



# War, Viraha, Folk Feminine Consciousness and Pingal Poetics in Contemporary Haryanvi Ragni Tradition

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## Abstract

The present research article critically examines selected contemporary Haryanvi Ragnis from the *Avikavani* corpus authored by Anand Kumar Ashodhiya, with particular reference to Ragni titled as धोखा चीन का – गलवान घाटी, आज्या राखी बंधाज्या भाई, शादी में भात रस्म, मेरे तन की ढेरी हो ली – विरह, कदे आज्या याद तेरी, असली दर्द, खेतड़ – दोचश्मी, निशाना, तोताचश्मी, करवा चौथ पै प्यार की पतंग, and फौजी फ़ौजण दोचश्मी. The study investigates how these compositions collectively construct a multidimensional folk discourse around nationalism, military sacrifice, agrarian ethics, ritual collectivism, conjugal devotion, feminine emotionality, psychological longing, betrayal consciousness, and regional cultural identity within the oral-performative framework of the Haryanvi Saang-Ragni tradition.

Employing an interdisciplinary methodological framework grounded in oral tradition studies, Pingal prosody, folk-performance theory, feminist folklore criticism, cultural semiotics, and socio-psychological literary analysis, the article argues that these Ragnis represent a sophisticated contemporary evolution of Haryanvi folk poetics rather than merely localized entertainment-oriented verse. The selected corpus demonstrates how regional oral literature transforms lived social experiences into culturally resonant poetic structures through disciplined mātrā architecture, refrain systems, dialogic cadence, symbolic compression, oral-musical continuity, and emotionally charged vernacular expression.

The article further establishes that Pingal Shastra functions not merely as a technical metrical framework but as an active performative mechanism sustaining emotional intensity, mnemonic continuity, dramatic progression, and collective participation within oral recitation traditions. Special emphasis has been placed upon the integration of *Veer Rasa*, *Karuna*, *Shringar-Viraha*, conjugal separation, feminine resilience, and military domesticity within orally adaptive Samamatrik structures.

The study identifies a major scholarly lacuna in contemporary Haryanvi literary criticism, particularly the absence of integrated analytical approaches combining Pingal analysis, oral-performance theory, feminist interpretation, cultural semiotics, and psychological folk aesthetics. By situating these compositions within broader frameworks of Indian folk dramaturgy, oral epistemology, regional poetics, and performative consciousness, the article positions the *Avikavani* corpus as a significant contribution to contemporary North Indian folk literature and indigenous knowledge systems.

## Keywords

Haryanvi Ragni, Pingal Shastra, Saang Tradition, Oral Literature, Folk Performance, Viraha, Veer Rasa, Feminist Folklore, Military Folk Culture, Cultural Semiotics, North Indian Folk Poetics, Regional Knowledge Systems, Oral Epistemology

## Background Study and Contextual Framework

The oral traditions of North India have historically functioned as living repositories of collective memory, emotional negotiation, ethical transmission, and performative pedagogy. Unlike manuscript-centered literary systems dependent upon textual permanence, oral traditions survive through rhythmic retention, communal participation, performative repetition, improvisational continuity, and culturally embedded recitation practices. Within this broader civilizational continuum, the Haryanvi Saang and Ragni tradition occupies a uniquely significant position because it transforms localized rural experiences into orally transmissible poetic discourse deeply rooted in agrarian consciousness, kinship ethics, military memory, ritual symbolism, and vernacular emotionality.

Haryanvi Ragni should therefore not be viewed merely as a regional song tradition. Rather, it operates as a dynamic epistemological system through which communities negotiate nationalism, emotional suffering, social obligation, labour consciousness, feminine endurance, ritual structures, and moral identity within the linguistic intimacy of regional folk culture. The oral performer in this tradition functions simultaneously as singer, narrator, philosopher, emotional mediator, and cultural archivist.

The selected Ragnis from Anand Kumar Ashodhiya's *Avikavani* corpus reveal this performative complexity with remarkable sophistication. "धोखा चीन का - गलवान घाटी" transforms geopolitical conflict into collective folk-national memory by localizing the *Galwan* Valley tragedy within emotionally accessible vernacular discourse. "आज्या राखी बंधाज्या भाई" reconstructs sibling affection through ritual symbolism and kinship morality, while "शादी में भात रस्म" documents ceremonial collectivism embedded within rural North Indian marriage structures.

Similarly, "मेरे तन की ढेरी हो ली," "कदे आज्या याद तेरी," and "असली दर्द" collectively construct a psychologically layered landscape of Viraha, emotional exhaustion, bodily collapse, and intimate longing. "खेतड़ - दोचश्मी" relocates emotional discourse into agrarian labor ethics and rural survival consciousness, whereas "निशाना" and "तोताचश्मी" engage respectively with Shringar aesthetics and emotional deception through highly localized metaphor systems. "करवा चौथ पै प्यार की पतँग" and "फौजी फ़ौजण दोचश्मी" further expand this emotional field into military domesticity, conjugal sacrifice, patriotic duty, and feminine emotional resilience.

A.K. Ramanujan observed that Indian oral traditions continuously recreate narrative meaning according to local social realities rather than preserving rigid textual fixity. This theoretical insight becomes especially relevant in understanding the *Avikavani* corpus, where contemporary anxieties surrounding war, separation, betrayal, emotional instability, agrarian uncertainty, and patriotic sacrifice are transformed into culturally intelligible folk discourse. Richard Bauman's performance-centered framework similarly clarifies that oral literature derives meaning not solely from semantic content but from situated enactment before a participatory audience. In Haryanvi Ragni, cadence, refrain, tonal emphasis, vocal pauses, and audience interaction collectively generate emotional and ethical force.

The regionalization of emotional experience also distinguishes folk narration from classical Sanskrit literary systems. Classical aesthetics frequently universalize rasa through idealized archetypes, whereas Haryanvi oral poetry grounds emotionality within concrete socio-cultural realities. The grief visible in "कदे आज्या याद तेरी" or the patriotic anguish of "धोखा चीन का - गलवान घाटी" emerges not merely as abstract poetic sentiment but as historically embodied collective experience. Consequently, oral literature becomes a medium through which regional communities process trauma, longing, kinship, sacrifice, and identity.

## Literary Review

Scholarly engagement with Indian folk literature has evolved substantially through contributions from folklore studies, oral epic theory, performance criticism, literary historiography, and cultural anthropology. Nevertheless, Haryanvi Ragni literature continues to remain critically marginalized within mainstream humanities scholarship despite its extraordinary linguistic richness, performative sophistication, and prosodic discipline. Existing studies frequently reduce Ragni either to entertainment-oriented oral verse or ethnographic folklore material, thereby overlooking its psychological depth, feminist dimensions, performative aesthetics, and technically structured Pingal architecture.

Ruth Finnegan's foundational work on oral literature established that oral compositions cannot be adequately understood through written textual frameworks alone because rhythm, repetition, pause, vocal modulation, and audience interaction constitute essential dimensions of meaning production. Such observations become especially relevant for Haryanvi Ragni traditions where emotional intensity emerges through oral-musical cadence and performative delivery.

Similarly, Stuart Blackburn demonstrated that regional oral traditions preserve collective identity by localizing historical memory into performative narrative systems. The *Avikavani* corpus clearly participates in this process by transforming military conflict, domestic ritual, agrarian labor, kinship ethics, and emotional longing into orally transmissible folk-poetic structures.

Richard Bauman's theory of verbal art as performance further illuminates the communicative architecture of Haryanvi Ragni. According to Bauman, oral narration acquires meaning through performative framing, social interaction, vocal authority, and communal reception. Such a framework becomes crucial while analysing dialogic compositions like "फौजी फ़ौजण दोचश्मी," where emotional impact depends not solely upon textual content but also upon tonal contrast, performative pauses, and alternating vocal intensities.

Within Indian literary criticism, Hazari Prasad Dwivedi and Ramchandra Shukla emphasized the civilizational significance of Lok-Sahitya as a carrier of collective consciousness and ethical imagination. Vidyanivas Mishra later expanded this discourse by foregrounding the intimate relationship between regional language systems and cultural memory. His understanding of vernacular speech as a living civilizational medium strongly aligns with the linguistic texture and emotional immediacy of Ashodhiya's Ragnis.

The feminist and psychological dimensions of Indian oral traditions have also been explored indirectly through the works of Iravati Karve and Alf Hildebeitel. Their studies demonstrated how regional retellings frequently complicate normative gender structures by embedding feminine emotional voices within localized ethical frameworks. Such insights become especially important while interpreting compositions like "मेरे तन की ढेरी हो ली," "तोताचश्मी," "करवा चौथ पै प्यार की पतंग," and "फौजी फ़ौजण दोचश्मी," where feminine subjectivity emerges as psychologically layered rather than sentimentally ornamental.

The scholarly contributions of Anand Kumar Ashodhiya toward Pingal-oriented Haryanvi literary criticism represent an important development within contemporary regional scholarship. His previously published studies concerning Haryanvi Saang-Shaili, folk-prosodic structures, Ragni aesthetics, and cultural symbolism have significantly contributed toward formalizing analytical frameworks for Haryanvi oral literature. Particularly noteworthy is his emphasis upon Pingal Shastra as a living performative science rather than a merely archival poetic system.

Despite these developments, an important scholarly lacuna persists within contemporary Haryanvi literary criticism. Integrated studies combining Pingal analysis, oral-performance theory, feminist interpretation, socio-psychological analysis, and cultural semiotics remain substantially underdeveloped. The present article therefore attempts to address this interdisciplinary gap by examining the selected *Avikavani* Ragnis simultaneously as performative, prosodic, psychological, and socio-cultural texts.

## Research Methodology

The present study adopts a qualitative, interpretative, interdisciplinary, and performance-oriented methodology grounded in textual analysis, oral tradition studies, folk-performance theory, Pingal prosody, feminist folklore criticism, cultural semiotics, and socio-psychological literary interpretation. The selected Ragnis are approached not merely as written lyrical compositions but as orally adaptive performative entities whose semantic force emerges through rhythm, tonal modulation, vocal continuity, refrain systems, performative pauses, and collective reception.

The primary corpus consists of eleven selected Ragnis from Anand Kumar Ashodhiya's *Avikavani* collection, including “धोखा चीन का - गलवान घाटी,” “आज्या राखी बंधाज्या भाई,” “शादी में भात रस्म,” “मेरे तन की ढेरी हो ली,” “कदे आज्या याद तेरी,” “असली दर्द,” “खेतड़ - दोचश्मी,” “निशाना,” “तोताचश्मी,” “करवा चौथ पै प्यार की पतंग,” and “फौजी फ़ौजण दोचश्मी.” These compositions are analysed simultaneously as literary texts, oral-performance structures, and culturally embedded emotional archives.

Close textual analysis has been employed to examine metaphor systems, symbolic structures, emotional layering, dialogic tensions, folk imagery, and socio-cultural representation. Performance theory is utilized to investigate how refrain recurrence, rhythmic continuity, oral cadence, tonal descent, and vocal emphasis contribute to collective emotional participation within Saang-oriented recitation traditions.

Feminist interpretative methodology is employed to analyse feminine emotional speech, conjugal endurance, ritual agency, betrayal consciousness, domestic labor, and psychological resilience across compositions such as “तोताचश्मी,” “करवा चौथ पै प्यार की पतंग,” and “फौजी फ़ौजण दोचश्मी.” Psychological literary analysis further assists in examining longing, abandonment anxiety, patriotic grief, humiliation, emotional dependency, relational fracture, and memory recurrence.

The study additionally incorporates cultural-semiotic interpretation in order to decode ritual objects and folk metaphors such as राखी, पतंग, खेत, दुनाळी, तिरंगा, भात, and बाँसुरी as carriers of civilizational ethics and regional symbolic consciousness.

The Pingal-oriented methodological framework involves detailed examination of *Mātrā* balance, *Guru-Laghu* sequencing, Yati placement, refrain architecture, oral cadence, *Sam-Tukānt* closure systems, tonal gravity, and performative rhythm. Oral folk literature is thus treated as a culturally embodied epistemology wherein rhythm itself functions as emotional, mnemonic, and ideological technology.

## Narrative and Literary Analysis

The selected *Avikavani* Ragnis collectively construct a multidimensional emotional universe wherein nationalism, military sacrifice, feminine endurance, agrarian ethics, ritual collectivism, emotional betrayal, conjugal devotion, and psychological longing coexist within an orally dynamic literary framework. Although each composition addresses a distinct thematic concern, all of them remain interconnected through a shared cultural grammar deeply rooted in Haryanvi folk consciousness.

“धोखा चीन का - गलवान घाटी” transforms geopolitical conflict into collective folk-national memory by translating military trauma into emotionally accessible vernacular discourse. The border ceases to remain a distant strategic abstraction and instead becomes an emotionally inhabited cultural space where sacrifice, betrayal, and patriotic grief are collectively experienced. Through compressed oral diction and Veer-Karuna synthesis, the Ragni transforms military confrontation into participatory emotional nationalism.

In contrast, “आज्या राखी बंधाज्या भाई” reconstructs sibling affection through ritual-cultural symbolism. Raksha Bandhan emerges not merely as ceremonial practice but as an emotional reaffirmation of kinship continuity and mutual protection. The recurring invocation of brother-sister ethics transforms the composition into a performative articulation of familial trust, emotional dependency, and cultural obligation embedded within North Indian social structures.

“शादी में भात रस्म” documents the ceremonial collectivism of rural marriage culture. Rather than romanticizing ritual superficially, the composition reveals how kinship obligations, communal participation, ceremonial generosity, and honour structures collectively sustain social cohesion. Folk ritual here becomes a performative enactment of collective belonging.

The Viraha-centered compositions “मेरे तन की ढेरी हो ली,” “कदे आज्या याद तेरी,” and “असली दर्द” significantly deepen the psychological dimensions of the corpus. These Ragnis portray longing not as decorative romantic suffering but as bodily exhaustion, temporal stagnation, and emotional fragmentation. The expression: “मेरे तन की ढेरी हो ली” symbolizes corporeal collapse under emotional burden, transforming Viraha into physically embodied suffering. Similarly, “कदे आज्या याद तेरी” portrays memory as involuntary emotional recurrence disrupting ordinary existence. “असली दर्द” further intensifies this discourse by distinguishing performative sorrow from internally lived suffering, thereby foregrounding psychological authenticity within folk expression.

“खेतड़ - दोचश्मी” relocates emotional discourse into agrarian labor consciousness. The dialogic structure reveals tensions among land, livelihood, survival, labor, and relational expectation. Agricultural space becomes emotionally charged rather than economically neutral. The field itself functions as a symbolic landscape where masculinity, labor ethics, environmental uncertainty, and familial obligation intersect.

The Shringar-oriented Ragni “निशाना” exemplifies the sophisticated aesthetic capacities of Haryanvi folk poetics. The composition employs dense *Nakh-Shikh* description through localized metaphors such as: “आँख झील सी नीली सै” and “कानां धौरै दो जुल्फ़ नाग सी”. These images synthesize classical aestheticism with rural sensory familiarity. However, the composition ultimately destabilizes romantic idealization through the abrupt rupture: “नीन्द खुली जब सपना टुट्या”. The movement from sensual immersion toward dream-collapse transforms the Ragni into a meditation upon illusion, emotional longing, and transient beauty.

Conversely, “तोताचश्मी” operates as a sharp critique of emotional instability and deceptive masculinity. The female speaker’s declaration: “तेरे प्रेम की चाहना कोन्या, जित मर्जी धक्के खा” constitutes not merely romantic rejection but a culturally assertive articulation of feminine self-respect. The composition exposes performative affection, emotional inconsistency, and manipulative desire through avian and environmental metaphors such as “सुवे की ज्यूँ फिरै चाखता” and “भँवरे की ज्यूँ मंडराता.” Folk poetry here becomes a medium of socio-emotional resistance.

“करवा चौथ पै प्यार की पतँग” synthesizes ritual devotion, conjugal intimacy, and patriotic accommodation within an emotionally layered framework. The symbolic “पतँग” functions as an image of relational dependence sustained through emotional trust and continuity. Simultaneously, the woman’s acceptance of military duty transforms private suffering into participatory nationalism.

Finally, “फौजी फ़ौजण दोचश्मी” extends this emotional terrain through dialogic conflict between personal longing and national obligation. The alternating voices of *Fauji* and *Faujan* create dramatic tension between emotional intimacy and patriotic discipline. The line: “देश ते बढकै कुछ भी कोन्या” stands in direct emotional contrast to: “तेरी मरजी तूँ जाणै पर मैं तो तेरी हो ली”

This dialogic juxtaposition produces one of the most psychologically layered representations of military domesticity within contemporary Haryanvi folk literature.

Collectively, these Ragnis demonstrate that contemporary Haryanvi oral poetry is capable of negotiating nationalism, emotional trauma, ritual culture, gendered experience, agrarian uncertainty, and psychological complexity within a sophisticated performative framework.

## Pingal Analysis

The selected *Avikavani* corpus demonstrates a remarkably disciplined yet orally adaptive engagement with Pingal Shastra. Despite thematic diversity, the Ragnis collectively maintain strong *Mātrā*-consciousness, oral cadence stability, refrain continuity, Yati balance, and performative rhythmic coherence characteristic of mature Haryanvi Saang-oriented prosody.

Most of these compositions operate within variants of *Lavani-Mishrit Dirgha Samamatrik Chaubola* structures wherein *Charan* distribution generally ranges between approximately twenty-six and thirty *Matras*. Such metrical flexibility permits emotional expressiveness without disturbing rhythmic discipline. The *Yati* frequently appears around the fourteenth or sixteenth *Mātrā*, producing controlled oral suspension before terminal rhyme closure.

In “निशाना,” the line: “लौंग तेरी का लशकारा, || चमकै कानां की बाळी” illustrates mathematically balanced pause placement wherein the Yati intensifies aesthetic anticipation before the rhyming tail segment. The composition additionally employs compressed internal rhyme clusters such as “धड़कै-रड़कै-जड़कै-तड़कै,” thereby generating rapid acoustic circulation suitable for Shringar-oriented emotional acceleration.

Similarly, “तोताचश्मी” utilizes imperative rhyme closures including “जा,” “खा,” “फ़ना,” and “चढ़ा,” producing sharp tonal conclusiveness appropriate for emotionally resistant speech. The refrain: “तेरे प्रेम की चाहना कोन्या, जित मर्जी धक्के खा” functions simultaneously as rhythmic anchor, emotional assertion, and mnemonic device within oral recitation.

The *Viraha*-centered Ragnis employ softer phonetic continuity and elongated vowel cadences to sustain emotional melancholy. Refrain systems in “मेरे तन की ढेरी हो ली” and “कदे आज्या याद तेरी” generate recursive emotional pressure through repetitive tonal descent. Such oral recurrences reproduce the cyclical temporality of longing itself.

The dialogic structures of “खेतड़ - दोचश्मी” and “फौजी फ़ौजण दोचश्मी” reveal particularly sophisticated prosodic engineering. Character alternation requires rhythmic redistribution without disturbing the underlying Laya. Conversational pauses, tonal counterpoints, and alternating emotional densities collectively produce dramatic performative fluidity characteristic of advanced Saang-Shaili traditions.

“करवा चौथ पै प्यार की पतँग” demonstrates remarkable *Sam-Tukānt* discipline through recurring closures such as “भरमाइये ना,” “जाइये ना,” “जगाइये ना,” and “हिलाइये ना.” These negative imperative endings generate emotional pleading while simultaneously stabilizing oral rhythm.

The corpus further reveals strong deployment of oral-musical Alankars including *Upama*, *Rupak*, *Anuprāsa*, and *Dhvani*. Images such as “अमर बेल ज्युँ तरु लटक ज्यौँ,” “आँख झील सी नीली,” and “झड़ में कोयल काळी” derive emotional force not merely from semantic beauty but from phonetic fluidity and performative recitability.

Importantly, *Pingal* within these compositions functions not as decorative classical residue but as the structural nervous system of oral literature itself. Rhythm becomes emotional architecture; *Yati* regulates psychological hesitation; refrain systems preserve memory; cadence intensifies *rasa*; and oral-musical compression transforms localized speech into collectively participatory poetic experience.

## Discussion

The selected *Avikavani* Ragnis collectively demonstrate that contemporary Haryanvi folk literature possesses extraordinary thematic elasticity, emotional sophistication, and performative depth. These compositions move decisively beyond entertainment-centered folk expression and establish Ragni as a serious literary medium capable of negotiating nationalism, military sacrifice, ritual culture, emotional trauma, agrarian ethics, feminine consciousness, and psychological complexity.

One of the most significant contributions of this corpus lies in its integration of feminine emotional subjectivity within orally performative frameworks. Women in these Ragnis are neither passive symbols nor ornamental presences. Rather, they articulate longing, betrayal, ritual faith, emotional labor, resistance, conjugal endurance, and psychological exhaustion with remarkable cultural authority and emotional density.

Simultaneously, male voices are frequently burdened by warfare, agricultural responsibility, labor anxiety, national duty, or emotional inadequacy. Such representation prevents simplistic moral polarization and instead constructs a nuanced emotional landscape wherein both masculine and feminine subjectivities negotiate social obligation and personal suffering.

The corpus additionally reveals how folk traditions continue functioning as regional knowledge systems preserving emotional histories frequently ignored by formal historiography. Military families, agrarian distress, ceremonial obligations, kinship anxiety, patriotic grief, and relational fragmentation all receive collective articulation through orally transmitted poetic structures.

From a prosodic perspective, these Ragnis strongly challenge assumptions that folk poetry operates without technical discipline. The rigorous deployment of Mātrā balance, Yati engineering, refrain continuity, tonal descent, oral cadence, and performative pause structures confirms the continuing vitality of Pingal consciousness within living oral traditions.

The study further demonstrates that oral literature cannot be adequately understood through purely textual methodologies. Meaning in Haryanvi Ragni emerges through the convergence of rhythm, sound, gesture, cadence, audience interaction, emotional participation, and performative memory. Consequently, the selected corpus must be approached as a multidimensional performative phenomenon rather than merely regional lyrical expression.

## Conclusion

The present study establishes that the selected *Avikavani* Ragnis authored by Anand Kumar Ashodhiya constitute a major contemporary contribution to Haryanvi folk poetics, oral-performance aesthetics, Pingal-centered literary discourse, and regional cultural consciousness. Through compositions such as “धोखा चीन का - गलवान घाटी,” “आज्या राखी बंधाज्या भाई,” “शादी में भात रस्म,” “मेरे तन की ढेरी हो ली,” “कदे आज्या याद तेरी,” “असली दर्द,” “खेतड़ - दोचश्मी,” “निशाना,” “तोताचश्मी,” “करवा चौथ पै प्यार की पतंग,” and “फौजी फ़ौजण दोचश्मी,” the *Avikavani* corpus demonstrates the extraordinary capacity of the Haryanvi Ragni tradition to absorb contemporary realities while simultaneously preserving indigenous performative structures and regional memory systems.

The article has shown that these Ragnis collectively negotiate an extensive emotional and socio-cultural terrain encompassing nationalism, military sacrifice, ritual collectivism, agrarian struggle, feminine endurance, conjugal longing, emotional betrayal, and psychological fragmentation. Unlike purely textual literary systems, the Ragni tradition transforms such experiences into orally participatory emotional events through cadence, refrain, vocality, tonal gravity, and performative repetition. Meaning therefore emerges not solely through semantic structure but through the interaction of rhythm, Yati distribution, oral-musical continuity, and communal reception.

The study further demonstrates that *Pingal Shastra* remains deeply embedded within contemporary Haryanvi oral literature. The sophisticated deployment of *Samamatrik* structures, refrain architecture, *Guru-Laghu* sequencing, oral cadence, and dialogic rhythmicity confirms that Haryanvi folk prosody represents a living performative science rather than an obsolete classical inheritance. Emotional intensity within these compositions is inseparable from prosodic engineering itself.

Equally important is the feminist significance of the corpus. The female voices within these Ragnis articulate vulnerability, devotion, resistance, emotional exhaustion, ritual faith, and self-respect with remarkable psychological depth. Their speech constructs a regional ethics of emotional endurance that complicates simplistic binaries between submission and empowerment.

Ultimately, the *Avikavani* corpus reaffirms that Haryanvi oral traditions remain intellectually sophisticated cultural systems capable of preserving collective memory, negotiating historical anxieties, and generating regionally grounded literary modernity. Future scholarship may further explore comparative *Pingal* frameworks across North Indian oral traditions, feminist reinterpretations of *Saang* performance cultures, oral-musical cognition, and the relationship between folk prosody and collective emotional psychology within contemporary rural societies.

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