

**FOLK MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF INDIA**  
DOCUMENTATION, STUDY, ANALYSIS

SPECIAL PROJECT  
BY  
**SUSHEELKUMAR WANKHEDKAR**  
97613009

GUIDE  
**PROF: M BHANDARI**



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DOCUMENTATION STUDY ANALYSIS

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IS APPRECIATED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR

BY

M.A. DESIGN

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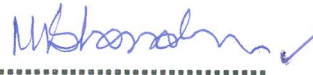
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**APPROVAL SHEET**  
**SPECIAL PROJECT ENTITLED**  
**'FOLK MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF INDIA'**  
**BY SUSHEELKUMAR ANANDA WANKHEDKAR,**  
**IS APPROVED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR**  
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**GUIDE**

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This work done is dedicated to all my Adivasi Bandhu in Maharashtra.

*veena* ( the hand veena ). But as usually understood an instrument is a tool, other than the human body, used to produce music. However, closer thought shows that an instrument-at least in the most musical Instruments of India

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## MUSIC

### Definition and Evolution

"What is a musical instrument ?" While one can attempt -to give an answer, However vague, to the question, the query implies others i "What is music ?" and "What is the origin of music ?" The latter is simpler to answer-at least, it appears so.

The probings are important, because the concepts of musicology and organology are, in their present state, highly sophisticated. For, at the earliest stages of man, music, noise, speech, and dance are all an undivided condition of motor impulse. is, for instance, a screech accompanying primitive or tribal 'dance' music ? Yet it has a 'rhythmic' and 'melodic'-or, more strictly, an affective-spell, different from speech. It, therefore, .seems to me logical to take an undifferentiated sound material us one of the communicative processes-both in humans and nonbumarts-which later, in man, gets bifurcated into speech and music ; the former as a tool of conscious articulation and the latter for nonconscious expression. The division is never complete, for speech always retains a microstructure, particularly at levels "below' intelligibility, and music has its own conscious alphabets such as 'notes', 'chords', 'raga's, and so on.

Starting from the other end. of the spectrum, as it were, Hindu philosophy expresses the whole of the acoustic material, and even the non-acoustic, in terms of the One Sound-the Primordial Vibration-calle& variously as *ivada Brahma*, *Omkara*, and so on ; hence, the metaphysical association of the flute with - Krishna ), the *veena* ( with Sarasvati ), and the *damaru* with Siva ).

The primeval nebulous state of music is reflected in the early instruments which do not produce any definite 'musical' sounds. Of this type are the scrapers and rasps and seed rattles. The sound emitted by scrapers is definitely 'noisy' and the instrument itself is found mostly with the primitive tribes, as, for instance, the antelope horn scraper of the American Indian and the omichicahuaztli of Mexico; in our own country we have *doddurajan* of Savaras and *kokkara* of Kanikars. The earliest instruments, again, are both musical and non musical in function. Musically the association is inseparable from dance and hence also rhythm. Dried fruit-rattles-the *kaniyari dander* of Orasans or, even more primitive, fruit shells tied to the waist-are such musical adjuncts of beginning stages. Later on we have fl. sticks, sticks, slitdrums, plates, bars, drums, *veera-s* and futes. The functions of instruments are also a feature of early society. The *coicli* was not only an announcer of battle and also a container of sacred water for ablution. The *nagcira* and the *dliumia* were also battle drums. Membranophones have been used as tools for signalling the most famous ones bent, from Africa. Riitray, for instance, has shown that "different in pitch between two skin-drums used for transmitting news corresponds to the high-and low pitched vowels of ordinary speech". The Savaras of Orissa have a *lc2-Ind* where in one Kitting 'invents' a drum and a brass gong to announce a funeral or a wedding.

What then is a musical instrument? Most broadly put: it is any material used for producing sound in music-but we have already noted its hazy origins. In this sense the oldest instrument is the human body itself, particularly the voice. Indeed, in our musical texts of yore it has been called *gatra veena* the body veena. Clapping of hands, beating on the things and buttocks, stamping on the ground-all such auditory bodily actions are the first instruments. It is of interest to note that the hand used as a counting adjunct to *vedic* chanting-no sound is produced at all in this process-is called the *hasta*

## **Classification of Instruments**

An instrument that emits sound pleasing to the senses can be designated as musical instrument. It may consist of musical notes with definite or indefinite pitch or may have the pure tone of single frequency or even complex harmonic frequencies or overtones, varying in the relative strength of the instrument-type and intensity of its emission.

Universally the vocal sounds are accepted as part of an integral theory of the origin of music. Instrumental sounds of music among the earliest inhabitants on

Earth is not traced except for the Prehistoric cave paintings illustrating musical how, slit drum, of which the how is significant showing its ritualistic usage, especially depicting sound energy of the how for communicating with the super-natural. The evolution of musical instruments have depended heavily on the

Primitive music and instrumental sounds are now considered as a process of communication mainly for ritualistic purposes and synthesising magical purposes to gain supernatural powers. Perhaps with those pre-musical sounds, the elementary phase of stimulant music initially took the established form of many such sounds producing devices in the tribal areas.

Usually it has been observed that the sound producing devices (instruments) used by the tribals for musical purposes invariably have the effective pure tone of a single frequency. When conjoined together in an orchestra' sounds may have varied in multiplicity according to the relative strength of the instruments used, and thereby intensity of those instruments producing the sound have the harmonic frequencies or overtones of a multiple nature.

The individual tone quality of each instrument is often distinguished by its individual characteristic and relative *forces of pitch*, tone and the overall tonal spectra achieved when struck together or manipulated in unison.

With some musical instruments of the ideophonic, or ideo-percussion category like jingles, bells, thalis or dera etc., the sound producing vibration is comparatively complex than those of the instruments of the chordophonic or the aerophonic category.

Harmonic dissonant constitution, as a result one can achieve only the indefinite pitch simply to mark the intermittent rhythms.

Initially many primitive instruments had mainly magical connotations. Sounds of those instruments were manipulated by hand or breath. In those instruments the manipulator basically emitted various effective sounds to communicate with the spirit-world while performing all sorts of social rites.

Scrappers, bull-roarers, seed-gourd rattles, jingling bells were used to create mystic sounds through corrugated or serrated surfaces or clashes of the instruments. A piece of wood whirled on a cord to spin in a bull roarer used to produce a roaring vibration due to free air. Bhorindo, a willow whistle or pottery flute, a femur bone trumpet of the Lamas may be included in the category. Most of the instruments of primitive origin were simply used as a voice disguisers.

There are a few friction drums on which two to three contrasted pitches may be obtained like the naga log drum or a Reddi's slit drum. A long drum partially hollowed out through a slit incision on a wooden log, transmits sound and when struck, the two edges produce different pitches and especially in a huge naga log drum even code messages are obtained and communicated. Next to this ideophonic percussion series appeared the aerochordophonic musical how, an enlarged version of almost a Jew's harp.

## **Avanaddha Vadya**

### **Percussion Membranophone**

of all instrumental sounds, percussion membranophone occupies a higher position in tribal music and dance.

A category of the musical instruments, on which the main acoustic chain of events could be achieved on a membrane.

Considering membranes as the chief reverberating medium, we find different varieties of drum shapes like a kettle, having iron resonating chamber covered with a strong hide.

In common we come across barrel-shaped hollow resonating chambers, and double opening sides of these drums are covered with goat or sheep skin. Invariably these barrel-shaped drums are laced with

rope or leather straps or laced with leather toughs. In fact, the vocal sound accompanies the instrumental sound that can be termed as the chorale prelude or basically just the interwoven melody segment that assists partially an instrumental composition to the tribal orchestra.

In the world of tribal music, primarily the drummers' capabilities surpass the aurally generated emotions. A tribal drummer confines himself to rhythmising various time-beats that ensemble a wide range of human feelings. Even, perhaps many other subordinate instruments may not tend to offer glittering as beacons to enormously rich patterns in tribal membranophonic musicality.

It is hoped that this section **reflects** a new approach towards exploring rhythm- forms and sound variations on a chosen few varieties of tribal Indian drums, and percussion.

Instruments of percussion are used to keep time cycle in dances and songs, and thus .thought to be the first in order of succession, the. rhythmical effects in music strongly appeal to the mind of those Vanaputras.

With the drums played in groups, in pairs and solo no other instrument has so much appreciation, convention, and usage. The rhythms are comparatively simple and the technique of playing is not at all complicated. Such simplicity in manipulation has distinctly a primitive flavour yet does not sound **less** aesthetical.

Formation of a drum is a frame of earth, wood or metal, with a piece of membrane stretched over either on one or mostly on both the sides. The normal shape of it is hemispherical, centrally constricted-shaped in an hour glass, cylindrical or a circular one. Broadly the instruments classified are included here in sequence of a periodic set of intermittent beat values to complete a cycle.

Often the subjective quality of their membraned sound determines loudness. Resonating magnitude of auditory sensation produced by recurrent percussion sound from these instruments sets an unit in vibration by striking or with combination of strokes and friction.

Variation **in** instrumental shapes along with classified category of different sizes of the drums have sequential orders to cope with their numerous strokes and ornamental beat patterns. Broadly @he drums manipulated with strokes have been sub- divided here in the following categories :

Dhol-shaped (Oindrical type)

Nagara-shaped (bowl type)

Damaru-shaped (hour-glass type)

Khanjari-shaped (rim-type)

Ghat-shaped (pitcher-type)

Laced with leather or rope or leather toughs, manipulatory chain of events in those single or both covered ends are with combination of fingers with intermittent strokes and rubs on the membrane surface.

## **Dhol shaped cylindrical type**

In this category the resonating chamber of the drums covered, have hollowed cylinder made of clay, wood or metal with variations in the shape. Both the opening ends are mounted with hides, stretched by tightening cords or braces through leather hoops.

## **Nagara shaped bowl type**

Resonating chamber of the drum comprises here in shape of a hemispherical bowl and single opening is covered by stretching membrane laced to the body with hoop. This is very popular and inevitable membranophonic instrument aptly manipulated by Koknas, Warlis and Dangis of Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Maharashtra and South Gujarat respectively. Warli Sangad from Maharashtra is similar type with an addition of one more drum to enhance the auditory volume.

This batter-headed kettle drum pair is mounted with goat, cow or an ox's skin. The drum pair rests on ring-shaped iron pedestal with small wooden blocks. The drum head membrane is stitched around another iron ring little bigger in size than that of the actual drum head.

## **Damaru shaped hour-glass type**

Characteristic features of the instruments belonging to this family lie in their centrally constricted wooden sounding chamber.. Both sides of the drum heads are mounted with vellum often integrated on tension rims, braced and tightened with ropes in crisscross manner to cup around the drum head properly.

## **Tat vadya chordophone**

characteristic features of a chordophonic instrument commonly have a scooped out. cup-shaped resonator, covered with a solid sound board (rubic) Or a stretched membrane. Convex resonating body may be gradually narrowed towards the neck and continued into a straight arm pegdisr-, scroll-head peg box or bent-back peg box. String may be one above the other stretched in his\_arm to the belly forming at to the crescent of the whole frame, passed through holes in the flat surface (wooden Or parchment, sounding board or resonator) Of the belly and pass through and fastened to the rounded underside.

## **Sushir Vadya Aerophone**

**Lip voiced Trumpets**

**Sub-division-I**

- (a) Singha type having horn shaped tube, looks like an animal's face.
- (b) Turhi "having a straight tube

**Division - II**

**Flue voiced Sub-division**

- (a) End bloym
- (b) Vertical
- (c) Transverse Reed voiced

**Division -III**

**Sub-division**

- (a) Free reed
- (b)Single beating reed
- (C) Double beating reed

## Tadpu

(Side blown cone-flute)

Tribes: Bhil, Chodhri and Kokna Area : South Gujarat,

Dadra & Nagar Haveli Diwali and Holi are the prime

occasions when -Tadpu adds to their orchestral brilliance. From a distance it sounds like a snake charmer's Mutli or Mahuwar. This particular Bin type of instrument is prepared by the instrumentalist himself.

Dangis play this unique acrophonic oboe comprising three sections with • LOW length of 132 cm. Top of it is dry-hollowed gourd(tumbadi), to which socket-like small mer;,1 mouthpiece is fixed. Two bamboo pipes of approximately 2.5 cm. diameter and 33 cm. long each pipe is affixed to the broad bottom end of Tumbadi and other opening ends of these pipes are further attached with both sides open horn. Both bamboo pipes have stop holes to manipulate. All the attachments are closed with wax to achieve a compact chambered acrophonic sound. In different dance sequences Tadpawala (manipulator of a tadp,) is the central figure to conduct sequences of the dance formations. Invariably encircled by men and are coiled putting arms on each other's waist to look into a big chained line and then circled to go round clock-wise and returning back in anti-clockwise direction; 2dv2nce.towards a central point where the Tadp2wala leads the dancers forward and recede back to form into a blossomed flower. Tarpo

(End bioan obo,)

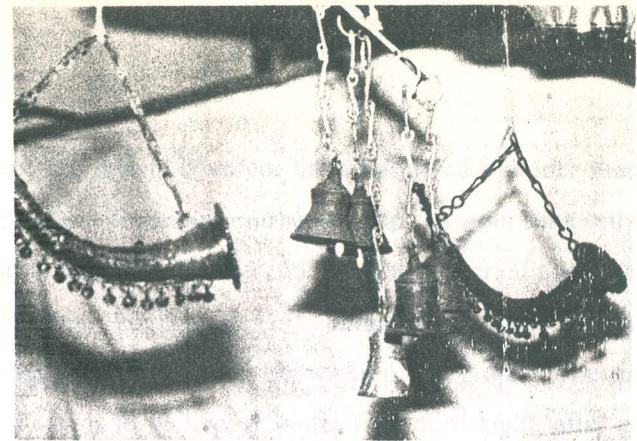
Tribes Kokn2 and Warli

Arta 1)adra & Nagar Haveli and Mah2rashtra.

This is a cone-flute with seven holes. Lower six holes are called chadi and the upper one bumbalio. It can be divided into three parts.

(a) Doudhi (b) bamboo pipes containing holes and (c) Konk, part of the instrument made of toddy leaves with almost an oval bell opening of circular diameter. of this opening is about 9 cm and the total length of the instrument is 45.5 cm. to 61 cm. approximately.





## Turi

Side-blown bugle

Tribes Maria, Muria

Area Butar, Madhya Pradesh.

An acrophonic musical instrument having the vibrating lips, coupled to air column. It is made in a casting process, most similar to a trumpet, but having the bell less expanded and the tube curved more in a conical shape. The clamps are suspended from the exterior surface (outward-turned orifice of the trumpet) of the side-blown curved bugle. The bugle, clamps strike against each other due to frequent movement. Rhombus-shaped clamps are reminiscent of primitive type bracelets, used as a body ornament. It is blown during festive occasions.



## **Dholu**

In this instrument the resonating chamber of the drums covered, have hollowed cylinder made of biggest possible wooden log. Which is to be cut out from tree on the occasion of pournima only and before cutting the tree the wood cutter performs traditional pooja and sacrifices a sacrificed cock and the owner (instrumentalist) has to do fast on that day. Both the opening ends are mounted with hides, stretched by tightening cords or braces through leather hoops as shown in photographs. The rope is made of dry plants of turi. The dry stems of turi is to be kept in water for a fortnight, after getting the plant fibres the rope to be made as shown in photograph.

It is said that the annoyance of the water maiden due to her defilement in contact with leather caused a drum membrane torn untimely into pieces and since then it is customary. It is an old Muria saying that the water is defiled by contact with a cow hide.

As a raw material, the Murias choose a cow-hide comparatively better than that of a bullock for preparing the membrane of a drum. They give preference to a skin of a

The tribes also undertake a careful ritualistic tanning process of the drum membrane. They take the raw hide to a river or a pond and soak it in water for

quite some time till the hair get detached easily,

While cleaning the surface, they offer some coloured powders, a fowl, some shells and liquor in the name of the respective god; while propitiating they request the water maiden to pardon them for defiling her water for such a long period and bless them with a very strong unbreakable skin for the instrument that sounds well.

Finally on completion of this entire tanning process, a Chelik offers the drum with some Mahua flowers, soaked into water along with pulse, little rice, turmeric,

an egg and a fowl. They put some paste of oil and flour on both ends of the drums, and chant the mantras for their great Mandri teacher Bhimul in order to obtain his blessings and favour. To perform the concluding ritual he invites all other

Cheliks along with Motiaris to assemble, and dance to the beating rhythm of his newly built drum till dawn.

Usually the drums are suspended from the ceiling of a verandah, a front room of a tribal hut, a Ghotul. Some of the roof tops of their bachelor's dormitory are entirely covered with series of their percussion musical instruments.

As objects of great honour the tribals treat their musical instruments with an awe-inspiring reverence, especially on special occasions like marriages and other ceremonies. An excellent example may be set of an occasion when a Muria young man goes for his marriage. It is again their musical percussion, Mandri playing a very important role. In a marriage procession when the boys enter the bride's village, they shout to dispel any hostile or evil power to touch them.

Murias consider the particular hide as the best skin to produce the roaring sound of a tiger.