

Glossary of some Nepali song types

Dohori Geet :-This style of song is a question and answer song and is a competition between a male and a female lead singer. Each lead singer will have at least two supporters. The first line of each verse is a question and then the second the answer and the next two lines are a common chorus; lines that are already known. The lead singer will sing the question alone and the supporters join in for a repeat. The answer is given in the same way and all singers repeat each line of the chorus, twice, in unison. The male team always asks the first question and the female team must answer. The competition lies in trying to make the cleverest question that is the most difficult to answer and also for the response to be very clever forcing an even cleverer question in the next verse. The song can go on for hours or even days and the one who finally cannot come up with a suitable response is the loser. Everyone listening recognises when the loser is beaten. Traditionally the lead singers would be young and unmarried and the winner would gain popularity and reputation and perhaps be considered a desirable and clever marriage partner.

Bhojpuri :- Bhojpuri is a style of songs and dance from the mid-Tarai area (a narrow strip of flat land running the length of Nepal's southern boarder), and is also the name of the language of that area mainly in the Bara and Parsa Districts of the Narayani Zone of the Central Region of Nepal. The songs are also characterised by being sung at a very high pitch with a very fast rhythm to the melodies.

Jhyaure:- These are typical songs and dances of the mid-hill area of Nepal and have their origins in Jhamara, a Vedic chanting style. They are now popular all over Nepal.

Chutka:- Chutka songs are distinctive in that they have very short verses and melodies that are repeated usually 7-9 times. The first line is always at a slow rhythm and the repeats become progressively faster. The associated dance also begins slowly and then the tempo gets faster and faster.

Karkha Geet:- are Gaine poetic songs set to music and are usually a recantation of some historical event e.g. the story of the main life achievements of Prithvi Narayan Saha. The story is already known but a singer will add his own variations and may gain a reputation as an accomplished poet. Traditionally, a *karkha* was also written on the death of a fairly wealthy or important personage. Immediately after the death, the Gaine would be invited by the bereaved family to listen to the life story of the deceased person so that he could compose a long poem in his/her memory. On the 13th day of the Kriya (mourning period) the Gaine would be given whatever reward he requested e.g. a horse or an amount of money and after the Kriya he would go from door to door singing the poem/song, to the accompaniment of his *Saarangi*, and would receive further rewards e.g. of grain or money in return for his entertainment.

Doteli Geet:- Doteli is the language of the Doti District in the Seti Zone of the Far Western Region of Nepal and is also the name given to a style of song from the district. There are many varieties of Doteli songs, both fast and slow and they are recognised by

the common language.

Thadi:- These are slow, solo, emotional and often tragic songs, sung in isolation, without accompaniment, often in a forest or jungle. Other people may overhear the singing and will learn of the singer's pain. The songs are usually full of symbolism and the great majority have never been written down. There is a set style to the song, that the singer weaves his own sadness into, and they may consist of many verses. A singer may sing the same song over and over again, through time, if his/her pain continues. The theme is frequently the death of a child or other close relative or unrequited love. These songs are known only from the Far Western Region of Nepal and, although known to be a very ancient form of song, only fairly recently have some examples been performed for an audience and recorded.

Ghatana Geet:- This is another style of song belonging to the Gaine caste. The songs contain a message or lesson in morality and tell the consequences of wrongful behaviour. For example, they may tell a story of a gambler who loses all his possessions and property or of a murderer's capture and punishment. They are sung from door to door to the accompaniment of the singer's *saarangi*, as is the Gaine tradition and the singer will collect a reward often of grain or money. This tradition was found throughout Nepal.

Khele:- Khele songs are from Syangja District in the Gandaki Zone of the Western Region of Nepal. Each verse of the song has only three lines but there are many verses. The form of the song is known but the words are composed in the instant. One form consists of a religious lead singer and his supporters reiterating the lines. Another form can be a male and female question and answer song in a similar way to the *Dori*.

Deauda:- This form of song hails from the Karnali District in the Seti Zone of the Far Western Region of Nepal and is unaccompanied. The singer/dancers join hands in a circle. Both male and female may take part but the females will be next to each other and will only join hands with other females and the same with the male participants so there will be a break in the circle. The lead singer makes up the words anew each time and the others repeat them several times to a particular melody. The theme of the song is usually a historical story such as the retelling of a battle but can also be a love story. The dance is very simple and consists of taking 1½ steps forward and then 1½ steps back.