

CHAPTER : 10

MUSIC AND DANCE

The aboriginals derive this inspiration on many things from the natural environment. The art of dance and music they have developed has shaped out of the chirping of the birds, the rustling sounds made by the leaves, water flowing, the gush of animal sound etc. The dance of the peacock they observed might have given them the idea of dance. The tribes of Saputara (Dangs district), who see a good number of snakes daily in areas inhabit might have led them to imitate the manner in which the snakes move. The tribal dance of this region based on the dance of the serpents is well-known

It is said that once someone passing through a thick forest, had heard a tremendous noise. His inquisitiveness made him approach the spot stealthily. There he saw a big assembly of monkeys performing a dance in an open space. He liked the dance and made a mental note of all its details. On returning to his village, he narrated to the villagers what he had seen in the jungle. The villagers organized a dance party and performed the dance imitating the movement of the monkeys and that was how they learnt dancing. (Photo) For instance, the south-eastern Indian tribes like the Tangsas and the Singphos learnt how to dance from the monkeys

The sound created by the clapping of hands, the stamping of feet, the cleaning of stones or metals etc. has for long been considered to be a part of music by human

beings. One does not know how old this art is. It is said that it is as old as the human race. The Indus Valley civilization is approximately dated about 2000 BC or even 3000 BC¹. A seal from Mohanjodara represents a young aboriginal nautch girl, her hands on the hip in a partially impudent posture with the leg placed slightly forward as she beats her feet in time to the music. The expression on her face looks real. It represents some kind of music and dance cultivated by the people of Mohenjodaro.² This art seems to have been handed down from generation to generation. As man shifted from his original environment, he might have found something to replace one thing or to omit another.

During the pre-historic period, man had to struggle against natural calamities. Sometimes, he was very scared and frightened of natural phenomena like light, darkness, seasonal changes, heavy rains, floods, etc. These naturally changing phenomena might have made them superstitious and made them think of these phenomena as good and bad. The ones who are considered responsible for doing good are treated as good gods and those thought responsible for ills are considered as bad gods. To please gods, prayers, are performed. This has given birth to the worship of natural aspects. They dance and sing songs to please the gods. The dance and music have continued to be used as prayers in the form of religious rites

1. V Premlatha, Music Through Ages, Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi, 1985.
2. Rao. Bahadur. Dikshit., Lecture on the Pre-historic Civilization of the Indus Vally, p. 30.

and festivals. These were adapted from generation to generation as the media through which the aboriginals worshipped their gods. They express sorrow, fear, pain, joy etc. in the form of music. The entire story of music and dance from the pre-historic times to the present day is but a record of human feelings in such a form.

The earliest folk-tales, folk-songs and ballads are found in the Vedic literature of India. The word 'folklore' was coined by W.J. Thomas in 1846 who thought of it as 'popular antiquities'. Derived from the German word 'volk lehre', it means "people's customs". In the anthropological usage, the term folklore has come to mean myths, legends, folk-tales, folk-songs, proverbs, riddles and a variety of forms of artistic expression whose medium is the spoken word. ³

According to the aboriginals' custom, the folk fare is a source of rejuvenation through songs, through meeting with the relatives and friends once in a while, and through dancing and generally making merry, by means of which the society gets a lease of life. The fairs held periodically are the mirror of folk culture. The tribals acquaint themselves with the dances of various tribes, their dresses, songs and their nature through such fairs. (Photo)

3. Vidyaarthi L P., and Rai B.K., The Tribal Culture of India, Concept Publishing Company, Delhi, p. 313.

- - - - Rise of Anthropology in India, Social Science Orientation, Vol. I, Delhi, concept publishing co. (Chapter IV, Tribal Ethnography in Western India)

The tribals of Gujarat think of the fairs, as a means of meeting lots of people in celebrations or pilgrimage. They call it 'Melo' or 'Bamblo'. The fair have been occasions for trading in ancient days among the Aryans and non-Aryans. It used to be a customary practice to hold a fair on every full-moon day, in order to enable the people to get a change from their daily work-a-day routine lives. It was a meeting place for friends and relatives. (Photo) People could sell goods and buy their requirements. Such fairs have ceased in the non-tribal areas still continued in the tribal belts. One of the tribal fairs is known as Bhathiji Maharaj's fair, which is held in Jetpur and Chhotaudepur on the first day of the month of Kartik, which is a New Year day as per Vikram-Era. People come from different villages carrying grains and singing songs to attend the fair. The witch-doctors chant mantras, and pray to Bhathiji Maharaj to save the tribal folk from snake bites.

The tribal folklore mirrors the tribal culture. Living in the lap of another nature, they express in the form of songs whatever they have seen and observed about came to him. It is not clear how they came to think about forests, trees, animals and the opposite sex. The folk songs of the tribals narrate their feelings of enjoyment of existence and of domestic events of people. The songs sung by the peasants on the fields, the seasonal songs sung by the children, the mystic songs sung by elders, the songs sung by boatmen on the rivers, and the magic chants of the snake charmers are instances of such celebrations. The marriage and hooting songs of the Rathwas are the realistic expressions of their lives.

Various tribes have developed special folk dances in their own individual manner in different regions. All tribal dances are expressions of the feelings, emotions, and represent the depiction and expression of such feelings and emotions. The pleasure of dance helps remove the weariness born out the work. (Photo)

Every ethnic group attaches a lot of importance to its festivals. Some of the festivals are for particular occasions while some others are spread over various seasons. The tribals are people are in love with their festivals. If there were a marriage in one house, in the village the entire village gets the invitation for music and dance at night at least one full month before the event.

The aboriginals strongly believe in their ancestors. They think that their ancestors enjoy both good and bad powers over their lives. The souls of the ancestors help them in the time of great stress and strains. Folk songs are sung on religious and social occasions. These are not sophisticated but verse and music combine in the folk songs to create a special atmosphere. The musical aspect is reflected more in practice. A small poem is sung and very often rendered in a lyrical mode to the accompaniment of music on the musical instruments.

The tribal songs of the Rathwas and the other tribals of Gujarat are of several types celebrating as they do such events as life cycle, songs and are sung on different occasions like birth, marriage, death, festivals, religious, historical etc. Religious songs are sung at the time of making suppliant to the deities. Some are sung at work,

for example at the time of ploughing, harvesting, catching fish, etc. The Kakanas, of southern Gujarat sing songs while weaving baskets. Such songs are of great value of imbibing in the young generation the ethos of the tribal culture.

The folklore of the Rathwas are the representation of the culture of the community as a whole. It reflects not only their culture but also ensures solidarity, continuity and consistency in them as a culture group. The tradition of folk art is strong among the Rathwas. They treat songs and dance as but a routine of life not as art. Music and dance may be of religious and social content or related to wars and hunting for the Rathwas. 'Nach' means a dance in the language of the Rathwas and other tribes. The dancer constantly walks in the dance. Their folk dance is known as 'Chalo' or 'Kudwa' (that is jump or dance). (Photo) The Rathwas are very fond of festivals including religious festivals. They dance at night to cast their weariness after a hard day's work and in the morning on their way to work. A drummer is summoned on the death of a person. He beats the drum and sings death songs. The deceased may be rich or poor, but a drummer and a Pisvo (Country Shenai) player are called invariably. A drummer beats on the drum walking ahead of the pyre right up to the cremation ground. The drummer beats the drum very loudly, when the bier is being lit.

At the time of Pithoro ceremony, the drum is played in the lobby the whole night to invite spirits. Once the Pithoro painting is completed, the offering is over, the Priest starts dancing first and then the Rathwa men and women join in. The dance

goes on the whole night to the accompaniment of. There is a religious ceremony known as 'Melo-Ramadevo'. The Rathwas gather near 'Malun' (God's place). The devotees visit each of the gods; sing songs of praise, with the drum and the other musical instruments playing in front of gods⁴.

During the occasion of Indra bawo (God) worship, all villagers get together and dance to the beats of the drum. (Photo) Along with the drum, the Rathwas of Paal play on the 'Pisvo' (Country flute) and Kartal. (Photo) Sometimes, they do not sing, but while some only perform a dance, others only beat the drum. This dance, known as 'Kunwariyo' is meant for Lord Indra, the deity⁵.

In Naswadi taluka, only men folk dance and play drum during Shivratri fair. However, among the Rathwas of Paal, men, women and children dance freely without hesitation. The dance is performed in a circle. Some men play 'Pisvo'. (Photo) The Rathwas of Chhota Udepur also play this instrument and dance the same manner. Pisvo and Kartal are played during the festival of Dashera⁶.

Holi is the one of the important festivals of the Rathwas, celebrated on the outskirts of the village. There is a belief that diseases are cured by the heat of the fire

4. Tadv. Shankar. S., Palna Rathwa, 1977, Laxmi pustak Bhandar – Ahmedbad.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

of the Holi pyre. People take a vow of fasting, offer coconuts and walk round the blazing Holi pyre. (Photo) Once the worship of Holika is over, the villagers congregate at the site Holi where the dinner has been lit, and served to all. It is a dance festival, which continues for five days. The Rathwas' revelers especially the male ones, smear ash taken from the Holi pyre on their body and become Holi revellers or 'Gheraiya' (Photo). Once a person becomes a 'Gharaiya', he has to continue doing it for five years. The groups of Gheraiyas go to dance in village after village. This group is known as 'Ghers'. They dance to the accompaniment of musical instruments like a big drum (Ram Dhol), Pivo (Country flute) and Cymbals. (Photo)

Gheraiyas wear lion cloth or short dhoti (lower garment) and tie jingle bells to their waist and perform the dance in circle. The dancers move their waist in such a way that the jingle bells shake making jingling sounds (Photo). Some Rathwa men wear female attire for dance. They are known as 'Gherani'. (Photo) The Ghers wear all kinds of attires and funny cloths, and tie peacock feathers on their heads for the dance.

Another Holi dance is the 'Mandva' dance or Pyramid dance. (Photo) On the fifth day of the Holi, the Ghers from different villages congregate in Kwant village of Chhotaudepur to take part in the dance fair held there. This group of Ghers is known as 'Moti Gher'. In the Mandva dance, some Gheraiyas, sit in a circle, some others step and stand on their shoulders hands locked in chain to create another circle

to support another group of Gheraiyas climbing on to the shoulders of the second rung and so on. The sitting Gheraiyas sit still while the others stand on their shoulders. The upper stratum of Gheraiyas brandish a handkerchief or an open umbrella, and then all of them dance in a circle. It appears as if a whole shamiana (Mandvo) is dancing. The mandvo dance is performed at the house of village headman or the richest person of the village. They collect Rupees 5 or 10. They also collect money from houses for food, liquor etc. (Photo) The food is then cooked and eaten. The topless body is covered with bamboo strips and the whole body is decorated all over making round sings with ash. The Gheras return to their respective villages after fifth day, take bath in the river or well and only then go back to their respective houses⁷. (Photo)

Yet another group of Gheraiya dancers play on the Bheri an instrument made from ground. The dancers tie ankle belts and sing playing on the 'Bheri' for accompaniment. A Gheraiya dancer dances like a peacock with the features kept vertically.

Prior to the marriage, the representatives of the proposed bride and groom meet to decide on mutual give and take on either side. This ceremony is known as 'Danpa'. Hooting songs are sung by folks of the Rathwas bride. The sing, dance and enjoy on each and every ceremony. Music and dance programme begins two months

7. Ibid.

before any wedding. The Rathwas of Sankheda and Naswadi talukas perform a dance to the beats of a drum known as 'Dhol Nutrya'. At the time of the 'Grahshanti' ceremony, men and women perform Timli, Kundiya, Ambaligoelho etc. dances at night. Women dance with a Matlis (pitchers) on their heads and men with Dandiyas (sticks). The Rathwa marriage celebrations is like a dance fair with a variety of a dances performed during the period⁸

The groom and the bride both are seated on the shoulders and dance is performed among the Rathwas and the Bhils at the time of bidding farewell to the bride.

One of the marriage dances is called 'Timly'. It is performed when the bridegroom's party is proceeding for the wedding. It is commonly played in Jetpur-Pavi area of Chhotaudepur. The dancers form a row and dance. The whole row walks on in a dancing gait⁹.

'Ghammarji' is a marriage dance performed by both men and women at night. An earthern pot called 'Lota' is placed on the heads of the women in an up side down position and the dancers move in a circle, flexing their hands from the elbows. This kind of turning on their own axis, is called a 'Ghumri'¹⁰.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

In spring season and also on occasions of marriage, men use simple and women coloured, wooden sticks (Dandiya) to dance what is called a 'Dandiya' dance. Songs are sung. A long drum is played while the singing is on. It is called 'Sakhiyo'. The Dandiya dance is common among the Rathwas and the Bhils. The sticks called dandiya are made from abuni-wood¹¹.

In some places in Jetpur-Pavri taluka, the Dandiya dance is performed on the occasion of marriage. Men perform the Dandiya dance at night after the 'Grahshanti' or during the day in 'Mandva' ceremony. The songs sung on such occasion are called 'Dandiya' songs. This dance is not enjoyable without cymbals used for musical accompaniment. The Rathwas of Paal also perform a similar dance¹².

Another marriage dance is 'Rola'. It is common among the Rathwas of Jetpur-Pavri and Paal of Chhotaudepur. In the Rola dance, men and women form a chain by joining their hands behind each other's waists to dance in a circular fashion. About eight or nine men and women perform this dance. The songs consist of their youth, single, married, social life etc. These songs are known as 'Rola' ¹³.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

The 'Haleni' dance is generally performed by the Rathwas of Paal. Men and women make separate circles. The dancers tie jingle bells on their waists. The dancers move in an irregular manner. Some dancers have Kartal in their hands¹⁴.

The 'Fuleka' or 'Ghodilo-Nritya' of Naswadi taluka is also performed during marriage. The bride or groom is taken out in a procession. The bride and groom seated on the shoulders of their relatives and are taken from house to house in the village and then for a dance at night. The man of the house, to whom the bride or groom is taken, gives money to the drummer to pay for the dance performance. The procession moves round the village singing and dancing and returns home at dawn. This dance is also performed when bride is given a farewell. Among the Bhils and the Rathwas, the bride and the groom again sit on their dancing relatives' shoulders, and money is paid by both the parties¹⁵.

The 'Simbhodhi' dance is also a marriage dance performed at a time when the bride or groom proceeds to worship gods on the outskirts of their village, a day before the wedding. This ceremony is prevalent among the Tadvis of Sankheda taluka, living on the banks of the River Orsan. It is commonly performed by the Rathwas of Jetpur (Chhotaudepur), Halol and Jumbu-Ghoda.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

After performing the Puja (worship), the bride or groom is seated on the shoulder of any of their relatives for the performance of a dance which is called 'Gholido-Simbhodi'. Women also sing songs in accompaniment.

Gor-Mati-Chori Nritya is performed among the Rathwas of Naswadi taluka. During the marriage celebration, a person using yellow clay prepares a square block known as 'Chori' in the middle of the marriage Shamiyana where the marriage is being solemnized. Women dance around 'Chori' holding each other's shoulders and singing. The yellow clay is known as 'Gormati'. It is brought while the dance is on. In the region where rice is grown, the 'Chori' is done using rice flour. The floor of the 'Chori' is decorated in a flowery pattern with the rice flour and is called Rangoli. In the Paal region, the bridegroom's party approaches the bride's abode in the manner of a group going to raid the place. They do this, as they go dancing to the loud beats of the drum ¹⁶.

Young girls Rathwas belonging to the tribe in Naswadi taluka celebrate 'Gauri Vrat' to appear the gods to give them good husbands. However, the boys do not fast likewise to get a good wife whereas the girls perform this fast in a ceremony where they plant the paddy seeds, during one year, they collect and bring paddy saplings from the field and plant them singing and dancing during the process the following year.

16. Ibid

The Khala Nritya is a seasonal dance. A big fair is held in Bhadarwa of 'Tilakwada' taluka on the day of Kartik-purnima. Tribes like the Tadvi, the Bhils, the Rathwas, the Bariyas, etc. take part in this fair. People carry grey sapling in a basket on their heads. They play the Shehnai to the accompaniment of swinging by the women folk. Young men sing and dance. The Rathwas enjoy the spring festival known as a Rang Panchmi, singing and dancing late into the night. Men folk dance too. The drummer beats on the important drum of the Rathwa, known as Ram Dhol. The drummer holds a stick in the right hand and plays on a drum hanging from the left shoulder, beating it with the left palm. One player plays on the cymbals ¹⁷.

During the spring season, young tribal girls including those from the Rathwas, gather during the night for dance. They narrate whatever they might have experienced in the form of songs. It may be happiness, sorrow, anger, love etc. They narrate satirically all this to their relatives like mothers and sisters-in-law etc. Somebody in love tells it all in the songs, and so do they express whatever good or bad incidents they have had in the form of songs ¹⁸.

In the month of Mahafagan, youngsters, select their match. During the fair on Maha Shivratri, youngsters get into a romantic mood, and sing romantic songs. Girls

17. Tadvi. Ravaben S.

18. Ibid.

sing hooting songs and tease the boys, like for instance, how their shoes are shining too much, how he is wearing a waist band, a point of earnings, etc.

Two fairs held in the Paal region: One is the Telavmata fair near Bharawad and the second the Pancham Melo at Jetpur. Devotees from Chhotaudepur, Jetpur-Pavi, Jambughoda and Sankheda talukas participate in the fair. Different tribals participating in them take part in the dance. They are fully engrossed while dancing as they go on making circles. Both men and women participate in the dance. Some hold cymbas (Kartal), some of the male dancers play on the flute (Pisvo), while play yet other Ghanjharī and dance gay abandon, losing all sense of time.

The month of Chaitra is known as 'Dal-Valiya'. This is the month when new shoots grow on trees such as Neem, Levri, Sadad (Arjun Vriksh) etc. which get weighed down by a full bloom. Chaitra is considered to be a month for obtaining boons and giving alms. Bathing at pilgrimage spots during this month is believed to earn them boons. Fairs are held on Chaitra Purnima in Pancheshwar of Sankheda taluka of Vadodara. The biggest Chaitri-Purnima fair is held at the junction of the rivers Orsang and Narmada in Chanded-Karnali. There is no dance performed in this fair.

The Bhils, the Rathwas and other tribes from khandesh (Maharashtra) congregate in large numbers to attend the Shul-Paneshwar fair. Some of them walk

long distance to reach the site of the fair, with young men and women, preferring to walk in groups at night. They sing the whole night as they walk.

The Rathwas and the other tribes believe in a Goddess Bagheshwari, who is thought to protect them from tigers. Almost every village has a small temple dedicated to this goddess. People come dancing, singing and playing PIsvo to attend the fair. Devotees come from long distances in large numbers.

During the time of the Gaikawad regime in Chhotaudepur, there were competitions in archery held. The Rathwas and the other tribals dance in a circular manner in this fair. Incidents of a murder or two, or the settling of scores for internal rivalry and bad blood take place during this time in spite of tight security arrangements.

Musical Instruments:

Man perhaps found the earliest instrument from his own body that is the beat of his heart and pulse. This had probably invested in his the sense of rhythmic consciousness. Man seems to have also learnt the musical sounds evident in clapping with both hands and stamping with feet. The earliest man living in jungles, might have felt inspired through natural sounds, experienced by rubbing stones or such other materials that produce sound. He might have also felt inspired by the running of water, by the rustling of leaves, the movement of animals, the tweeting of birds and so on.

It is said that the earliest sculptural evidence of using sticks in dance and music comes from the painting of Bagh caves, wherein in each of the two groups of dancers and musicians, three women are shown holding a pair of sticks each ¹⁹.

The Kartala or the clapper, an instrument involving two wooden planks or sticks is an extension going outward from the hands. This instrument is as old as the Indus valley civilization, surviving through the times to the present as is evident from its use by wandering mendicants and beggars in whose hands one finds it even today²⁰.

It is said that the whistles were used at Mohen-jo-daro. This must have been used by the officials of the palace to summon people or to announce the time of the day. There is another musical instrument from Mohen-jo-daro, which is apparently a miniature jar. Its rim had been rubbed down to enlarge the hole slightly. The second hole is pierced near the mouth of the jar. The instrument bulges at the centre like a pot and has a narrow bottom. The instrument is so shaped that it appears to be prototype of Magudi. It is commonly seen in the hands of snake charmers in recent times ²¹.

19. V. Premlatha, Music through the Ages, Sundeep Prakashan, 1985, p. 238.

20. Ibid; p 239

21. Ibid; p. 239

Indians had the knowledge of musical instruments acquired from the times of Indus valley and Harrapan civilizations. The musical instruments of the tribal folk are of very ancient origin too. Some of them even made newer instruments. Before launching into the making any instrument, the tribals seek to find most auspicious moment to set the process in motion. The person who makes it has to observe celibacy, make offerings to god and then start using it. An impious person and a woman in menstruation cannot do so.

The main musical instrument of the tribals of Gujarat are drums, tambourines (Tabla), Pipudi (hautboy), Flute (Pavo), sambals etc. One of the raw materials used for making musical instruments is animal skin which has little sound quality. The skin must be stretched and tightened over a frame to produce a sound of considerable volume. The Indus Valley people obviously had the knowledge of how to use the skin and evolved a type of drum like the tambourine. Specimen of this variety is seen in the hands of two male baked clay figurines. The instrument which is circular in shape is held against the performer's chest by a sling round his neck. It is played with both hands. One of the terra cotta tables from the Indus Valley civilization represents a kind of drum seen hanging from the neck of a man. There is also an interesting figure of a woman holding a drum under her left arm. An amulet from the Harrapan period shows man playing drum with a tiger in front of him

Evidence of the use the tabor or Dholki is found in the form of clay tablets from the Indus Valley site. The terracotta figure of a woman with a drum held under

her left arm and the right side of the face showing as she plays on it is also to be seen. The earliest barrel-shaped drum is seen in the sculpture at Bharut belonging to the early first century BC ²².

Drum:

The drum, music and dance form an integral part of the tribal life. The drum is made from the trunk of the Neem, mango, Twan or Biya trees. It is made hollow. Both of its ends are covered by goat skin. Monkey skin is also used sometimes. Both the ends are tightened and stretched by strong ropes through small brass rings. The drum is played by two hands by beating on the sides of it. The length of the biggest drum is 60 centimeters and it is known as 'Ram Dhol'. It is very commonly used by the Rathwas and the other tribes. While it varies between 52 and 60 centimeters in length, its breadth varies from 25 to 28 centimeters. The inner part of the drum is rubbed on the right side by soot which is obtained from the central part of the wheels of bullock cart. The drum sticks are made from the wood of Saag, mango trees and twigs of Mehndhi. The bigger drum is used during the spring. The smaller drum, known as Dholki, is played in the same manner like the big drum though. Another type of drum is covered with goat skin only at the top and it is made round in shape at the bottom. The skin part is beaten with small sticks to make the sounds needed.

22. Ibid; p. 243

One of the drums, known as Madad is slightly broad and bulging from the centre and bit tapered from both ends. The ends on either side are covered with skin to make it ready for playing on it. This is very popular among the Adivasis. They play on it during marriages. The Rathwas of Paal and other tribals of this region play this drum as a herald to summon or gather the community from remote hilly areas at an appointed place.

Madad is generally played by the Kotwalya tribe in Chhoa Udepur. Another drum, which is used at the time of death and on the twelfth night after the death of a person, comes in handing when devotional songs are sung and prayers recited, is the Mugdan or Pakhavaj.

The double-headed drum and the cymbals have been the traditional musical instrument of the Dhodias. These types of drums are widely used by the Bhils, the Dublas, the Naikas and various other tribes of Gujarat.

Nagaru is also a kind of drum. These come in various sizes. These are generally found in the temples. When a person suffers a snake-bite, someone usually goes to the temple and plays nagaru to call the Bhuwa or the Priest to cure. Now a days people go to Bhuwa place.

Dandudi is another type of drum. It is made up of an earthen bowl and its top covered with goat skin. It is used to provide rhythm to the accompaniment of other instruments.

Dhak or Dhakli is also a kind of drum which is 30 centimeters in length and 15 centimeters in circumference. Made from Saag wood, it is slightly thin from centre and coated with goat skin. The Adivasis tighten the skin on it with jute thread. The centre part of the Dhak has 9 bells ordinarily found tied round the bull's neck, tied to it in case the bells are bigger, then only three bells are used for the purpose. The person playing the drum holds it with the left knee. Sometimes, he tightens the rope of the Dhak and beats the drum propping it on the left knee. The drummer moves his knee slowly so that the ginging of bells is heard distinctly. He beats the drum with a stick in the right hand to give rhythm. One side of stick is attached to the string with bells. The Dhak is generally played when the Priest summons the spirits into his body, especially at the time Indradev and Pithoro are worshipped. It is played by two persons. The Dhak player is known as Dhaki. A drum smaller than Dhak, is called Dhalu or Dhakli, which is played to invoke and summon spirits. It is played while narrating stories 18 cms long and 13 centimeters in circumference as it is generally, this drum is thin at the centre. Thin goat or rabbit skin is used to cover it, and the skin is then tightened using a thin string. It is done by Dabghar, a person professionally known so because he is the one who covers the drum with the skin of a goat or a rabbit.

The drum is played on all auspicious occasions. It provides rhythm in the dance festival. A big drum and Thal are played during fairs and also at other good occasion. The drummer plays the drum and the flute. A drummer is must for the Rathwas and the other aboriginals irrespective of whether it is a marriage being celebrated or death being mourned.

The drummer is an important member of the dancing party. He is also the most respectable person, enjoying as he does, good socio-religious position on a hereditary basis. He is invited at the time of marriage and on other festivals like Holi. The drummer gets Rupees 10 to 12 for his service which renders for 3-4 days on occasions like marriage. The drum is generally played in front of the houses of both the grooms and the brides.

Flute:

The Rathwas are very fond of the flute. Known as Pisvo, it varies in length and thickness, and is generally in the range of 25 to 50 centimeters in length. The Pisvo of Paal region is 35 cms in length and 2.5 centimeters in circumference. The flute of Sankheda and Mewas is smaller. It is used both in pairs and in singles. It is made of a hollow bamboo open at the bottom and with slanted mouthpiece cut on one end. There are five to seven holes on the side each at a distance of 2.5 or 5 centimeters. Many boys play on it while grazing their cattle in the forest. They also use it to attract girls and other boys to the grazing grounds. Some play it early in the morning and some midnight. The flute is also played at the time of Pithoro worship.

The sound of the flute is heard continuously during the rainy season in the tribal villages.

Pihvi is smaller than Pisvo. It is made from thin ordinary bamboo. 25 cms long and 2 centimeters in circumference, it is played by farmers and cowherds.

Another type of flute is known as Vahadi. It is prepared from a medium size piece of bamboo varying between 45 to 60 centimeters in length and it from 1.5 to 2 centimeters in circumference. Vahadi is decorated with brass wire. It is played to the accompaniment of drum and cymbals. Vahadi is played during ceremonies meant for Lord Indra, Pithoro worship, fairs, etc. The flute is not only an important musical instrument of the Rathwas but also of other tribes of Gujarat.

Shehnai or Sharnai is a drummer instrument and the drummer plays it. It is made from Teak or Shishum wood. While a big shehnai is 38 centimeters in length, a small one is 30 centimeters long. On its backside, it has a 7 centimeters long brass pipe attached to it. Palm leaf is placed and in the portion with a narrow end the player blows it from his side to create excellent tunes.

Thali:

Thali is an important musical instrument of the Rathwas and the other Adivasis too. It is made of brass, bronze, or copper plates. Its beat is quite important in the overall music of the tribals. The beats of the Thali are heard even at distances farther

away from where it is being played. It is played during marriages, seasonal festivities and even religious dances.

The combination of Thali and drum is known as Tur. It is greater in demand at the time of wedding, festivals and such other occasions. The method of playing this combination is that the drummer suspends the drum from his neck. A cloth band attached to the drum passes under one of his arms. The drummer is the chief musician, who sets the pace and selects the tune. The man who plays the plate with a short stick is always secondary in importance. The plate player has to follow the drummer with the sharp clanging of the plate to provide the rhythm adapted to the main tune being played by the drummer. The plate is balanced by its edges on the thumb of the player, who keeps other fingers on his left hand pressed to the plate lightly or with force as required for the different modification of the sounds made by the plate. The drummer and the Thali player are always in the centre and the dancers go round and round.

Bheri:

Bheri is a musical instrument made by clubbing two 'Tumbda' (gourds). The gourds are dried and hollowed out for the purpose of making the musical instrument. It is decorated with beads, colored pieces of cloth or peacock feathers. The bheri belongs to the Naikas and is generally played by the tribes of South Gujarat. The Rathwas also play Behri.

Ghangri:

Ghangri is a musical instrument made out of bamboo strips split in the middle and one position is adjusted at one end and tied with a string which has jungle bells attached to it. The player holds it to the lips then pulls the string and plays it gently. The string of Ghangri is made out of fiber obtained from the bark of 'Ankada' plant (type of cactus). The string is very smooth and made smoother by coating it with bee wax. The Rathwas play this instrument on the when they go to the fields, or take their cattle for grazing, or go dancing.

Duff:

Duff is a flat instrument having a thin skin of animal as its cover. It is played with the fingers and palm on religious occasions during festivals and when marriage dance is on.

Manjira:

Manjira is a small conical shaped instrument made of brass metal. It is always in pair. A string is attached to it from the hole on the top of its conical part. It is largely used in religious gatherings during the Bhajans and on other festivals. A group of Manjira players stands in the middle of an open space.

Dhanglo:

Dhanglo is made by putting together a piece of bamboo which is one hand in length and a round part of gourd is attached to it at the lower end. They pass a wire from down and this is then taken up to wooden peg. The wire goes down parallel to stick right up to the wooden peg and is then passed through the string to give vibrations. It is said the person who plays Dhanglo can also play the Violin which is similar in nature. Their flute is made out of bamboo to near perfection.

MUSIC AND DANCE



Dance with bow and arrow



Various dresses, dances in fair



'Melo' or 'Bomblo' dance in fair



Indance show emotions and feelings



Chalo or Kudwa - Jump and dance



Beat the drums and thali



Play 'Pisvo'



Kartal



Musical Instruments





Digging for holi



Arrange holi with wood, branches, kits



Fire the holi





Blazing holi pyre



Worship holi



Gheriya and Villagers

Gheriya body cover with Holi pyre ash





Gheriyas going with bow and arrow with Musical



Gheriya Wear beads ornaments and jingle bells



Gheriya and others with Ram Dhol



Gheriya wear peacock feather, Hanuman and other Character



Gherani



'Mandva' Pyramid dance



Gheriya collect food, liquor money



Gheriya wear peacock feather, Hanuman and other Character