

FORM AND VARIATION IN RAJASTHANI FOLK SONGS

Dr. Shanno Khurana

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 and 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 *vadi*, *samvadi*, notes *aroh*, *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 Marubhumi, (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, Pratapgarh, Abu and Sirohi.

In Marubhumi 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, Langa, Mangiyad, Kamad, Bhope, Sarangade, Mirasi, Patar, Kalavant. The Langas and Mangiyad communities specialise in singing song known as *Jangda*.

This is a metrical composition. The Langas sing *Jangdas* 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 *Jangda* is rendered. The rhythm for *Jangda* is established with the handling of the bow.

The theme of *Jangda* 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 *Jangda* 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 Langa community has given names of different *ragas* to different *Jangdas*. As far as I have been able to examine, they are seven in number,

1. *Soob*
2. *Maru*
3. *Sorath*
4. *Gund Malhar*
5. *Todi*
6. *Kafi*
7. *Khamayachi*

Before a *Jangda* is sung, a couplet denoting the *raga* is sung and the name of the *raga* is constantly heard in the song. The *Jangda* in seven types of *ragas* is given at the end of this article.

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

ती — ञक थीं । घा घा —

Intricate patterns of notes, turning into short *taans* are in abundance in this form. The short *taans* turn 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 *ragas* are similar to those we have in our classical music, they have no similarity in the structure or mode of the *raga*. But at the same time, when the folk singers sing the particular *raga* it has remarkable uniformity.

The next form of song of *Marubhumi* is *Maand*. *Maand* connotes the area of Jaisalmer in Rajasthan. There are four types of *Maand* prevalent in Rajasthan,

1. *Soob Maand*
2. *Sameri ra Maand*
3. *Asa ra Maand*
4. *Shudh Maand*

Some of the famous *Maands* are:

<i>Soob</i>	बायरिया कीमो
<i>Sameri</i>	आखड़ ली फर के
<i>Asa</i>	भइ भटे तो देख्या बन वासी
<i>Shudh</i>	भूमल केसारया बालम

The mode of *Soob Maand* is,

MP GM PD N — $\dot{N}\dot{R}$ $\dot{N}\dot{S}$ — NN $\dot{S}\dot{R}$ $\dot{N}\dot{N}$ $\dot{D}\dot{N}$ $\dot{D}\dot{P}$ S G MP
DN PD M P G M P D M P GM — — S G M P D G

Sameri

S R M P $\dot{D}\dot{N}$ S — $\dot{D}\dot{N}$ $\dot{S}\dot{R}\dot{G}\dot{R}$ \dot{R} — — — \dot{S} N D P \dot{S} , N $\dot{D}\dot{P}$
DPM PG (S R N S) P P N — P D M P R M

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

Asa

N N \dot{S} , ND $\dot{P}\dot{D}$ MP R M P D $\dot{M}\dot{P}$ G R R S, R — M P D \dot{S}

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

Shudha

S $\dot{G}\dot{M}$ $\dot{P}\dot{D}$ $\dot{N}\dot{S}$ N $\dot{N}\dot{N}$ $\dot{N}\dot{D}$ NS, $\dot{N}\dot{S}$, D $\dot{D}\dot{N}$ $\dot{P}\dot{S}$ $\dot{D}\dot{P}$ $\dot{M}\dot{G}$ $\dot{S}\dot{R}$ $\dot{G}\dot{R}$ $\dot{G}\dot{S}$

Tala, in *Maand* is confined to *Dadra* (6 beats), *Chanchar* (7 beats), *Teevra* (7 beats) and *Kaharva* (8 beats).

Regarding the style of singing a *Maand*, one could compare it to the *Thumri* style sung in Northern India. In some portions of the song even the *Tappa* 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 *Ram Bhanat* These are some examples of this form.

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

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

Manglik songs are sung on auspicious occasions, like weddings and festivals. They denote good wishes for the occasion. *Banna Ghori* 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 *tala* in these songs but only rhythm. The range of notes is only from three to five notes. Choruses 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) *Vani* (2) *Heli* (3) *Harjas*.

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

Gadalia are popular singers of *bhajans*. Songs are based on Shiva, Parvati, Lakshmi, Saraswati and different gods and goddesses. In *Harjas* and *Prabhati*, songs are based on Radha-Krishna. *Dhuji* songs, connected with *Ramayana*, 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 with great abandon.

Some of the famous songs which are sung by women alone are,

- (१) मन मेरा सेज्या सुमरण कररे
- (२) मनवा नाय बिचारी रें
तेरी मेरी करता उमर खोगई सारी रे ॥

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

Folk Ballads

The sixth form is *Kathayen* or Ballads.

These are historical tales and love songs. *Pabuji - ki - Khatha*, *Bija Sorath*, *Bhanwara-Bhanwari* are well-known ballads. The entire *Bija Sorath* is in *Sorath raga* and *Bhanwara-Bhanwari* is in *Gund Malhar raga*.

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

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

The literal meaning of *Khyal* is imagination. There are different versions and meanings of this word. According to Devi Lal Samar, खेल पमाशा अथवा मनोरंजन के कारण उनका नाम शमार पड़ा। (*Rajasthan ka Lok Sangeet* Pp. 29). According to Shri Ram Lal Mathur, in his paper 'Rajasthani Lok geetan men Khyal,' songs sung with *Ger Nritya* on the occasion of Holi, are known as *Khyal*.

Some well known *Khyals* are 1. *Gopichand Raja ke Khyal*, 2. *Chaila Panihari*, 3. *Ath kheeve Aamal ko Khyal*, 4. *Prahlad Bhakta ko Khyal*, 5. *Khyal Dayaram Madvi ko*, 6. *Nene Kasham ki Khyal*, 7. *Khyal Biram Singh Nautanki ka*, 8. *Khyal Raja Risalu ko*.

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

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

Khyal from Bikaner is very popular. Participants wear pleated skirts and high turbans. Names of some of the famous *Khyal* writers are Shri Motilal of Bikaner, and Nanoo Rana, Ujira Teli from Shekhvati.

Khyals play an important part when *Nautanki* or *Rasdhari* are staged, themes are historical or religious.

Another form of *Natya Sangeet* is *Lavni*

According to Shri Komal Kothari, who has done some research on folk music of Rajasthan, there are twelve different types of *Lavni*. According to Shri Devilal Samar, the word *Lavni* means "becoming". As far as I can gather four types of *Lavni* are in vogue. *Sadharan*, *Jyanaki Langdi* and *Vashikaran*.

Some of the famous songs of this form are,

1. *Lavni Rangat Vasikaran*

जिसदममे दम अदम कोनिकलजावे है
कंचन काया फिर कौन काम आवै है
इस लिए राम का नाम भजो तुम प्यारे॥

2. *Lavni Sadharan*

मोरध्वज सेराजा जगत मे कटयो मजलिसम्याना
धरा सं तका रूप छनल को आये श्री भगवाना
अजुन बचन बहत ठाकुर सु सुन मेरे मत की ।
सेवना लो अपना भक्त चटकमोहि लग रही दरशन की ॥

3. *Langdi Lavni*

बादलों की फौज सज इन्द्र हस्ती पे असवार है
लोलन का गोला गरजता वो बिजली तरवार है
कोक्ला कड़खैत मोर पपैया नृतकार है
मौसम इसी विध रहण की अब बागां विच बहार है ॥
टेर - आई बरखा की भार फेल कर घटा घटा सुरखे है
नहीं म्हानें सुहावै बागां की सैल करण चित्त चावे है ॥

4. *Jyanaki Lavni*

अब रानी विछावै, नहीं सरमावै ।
या मद का देकर पाता मुसे खिनावै ।
महाराज बणिया आज, मुसीबत आये
न जाऊ तो जाऊ चून से जाऊ तो लज्जा आये ॥

(Words of above mentioned *Lavni* are from Shri Devi Lal Samar's *Rajasthan ka Lok Sangeet* Pp. 27)

Lavni is rendered in different *lokragas*.

We shall now take folk songs of the hilly or the *Pahadi* 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.

Example

R S N — N S R — S N S R S R S , S (— —) S

म गा सं रा मानी रे ज ना व र क्यो बो यक्यो

Bhils of Udaipur, and villages of Sinhar near Nathdwara sing songs on *Kali Devi*, *Chamunda Devi*, during *Navratri*. These songs are sung by men alone with the accompaniment, *Madal Dhak Tahali*. If women do sing they sing separately, never along with the men. The *tala* generally used is division of four beats. The Bhils tune *Dhak* (drum) in three or four *swaras* or notes. This is done by tightening the rope which is tied over the *Dhak*. The effect of this is like a *Tabla Tarang*.

Amongst the Adivasis, a love story, *Raraji*, is very popular. This is rendered in very simple style.

There is hardly any rhythm in the songs of this area. Only one line is fixed which is known as *Tek*. This style, we may accept as the principle of recurrent sound value. पुनरावृत्ति का सिद्धांत. Other words are composed and fitted in on the spot, the song *Vir* is an example of this type.

The language of Bhils is *Dingal*. Themes of songs are varied, such as the Sword the Arrow etc. other communities in Adivasis, besides the Bhils are, *Garasiya* and *Sahariya*.

From these few examples, it is obvious that Rajasthan is exceedingly rich in folk music. Not only are there so many varieties of folk tunes, but there are also many varieties of folk instruments.

In point of rhythm, grace, melodic variation individual expression, sublimity and grandeur of theme, there is hardly any folk music that can equal and none that can surpass that of Rajasthan. Some of the folk tunes of Rajasthan e.g.; *Maand*, *Asa* etc. have acquired the status and dignity of classical *ragas*. The ballads are a class by themselves and are matchless in stimulating heroic sentiments. The folk songs of this area provide an extensive field for research work, and in their exquisiteness of melody can delight even the most fastidious critic.

SEVEN TYPES OF JANGDA

Couplet 1. सूब बेटी सुख देह री घण जे ही पाणी जात
सब सता चांहणी, दिवले तेल मति बाल ॥

Couplet 2. सूब घर आया सज्जण नाह दीजै बेई पूठ
आंगा होयने मिलने वानै आदर हीजे ऊठ ॥

- Couplet 3. सूब सीस गुथांए कर गहि गाधीउ री हाट ॥
विणज गुमायो बाणियौ बदल गुमायो जाट ॥
- Couplet 4. सूब सीस गुथांए कर चंदलै सामी मत जोय
कदियक चदलो गेह पड़े, रैण अंधरी होय ॥

The mode of *Raga Soob* is:

MP GM PD N — NR N S — NN SR
NNDN DP N NR D PM DP MG
GM PD SN DP MG R N S—
 S G M M G — — N D P M M G

In some places sharp fourth or *tivra madhyam* is used which enhances the beauty of the *raga*. This *Lokaraga* as I call it, is somewhat like our *raga kalngra* in classical music.

LAGA SOOB

Jangda

थाराडे कारणिये ढोला रे केलड़ी बवाऊ
दांतणिये मिस आये रे महाराजा थारी रे
नीदउली लग रही
लग रई, लग रई, रे महाराजा थारी रे
नीदउली लग रई ।
आपरे कारणिये ढोला रे हवद मरांडू रे
इसणिये मिस आये रे, महाराजा थारी रे
नीदउली लग रई
थाराडे कारणिये ढोला रे, चरुडा चढाऊं रे
जिमणिये मिस आवै रे, वादीला थारी रे
नीदउली लग रई
लग रई, लड़ा रहे महाराजा थारी
नीदउली लग रई
आपरे कारणिये ढोला रे जाजम ढलाऊं रे
बिराजण रे मिस आव रे महाराजा थारी रे
नीदउली लग रई
लग रई, लग रई महाराजा थारी रे
नीदउली लग रही

Notation

MP GM PD N — NR NS — NN SR
 आप रेका रणि ये S ढो S लारे S हव दम
NNDN DP N NR S — PM DD MG GM
 रा SSS ऊरे श्री लणी ये S मिस आवै रेम राजा

PD SN DP MG RN SS
थारी रेनी दडी लारे लग रई

(All the stanzas are sung to the same tune)

GUND MALHAR

- Couplet 1. नदिया मे गंगा बड़ी तीरथ बड़ो केदार
रूखा में चन्दण बड़ो रागा गुंड मल्हार ॥
- Couplet 2. केसर चंदन की चंवरी करु अइयो किसन मुरार
परणीजे राणी राधिका, जद सुणियो गुंड मल्हार ॥
- Couplet 3. दुध कढ़ाती छोड़ियो पिलंग बिसारियो हार
पुत्तरे छोड़ियो पालणो म्हे सुणियो गुंड मल्हार ॥

Jangda

ए ननदल ए मुरली ले गयो
: ओ तो : अपने घर रा चोर रे
ए ननदल ए मोहन मुरली ले गयो ॥

नदी रे किनारे घेनु चरावे
मुखड़े बजावे बांसी रे
राधो तो पानीडे ने संचरे
कानू डै तो रुधा घणा रा भाग रे
ए ननदल मोहन मुरली ने ले गयो ॥

ओ तो अपने घर रा चोर रे
आठ गागर रो कान्हा बेवड़ो
ओ तो न बरे गागर री घाट रे
राधा जी तो पानीडे ने संचरे
कानूडो तो रुधा घण रा भाग रे
ए ननदल, मोहन मुरली ले गयो
ओ तो अपने घर रा चोर रे ।

Notation

NN N, NN SN S — SN SN PG MP
आठ गा, गर रोका बया वये बड़ो भा तो SS

DN, N SN PG G MG, M MR — RR, R
न व, रे गा ग रि पे री मा S, S टरे S राधाजी

RR MP N MP, MP MR NS NS NP GGG
तोपा णीडे ने सं SSS चरे कान्हू डेतो रुधा घणडा

MG — P MR — PNNP GP M DP M GR
 मा SSS गरे S एतणद लS ए एस SSS

R — MP, MG RS, NS RMMG RS GR SNS
 एस मो SSS न SSS मर, ली S SS ले S S गयो

The mode of *Raga Gund Mahar* is like this:

N N S N P M PM GR, NP, M P
 M G R, R N S.

D P M P G M, P N P M P M G M

RAGA SORATH

- Couplet 1. सोरठ जब ही कीजिये, सोये ही पड़ जाय
 ज्यू रात गलतड़ी ज्यू ज्यू मीठी थाया ॥
- Couplet 2. सोरठ सुरत तणा पिलगं बिछाया रख पौढवा
 मोती मोहबत न म्हारे हीरा नग जढ़िया हियै ॥
- Couplet 3. सोरठ नारि सांमली सोह ज्यारी रे रंग
 सीचाणो री पांख ज्यूं म्हारे उड़ लागे अंग ॥

The mode of *Raga Sorath* is

N N S, N S R S N — P, M P M R,
N P M P MR R R GMP — RGM —
 MPN — S, R S N P D D N R N P
 M P M R R G M — —

RAGA MARU

G M D N S, N D P, G M M G — — —
S R — — S N S R N S R, G M D N — —
 N, D M M G, G M P D M P — —

- Couplet 1. चकवा रंग की भांति सो बउदू कहत सुजान
 नाव कहयो इहि पारहो ग्रह सूर खाण बखान ॥

RAGA TODI

- Couplet 1. तोडी मीठी रागिणी, मजलस मीठी तांग
 सेजा मीठी कामणी रिण मीठी तलवार ॥

- Couplet 2. लोहा लपटया काठ ज्यूं धूम रचा जल भाय
बड़ा डूबण न देवे, जहारी पकड़ी बाय ॥
- Couplet 3. सीचा था गुण जान के निष्ठे निकलया काठ
देखो प्रीत अजाण री, म्हारे सिर पर बाट ॥
- Couplet 4. अरगण तो मौ सिर बुवौ मोरो लहोपण हियो लगाए

JANGDA

पनि, थारे पिवरो कोणी नाम कांही

लगर तोड़ा रे लाजरा

: आ तो : जाण पठा घर जाए

: रे : बिलाला थारे मन मेरे

रसियो राज कुमार

ए दारुडे रो छकियो रे

रसियो राज कुमार

चौपड़ ढाली चौबटे उलउल नेजा ढाल

क्यो मीना थे लाज मे रे

: आ तो : भुक भुक भोला खाय

: रे : बिलाला थारे मन मे रे

रसियो राज कुमार

र राता को निदाल रे

रसियो राज कुमार ॥

घोड़ा टारा बेचने पास्य जब चिणा

ऊचौ रे घताडू रे मालिया

आयो रहस्या दोग जणा

: रे : बिलाला थारे मन मे रे

रसियो राज कुमार

राता को निदाल रे

रसियो राकुमार

गज गेहनी, हंसा गति, पीडी केत परवाण

बांह चपै केरी डालिया

मुन्दर चतुर मुजान

रे बिलाला थारे मन मे रे

रसियो राज कुमार

दारुडे रो छोकियोरे

रसियो राज कुमार

Mode of Raga Todi:

R P M G S N S R S, G M P D N S

R N D M P — Ś Ṛ Ṇ D P D M P D P

R P M G S N S

RAGA KAFI

- Couplet 1. काफी सदा गांवणा, गिंवर के मुख दंत
सुन्दर आवै मलपति नाक सोने की नाथ ॥
- Couplet 2. काफी प्याला प्रेम का पीवण हार सुजाण
पीवण वाले सिक रहे, मगन भये सुन ज्ञान ॥
- Couplet 3. काट काट काफी करी सब गगन को सीर
भोपाला मन भावणी धनै गाई गुणी गंभीर ॥
- Couplet 4. जग रिप वाहन ता सुगुण ता ऊपर एक भंग
चंद भवंग मृग चीतरे चल्या जात एक संग ।

Jangda — 'Jhalo'

सिरदार भालो म्हानै किण जो कियो
किण जो कियो माई म्हारे रह जादे रे बनै
भालो किण जो कियो ॥

पाल रे माथे बुगलो रे बैठो
म्हां जाणयो हंस आप रे
अवर पखेर रे उड गयो रे
हंस रियो बिलमाय
भालो म्हेने किण जो कियो
किण जो कियो दासी म्हारे अकवरियो रे बनै रे ने
भालो कियो जी कियो ॥

सिरदार भालो म्हेने किण जो कियो
राय चंपली रे बांगां में रे
पवडी पिलंग बिछाय रे
अवर पखेर रे उड गयो रे
हंस रेयो बिलमाय रे
भालो किण जो कियो
किण जो कियो भाई म्हारा
नवलखिये रे बनै रे नेने
भालो कियो जी कियो ॥

सिरदार भालो म्हाने किण जो कियो
प्यारो रे तूही फेर सदे
कली तूटी कुम्लाये रे
मन को रूठयो रे बालमो रे
जानै बटाऊं रे जाय रे
भलौ म्हाने किण जो कियो
किण जो कियो भाई म्हारे
भालो किण जो कियो, सिरदार
म्हाने किण जो कियो ॥

Mode of *Raga Kafi*

S R M P D N D P, S N D; P D
 M P, R M P D N D P, M R P D M R
 S N R — S (Resting note is “*Dhaivat*”)

The seventh Jangda is in *Raga Khamayachi*.

Couplet 1. खमायची रा ठाकरा चढयो मल धो उँ
 नारेला रो बालक रुख ज्यो फूललो ज्यु फलया

Couplet 2. घनौ दियाडो आजरौ, धन मुहरत धन भाग
 दिया उबै बधावणा गाही जै मंगल चारा ॥

चित्रल की गोरियां सोढा भंवर सुजान
 बढ भुकै लंबोतला, आहियो गढ अमराव ॥

जैडो दिन आजरौ जेडों नितोनित होय
 आगण बुडा ज्युं हिवउँ ठंड लाग होय ॥

Mode of *Raga Khamayachi*;

S G — M P D N Ṡ, N N Ṡ
N P M P G M, G M P D N S,
N Ḋ N N P M G M

Dr. Shanno Khurana is a vocalist of repute in Hindustani Music; she has been broadcasting from various stations of A.I.R. since 1945. As a member of Cultural delegations sponsored by Govt. of India, she has visited several countries. Composer of some Indian Operas, she has recently been experimenting successfully in the use of classical as well as folk music in the opera form. The present article was written after an exhaustive study-tour of the region. Dr. Khurana has been awarded the degree of Ph.D. in Music.