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## REPRESENTATION OF FEMALES AND CULTURE IN THE HARYANVI RAGINIS, A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE RAGINIS OF RAJENDER SINGH KHARKIYA

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### ABSTRACT

India has been referred to as a nation with a wide variety of religions, people, cultures, and rituals. In Haryanvi's music "Ragini" is one of the rites in which Indian music has its own special position. Ragini is referred to as the classical style of music. It is a musical retelling of a narrative or incident sometimes referred to as a "kissa" (10) For the Haryanvi jaat, community in particular; it serves as a fantastic source of entrainment. Raginis have been around since the beginning of the twenty-first century, but they are more common among males than females. In this specific assignment, I'm using Rajender Singh Kharkiya's Ragini to illustrate the Haryanvi culture and the position of women therein. Therefore, I shall focus on the aspect that how the culture of Haryana is represented by Rajender Singh in his Raginis. Basically, his Raginis is a true representation of Haryanvi culture and the status of females in Haryana and how the singers use the medium of "Ragini" to draw the attention of people towards culture and females. This paper also focuses on the aspect that how Dalit women first start entering into 'akhara', in order to sing. If we look at old Haryanvi culture, we cannot deny the patriarchy and dominance that still exist now. This is shown via the perspective of the "Ragini" in this paper.

So, I'll be talking about the kind of culture Haryana has in this paper. In addition, I'll focus on the issue of how women are portrayed in the genre's oral form. Women are known as "Mateirsakti", in our nation. Even the country's name came after the name of the female that is "Bharat Mata". Therefore, the focus of my research paper is to examine how Haryanvi culture and women are represented in the Raginis. The current research paper also discussed the status of women in Haryana in modern times as compared to its ancient eras. I also find it interesting how 'Ragini' was presented in accordance with the other genres of literature's designated times and seasons. According to the Navaraasa theory, Raginis will have a positive impact on the human mind and body. There are several Raginis and singers in Haryana whose names are well-known, such as Dada Laxmichad, but the Raginis of Rajender Singh Kharkiya will be my criteria for this paper.

**Keywords:** Ragini, Culture, Haryana, Female, Bhartmata, Century.

### Introduction

Desha me yo desh mera se Harya bharya Haryana, sidhe sadhe  
loog aade ke dudh dahi ka khana.

A minor region in India's northwest is called Haryana. Its inhabitants are known as hajir jawabi. Haryana is renowned throughout the world for having a rich cultural history that dates back to the Vedic era. The historical traditions of meditation, chanting, and 'Bhaki' are still practiced by the general populace in Haryana. Haryana is referred to as the land of festivals. It has always been a state of many distinct cultures, religions, and traditions. It has also been referred to as a state of unity in diversity. The language used by its inhabitants, known as Haryanvi, is what makes Haryana unique. It may sound coarse in some ways, yet it is full of compassion, trust, and straightforwardness. If we turn our gaze deeply towards it only then we examine its culture minutely. As we know that the people of Haryana take great pleasure in its popular arts, which include Saang, dramas, and the ballad Ragini. Haryana once served as a major tourist destination for its vibrant culture. But because of growing urbanization, its culture is changing rapidly. Saang, Dhamal, Ragini, and folk melodies all serve as examples of Haryanvi culture and civilization. One of them is Ragini. The song (Ragini) is structured into three sections: a slow verse, an upbeat chorus, and a slow chorus towards the end. The Haryanvi culture is now a major draw for Westerners in the twenty-first century. The Bhagavad Gita, which is our holy book, is recited in Canada in the month of November 2022 as a recent example of the popularity of Haryanvi culture in the heart of westerners. Apart from art, Haryana's culture is noted for its longest, customs and rituals. Actually, south Haryana' is known for its army services. It is noticed that among the five soldiers, every fifth is Haryanvi. It is a state with a reputation for harmony in contrast. According to A.R. Desai, "the rural cultural identity of rural India is determined by its norms, values, folk music, festivals, rituals, and the performance of sacraments are same of rural cultural traits of rural India".



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The emotion of the Haryanvi common masses is reflected through Ragini, saangs, and folk songs for instance, the song “Badal uthya ri sakhi mere sasre kii”, beautifully conveyed a girl's loyalty to her in-law's-family which reflects the sentiments of the people. Here, the cloud's ominous dark hue symbolizes the deplorable state of farmers. Another song, “Kasumal chunni kali a hoi Pradesh kii tayari a”. This song typically, sung on the occasion of a girl's wedding when she departs with her husband and leaves her parents behind. It is a very pitiful song that represents a girl's nostalgia. As we all know, getting married is a joyous moment, but it may also be difficult for a lady to leave the house of her parents in whom she is living since her childhood. So, again it's a moment of grief for a girl. Every community develops its own unique cultural and behavioral patterns that are frequently referred to as “working-class culture”, “mass culture” or “middle-class culture”. Therefore, culture is not about reality, aesthetics, taste, or aesthetics. Instead, culture is a system where specific conceptions of reality, aesthetics, and beauty are produced in relation to particular social strata”. Ramond William is quite right when he says; ‘culture is ordinary, in every society and in every mind’ Culture is ordinary, an experience common and accessible to each person and his/her society. For William, culture means the whole way of life and the form of signification like Ragini, a folk song that circulates within a society. (hope).

The ordinary people of Haryana perform traditional dances known as “folk dances” also part of Haryanvi culture. The Haryanvi common masses have also done many other types of dance, such as the Gangoor dance, Gugga Dance, Raasleela, and Holi dance, etc are also part of traditional Haryanvi culture. Gugga Dance is performed in honor of Gugga Zahir Pir; Raasleela is well-known among residents of the Faridabad district. It is performed by the gopis of Braj Bhommi. As a result, Haryana is a place with many different traditions and civilizations. The mainstay of this state's folk culture is represented by folk dances. **Dr. Iqbal Singh Saund** says about folk songs “Folk dance is a collective human dance based entirely on the frantic joy which is performed spontaneously. This dance form admits no hard and fast, restriction of attire, properties, make-up, and place”. In the above picture people are performing “Dhamal”. It takes place when farmers used to harvest their crops so; it's connected to the harvesting season. While dancing people have musical instruments such as Dholak, Been, or Khartal. As shown in the picture.



Ragini has been referred to as the folk song of Haryana. It has its root in Haryanvi culture from ancient times. It has been noted that after 1975, Ragini gained increasing notoriety. Ragini's famous vocalist Satyanarayan Shastri has been performing at Aakash Vani since 1983. In Haryanvi Ragini, Pandit Lakhmi Chand from Jatti Kalan (Sonipat) is referred to as Survyva Kavi. He produced numerous Saang, including Nal Damyanti, Meera Bai, Tara Chand, and Puranmal Therefore, it is similar to a lengthy poem in which several performers portray various characters emotions to sing and dance. The culture of Ragini dates back to the last few decades. At that time Ragini was the main source of people's entertainment. Ragini is undoubtedly played on an open platform using musical instruments such as a harmonium, microphone, Dholak, matka, and others. The folks sang these songs even reaping the crop and carrying out household



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chores in their natural rhythm. Ragini, we might say, has a significant role in Haryanvi folk melodies. There are numerous singers in Haryana, who is well-known for singing ragini like Karpal Sharma, Rajender Singh Kharkiya, Rajkishan Agwanipuria, and Laxmichad. This image depicts Ragini's performance, which is the main core idea of this paper.



In former times, only men sang ragini. The name "Bhand" had been used in the vernacular who sang ragini on the public stage. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that Haryana's culture was once somehow ruled. In those times in Raginis and saangs, the role of the female is played by a man. This shows the dominant culture of Haryana where the women's place is within the four walls of the house. So, they were prohibited from performing. Susan C. Cook and Judy claim "Females are expected to be supposed passive recipients of musical practices in the 'public domain' but not as active contributors in any way", (Susan cook and Tosu). Therefore, we might conclude by saying that males dominate these ragini. It was only the "Dalit" ladies who first started performing into 'akhara', and they did so by opposing the Mardhana (male) Ragini of the time.



Now female of Haryana is contributing equally in every sector they are not far behind male in any sector. Sakshi Malik and Babita Phogat are live examples of (Narisakti) who performed amazingly in the Olympics 2022. It is not to say hyperbole that most females who are becoming role models of the nation belong to the jaat community which had been called a predominant caste in Haryana. As a result, it may be assumed that the Haryana of today is different from the Haryana of the past. Now attitudes and perceptions of people have changed. But it's impossible to change society within minutes, it would take time. Still one can see dominance; patriarchy and pressure of the society upon girls not even Haryana but even in the whole world. For instance, "Madu Bala", a singer from Haryana is a well-known Ragini vocalist, much like Sapna Choudhary. She resorted to Christianity after leaving Ragini. The oppression of society and the community is the cause of her employment change. What Virginia Woolf said in her 20th-century critical literary text "A Room of One's Own" "women don't have their room of once own" According to a number of studies, in former times in the rural arena women had faced difficulty in performing in the stage because at that times people were even not ready to listen to a female voice on the stage. But now time has changed. One more example is Amrjot and Chamkila, who was shot dead on stage while performing Ragini on the stage. Ellen Koskff, an expert in ethnomusicology, supports her claim that female musicians and performers take on the "Dual roles of entertainers and courtesans", by citing research on court customs in Asia and Europe.



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Diana Tietjens, in her 2002 book *Gender in Mirror*, argues how the patriarchal culture of the past hinders women's competence. According to Marry Douglas, the body serves as a vehicle for culture and an expression of it; it is "a center of social control... governed by the norms of cultural life" and is what Michel Foucault referred to as a 'docile body'. Similar to this, caste, class, social mores, conventions, and religious traditions have shaped women's sexuality. Similarly, Rajendra Singh Kharkiya, through his *Raginis* emphasizes social change for the betterment of society. After the independence, there are many authors who wrote on Haryanvi culture one among them is Degrades Mukhopadhyay; whose book *Lesser-Known Forms of Performance Arts in India* (1978) covered the folk culture of Haryana.

The majority of Ragini, songs, and saangs in Haryana are based on Indian epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Through these Ragini, numerous societal issues are depicted in an effort to reform society. It is the nation where Kaurav and Pandava fought the battle of Mahabharata at Kurukshetra. Krishna's updates of 'karma', which was given to Arjuna on the earth of Kurukshetra, are renowned not only in India but abroad also. In Kurukshetra, a separate temple has been constructed where the 18 lessons of Geeta will be placed one after another. As a result, Lord Krishna's lesson to Arjun has not only gained notoriety but also entered the Indian cultural legacy (Encyclopedia of Haryana).

Haryanvi folk musician Rajendar singh kharkiya has become well-known for his melodic tunes. He was born on September 21, 1966, in the village named Panchi, located in Ganaur Teshil of Sonipat district in Haryana. He was married to Sashi kharkiya. He belongs to the Jaat community. Apart from that he also sang in the Haryanvi film "Laado." Since his childhood he loved singing Raginis he had the glamorous ambition of making Haryana well-known. His well-known Ragini is, "52 Goan ki Ragini", "Jahaj Ke Mai Baith Gori", "Sath Rahniye Sang Ke Sathi", "Ghada Uthwa De", "and Sapne Main Susral", and some others. The present paper is also based on the representation of Haryanvi culture and females in the Ragini of Rajendra singh kharkiya. In his Ragini "Jahaj Ke Mai Baith Gori" Rajender Singh depicts the respect of females in Haryana. This vehicle 'Aeroplain', represent something high this is linked to the respect of female in Haryanvi culture. This specific line, 'Jahaj Ke Mai Baith Gori tera pala latk', represents male love towards females. He also emphasizes the Haryanvi traditions, which are still valuable and still respected, in his Raginis. The phrase 'Mn to pucker gai mere sasu or Sali', specifically represents the Haryanvi tradition that once a female marries, the girl's family bestows blessings on both the bride and the groom in the form of a hand placed upon their heads. The line 'dhan dhan ho tere mat pita n lad lada ke palli' demonstrates the respect, that the Haryanvi people have for the parents of women. In Haryana whenever a new wife enters her husband's home she is required to have a 'paluu'. This 'paluu', is the symbol of respect in Haryanvi culture. By the line, 'jahaj ke maha jithe manas sare so liye mahu batwe s aari ghugnaht kholiye'. Actually, this line has dual meanings; one is that Haryanvi women are subject to patriarchy and male dominance, and the other is that it represents reverence for elders. In the line 'Lokma Bhaya krwa liya so so dosh dharege', Rajender Singh touched on the subject of love marriage and the gossip spread by others when someone marries covertly. It is thought that after marriage, when a woman enters her husband's home, she will formally address everyone by some cultural name that is highlighted by Rajender singh, such as Dever or Bhabi. As depicted in the line 'Dever kh k bola kariye phool zadge'. This is further a symbol of Haryanvi culture and tradition. In the Haryanvi culture everyone is addressed by their cast, district, or community name, and doing so makes individuals feel proud of them. This is depicted by the line, 'Dekhe Rothak h jila hamara Hariyane m name ho sonipat Teshil lagti Panchi s gamm ho'. So, this Ragini directly depicts the culture, tradition, and community of Haryana. It can be said a good piece of art.

In "Ghada Uthwa de", is another Ragini by Rajendre Singh that is also taken for present study. In this Ragini, he explored the subject of the caste system that had spread in Haryana in its early periods through the history of King Harischandra and his queen Madnavat. He also discusses 'poverty', which is the root cause of all evils in society. This Ragini is about King Harischandra, who was a brilliant and rich ruler during his time, yet by the grace of God, he experienced some extremely bad days. He left his kingdom and began working as a servant in a lower-class family's home. There was a time when the king, queen, and their son all three are separated. Therefore, this ragini is based on the identical situation that occurred when everyone was split up. This Ragini is based on the conversation between the king and queen when both of them have arrived to draw water from the well after separation. It was the time when Madnavat refuse to touch the pot of his husband to whom once she marred. The line 'Konya luau hath ghade ke ghat Jaya dharm hamara' symbolizes the caste system and intolerance that were prevalent at the time. Here, kharkiya highlights the religious barriers that are prevalent in society. As it has come to notice that women are more conscious of their children as compared to male. The particular line 'Tn khaber nahi ladke ki is a statement that displays a woman's love for her son. As it is said, Haryana is the symbol of power and strength so, so its females are also strong and powerful. So, the line 'M kud bahyai n nich bata diya', also represents this. The faithfulness and dependability of Indian women are touched by Rajender Singh in this Ragini. This Ragini is particularly, the depiction of the nature of the Haryanvi people.



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One another Ragini taken for the subject of this paper is “52goan ki ragini” Here he illustrates the culture of Haryana and the representation of Haryanvi females. So, this ragini is a statewide humorous depiction of females. In this Ragini Rajender singh makes humorous remarks about the women of each community such as ‘choti beer dekhi modi or maklane kii’, here, he makes a statement about the height of ladies of the villages named Modi and Malklane. In one more line, ‘lambi patli pahli dekk beer Basane or Barsana kitchen makes a humorous joke on the height of female. In this Ragini Rajender Singh also touches on the theme of pride when he says ‘upper n muh kr are k chala kosla sulane kii’. This Ragini touches on the theme of wide Haryanvi culture and the nature of females. The line ‘jisi suni thi usii kh di’ captures the straightforwardness of the Haryanvi people. It also depicts the simplicity of the Haryanvi people. It’s only the hospitality of the people which attracts people from across the globe to explore the state with nosiness. Through his Ragini Rajender singh also comments on the dress of Haryanvi females like ‘Othche othche daman phara Gorane kharane kii’. This Daman is their basic trousseau and this is the symbol of spirited enthusiasm. These Ghaghara have different bright colors. They may also have a border at the bottom end. Therefore, this outfit is distinctive and particularly representative of Haryanvi culture. In this particular line ‘Esara t bat krti Dujane kii’, embodies the symbolic essence of the Haryanvi people. In the specific Ragini, he discussed symbolism. A 20th-century critic named Ferdinand De Saussure’s book Course of General Linguistics (1915) talked about symbolisms. As it is noticed that people of this state are famous for their simplicity, boldness, and politeness same is depicted by kharkiya. One more line ‘Bayahe kassm k jutt mar de’, above the line represents the strongest personality of Haryanvi women. Now we can say that the women of Haryana are contributing equally to males in every field, including agricultural, farming, and household sectors. Like, ‘ghat ke upper kharbuje tolah kulta or kutlane kii’. The line ‘Vakt pade pr dokha de ja julne kii’ is a lovely expression of the Haryanvi woman’s cunning character.

One more Ragini taken for this study is “supne k maha Susral”, which also touches the subject of Haryanvi culture in a highly artistic way. This Ragini is based on dreams and it depicts that Haryanvi people have more trust in dreams. In India, it is a common misconception that we always associate dreams with reality which is touched by Northrop Fryes in his book Anatomy of Criticism based on the study of myth. This Ragini is based on the Haryanvi tradition. In Haryanvi culture, a girl’s spouse is respected more in the house of his father-in-law. People referred to him as ‘Batauu’, in Haryanvi. Aside from that, Haryana is well known for ‘milk’, because everyone has animals in their house. So, whenever any guest comes they serve first milk to him. As depicted in the line ‘Mere sasu n mitha dud pilaya’, is a sign of respect. In Haryana its culture that how many cattle a person has is also linked with a person’s status. In Haryanvi culture ‘Hukka’, is a sign of fraternity, respect, trust, joy, leisure, and monarchy. In Haryana, every person remained ‘Hukka’ in their family. It stands for brotherhood, harmony, community, and honesty. The line ‘Mera sala hokku bhargya’embodies the actual core of the Haryanvi tradition and the bond of respect. There is always a room on the roof in Haryana, and in the locals language we call it ‘chubbra’ whenever a guest comes he would stay in the ‘chubbra’. The protagonist in this Ragini is also invited into the chubbra or the same chamber. It has been called that Haryanvi people have considered more affectionate as depicted in the line; ‘Jija lag s mn payara’. In ancient times, Haryana has been referred to as the home of the Saraswati and Indus Valley civilizations. Professor Suraj Bhan says; “Both rivers have made excellent contributions to enhancing the cultural legacy of Haryana” In the same way, the idea of choral stands for communal harmony when members of many communities gather to discuss a difficult problem.

## Conclusion

So, this paper depicts the true essence of Haryanvi culture particularly, in the Ragini of Rajender singh kharkiya who is the famous singer of Haryana folk songs. This paper depicts how the culture of Haryana is famous not in India but even in the Western country also. This paper also highlighted the aspect, of how Rajender Singh touches urges for social reform through his Raginis. The present paper has made an attempt to highlight the culture and representation of females in Haryana with its changes over the years. With impeccable and opulent efforts have been made by the government as well as private and cultural agencies to save the lost and forgotten folk art. Ragini singers thus reproduce the existing structures of inequalities and discriminatory practices that mirror the cultural practices such as Ragini based on caste, class, gender stereotypes, sexuality, etc. Rajender singh kharkiya is one among those who touched on the subject like this. This folk art now has an autonomous identity and appeals for great amusement to local folks. Like a saang performance, the performance of Ragini has also attracted the attention of the audience effectively. The influence of recent advancements in internet technology has brought merits and demerits for these folk arts.

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