



Oral literature of Tribal in Southern Rajasthan

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Abstract— Folk culture is reverberating in the people of Rajasthan. The activities emerge from the very life of the masses. From gathering food to more sophisticated practices of religious, social and political life. Regional folk literatures are also one of the transporters of culture. This paper includes the outreached and unheard topic of Vagad region which has very diversified and unexplored field need to identified and recognized by several prestigious entity of academics and historians. Folklore of Vagad is unfathomable, encompassing the rich cultural heritage of legends, songs, customs, history, artifacts, music, herbal and myths etc. and is a marked with regularity and dynamism. It also includes the Scattered Genre of Vagad's folklore where proverbs and riddles are likely to be heard and situated in each and every person's tongue around the region. We will discuss the majority of sayings, riddles and idioms present in the vast and diversified area of Vagad which are many in numbers and have very little or can say, still finding its glory to understand or looking for its inclusion in mainstreams of Modern ethnographic Literature.



Keywords— Vagad, Genre, Proverb, Oracy, Folc.

Introduction

What is Literature?

Man started speaking as soon as he was born - but whatever he said through speech was not called literature. When texts were written, they came to be called *Sahitya*. Literature is not related to speech, it is believed to be related to writing. As long as the Vedas were sung from one mouth to another, they did not come into the category of literature. When they were alphabetized, they came under the category of literature. We would call literature a storehouse of scripted knowledge.

Literature has the same place and function in life as the heart and mind in the human body. Literature not only gives knowledge-material to the society but also gives reason for being alive or can say heart-valve. The feelings or thoughts of the mind which have been recorded, is literature.

Folk literature:

Whenever we talk about folk literature, it is often taken to mean that it is born in the villages or in remote locations. But this is not the complete and overwhelming truth. Folk literature is a culture, a heritage which is natural and contains the most diluted part of our culture. In fact, folk

literature is not a product of the mind of scholars and elites but a product of the mind of the community, so it seems more appropriate to pronounce it as folk literature.

The concept of folk literature has been continuously dynamic for centuries and as the understanding of literature, the elite and different classes have made radical and ideological changes. In contemporary times literature has been democratized and it has more inclusive and became strong. In addition to written literature, these changes have been oriented towards oral literature as it functions as a cultural archive carrying folk's daily lives, their community-specific ethos, history, beliefs, traditions, and integral practices from one generation to another. Thus it has been rightly said by Angela Carter that literature in human history has been predominantly narrated, not written, heard, not read.

¹Dr. Verma, Dheerendra. *Hindi Sahitya Kosh*. Section -1, p.no. 682

Sanskrita,Nanuram. *Rajasthani Folk Literature*. Rajasthani Granthakar, Jodhpur p.1, 2020

Oral stories, folklore, songs, are an important reflection of the fantasies and lively experiences of folk. The word 'folk' is derived from the Old English word 'Folk' which means common people or society and thus in its beginning, the term was used to refer to rural, illiterate farmers or people living in rural areas. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the term folk are defined as "particularly a group or type of people". The meaning of folk is variously defined and explained by various dictionaries and thinkers and subject matter experts and can usually be understood as a traditional origin in a culture that reflects the particularities of a particular ² Lifestyle for the same culture. Folk is essentially related to common, ordinary people who share public beliefs.¹

For a considerable amount of time, the term "folk" in the East was used to refer to rural and countryside cultures, which were generally insensitive to some characteristics of comparatively educated metropolitan culture. This dichotomy between folk and urban was identified and discussed by the folk poet, Alan Dundes, who played an important role in defining folklore and establishing it as an academic discipline. In his attempt to end this binary and adopt it by most intellectuals, Dundes sought to explain that folk was the original form of all emotions and a powerful source of acquiring knowledge. Despite all the stores of knowledge present, ² sciences has given many gifts to mankind, folk is still located separately in terms of its originality and simplicity.

However, in due time, the word *Lok* acquired many layers of meaning and various interpretations. Thus, its understanding today is not limited to the realm of dualism between urban, elite, literate and rural, poor, illiterate.

Alan Dundes, in his actual work, *The Study of Folklore*, states that "folk" can refer to people of any group who share at least one common factor." It does not matter that the additive link. It can be a common occupation, language or religion, the important thing is that the group that still forms for some reason has some traditions that he calls his own." According to him the word lore has components such as "myths, legends, folklore, jokes, proverbs, riddles, spells, beauty, blessings, curses, oaths, insults, vengeance, taunts, teasing, roasts, intricate utterances and greetings and formulas of intervals are included.."

During these developments of its structure and meaning, the term folk had to undergo significant conceptual changes. From illiterate, uncultured, rural culture, it progressively became more widespread, and certain regions of the educated world have joined. From rural areas, folk later

stages can now be traced back to the urban world as well. Folk, however, continue to be synonymous with oral traditions wherever they are.

The American folklorist, Dan Ben Amos, defined "folklore" as artistic communication in small groups "with reference to his work" Definition of Folklore." (Amos 13)

Thus, in simple terms, folk can be defined as encapsulating and representing the culture of a particular community through songs, anecdotes, performances, day-to-day rituals, legends, beliefs, traditions and cultural practices etc. which are considered to be essential components of folklore.

The word Oracy gradually took the form of traditions, as a medium of expression in various cultures. In his book, *The Singer Resumes the Tale*, Albert Bates Lord writes, "Oral songs that contain music and stories and other proverbs that people have heard and sung without the interference of writing." The creator or the narrator did not write the song or the story, rather it was sung or told or the recipient did not read the song or story, only heard it. These stories and songs are not only oral but also audible. They are not only heard, they are also heard."

Vagad region – An Insight

India is a large country in which it is natural to get many territories by one name. In India, three regions are divided under the name of Vagad-

- A region between the borders of Kutch and Gujarat regions is known as Vagad region.
- A state named Vagad is also located near Bikaner.
- At present, the entire part of Dungarpur-Banswara districts of Udaipur division is known as Vagad Region.

Khad khakd ne khejad Gana

Kasdhiyalo ves

Napt nari nipu Lajaman

ei to Bantyo agad des

In the history of Rajasthan, the name of this state Vagad is such a belief given from a millennium century. It is mentioned in the old copper plate, *Jeevan Charitra*. Rajput kings ruled here in Rajasthan, in which Bhil tribes fully assisted the Rajput rulers in the medieval period, but later their areas were captured. This region has been famous by many names like Vagar, Vagvar, Vaiyagar etc.

²Dr. Satyendra gupta, Loksahitya Vigyaan p.no.5

³Ben Amos, Dan. "Toward a Definition of Folklore in Context." *The Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 84, no.331, 1971, pp. 3-5

Vagad or Wagad, situated in the western part of India and on the Aravalli hills of Southern Rajasthan, was a stately province before the Independence. The place is believed to have existed during the Ahar civilization, which means the history of Vagad dates back to 4000 years ago. In the cultural context, present-day districts of Dungarpur, Banswara and some part of Southern Udaipur which is known as *chhappan* altogether create the region of Vagad. Renowned for its tribal populace, Vagad has made its socio-cultural and political progression in different times at different levels. The number of languages tribal communities in India speak is truly in enormous amount. Indian census figures, more than ninety languages with speech communities of more than 10,000. Likewise *Kukna*, *Bhili*, *Gondi*, *Mizo*, *garo*, *Santhali*, *Kinnauri*, *Garhwali*, *Dehwali*, *Warli* and *Pavri* have their own tribal literature.

(Ninama, Mansingh. *Resurgent voice in Tribal Literature in Southern Rajasthan*, p.49)

In Rajasthan culture areas are categorized as *Marwad*, *Godwad*, *Shekhawati*, *Dhundhad*, *Mewad*, *Vagad* and *Brij* etc. and their dialects are divided according to these culture as well. (doshi 1991)

Vagadi dialect of Vagad region -

The folk literature available at the time of Vagad is in *Vagadi* dialect today. This dialect is believed to have originated from *Shaurseni*. *Shaurseni* gradually changed from the north to *Brajbhasha* and rising to the south, it became a branch of *Vagadi*, becoming old-west Rajasthani and Marwadi and Gujarati from it. The form of this dialect is mainly made from Gujarati and the inclusion of *Malavi*, *Mewadi*, *Bhili* etc. It also includes the words of *Braj*, *Awadhi*, *Marwadi*, *Khadi Boli* etc. The form of this *khichadi* or mixed language is clearly visible in the *chaupda* (Epic) of prestigious and visionary sage *Mayji Maharaj*. The *Vagadi* literature appears to have been composed since ancient times. Predominance of this region are mainly by the Bhil caste resides here from very long time. Dialect of Bhils and Meenas living in this subcontinent is 'Bhili', the dialect of Katara tribe is *katari* and the remaining of them speaks *Vagadi* dialect. *Vagadi* is considered to be the main dialect here. The *Bhili*, *Palwadi* and *Katari* dialects are limited to the *bhil* regions only. Here the form of language and the form of folk literature is also mixed.

English: Where are you going?
Vagadi: Kae jairo hai?
Katari: Khare jaiy eh?
Palwadi: ka jaye hain?

There is not much written literature in Vagad region. There are some inscriptions, *Pattavaliya*, *Tamrapatra* and *Nama-Bahia* can be found. But the folk literature of this massive landmass is very rich. Till date, it is unpublished and orally prevalent. It includes historical heroic poetry, folk songs, hymns, crosses or puzzles, jokes continue to irrigate their depleted lives by this only.

Vagad literature can be broadly divided into two parts-

Major literature: including folklore, folkore. Sculpted literature includes proverbs, idioms, riddles, verses, prose, poetries and grammar etc.²

Kale, Malini. *Banswara ki kala or saskritik virasat*. Himanshu Publication, 2012.

Oral literature:

Oral literature can be scattered, mixed, spread, chaotic, adjective that can be applied to all genres of folk literature, thus folk songs or folklore, folkore or folk theater or folk arts, all of them are scattered in a particular region. There are many new and old trends in reaching from one zone to another, so that even after the creation of a particular region, the other region gets the same respect.

Since their permanent form is not able to be preserved permanently in the oral tradition, only the clover changes when the original narrative is permanent, due to which many compilations are found in the compilation, the creation of the 'standard text' from these cluttered texts are required. Since folklore, folkore, folkore and folkore have become more popular, most of their lessons have been compiled. Therefore, their form is starting to get fixed.

In contrast to this, many of the utterances that use their experiences on a particular occasion or talk in the daily life like *Takiyaklam* are prevalent in the society, which could not be compiled or many forms of them appeared in the collection or which are still chaotic. Due to the lack of standards, they are called futsal or 'miscellaneous literature' in folk literature.

² Dr. Dabi, Premchandra, *Rajasthan me Wagad ka Loksahitya*. p.n. 3

The folklore, proverbs, puzzles, hymns, jokes, mantras, etc. are such genres, which are still scattered in the public mind. These are called 'miscellaneous folk literature'.

The proverbs are called *Masal* in Persian and Sayings in English; in most definitions, proverb and proverbs are defined in a category. The common meaning of the proverb is saying-Listening or Storytelling. Even in proverbs, like folklore, the essence of folk life and the experience of low mind remains the same. Minority, experience-extracts, linguistic simplicity, spontaneity, popularity, rhetoric etc. are the qualities of the proverb. In Indian rural society proverbs written about household, family, society, agriculture, livestock, rainfall, fortune-misfortune etc. are still prevalent today. Popular sayings in Vagad region are like-

Jug jerri te Manakha Veri

Explain: Everyone is an enemy of the bad tongue person, so humbleness should be kept in speech.

Muda aade panu raakvu

Explain: There should always be decency in the language.

Navi navi kesh katra munda aagle

Explain: The reality is often in front of us.

The phrase 'idiom', originating from the Arabic word 'haur', is used in the sense of mutual conversation. In English it is called idiom. The word *Vagdharma* is also used for idioms. In Hindi, a synonym *Roodhi* is also found. Idiom is such a meaningful phrase in itself which despite being incomplete, gives new power to the language-style, makes the particular expression alive and alive. Interaction, dialogue, and question-answering are revealed through idioms. Vagad also has some prominent idioms which are associated with folk lives here. Any phrase which does not take a connotation and takes a peculiar meaning is called an idiom, such as -

Vagadi Dialect	Translation
<i>Wat Jovi</i>	Waiting
<i>Vesmay Padavu</i>	to interrupt, to intervene.
<i>Himmat Raakvi</i>	To have some courage
<i>Thak Khabhi</i>	Rest a bit
<i>Dhakiya Poot</i>	Loving with a lot of love
<i>Vagar peda ni dhadag</i>	a man of principle
<i>Upale Hath</i>	Prudent human
<i>Wahdo dado</i>	Evening time, twilight time etc.

Prahlika is called *Paheli* in the folk world. In English it is called riddles; it is also called *Bujhauval* in the folk world. According to Dr. Sarojini Rohatgi, Riddle is a special art, through which our intellectual nature is enhanced and there is a kind of intensity within it. It is a well-intentioned creation and related to the collective power of intelligence. Puzzles create a sense of curiosity and entertainment in children, youth and girls. There is a curbing of the curiosity of the blind. Thus the purpose of the puzzle is not euphemistic. As much as there is a place for utterances in poetry, as much as there are riddles in folk literature.

According to Krishnadev Upadhyaya, the human tendency is mystical. When a person wishes that his statement is not understood by the local people, then he uses a language which is not comprehensible to the people which takes the form of a puzzle.

The puzzle's main goal is to increase curiosity while also testing your intelligence. Even though solving puzzles is a tradition, there are other ways to have fun and be entertained. It aids in mental concentration in addition to intellectual development. Its distinguishing feature is mysticism. Riddles have their roots in the human expression's hidden propensity. In Vagad, there are a lot of puzzles that are difficult to solve and understand. Such as-

- *galu te galau pan galau passe ni kadau* - The above puzzle indicates 'Kajal'.
- *ik rukda ne gaud me polu* - which means a tree with a hole in the roots - the puzzle directs the 'needle'.
- *mita me mitu hu vey* - Salt, salt in *Vagadi* called *metu*.

The word *Sukti* is formed by adding the word *Su* to *ukti*. to the expression which means delightful succulent statement, which is the stingy form of speech. In Sanskrit it is called *Subhashit* (well-versed). It means beautiful saying.

According to the *Hindi Sahitya Kosh*, the goal of the lyricist is not to entertain the reader but to scour and refine the idyllic and otherworldly life in it. The self-essence of both is the philosophy of policy. A subtle difference is not as much as a proverb is as strong as the urge for morality is in a genome. In Vagadi, such is described here as-

Kada pade Jayi warey Madtu Thay.
Thayo jaye je mawthu tare layi ne jaye.

Means at the time of dearth then nothing rises in that particular year and there is even more degradation due to the monastery.

Meaning and historical significance of Proverbs:

The folklore has an important place in folk literature. The intensity and effect of a statement is produced by them.

Rural people use many proverbs, idioms, riddles, phrases etc. in their daily practice. The use of proverbs brings strength to any utterance or statement and has its effect on the heart of the audience. This shows his eloquence. Experience is the treasure of proven knowledge. The facts that humans have interviewed since ages are published only through them. The publication of this long-felt knowledge is his primary objective. Who has influenced the ideology of any caste for centuries and if it is to be interpreted, then it is necessary to study the ethos of the castes.

The folklore literature has a special significance in oral folk literature. The proverb differs from other folk literature in nature and experimentation. In the proverb, the tendency to fill the ocean in a pot works. In this, the truths of life are revealed very well. This is the ethics of rural masses. Proverb is the condensate jewel of human knowledge. In which the light bursting with the rays of wisdom and experience is obtained. Like the spiraling elements of nature, the locos continue to spread their bright rays all around. People's literature is a major part of the world's policy literature.

Oral literature is the literature of folk experience. The human mind continuously receives something from history, tradition and culture saves the experience of its surroundings. The knowledge gained from his day-to-day life reveals short words and favorable opportunities in meaningful style. This simple intelligent and lifelong utterance of human beings is proverbial literature. The proverb literature is also called *Niti Sahitya*. The tradition of folklore literature is very ancient. Certain half-incomplete rites of the Vedas come under folk literature. All the creative genres of folk literature have been enriched by the association of the proverb. Rich traditions of folklore exist in literature of Vagad. The stories of Premchand, the poems of *Hariyuddha*, have come alive with proverbs and idioms. Tulsi's *Ramcharit Manas* is a unique book in folk literature as well.

The literal design of a proverb is made by folklore. But each line of the folk is not a proverb. A specific meaning is associated with a long rhythm of rhythm and linguistic experience. Proverbs undertake long literal journeys of speech and vocabulary of proverbs and public experience. They can be said to be practical applications of religion, work and salvation tables across caste.

Vagadi Proverbs:

One form of proverbs is also known by the name of proverb. In the *Vagadi* dialect of Vagad region, the practice of saying 'Kevate' is prevalent in the proverb. This word 'Kevate' is

developed from *Aahana*. Western scholars consider the origin of the proverb to be *Kathavarta*. But Suniti Kumar Chatterjee is believed to have evolved from the Sanskrit story of the legend to the proverb, from proverb to proverb. Siddheshwar Verma considers the etymology of the proverb by the suffixation in the word 'Kaha'. In *Prakrit*, after taking the story as a narrative, the form of *Ahanaka* or *Ahana* became prevalent. In Rajasthani it is called *Okhano* (Akhyanaadh).

The meaning of a proverb is that statement or utterance prevalent in the world, which is based on extensive folk experience. Proverb in English; It is said. A proverb is virtually a policy code of conduct for life. It is an accumulated corpus of long experiences of the folk mind, in which history, tradition and culture are constantly adding something. From a classical point of view, a proverb is considered a secondary interpretation, that's it. Folklore is adorned with the adulation of a proverb. Scholars have considered the half-incomplete Rika received in the Vedas as the seed land of proverbial literature.

In fact, *Vagadi* locales can be said to be a barometer to understand the state of happiness and sorrow prevailing in human life. In this, melody, malice, honor, humiliation, love, ego, happiness, sadness etc. can be measured by the temperature of psychics. Proverb has a miracle like a mantra which is presented in a diary with any figurative use of any place, time festival and festival anywhere. They have both their pithy prose and lyrical aspects. But rhythm is important in them. Like to express self-respect -

Tu moto, mu moto, kon bhare, gher nu koto.

That means you are big, I am also big, who filled the canes with water.

In such a way, the folklore is a figurative attempt to translate abstract experiences from the routine life into words. These proverbs collect the pollen of experience like a honeycomb and are formed like honey. Which at all times tolerates the healing of the masses like a virtuous honey. It is used as a verse or sentence. In this, the actual meaning is secondary but dominant and satirical is predominant. These traits make our tradition and ethnic memories aware of the journey from the source of religion, culture and philosophy. This history gives the essence of *Purana*. Analyzing the locales, Dr. Bholenath Tiwari writes that based on various experiences, mythological and historical persons and stories, natural rules and folk beliefs, etc., the pure abstract lively folk prevalent such utterances are called Proverbs Which are used for confirmation or opposition, relevant learning and prediction etc.

The proverbs are full brief statements of people's community. The quality of proverb likewise the ocean in a pot is well established in Hindi language meaning that the

Saying is very big in small size, like *Akela chanaa Bhaand nahi Phod sakta* (One can start but can't finish / One is an insufficient Number). This means that a person alone cannot do anything; it does not mean that if negative feelings arise in human beings should be pushed towards despair, but in the form of a gesture that the work is organized to make it successful, in this sense; proverbs prove to be an unmatched source of euphemism.

Lord Russell has called the proverbs the wisdom of many and the miracle of one.

Proverbs are the sharp and intense form of human knowledge. Sunrays after craving metals for eternity, makes many types of gemstones and sub gemstones by which the light is always sprinkled. In the same way, the Proverbs are condensed gems of human knowledge, which receive the light emanating from the rays of wisdom and experience.

Proverbs can be heard everywhere. An expert summarizes the policy statement in regard to the public's behavior in a specific circumstance. Because of being told, such sentences are called proverbs. If there is a person who does not complete any kind of work, but the first person who comes forward for leadership on such occasion an experienced person will say in instance-

Bahatu Kutru Agadi Re

And somewhere even in *Vagadi* folk songs proverbs are used for such a person -

Khali sana ghana waje, e vevayi ke ni maley

Buset maro dhoti mari, e vevayi ke ni maley

In the proverb a *Vevan* (in laws) says to the *Vevayi* that you are smart person but you are doing a lot of useless things and nothing is done by you and the clothes that you are wearing are given by us. Such kind of a person has been attacked with sarcasm in a proverb with the *Vagadi* song and tone.

Folk proverbs are carriers of folk culture, Confidence of the mind; intellectual ability and deep knowledge of social understanding are articulated in proverbs. Proverbs are universal and timeless.

In the *Vagadi* proverbs we get to know the culture of this region and secondly we also get to know the loyalty and mental fertility of the people here, these locales reveal the universal truth as well as the dialect of the respective terrain. These proverbs not only reveal the universal truth, but also propagate the literal sweetness of the dialect of the concerned land.

According to Dr. Krishnadeva Upadhyaya, "Proverbs are the treasures of research." The facts that humans have interviewed from time to time are published through them.

This is the main objective of publishing this long-felt knowledge.

Vagad affects the life of people in terms of its generality and splendor. Many types of emotions have been expressed in them. Dr. Bhagwati Prasad Shukla has mentioned the expression of these feelings in his work *Bagheli*. Policy criticism, satirical nature, sermon, information, wonder, agricultural customs, good inauspicious, public behavior, hope-despair, launch, parable, food, character, physiological pleasant, health-related sayings where numbers are unlimited. No official census has been known yet.

Dr. KrishnaDev Upadhyay has classified the proverb into five categories - location based, caste related, agricultural, animal based and miscellaneous.

Dr. Ganesh Lal Ninama said the sayings in Vagad they are grouped into four categories- Chronological, Ethical, Realistic, Satirical etc. Sh. Nemichand Jain has classified the Bhili folk proverbs into three parts- by form, by subject, by region.

These kinds of proverbs that are prevalent in Vagad are somewhat similar to Hindi language, but they are used only in pure *Vagadi* language.

Here are some of the prominent sayings of Vagad, which highlight the personality of Vagad's life-

- *Bhkala to bhukala sukhala khati* means we are hungry yet but still happy.
- *Bhuke hu bhetadi khaye pan bheenkh ni mange* means even though I am hungry, I do not want to wander here and there, but begging is against my pride.
- *Ser ni dawa, jungle ni hawa*- the medicine of the city and the wind of the jungle are equal.
- *Beri te gaara no khoto* - An enemy made of clay is also bad, that is, no matter how hostile is looking it turns out to be fatal.
- *Bhola na bhagwan he* - God to innocent people remains close all the time.
- *Hukam vagar paanu ni hale* - Even without the permission of God, the leaf does not shake.
- *Has te chodanyi hoodi dekaye* - Truth is visible even till the full moonlight.
- *Anbhanya ne udaharey khata* - illiterate, mostly remain in credit. That is, everyone is exploited due to illiterate in the calculation of illiterate human beings.

- (Interviewed taken on 08 July 2021 from Rameshchandra vadera Ex-Steno. Govt. Judicial

dept. Bnaswara, village- Madkola, Dist. Banswara)

CONCLUSION

As the time passed by, innovations in science and technology, lacking in ruralization, change in human relationships, loosening of familial and social ties, shrinking space for community life, enhancing individualism etc. have eloped the cultural trends of the past, still in the rural and the indigenous communities of the Vagad region folk literature play a very important role. Folklore is symbol of collective community life also in Vagad. They are the signs of the equalitarianism traditions in which the people are related to each other with the bond of fraternity and trust. It is not just words that spoken; it is a metaphor for a way of utterance. Therefore, Proverbs celebrate nature and environment with a sense of gratitude. The survey undertaken and the needs analysis done by the some regional experts resulted in an understanding that culture is the backbone of any society but, culture can never be the result of any one person's initiative or endeavor, rather it is a result of a cumulative process. If we were to keep aloof from our culture, our lives would cease to have a direction and flow and it is therefore essential for us to maintain vibrant contact with our cultural heritage and languages time by time. It also states that it is time we take the entire enterprise of folk cultural heritage preservation in our hands and take it forward to near future securely.

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