

**THE EVOLUTION OF KHASI MUSIC : A STUDY OF THE
CLASSICAL CONTENT**

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CONCLUSION

This chapter recounts and re-examines the findings of the subject of study. To begin with, one of the essential elements of the work is the distinction between Khasi Folk Music and Khasi Traditional Music. Traditional Music both in the religious and non-religious context has been studied to reflect on the elements of classicism. In fact, it is the prevalence of a well-defined rhythmic pattern in the Traditional Music that has highlighted the various factors which form the classical content. Khasi Traditional Music, unlike Folk Music, has been found to contain both the accented beats or stresses and the unaccented beats or off-beats and also the lesser stressed or weak beats or accent.

The essence in the exploration of the classical content also lies in the invention of new terms and terminology in the Khasi Rhythmic System. In fact, what is most significant in the work is the technical analysis of the music beats based on the Khasi Rhythmic Pattern. This has proven the fact that Khasi Traditional Music is classical not because it is measured through any yardstick as specified in Chapter-V. It is

classical because of the ingredients inherent within the system. This again reflects the antiquity of *Ki Shiphew Ksing Bad Arphew Hynniew Skit* (The Ten Units of Drums and Twenty Seven Beats). New musical terms such as '*Sing Tied* (drum syllable), *Jingkdew* (signs & symbols), *Ka Shi Pyllun* (one cycle or *avartan*), etc. indicate new words incorporated into the system. These are definitely new findings and at the same time, stand as innovative steps towards creating an authentic system of Khasi Rhythmic Pattern. In the quest for invention of newer technical terms in Khasi Music, history is found to play a vital role. Even in the case of musical instruments, the historical process has proven the fact that interaction and contact had been there for many years past between the Khasi people and the people of the adjoining areas as well. For this reason, history has been highlighted as one of the salient features which has contributed towards the 'classical content'. Speaking of the rigidity of the framework, it is totally a new finding to show the prevalence of a cycle of beats or *Ka Shi Pyllun* which makes one unit of drums. The presence of the first accented beat indicated by the sign **X** and the cycle, has created the rigidity in the rhythmic pattern. The concept of the Parent Drum Beats and their variations is a work which is very technical in nature, yet most authentic in the sense that further research work on this aspect can be done and more

interpretations can be had from it. The folk character of the beats is another finding which touches on the antiquity of Khasi Traditional Music to explain more on the evolution of music and the classical content.

The finding of the *Guru Shishya Parampara* in the ethnic or local context is indeed very worthwhile. It is this aspect which has strongly supported the evolution of Khasi Traditional Music. The father teaches the art to the son or the nephew, the son to his own son and so on. In this manner, the art is inherent in the family, in the customs, the way of life; in a word, it is inherent in the tradition itself. This has made Khasi Traditional Music part of the tradition of the people and the society. A person in this context can learn and also be taught. This is the essence of Khasi Traditional Music which contains the elements of 'classicism' in it.

Speaking of the tradition which is handed down from generation to generation, the art of music or the art of the crafting of musical instruments does not necessarily remain confined within the same family. A teacher teaches the trainees, his nieces, nephews and others. It is in this light that the concept of native state patronage or patronage of the *Syiem* under *Ka Sad Ka Sunon* has been a necessary factor for the development of the drum beats and the use of the

musical instruments. Any performer of Traditional Music finds a platform for his art at the annual rally or festival which takes place at the *ling Sad* (Religious House) situated at Smit. This patronage however should not be understood as the creation of temple music or court music as in other parts of India. In fact, native state patronage has its root in the socio-political structure of the Khasis which has been previously highlighted. The socio-political themes have influenced the music of the people. The *Syiem* patronises music because the part played by music in the making of the *Hima* is central to the core. Music explains that the *Bakhraw*, the *Basan*, the *Lyngdoh*, the *Sohblei* and others have their own roles within the *Hima* associated with the use of the male drum. Music also tells of the role of the *Syiem* and the *Syiem Sad* with the use of the female drum. In fact, no ritual and dance form can become complete in the absence of music. Therefore, the growth of music at the level of the *Hima* and the patronage of the *Syiem* go hand in hand.

The use and classification of Khasi Musical Instruments has also helped to highlight the classical content. In fact, a study of musical instruments can offer prospects and immense scope that new or even rare musical instruments can be identified. Their classification and their influence on the growth of music can also herein be exposed. Even the

rhythmic pattern of *Ka Padiah* alone can offer tremendous room for further research work. *Ka Padiah* develops differently on the religious and non-religious beats. The factors leading to this aspect are varied and need an intensive study. Even Pure Khasi Folk Vocal Music also develops on certain drum beats which I have discussed in the form of the beats used for Khasi Folk Vocal Music alone, more precisely, for ballads. This subject of study has laid more stress on the rhythmic pattern of Khasi Music than on the melodic aspect. This explains that instrumental music has been focused. The area in Folk Vocal Music and the beats used therein is still unexplored. In fact, this is also a broad area which offers tremendous scope of research for other scholars. The question to be considered is whether Folk Vocal Music or Ballads based on certain drum beats can also attain the classical form or not. This means finding the system prevalent in Vocal Music based on certain drum beats which also have a rhythmic pattern.

We can say that despite being the first work of its kind, this study has been able to highlight the prospects and the scope of the work. The dying art forms of *Ka Sharati*, *Ka Shawiang*, etc. can also be treated as broad areas of new research work. The concept of dance vis-à-vis music from the technical point of view is another aspect for research. In conclusion, this research work, however scanty it may be,

has attempted to go deep into the salient features inherent in Khasi Traditional Music to the best of its ability. This research work has tried to indicate other art forms associated with Khasi Traditional Music which can lead to further research work.