

## 23/24 Contemporary Issues in Sound Art

### **Sound Used in Indigenous Tribal Rituals**

My essay will explore how sound is used in indigenous tribal rituals.

Without being enslaved to the continuous development of a technological future and a world where fortune rules and poverty suffers, Indigenous People retain their own rich identity in which they can roam the world in a free spirit.

### **Annotated Bibliography**

#### Text 1

Emotional dimensions of ritual music among the Kotas, a South  
Indian Tribe

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/852864?seq=3>

“early on I made the clumsy mistake of asking whether a particular funeral was ‘Jolly’...”No”, I was told, “it was tragic.” Knowing that Kotas plays music and dance at funerals I had made a simplistic and erroneous inference. I clearly had something to learn”. p380-p381

To question an alternative perspective to a situation because of the expected change in culture would indicate so here however to be direct implying singing and dancing at a funeral makes it ‘Jolly’ deemed to be a fault she explained she ‘clearly had something to work on.’.

“Kota villages are electrified to some extent; a few homes are also equipped with phones. A number of persons own televisions, cassette tape players, and a few even possess automobiles. Although most of my companions and consultants in the village could not

readily conceive of my life in the United States, many were well aware of events in the wider world around them.” p383

I naively assumed all indigenous people’s perspective of the world couldn’t comprehend or be ‘aware of events in wider world around them’ as I believed they were alienated from technology however discovering that ‘Kota villages are electrified to some extent’ shows the power of enslavement we as humans suffer from as we immerse ourself in technologically.

“Day to day musical life in the Nigiris and Kota villages resembles that in other parts of India in that all have access to musical selections of All-India Radio.”

“Tamil film music is always a favourite. Men and women often base new songs on melodies of popular film songs” p383

I want to categorise the Indigenous Tribal People into two groups 1) those who have been exposed to technology and 2) those who are alienated from technology. The purpose of this experiment is to see the difference in how sound is used in indigenous tribal people’s rituals.

“among the Kotas is confined to a double-reed aerophone of conical bore called the kol. This primarily outdoor instrument is accompanied by two contrastingly pitched cylinder drums called par, which play interlocking patterns, and a lead frame drum, the tabatk. Kol music, though occasionally performed for ad hoc celebrations, is largely delimited to particular times during mortuary and worship ceremonies. In the sense it is not ‘everyday’ feature of Kota musical life.” p383

For a ritual to be a ritual it must take place “In the sense it is not ‘everyday’”. Rituals are obscure behaviours happening in a repetitive manner with multipurpose results.

“Kotas once performed music for other communities on a regular basis in return for goods or services. They now play at Tamil and

Badaga events only occasionally; they generally paid for these services.” p383

For music to be held on such a high pedestal as a culture for survival means music in Kota is a way of life. Passed from generation to generation music has a rich significance, there will be musical talent in the blood of the people of Kota.

“Unlike most other Indian communities, Kotas do not perform for weddings, child naming, or other life cycle ceremonies (other than the funeral)” p383-p384

For a culture to have strict rules that are obeyed thus for example, Kota ‘do not perform for...life cycle ceremonies (other than the funeral) indicates again how music is a way of life for the Kota people.