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Singing Gangaur: Women's Folk Narratives, Gendered Spaces, and Cultural Transformation in Rajasthan

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Abstract

Rajasthan has a very rich tradition of folk singing. The repertoire of women's songs showcases different stages of human life, from conception to death. These songs preserve cultural traditions and pass collective memories and stories from one generation to the next. The paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork and has been analysed using performance and gender studies frameworks to study the narrative of folk songs sung during Gangaur festival. Group discussions during the study led to an understanding of how the festival of Gangaur is viewed by the women celebrating it. In India, marriage is still a prominent concern for families and Gangaur is also a means by which women are initiated into the out marrying patriarchal system. It normalises marriage for each individual woman by making marriage a collective celebration and combining it with the narratives of folk gods, giving the institution of marriage a cultural and religious legitimacy. The findings lead to an understanding about how the ritual folk songs performed by women are substantial in demonstrating gendered experience of emotion and social constraint within private spaces by highlighting the connect between the ritual and its prominence amongst the privileged classes. It also suggests how the divine and popular folk figures function as narrative mediators to express the lived realities and as a space for emotional catharsis for women, particularly in articulating grief related to daughters leaving homes after marriage, while attempting to read how women's agency functions within the domestic sphere.

Keywords: *folklore, gangaur, women spaces, rajasthan, paradigm shift, cultural studie.*

Introduction

Rajasthan is renowned for its tradition of celebration through singing characterized by an extensive repertoire of folk songs performed by women. The tradition of folk singing moves beyond music alone; it plays a vital role in the emotional wellbeing of women and they can give vent to their inner feelings embedded in a collective cultural folkloric form. The ritual knowledge and folk songs are transferred from one generation to another through this practice According to B. L. Mali, these songs capture different phases of human experiences from the beginning to death. This paper aims to study the socio-cultural and economic factors influencing the evolving dynamics of one such festival named *Gangaur*, that is practiced primarily within the domestic spaces. The ethnographic fieldwork suggests how this folk tradition is adapting to fit the contemporary modern times. During the fieldwork, live songs being sung during the celebration of *Gangaur* were recorded in the Lachhmangarh village of

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Sikar district in Rajasthan. Through the transcription of relevant songs, it is depicted how representations of ritual practices in women's folk songs reflect their historical association with upper-caste households and material surplus.

Gangaur, a vibrant festival celebrating the union of Shiva and Parvati, exhibits diverse regional expressions across Rajasthan and other states. In Kolkata, Guha-Thakurta builds a history of today's Durga and the multiple usage her iconography is put through, by explaining the humour and veneration of a domestic folkloric profane Durga and her drunk, good for nothing, husband Shiva, then compares it to today's modern version of Durga used in advertisements to attract women and girls. (Guha-Thakurta 8) Thus, using the figures of deities from the Hindu pantheon in folk narratives is a common practice across India. The folk versions of Shiva and Parvati are worshipped as a pair in North India and especially in Rajasthan. The marriage between them is a subject of many folk songs in the region. The practice of humanizing deities is common in folk culture and using their trivial life to represent a parallel to the lives of the people is often a subject of the folk songs.

Although, individual houses celebrate *Gangaur*, but the event also takes the form of large-scale processions that serve as a community celebration. In Jaipur, *Gangaur* is celebrated with magnificent processions that start at the City Palace under the patronage of the royal family. Manuscripts records in Rajasthan show that the royal houses were known to facilitate cultural and religious undertakings during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In Udaipur, celebrations are intertwined with the Mewar Festival, where processions navigate through the city and culminate at Gangaur Ghat on Lake Pichola, accompanied by cultural performances and fireworks. In this way, the festival becomes intertwined with the city space. Gangaur Ghat has a mural of *Gangaur* which is accessible all throughout the year, making the experience last beyond the duration of *Gangaur*. Jodhpur has a distinctive variation called *Dhinga Gavar*, in which women adorn different traditional costumes and prowl the streets at night. They playfully strike single men with sticks in an alleged ceremony that is believed to bless them with an opportunity to marry. Another variant of the festival is visible in Bikaner, where the festival includes the '*lotias*' fair, where maidens carry water and '*durva*' grass in decorated pots to designated sites. Though the *Gangaur* celebrations are centred around Rajasthan, they do not remain isolated and restricted to Rajasthan but extend to parts of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh. Similar festivals, such as *Gaura Parva* in Nepal and Uttarakhand, and *Gauri Habba* in Karnataka, reflect the widespread reverence for the goddess Gauri across various Indian cultures.

Ann Gold has stated in an interview with Vishes Kothari that Brahmin, Rajput and Baniya communities did not allow widow remarriage. Therefore, fasting and rituals to extend the life of the husband were observed more in these communities. Gold identifies *Gangaur* as very

much a Rajput ritual. The folk songs sung during the nightly procession of *Gangaur* also shed light on this.

The rituals, fasting, singing are all embedded in household routines and kinship structures, with women as the primary ritual agents. Komal Kothari maintained that women are the composers of these songs in their own right and there is no audience for which these songs are performed. (Bharucha156-157) Although, it is clear that the singing is very much performative and the male members of the family are supposed to hear these songs. The male members of the family are named and celebrated in these songs. Gold states that even though Rajasthan is a sexually segregated society, women sing at men. The performance is aimed at men, in their hearing, they sing. (Gold 38- 47) This is obvious in Gangaur as well as Shraavan folk songs when sisters return to their natal homes and sing poignant, tear-jerking songs at their brothers.

Gangaur as a practice was firmly situated in caste boundaries, gender norms, and ideals of marriage, fertility: the private domain of ritual life. In contrast, it has transitioned into a public cultural performance over time due to urbanization and increased mobility.

In one of the *Ganagur* songs called *Ghudlo*, it is said that: "Goral is worshipped by Brahman, Baniya, Rathore- Rajputs."[1] This song is still sung as it is during the nightly procession of women through the neighbourhood. *Ghudlo* song has its own legend behind it where a King saves the honour of girls. During the month of Chaitra, at the time of *Gangaur*, after the incident in which the Afghan *subedar* Ghurle Khan abducted unmarried girls, King Satal fought a battle with him, killed him, and protected the honour of the young girls. In the procession, a lamp is lit as a symbol of the decapitated head of Ghurle Khan and the girls request in the song to the male members of their family to help them reach home safely.

Caste-based social organization has shifted to become more inclusive and *Gangaur* is long been celebrated by other castes. It is why the researcher had access to the festival during her childhood and later during fieldwork. Family structure in urban areas changed from tightly knit village settings to more mixed neighbourhoods. Ritual practices began to adapt to such shared spaces and community terraces, streets, and temples have become key sites of celebration. This shift allows the participation of man, woman and children of all castes and the ritual knowledge of the festival is shared beyond the upper castes. Theoretically, this transition can be seen to be moving towards the spectacle from the private. What was once a contained, inward-facing practice has become outward-facing and performative. Public

[1] This song was recorded on 10 April, 2024 in Laxmangarh. The recording feature these words at 00.02.10-00.02.19. A Youtube video containing the same song is referenced here for clarification. (Versatile Baisa 00:00:57-00:01:10). "Superhit Gangore Geet mharo ghudlo gharan e punchaye Rajasthani Gangore Geet." *YouTube*, uploaded by Versatile Baisa, 8 March 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lg_z19NLWcU&list=RDlg_z19NLWcU&start_radio=1

processions and large *Gangaur* idols transform the festival into a communal event that emphasizes shared cultural identity rather than strict ritual purity or caste exclusivity. This is in tune with the larger transitions South Asian festivals are going through. Tradition is not merely a religious obligation but it is increasingly becoming the mark of cultural heritage as well.

The Ritual Festival of *Gangaur:*

Gangaur is celebrated for 16-18 days in the month of March right after Holi.[2] From the ashes of the Holi fire, new life emerges in the form of ritual material for *Gangaur* worship. Songs are sung during the festival wherein instructions are provided pertaining to rituals. The "*samagri*" (objects) used for carrying out the rituals are rooted in the rural Rajasthani household. The objects also signify the excess that is the result of recent harvest, that is why wheat is used in the rituals. It is the very reason that *Gangaur* is celebrated during this time. Daughters are called home because there is an excess of grain available at home. The objects used for the worship of *Gangaur* all signify the married state, and are often used in rituals. (Agarwal 136) The objects are kajal, roli, mehendi etc. Eights dots of all three are made on the wall. *Mandana* art which shows Shiva, Parvati and a well is drawn on a wall in the house. *Gangaur* idols are dropped in a dry well at the end of the festival. In the Group discussion held at Lachhmangarh with Manju Pareek and family[3], she compared marrying a daughter off to throwing her into a well as is done to *Gaur*. This shows how cathartic *Gangaur* as a festival proves to be for mothers mourning the loss of a daughter to marriage. The fertility of nature is celebrated alongside the fertility of women during *Gangaur*. Girls gather in the mornings in the courtyards of the home of a newly wedded woman in their neighbourhood. They pray for a good fiancé who resembles Lord Shiva. The first eight days are of *chhoti/younger Gangaur*, and the next eight days of *badi/older Gangaur*. In this way, Gaur is celebrated as a young child up to her marriage to Isar/Shiva.

The Folk Songs of *Gangaur:*

Folk songs play a crucial role in this transformation that can be traced across decades. Earlier *Gangaur* songs, sung within homes, articulated personal desires, marital anxieties, and gendered expectations, often addressing Gauri as an intimate, almost domestic presence. Over

[2] After Holi, people go to the remains of the Holika bonfire and collect *raakh* (ash). From this ash, eight *pindis* are made. A basket (*chabdi*) is lined with a red cloth, and the eight ash *pindis* are placed inside. Eight cow-dung cakes are also prepared, and a *tikki* of *roli* is applied to them. Earlier, these were directly worshipped (*puja hoti thi*); nowadays, a clay pot is used instead. A turmeric root (*haldi ki gaanth*), one silver ring, and offerings of water and milk (*dhaar*) are added. A little milk is sprinkled to make it white. *Gangaur* is then worshipped with *doob* grass. This information is provided by Indira Jangid during personal interviews.

[3] Laxmangarh, 11 April, 2024, 9-10pm

generations, the songs have undergone a transition. The earlier songs used to function as the carrier of ritual knowledge and of all the things which cannot be directly said by a mother to her daughter but she still tries to prepare her for the future life of a married woman, where the emphasis was on the trivialities of marriage, and how it is important to praise the in-laws, keep the husband happy and take good care of the child. The songs represented the respect that had to flow both ways in a joint family. (Agarwal 29) The trivialities of marriage were discussed through the wedding of Shiva and Parvati. Parvati or Gaura became like your elder sister who had been married and who has come back to the natal village to celebrate *Gangaur*. You could joke around with Shiv or Isar as though he was your own brother-in-law. *Gangaur* is considered as playful as well as a ritualistic tradition, therefore mirth and humour are important features of *Gangaur* as nowadays the songs function in a humorous way, where women express desire for a husband just as Isar.

Of late, Shiv bhajans have become a part of the repertoire of girls worshipping *Gangaur*. The focus is singing about Shiv-Parvati as the representative couple. Local traditions subvert the canon established by the great organized traditions such as the pan Indian Hindu tradition. Shekhawat (35) Shiv is worshipped as the deity who will give a good husband all over India by girls but in Gangaur he is sidelined and the focus is on the bride who is being taken away from her natal home. Shiv is portrayed as enslaved to Goral in the following lines: "Isar is mad for Goral dancing over the window hood."[4] Just like the Puranas tell myths and legends about gods in local rivers and mountains, spatially, Isar and Gaur have to be made local. This is how legends and folklore play a legitimising role for cultural practices while subverting the norm. (Kothiyal 218)

There are *Gangaur* songs of husband and wife where the wife negotiates with the husband that he foregoes meeting his friends in the fields and come join her in the communal celebration of *Gangaur*. That tells us that the earlier *Gangaur* songs were also couple songs, dealing with younger couples, maybe newlyweds. These songs are not sung during the worship but they still qualify as *Gangaur* songs. Another popular song in this category is one where the young wife asks permission to worship and play *Gangaur* which is a popular song.[5]

The celebration of *Gangaur* in Rajasthan, particularly among women, is a vibrant and multi-layered festival centred on fertility, marital devotion, and seasonal renewal. Rooted in agricultural rhythms and social structures, it offers fertile ground for theoretical analysis. Given that *Gangaur* is a prominent festival honouring the goddess Gauri, who symbolizes

[4] Chhajje upar Goral nacche, isar hai diwaana.

[5] "Khelan do Gangor | Rajasthani Gangaur Songs | Gangare Festival Rajasthani Song | Veena Music." YouTube, uploaded by Veena Music, 20 Mar. 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjD7teyuqZs&list=RDjjD7teyuqZs&start_radio=1 .

marital bliss and the transformations of womanhood, this event is crucial in Rajasthani tradition. Therefore, it provides a rich context for exploring the role of women's singing tradition. Ann Gold has highlighted that Rajasthan's singing tradition, particularly among women, serves as a profound cultural expression interwoven with everyday life. (Gold 104) These songs or Geet (as they are called in Rajasthani) are deeply tied to rituals, embodying themes of joy, sorrow, and communal values while preserving oral histories. Through their performances, women strengthen social bonds and navigate big life events, making singing an integral part of Rajasthan's cultural identity. Along with entertainment, the Geet are also about community and connection. The folk songs sung in Rajasthan by women on occasions such as *Gangaur* portray a societal structure that is firmly anchored in domesticity, while also being infused with the individual desire of a worthy life partner. The songs often employ repetitions, use of cliches, metaphors and local folk imagery depicting Rajasthan's culture. Women are custodians of this singing practice inherited by them that has been embellished with performance in relation to clearly defined methodical rituals and their structural pattern.

Rustom Bharucha and Komal Kothari in *Rajasthan: An Oral History*, explore the multifaceted nature of Rajasthani women's folk songs, highlighting their communal structure and thematic richness. These songs often employ onomatopoeic expressions which adds layers of meaning and cultural nuance. (Bharucha 172) The song translated here represents many characteristics of songs in women's singing tradition in Rajasthan: caste structure, ritual role of artisans in marriage ceremony and others, and the practice of naming the men in the family in songs. *Gangaur* is a festival where the girl devotees are being named as well; it does not happen in birth and marriage songs. By doing so, women are being included into the social fabric of the community who as a result are claiming a public space. The girl devotees are referred as friends of *Gangaur* (*Gangaur ki Sakhiyaan*) across Rajasthan. Many an Instagram pages have popped up now with the name *Gangaur ki Sakhiyaan* where you can follow the proceedings of *Gangaur* in various parts of Rajasthan. The song showcases the trope of repetitive lines where you just add new names to the same lines. In other songs, it would be all male relations being named. Here, it is all artisans in the neighbourhood that are being named - the people who make the festival possible.

This song showcases how *Goral/Gaura* is being showered on with love, being offered jewels and clothes because it is time to prepare for her wedding. This is also in tune with the kind of emotional connection devotees start to feel with the clay idols after only 16-17 days of worship that looks akin to nurturing a young girl from childhood to adulthood. Another *Gangaur* song carries advice about how to take care of a newborn and how to keep a husband happy. This shows us that *Gangaur* celebrations are culturally significant as well as being

religious. The knowledge of how to behave after marriage and during motherhood is being passed down in the form of song – something that individual mothers might not be comfortable saying directly to their daughters. So, it becomes a timeless collective knowledge system that takes care of the emotional needs of women.[6]

The song also highlights the village structure of the artisans being instrumental in bringing about the festival when ritual as an activity is a leisurely act for upper caste women from affluent homes. The processions of Goral worship in many parts of Rajasthan have helped ensure that more people of more castes celebrate *Gangaur* nowadays, earlier it being only the upper castes. Meanwhile, artisans who give shape to the festival lack the ritual knowledge for which their creations are used. Relying on the artisans does not bridge the inter-caste divide as the artisans are considered as only the suppliers of the object of the rituals, anything beyond that is restricted.

The festival was observed and recordings were made in a low-income Brahmin household of a local community in Laxmangarh. Despite financial constraints, it was observed that these families were adhering to uphold all the rituals. This illustrates a poignant collision between the reality of the class and its caste identity. To perform the morning and evening rituals, women require free time, while some women work in the fields, or perform "working-class" labour; others maybe homemakers and remain the custodians of these traditions and take the onus of performing these rituals in domestic spaces. College going girls and girls with jobs were also part of this group. They had to chalk out time to perform the rituals beside their schedule, where over the decades, the practice has been to look the other way when it comes to school girls and *Gangaur* worship.

The following song depicts the repetitive pattern of nonsense words, the fluidity of the subject as the names of the artisan keeps changing with every line, inclusion of different professions, some even confined to particular castes like the *joshi*, *naai, sunaar, khaati* etc.

Song 1 Source: Munni Devi Pareek in Lachhmangarh, Sikar, Rajasthan:

There are a great many goldsmiths in the village, my *Goral sevaraa*

Goldsmith Murarilal is but incomparable, my Goral sevaraa[7] (Translated Self)

[6] This was revealed during the fieldwork in Rajasthan.

[7] **गाँव मे जोशी और घणा ही, म्हारी गोरल सेवरा,**

जोशी मुरारीलाल जी री होड न होये, म्हारी गोरल सेवरा

There are a great many barbers in the village, my Goral sevaraa

Barber Shambhu Naai is but incomparable, my Goral sevaraa [8] (Translated Self)

There are a great many potters in the village, my Goral sevaraa

Potter Murari laal is but incomparable, my Goral sevaraa[9] (Translated Self)

Gaanv mai joshi aur ghanaa hi, mhari Goral sevaraa

Joshi Murari Laal ji ri hod na hoye, mhari Goral sevaraa

Sevaraa is sehraa, the floral tiara that used in wedding rituals and tied to the heads of bride and groom. It is also prepared with materials other than flowers; leaves are also used.
Laal is often used as a suffix after the first name of the men of the household in the women's singing tradition. Sometimes the honorific ji is also used. Sometimes, Laal may be a part of the first name. Laal means dear child.

[8] **गाँव में नाई और घणा ए, म्हारी गोरल सेवरा**

नाई शम्भु नाई री होड न होये,

पानड़ल्याँ पनचाए म्हारी गोरल सेवरा

Gaanv mai naai aur ghanaa hi, mhari Goral sevaraa

Naai Shambhu naai ri hod na hoye,

Paanadlyaan pancha e mhari Goral sevaraa

Naai is a Caste name and surname. But Naai community have many significant ritualistic significances. They contribute labour at functions such as childbirth and marriages in return of gifts and money. The mention of local artisan communities along with their function/art/work gives a picture of the village structure and a mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship that exists between different communities and how the role for each community is decided and everyone is involved and contributes to the rituals and festivals. Even if the people do not use the surname Naai, the community's name Naai is used to identify people in general and as depicted in the song.

[9] **गाँव में कुम्भटऔर घणा ए, म्हारी गोरल सेवरा**

कुम्भट मुरारीलाल री होड न होये,

पानड़ल्याँ पनचा ए म्हारी गोरल सेवरा

Gaanv mai kumbhat aur ghanaa hi, mhari Goral sevaraa

Kumbhat Muraari Laal ri hod na hoye

There are a great many carpenters in the village, my Goral sevaraa

Carpenter Surendra is but incomparable, my Goral sevaraa[10] (Translated Self)

There are a great many dyers in the village, my Goral sevaraa

Dyer Shyam Sundar is but incomparable, my Goral sevaraa[11] (Translated Self)

There are a great many priests in the village, my Goral sevaraa

Priest Rajendra ji is but incomparable, Priest Amarchand ji is but incomparable my Goral sevaraa[12] (Translated Self)

Paanadlyaan pancha e mhari Goral sevaraa

The word Kumbhat/Kumhar is Caste name and a surname. It refers to a person who makes clay pots.

[10] **गाँव में खाती और घणा ए, म्हारी गोरल सेवरा**

खाती सुरेन्दर री होड न होये

पानड़ल्याँ पनचा ए म्हारी गोरल सेवरा

Gaanv mai khaati aur ghanaa hi, mhari Goral sevaraa

Khaati Surendra ri hod na hoye

Paanadlyaan pancha e mhari Goral sevaraa

[11] **गाँव में छीपा और घणा ए म्हारी गोरल सेवरा**

छीपा श्याम सुन्दर री होड न होये

बाल्योंला बलकाये म्हारी गोरल सेवरा

Gaanv mai chhipa aur ghanaa hi, mhari Goral sevaraa

Chhipa Shyam Sundar ri hod na hoye

Baalyolaan balkaa e mhari Goral sevaraa

The Chhipa or Chhipi caste's traditional occupation is fabric dyeing and printing. The term "Chhipa" comes from the Rajasthani word *"Chhapa,"* which means "to print."

[12] **गाँव में प्रोहित और घणा ही म्हारी गोरल सेवरा**

There are a great many brothers in the village, my Goral sevaraa

Brother Mahendra is but incomparable, Devendra is but incomparable[13] (Translated Self)

There are a great many grandsons in the village, my Goral sevaraa

Grandson Divyansh is but incomparable, Grandson Priyansh is but incomparable[14] (Translated Self)

प्रोहित राजेन्द्र जी री होड न होये, प्रोहीत अमरचन्द जी री होड न होये

पानड़ल्याँ पनचा ए म्हारी गोरल सेवरा

Gaanv mai Prohit aur ghanaa hi, mhari Goral sevaraa

Prohit Rajendra ji ri hod na hoye, Prohit Amarchand ji ri hod na hoye

Paanadlyaan pancha e mhari Goral sevaraa

A prohit is a brahmin who conducts yajnas, rituals, rites etc. A gotra(sub-clan) or surname of Brahmin community as well. A dialectical misspelling of the word Purohit is found in written Rajasthani manuscripts.

[13] **गाँव में बीरा और घणा ए म्हारी गोरल सेवरा**

बीरा मेहन्द्र री होड न होये, देवेन्द्र री होड न होये

पानड़ल्याँ पनचा ए म्हारी गोरल सेवरा

Gaanv mai beera aur ghanaa hi, mhari Goral sevaraa

Beera Mahendra ri hod na hoye, Devendra ri hod na hoye

Paanadlyaan pancha e mhari Goral sevaraa

This is an example of how male members of the family are named and included in the song.

[14] **गाँव में पोता और घणा ए म्हारी गोरल सेवरा**

पोता दीव्यांश री होड या होये, प्रीयांश री होड ना होये

पानड़ल्याँ पहुंचाई म्हारी गोरल सेवरा

Gaanv mai pota aur ghanaa hi, mhari goral sevaraa

Pota Divyansh ri hod na hoye, Pota Priyansh ri hod na hoye

Paanadlyaan pancha e mhari goral sevaraa

This is another example of how male members of the family are named in the songs.

There are a great many girls in the village, my Goral sevaraa

Girl Rekha is but incomparable, Girl Monu is but incomparable,

Ruchi Girl is but incomparable, our Gudiya girl is but incomparable[15] (Translated Self)

This song portrays inter-caste dependence, despite caste separation that still exists in villages in Rajasthan even now. (Marriot viii) This song also showcases the nonsensical words that are sometimes spoken repeatedly in a folk song. (Raheja and Gold 57). Many a times, these words are used as women who sing them don't know the meanings and they continue rote singing.

In terms of the interdependence between castes, this song also illustrates how a village is organized. Even though the castes rely on the craftsmen to supply the materials for the rituals, there is still a division between them. The artisans are aware of the things used in the rituals, but they are merely the suppliers and lack ritual expertise. Rituals from the higher caste are gradually being adopted by other castes. Traditionally, only upper-class homemakers had the onus of performing these rituals, as only certain classes could afford them. Nowadays, rituals interrupt the daily chores which is overlooked as that is not considered work.

This demonstrates the agency women have in households to decide how much money should go for rituals. Women earn money by doing odd manual jobs that pay very less or work in the fields, these women are also expected to give labour to rituals. Traditionally, rituals were performed by domestic women who were not required to work; instead, they were responsible for marriage, childbirth, and childrearing. These days, rituals are observed in homes where the elders choose to preserve their customs rather than lose them, therefore they make continuous efforts in imparting this knowledge to their children.

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[15] **गाँव में बायाँ और घणी ए म्हारी गोरल सेवरा**

बाई रेखा बाई री होड न होये, मोनु बाई री होड न होये,

रुची बाई री होड न होये, म्हारी गुड़िया बाई न होये

पानड़ल्याँ पहुंचाई म्हारी गोरल सेवरा

Gaanv mai baayaan aur ghani, e mhari goral sevaraa

Baai Rekha baai ri hod na hoye, Monu Baai ri hod na hoye

Ruchi Baai ri hod na hoye, mhari Gudiya Baai ri hod na hoye

Paanadlyaan pancha e mhari goral sevaraa

This is an example of how devotees are named in the song.

Conclusion

The increase in the impact of visual culture and digital media has led to wide spread acceptance of *Gangaur* and its popularity is bringing to it, visibility in public space. Photographs, videos, and social media representations circulate idealized images of the festival, standardizing certain aesthetics and narratives while making the celebration accessible to audiences beyond its traditional communities. State-sponsored cultural events and tourism initiatives have also contributed to framing *Gangaur* as a symbol of Rajasthani identity, encouraging inclusive participation and public celebration.

Thus, *Gangaur*'s journey from in-house observances to community-wide festival reflects broader social changes in caste relations, gender roles, and modes of cultural transmission. While the festival continues to draw upon its traditional rituals and folk repertoire, its contemporary forms reveal an ongoing negotiation between continuity and change, intimacy and spectacle, and inherited practice and public performance. It also puts certain people in charge of defining what Rajasthani culture and *Gangaur* is, without taking into account the community's perspective.

Furthermore, the focus of this paper is confined to a single village, which, while offering rich ethnographic detail, inherently limits the generalizability of the findings. *Gangaur's* manifestations vary widely across different regions, and thus, this research represents a localized perspective rather than a comprehensive overview of the festival's diverse expressions.

Note: The primary study and ethnographic fieldwork was conducted in Rajasthan by Ritu Jangid

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