the surface of "dagga" and "table". So according to the categorization that we have already made, we can't put this instrument anywhere.

In this research I have taken interviews of two tribal artists each from these states i.e., Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa.

MAIN POINTS RAJASTHAN KALUNATH KALBELIYA



Kalunath Kalbeliya

Pungi

Kalunath Kalbeliya of Chamund in Jodhpur, Rajasthan plays the Pungi instrument. He has inherited the art of playing the pungi from his ancestors. He is the seventh generation playing this instrument. Pungi is also called been used by snake charmers. It is made from the wood of wild gourd plant commonly known as desert gourd (tumbi). It is made from tumbi wood (dried gourd) and bamboo pipes. The player blows into the pipes and creates music by pressing his fingers onto the holes made in the pipes. It is traditionally made from dried bottle gourd; the seeds of which are taken out and it is hollowed by taking out the pulp and then dried. Then a hole is made and a hollow bamboo pipe is inserted in it and made to stick in place with beeswax. This instrument is played on all occasions. Snake charmers use this instrument during their snake-shows. It is also played on the festive occasion of Shivratri. Male members of the Kalbeliya (snake-charmer) community consume bhang and dance to the tunes of the pungi.

KISHAN BHANGU



Kishan Bhangu

Goria (Ghorlia)

This instrument is known as Goria and is played by Kishan Bhangu who hails from Manpur in Udaipur, Rajasthan. Goria is made from bamboo and rope. To make this instrument, a thread is tied on a long piece of bamboo. This bamboo stick has a hole where a strip (patti) is attached and a cotton rope is tied behind the strip. The strip is then moved by tying the cotton rope on the fingers. The artist blows into the bamboo stick or the pipe and pulls the rope with his fingers and releases simultaneously to produce musical notes. Songs are sung along with playing the instrument. This instrument is mostly played during the Navratri festive season. During this season, Goddesses like Amba, Ambavali and Kalka Mata are worshipped. A big plate known as thali, two tarpas, dholak and kantha are also played along with this instrument.

GUJARAT KANWAR SINGH



Kanwar Singh

Piho

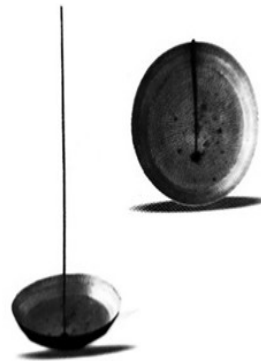
This instrument is called Piho and the artists playing Piho are Kanwar Singh and Nilesh Dehariya. These brothers hail from Chhota Udaipur, Kawat Taluka, Nakhla in Gujarat. The brothers inherited this instrument from their ancestors. Not much information is available about the history of this instrument. All that is known is that this instrument is played during Baba ji's programme. It is played for three days in the monsoon season (shravan maas). Bamboo wood, sagwan (teakwood) and iron rods are used to make this instrument. The artist first fills his mouth with air then blows it into the instrument and produces music by

pressing fingers on the holes simultaneously. The artist must keep a good control over his breath as this is important for playing the instrument. Bamboo wood is cut and hollowed by inserting a hot iron rod. Then, eight holes are made into the hollow stick. It may be noted that the number of holes is not certain; they can be made as per the artist's convenience. No songs or hymns are sung while playing this instrument; it is used only for the notes.

GOPICHAND JUGRA



Gopichand Jugra



Thali

This instrument played by Gopichand Jugra is Thali. Gopichand lives in Dang, Taluka-Ahwa, Post-Gadvi in Gujarat. The artist says that he inherited the art of playing this instrument from his ancestors. It is also said that the place they lived in was separated from Maharashtra. Hence this instrument came from Maharashtra into Gujarat's tribal areas. In Maharashtra, this instrument is mostly played when there is a demise in some family. It is used on the ninth night after the demise and continues until the tenth day. In Gujarat this ritual is carried out on the third day and it is believed that if this ritual is not carried out, the soul does not attain peace. A bronze thali and beeswax are used. The instrument is placed on the lap while playing, then bhangsar (kind of wood in Gujarat) is placed on the beeswax on the plate and then with light frisking of hands, music is created. The

MAHARASHTRA AMIT NAVNATH



Amit Navnath

artist buys this bronze plate and bhangsar wood is used as per need. Beeswax is applied on the bronze plate and then the bhangsar wood is frisked with hands which create music.

This instrument is Sambal. The artist playing this instrument is Amit Navnath who hails from Satara in Maharashtra. He has inherited the instrument and the art of playing this instrument from his ancestors. He is the 7th or the 8th generation playing Sambal. The origin of this instrument is based on mythology.

There were 2 demons called Chand and Mund. These demons were killed by Aadi Shakti and she hung the heads of these demons in her neck and also took care of them. The instrument was named after this act of looking after and named Sambal. The instrument is made from rosewood, teakwood, kher wood, cotton rope, iron and steel stand. Goat hide was used in ancient times but now-a-days fibre is used. There are 2 drums in this; one is a male drum and the other is a female drum. The male drum is made from 5 metals and the female drum is made from wood. Cane wood, cotton strap and decorative laces are also used. The artist stands while playing this drum. The drum pair is hung by the neck with a cotton strap. The male drum is held between the legs and is struck with the help of a cane held in right hand to create sound. The female drum is played with the help of Kadi held in left hand. An iron stand supports both the drums together. The carpenters shape rosewood, teakwood or kher wood into a pot shaped vase. Goat hide or fibre is mounted on these pots and tied with rope. Beeswax is applied on the inner side of male drum. Then both the drums are brought together with the help of cotton rope.



Sambal

GOVIND VAGHMARE



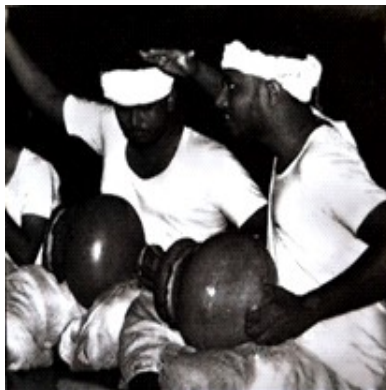
Govind Vaghmare



Tuntune

This instrument is called Tuntune and is played by Govind Vaghmare who hails from Nanded in Maharashtra. This instrument is traditional and is being played by the 3rd generation to which this artist belongs. The materials required for making Tuntune are wood of teak, rosewood, kher, neem, and thin steel wire, bamboo stick (kithi), steel wire number 28, goat hide, coconut shell etc. This instrument is mostly played in standing posture. The bridge is held in left hand and the wires on the bridge are played with a thin stick. Tuntune is played during jagran, plays, powada (genre) and gondhak. Rosewood and neem wood are used to make Tuntune. The wood log is hollowed and made even and smooth with the help of sandpaper. Then oil paints of desired colour are applied on it. Bamboo is fixed with the help of screws. Goat hide is mounted on one side. A latch is attached on the bamboo. The coconut shell is cut in a round shape and attached on the goat hide in centre. The coconut shell has a hole in between and a wire is passed through this hole inside the hollow and tied on to the latch fixed on the bamboo. This steel wire is of 28 gauge and this creates appropriate tempo.

GOA SHUBHAM SUBHASH NAIK



Shubham Subhash Naik



Ghumat

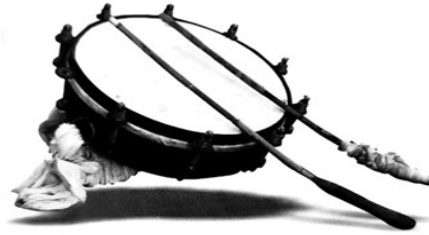
Ghumat is one of the oldest Goan instruments. The artists playing this instrument are Shubham Subhash Naik, Manthan Naik and Saish Naik. All three of them hail from Madgaon. Ghumat or ghumot was declared as the heritage instrument of Goa in 2019 by the Government of Goa. It is a blend of both Indian and Western cultures, hence is symbolic of both Indian and Western heritage. The instrument originated in Mand. It is a membranophone instrument, meaning that it is made from unglazed earthenware and hides of monitor lizard. It was basically played by the tribes of Mand in Goa. Mand is an open area with a tulsi garden in the centre. Ghumat is now played in other parts of Goa as well. It is in the shape of an earthen pot, the mud for which is brought from the village and is made on the potter's wheel. Both ends of this instrument are made open and the

bigger opening is covered with the hide of the monitor lizard and tied with a rope. The smaller opening of the instrument is left as it is or remains uncovered. When the hide loosens it is taken off, soaked in water and re-tied. It is then played after a period seven days. The open side of the instrument is made separately and then fitted on to the main body. This allows passage of air for the instrument. The instrument is also known as kettle-drum. Usually, the ghumat player keeps the ghumat in his lap and beats on it to create music. As per the historians, KhapurumamaParvatkar (1879-1953) was a distinguished player of ghumat which is considered to be around 1000 years old. It was made by the people who were potters by caste. Ghumat plays a vital role during the occasion of Ganesh festival-Ganesh Chaturthi and is extensively played during the festival. Lord Ganesha is worshipped in every house. Some people follow this festival for two days and some for five days.

MANTHAN MUKHADKAR



Manthan Mukhadkar



Tasha

Tasha has originated from Mand in Goa. The artists skilled in playing this instrument are Manthan Mukhadkar, Suajy Naik and Mahesh Gawde. Mahesh Gawde is the fourth generation of the family playing Tasha. His grandfather, father and uncle used to play Tasha and he is carrying forward this tradition. Mahesh Gawde has been felicitated in Goa with Yuva Srujan Puraskar by the Art and Culture Department of the Government of and with Sangeet Natak Academy Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar in Assam. He went to Nigeria and Sudan with his group in 2015 for a performance. He has also performed in various states of India. Initially Tasha was played only in Mand and it was played for only five days as per traditions but now it can be played anytime. Shigmo is celebrated five days prior to Holi festival. Shigmo is the major festival of Goa celebrated in the Falgun maas. Now-a-days it is celebrated for twelve days. This festival holds a competition between various instruments among which tasha is the main instrument. Tasha is made from goat leather,

copper and cane wood. Before playing the instrument, the leather is tightened with the help of screws. The instrument is hung down the neck with the help of strap attached to it and the player stands while playing this instrument during the time of aarti. During the Shigmo festival, the instrument players are dressed traditionally and play in a group. The traditional attire comprises of a vest, pudve (dhoti, which is a big piece of cloth tied around the waist covering the legs and hangs loosely). They also tie a turban locally known as saafa and the complete attire is white in colour. The instrument is mostly made by copper-smiths or the utensil makers and the leather-smiths. The lower part of the instrument is made of copper which is in the shape of a big bowl. The upper part of this copper is mounted with goat leather.

Conclusion

From the time when we were Tribal and may have accidentally created a GhanVadya i.e., striking two stones together till the present when we humans have created Tabla, Sitar, Ghatam etc. We have come a very long way. In our Indian Classical Musical Books also we have studied that Bharat Muni created the TripushkarVadya which were Alingyak, Urdhavak, and Ankik, which are now Tabla, Mridangam or Pakhawaj. Similarly, there are stories about all the categories of the Instruments that we play and listen to today.

The art of instrument-making has developed a great deal over the centuries. However, the introduction of new technology and the usage of new materials have changed the method and tonal quality of many Indian instruments in the recent past. These innovations have taken place side by side with the arduous continuation of traditional skills and the use of materials. I hope that this study helps to disseminate information about the tangible evidence of the development of music in India and paves the way for generating fresh interest in the varied traditions of Indian music.

Now, in today's world, we may need to revisit the categorization of the instruments because now electronic instruments are being mixed with traditional instruments, one of the finest examples is about "Kuljit Bhamra" who is the CEO of Keda Music, made an electronic table which consists of two touch-sensitive plates which look similar to the surface of "dagga" and "table". So according to the categorization that we have already made, we can't put this instrument anywhere.

At last, I also urge the readers and students to preserve our tribal as well as our folk music and spread that as much as we can, because this is our root from where our present Shastriya Sangeet was born, as the "Deshi Sangeet" that we listen in our daily lives (Kirtan of sardars, ragnis of Haryana, jagri of uttarkhand, and there are endless examples) is our core, classical music is the finest outcome of this music.

References

1. Deva, B.C. (2018). Musical Instruments. National Book Trust: India.
2. Folk and Tribal Musical Instruments. (Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa). West Zone Cultural Centre.
3. Sachs, Curt. (1977). The History of Musical Instruments. J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd.: London.
4. Deva, B.C. Bharatiya Vadye. (St. Bd. for Litr. & Cult., Bombay). Marathi.