



# A STUDY ON MEMBRANOPHONIC INSTRUMENTS FOUND ON THE TERRACOTTA TEMPLES' WALLS IN WEST BENGAL

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## ABSTRACT

The late medieval terracotta temples in West Bengal are richly decorated with diverse themes, including narratives on life, moral values, societal issues, environmental aspects, cultural elements, religious beliefs, and many more. In both religious and secular narratives, the intricately carved scenes depicting musicians playing various types of musical instruments stand out and easily attract attention. This study expresses a strong interest in exploring the membranophonic instruments depicted on the temple walls. The aim is to identify the membranophonic instruments represented in different religious and secular themes. Besides, the purpose of this research is to determine whether specific membranophonic instruments were used in particular religious or social ceremonies of that era by examining the concerned narrative portrayals. In addition to a thorough formal analysis, the exploration of the narratives depicted on the carved plaques is complemented with literary references and archival images pertaining to late medieval Bengal, providing clearer insight into the concerned issues. In conclusion, these representations can be considered one of the most significant visual records that enhance our understanding of the types of membranophonic musical instruments practiced and performed in contemporary societies.

**Keywords:** Music, anaddha, membranophonic instruments, terracotta temple, late medieval period, West Bengal

## Introduction

One of the important branches of fine arts is “*Vadya*,” popularly known as Instrumental Music (Ganguly, 1962). While singing is regarded as the highest form of musical culture in India, it is thought to be incomplete without the accompaniment of instruments that provide Tala (time) and Sur (intonation). The musical instruments found in India exhibit an endless diversity, each unique in structure and aesthetic appeal. Their roles are diverse. Certain musical instruments are primarily recognized for their role in accompanying songs, compared to being showcased as solo instruments. Examples include *sarangi*, *tabla*, *pakhawaj*, and *tambura*. On the other hand, some musical instruments are highly regarded for their use as solo instruments, such as the *vina*, *sitar*, *sarode*, and *bansuri* (Fyzee-Rahamin, 1990). The Sastras classify the musical instruments of India under four main categories (Roychaudhuri, 2007). These categories include *Tata* (chordophones), *Susira* (aerophones), *Anaddha* or *Avanaddha* (membranophones), and *Ghana* (idiophones) (Ganguly, 1962).

The present study expresses a profound eagerness to work on the late medieval terracotta temples of West Bengal, since the narratives depicted on the walls of these temples can be considered a great source for gaining visual knowledge about the traditional musical instruments that were prevalent in the late medieval Bengali culture and religious practices. These temples are abundantly decorated with carved terracotta plaques, and sometimes with lime-mortar (stucco) and soft *phool pathar* (stone). Various eminent authors acknowledged that the narratives carved on the walls of these temples provide a visual landscape of the then-contemporary society and have certain narratives and messages to communicate and stories to tell (Bandyopadhyay, 1984; Bandyopadhyay, 2016; Chakraborty, 2012; Haque, 2014 & Sanyal, 1968). The narrative potential of the portrayals is immense as they pertain to a diversity of themes. One can find narratives on life, values, society, environment, culture, religions, space, and many more. In both religious and secular narratives, the depiction of a vast array of musical instruments easily attracts attention. Among the large number of different types of musical instruments, the paper mainly concentrates only on those musical instruments that fall into the *Anaddha* or *Avanaddha* (membranophones) category depicted on the temples' walls. The objective is to identify the membranophonic musical instruments that are found in both religious and secular themes. Music plays an

important role in cultural and social events, celebrations, and rituals. Consequently, this study also attempts to explore what types of specific membranophonic instruments were commonly used during specific ceremonies, ritualistic practices, festivals, and occasions by examining narrative depictions. The study involves both primary and secondary data. The primary data mainly consists of the portrayals on the walls of the terracotta temples located in West Bengal. The secondary sources include books, journals, published and unpublished theses that have discussed the concerned issue. An in-depth critical analysis of the concerned depictions has been supplemented with literary references and archival images that directly or indirectly talk about late medieval Bengal to facilitate a clear understanding of the intended issues.

### ***Anaddha vadya* or membranous percussion drums that are represented on the terracotta Temples' walls in West Bengal**

The instruments categorized as *anaddha* are typically hollow and constructed from materials such as wood, metal, or clay. These instruments possess one or more openings that are covered with a piece of processed animal hide, forming the drumhead. The sound is produced by striking, rubbing, or blowing against the membrane stretched over the drumhead, either with the help of a stick or with the hands. The instruments are primarily used to provide rhythmic accompaniment. Their purpose is twofold: To measure taal (the time cycle) and show *laya* (the tempo). In Indian music, the instruments included in *anaddha vadya* or membranous percussion drums category are *dhak*, *dhol*, *dholak*, *mridangam*, *srikhol*, *nakkara*, *damaru*, *baya-tabla*, *dafli*, etc. (Mishra, 2015). The depiction of musicians with various types of membranophonic musical instruments is abundantly noted on the terracotta temples' walls located in West Bengal. The subsequent sections will explore these instruments. It has been observed that musicians depicted with membranophonic instruments include deities, mythological characters, and common (human) musicians, all of whom will be discussed here.

On the walls of many Brick temples in West Bengal, portrayals of *dhakis* playing *dhaks* are often noted (Figures 1 & 2). The traditional drummers who play the *dhaks* are known as *dhakis*. The instrument is a large hollow wooden barrel-shaped percussion instrument, while the *jaidhak* is a bigger version of the *dhak*. Both instruments are quite familiar to the local populace in Bengal. During the Durga Puja festival, it is common to see a *dhaki* playing the *dhak* with sticks. Despite having a leather covering on both sides, only one side of the *dhak* is used for playing. In the portrayals, the instrument is usually seen hanging from the shoulder while playing. For instance, an intricately carved terracotta plaque found on the wall of the Lakshmi Janardan Temple (1739 AD) in Ghurisha, Birbhum, could be mentioned in this regard (Figure 3). The plaque depicts a *dhaki* involved in playing a *dhak*, which is hanging from the shoulder. It seems that the instrument is embellished with feathers. In addition to that, in a panel above the triple-arch entrance of the Lakshmi Janardana temple (circa 18<sup>th</sup> century) at Surul in Birbhum (Figure 4) and in the central arch panel of the Shiva Temple – 3 (1769 AD), Uchkaran, Birbhum (Figure 5), a *dhaki* is also seen engaged in playing a *dhak* during the battle between Rama-Ravana. Here too, the *dhaks* are decorated with bird feathers on their canes.



Figure 1: *Dhaki*; Pancha Ratna Temple (1832 AD), Bankati, Bardhaman, West Bengal

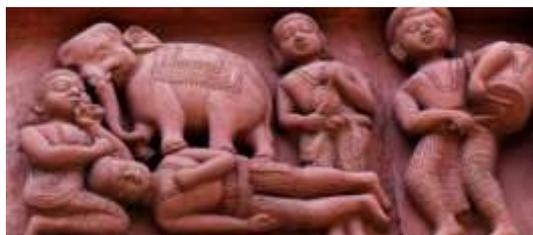


Figure 2: A *dhaki* is playing a *dhak* with two sticks along with a *kanshi* player; the scene related to Kumbhakarna's sleep break; Nava Ratna Raghunath Jiu Temple (1810 AD), Alangiri, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal



Figure 3: *Dhaki*, Lakshmi Janardan Temple (1739 AD), Ghurisa, Birbhum, West Bengal



Figure 4: A segment of the scene related to the battle between Rama and Ravana; Lakshmi-Janardan Temple (circa 18<sup>th</sup> century), Surul, Birbhum, West Bengal

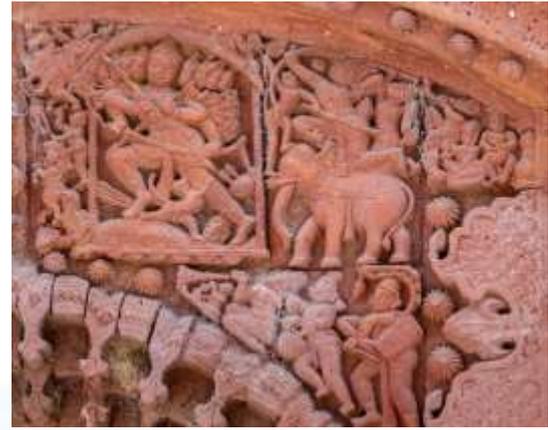


Figure 5: A segment of the scene related to the battle between Rama and Ravana; a collective of musicians is depicted engaged in playing the *dhak*, *nagara*, *shehnai* and *kansar* to enhance the war cry; Shiva Temple-3(1769 AD), Uchkaran, Birbhum, West Bengal

Apart from the *dhak*, the *dhol* and *dholak* are also widely portrayed on the terracotta temples' walls of West Bengal. The main difference between a *dhak* and a *dhol* is that one side of a *dhak* is played, while both sides of a *dhol* are played. Both the *dhol* and the *dholak* are double-headed drums, where the *dhol* is a sort of *dholak* with a relatively large barrel, played by hanging from the shoulder. The drum is usually played with sticks, while a *dholak* is smaller and is often played with hands. The *dholak* has been present in India since the Buddhist period. According to Amir Khusrau, its size was progressively increased in the 14<sup>th</sup> century AD (Veer, 1983). The two sides of *dhol* are commonly tuned to a common indefinite tone, producing a sound that is both powerful and grand. This instrument is commonly used to announce public information, community mobilization, and lead processions and ceremonies (Mitra, 2007). It has been observed that the *dhol* is more common than the *dhak* in temple decoration. Many temples have portrayals of the *dhol* and *dholak*. Examples include the temples at Surul in Birbhum (Figure 6,7), the Ananta Vasudeva temple (1679 AD) at Bansberia in Hooghly (Figure 8), the Radha Damodar temple (circa 19<sup>th</sup> century) at Hadal Narayanpur in Bankura (Figure 9), and so on. However, in addition to male drummers, female drummers along with *dholak* are also seen in the terracotta temples' decorations (Figure 10).



Figure 6: The terracotta panel above the entrance shows a drummer playing a *dholak* accompanied by musicians with *nakkara*, *ghanta* and *shehnai*. It seems the figures on this panel are wearing distinctively European attire; the eastern (left) *deul*, Jora Shiva Temple (1831 AD), Surul, Birbhum, West Bengal



Figure 7: The central terracotta panel above the entrance shows a group of musicians with different types of musical instruments that including *dholak*, *shehnai*, and *violin*; the *deul* temple (1861 AD) at Paschim Para, Surul, Birbhum, West Bengal



Figure 8: Two dancers are performing *Gaudiya Nritya*, accompanied by musicians playing a *dhol* and a *shehnai*; Ananta Vasudeva temple (1679 AD); Bansberia, Hooghly, West Bengal



Figure 9: A musician playing a *dhol*; Radha Damodar temple of Chhoto Taraf (circa 19<sup>th</sup> century), Hadal Narayanpur, Bankura, West Bengal



Figure 10: Two ladies with *dholaks* with European hair-style, Dewanji temple (mid-19<sup>th</sup> century), Hetampur, Birbhum, West Bengal

In addition to the *dhak-dhol*, the drummers are playing *mridangam*, *khol* and *srikhol*, which are widely seen on terracotta plaques. The *mrindangam* and the *khol*, also referred to as *srikhol* by the Vaishnavas, are two very similar drums. Although the word *mridangam* means the body of clay, today's *mridangam* mostly has a wooden body, whereas the *khol* continues to be made of burnt clay (Bhattacharya & Chakrabarti, 2000). The *mridangam* is a double-headed, angular-barrel-shaped, leather-headed drum with a slight difference between the two ends (Mitra, 2007). However, *khol* is also a *two-faced*, asymmetrical barrel-shaped (like myrobalan) *drum with* a hollow earthen body (Roy, 2004). Although it is a variant of the *mridangam*, it differs in shape and size. The drumheads at both ends of *khol*, one far smaller than the other, whereas the *mridangam* has a more symmetrical, barrel shape. The right face of the *khol*, which is three to five inches in diameter, has a high pitch and produces a metallic sound, whereas the left face, which is six to eight inches in diameter, produces a lower bass sound (Kasliwal, 2006).

In the portrayals, the *mridangam* and *khol* or *srikhol* are invariably seen dangling around the neck of the player with the help of a strap, and the two heads of these instruments are played with both hands, fingertips, and wrists. Drummers are usually seen playing the *mridangam* with classical songs, bhajans, kirtans, and all forms of dance, whereas the use of *srikhol* is mainly seen in Vaishnava processions. The terracotta plaques carved with an *mridangam* player are found in almost all the terracotta temples in Bishnupur, Bankura, West Bengal (Figures 11 & 12). In the portrayals related to *Nagar Sankirtan*, a sort of road rally with the devotees singing the hymns called Kirtana with the beats of *srikhol* and cymbals, often seen in the Bengal temples' decoration (Figures 13, 14 & 15). A panel found in the Radha Damodar temple (circa early 19<sup>th</sup> century) at Hadal Narayanpur village in Bankura district, West Bengal, most probably depicts that Sri Chaitanya Deva has attained *Bhava samadhi* during *Naam Sankirtan*. He is likely lying with his head on Nityananda's lap. Four cymbal players and two *srikhol* players are shown holding their instruments aloft, including a *ranasingha* player (Figure 16). In addition to the *Naam Sankirtan*, a *srikhol* player is also depicted in a different kind of narrative portrayal where he is trying to please an aristocrat by playing the *srikhol* (Figure 17). The aristocrat is seated on a couch holding a gun, and three female singers are performing in front of him. The singers are shown with one hand placed on their ears and the other hand stretched above their heads.



Figure 11: One gopini is playing a mandira with dancing Krishna and another is playing mridangam; Madan Mohan Temple (1694 AD), Bishnupur, West Bengal



Figure 12: Mridangam players and a dancer; Madan Mohan Temple (1694 AD), Bishnupur, West Bengal



Figure 13: Terracotta panel depicting Chaitanya Deva with his followers dancing with raised hands, likely chanting God's name (Naam Sankirtan), accompanied by srikhol, shehnai, and cymbal players; Jora Shiva Western Temple (circa 19<sup>th</sup> century), Supur, Birbhum, West Bengal.



Figure 14: The panel depicts Chaitanya Deva and his followers chanting God's name (Naam Sankirtan), accompanied by musicians playing the srikhol, ramsinga, and kartal; Gopinath Temple, Dashghara, Hooghly, West Bengal.



Figure 15: Depiction of Naam Sankirtan, featuring Shri Chaitanya Deva and his followers dancing with raised hands while chanting the Lord's name. They are accompanied by srikhol and cymbal players; Radha Damodar Temple (circa 19th century), Mejo Taraf, Hadal-Narayanpur, Bankura, West Bengal.

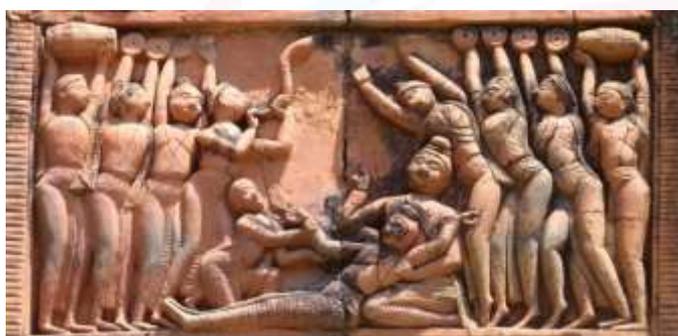


Figure 16: Chaitanya Deva is lying unconscious on the ground in divine ecstasy, with followers attending to him; Radha Damodar temple (circa early 19th century) of Choto Taraf, Hadal-Narayanpur, Bankura, West Bengal



Figure 17: A gentry is enjoying the performance of dancers and musicians, accompanied by attendants; Radha Govinda Temple (1786), Antpur, Hooghly, West Bengal

The *baya-tabla* is another well-known musical instrument. It consists of a pair of single-headed drums that are played with the fingers and palms. The *baya* (meaning “left”), also called *dugi*, is played with the left hand, measuring about 25 cm (10 inches) in height, and the drum face is about 20 cm (8 inches) in diameter. The *daya* (meaning “right”) is also referred to individually as the *tabla*, played with the right hand. It measures approximately 25 cm (10 inches) in height and 15 cm (6 inches) in width (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2025 & Fyzee-Rahamin, 1990). The instrument is typically an accompanying instrument and played in pairs (Figure 18); however, sometimes it is also played as a solo instrument (Figure 19). Musicians play the instrument either squatting on the floor or standing. A plaque of the Char-Bangla temple (north) (1755 AD) at Baranagar, Murshidabad in West Bengal, shows a king or zamindar enjoying the performance of a baiji (a professional dancing girl); next to the dancer, a musician is engaged in playing *baya-tabla* (Figure 20). Female musicians playing the *dugi-tabla* are also seen in the portrayals. A set of five vertical panels in the Lakshmi Janardana temple (circa 1844) at Debipur, Burdwan in West Bengal, shows four dancers along with a female figure with a *baya-tabla* in the central panel (Figure 21).



Figure 18: A collective of four celestial musicians, identified as *Gandharvas* and *Kinnaras*, is playing the *baya-tabla*, *vina*, *violin*, and *srikhol*; Radha Damodar Temple (circa 19th century), Joypur, West Bengal



Figure 19: A male *baya-tabla* player; Gopaleshwar Shiva Temple (1832 AD), Bankati village, Paschim Bardhaman, West Bengal



Figure 20: A gentry is enjoying the performance of a court dancer and court musicians with smoking hookah accompanied by an attendant; Char-Bangla temple (north) (1755 AD), Baranagar, Murshidabad, West Bengal



Figure 21: Four dancers and a female musician with a *baya-tabla*; Lakshmi Janardan Temple (circa 1844 AD; Debipur, Burdwan, West Bengal

*Nakkara* is a traditional percussion instrument and one of the oldest in India (Mishra, 2015 & Prasad, 1987). References to this instrument are found in ancient texts such as the *Rigveda* (47-29-30-31), *Vajsaneyi Samhita* (2955-6-7), *Kathak Samhita* (345); the *Samgit Ratnakar* (part — III), *vadyodhyay*, (page 483), etc. (Prasad, 1987). In addition, it has often been mentioned in classical Bangla literature and is still popular today. In olden times, it was called the *Dunduvi* (Farina, 2019). The instrument is found in various sizes. The largest variant is the *dhamsa*, the medium size is known as the *nagara*, and the smallest is referred to as the *kurkuriya* (Prasad, 1987). The body is usually made of clay or wood and is conical-shaped like a beetle nut. The opening at the top is covered with a hide (Mishra, 2015). In the portrayals, *nagara* is shown either hanging from the neck with a ribbon, placed on the ground or placed on the back of an animal, while a drummer playing with two narrow sticks held in both hands (Figures 22, 23 & 24). In the case of *dhamsa*, it is usually placed on the ground or on a platform meant for playing (Figures 25 & 26) (Prasad, 1987).

In the temples' decorations, musicians with various sizes of *nakkara* are recurrently noted. In addition, drummers are often seen simultaneously playing two same-size *nakkaras* using sticks, one held in the right hand and another held in the left. The sound of the instrument is deep and loud, majestic and imposing (Fyzee-Rahamin, 1990). A drummer is often found playing a *nakkara* in scenes related to warfare (Figures 5 & 27), hunting (Image 28), processions (Figure 24), and the proclamation of a kingdom (Figures 25 & 26), etc. It appears that it was probably used at the time of such events to send special messages, draw attention or signal danger. Other than that, its usage is also noted during a joyous event, festivals, weddings and other ceremonies where the instrument is used as an accompaniment with *shehnai* or others (Figure 29). It has been observed that *nakkara* is played exclusively by males, either in a sitting or standing posture.



Figure 22: A drummer playing a *nagara*; above the main left entrance, Radha Govinda Temple (1786 AD), Antpur, Hooghly, West Bengal



Figure 23: A man with a turban is playing two same-size *nagaras*; Jor-Bangla Temple (1655 AD), Bishnupur, West Bengal



Figure 25: A drummer is playing two equally sized large *nakkara* (*dhamsa*) with two sticks, indicating that the instrument is being played for a royal proclamation; Jor-Bangla Temple (1655 AD), Bishnupur, West Bengal



Figure 26: A large *Nakkara* is played by a drummer using two sticks to strike it; Radha Damodar temple of Chhoto Taraf (circa 19th century), Hadal Narayanpur, Bankura, West Bengal



Figure 24: The panel depicts a royal procession that includes a cavalry unit, accompanied by two gentry, one in a palanquin and the other in a horse-drawn cart. Additionally, mahouts are seen riding on elephants, while two drummers are playing *nagaras*, with one drummer seated on an elephant and the other on a camel; Char Bangla Temple (1755 AD), Baranagar, Murshidabad, West Bengal



Figure 27: A drummer is playing a *dhamsa* with two sticks in a battlefield; Base friezes on the south elevation of the Jor Bangla Temple (1655 AD), Bishnupur, West Bengal



Figure 28: Dasaratha mistakenly shoots an arrow towards Sindhu. The king went hunting in the forest located beside the Sarayu River. Upon hearing the gurgling sound of the water, he thought that an animal was drinking river water; Jor Bangla Temple (1655 AD), Bishnupur, West Bengal

The duff or *dafli* (tambourine) is another single-faced, small percussion instrument. This hand-frame musical instrument is a circular, dish-shaped drum made of a wooden frame, covered with stretched hide on one side (Fyzee-Rahamin, 1990). It is specially used during the *Holi* songs and festivals, devotional songs, and dances of common folk. The name is of Persian origin, it was called *pataha* in ancient India. It has its sculptural evidence dating from Bharhut (2nd B.C.) (Chaitanyadev 1974 & Prasad, 1987). In the portrayals on the walls of the brick temples in West Bengal, women are exclusively seen playing the instrument, either in accompaniment with other musical instruments (Figures 30 & 31) or solo (Figures 32 & 33). It is generally held in the left hand and gripped against the chest, and is played with the fingers of the right hand.



Figure 29: Ram and Sita are travelling in a palanquin, accompanied by a group of musicians playing the *nagara*, *dholak*, *cymbals*, *bugle*, and *shehnai*; the right arch panel of Sridharlal Navaratna Temple (1843 AD), De Para, Joypur, West Bengal



Figure 31: The lady in the middle is playing a *dafli*; Jora Shiva Western Temple (circa 19th century), Supur, Birbhum, West Bengal.



Figure 30: Scenes from the life of Lord Krishna (Krishna Leela); Radha Govinda Temple (1786), Antpur, Hooghly, West Bengal



Figure 32: The lady is playing a *dafli*; Lakshmi Janardan Temple (1739 AD), Ghurisa, Birbhum, West Bengal



Figure 33: A lady playing a *dafli*; Shiva Temple (circa mid-18th century) Ganpur, Birbhum, West Bengal

Apart from the above-mentioned musical instruments, another *anaddha* type of musical instrument found on the terracotta temples' walls is the *damaru*. The instrument is a small, two-headed, hourglass-shaped drum, with both ends covered with skin. It has two small lead or iron balls attached with a string and fastened around its narrow waist. When the instrument is moved rapidly in one hand, the small balls hit the skin, producing different rhythmic sounds (Roychaudhuri, 2007). The Instrument can be traced back to the Indus period. References to this instrument are found during the era of the *sutra granthas* and the epics, and it is also depicted in coins, sculptures, and paintings. In the Jataka stories, it was referred to as *dimdima* and is noted in the *Sangitaratnakara* from the 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D (Mitra, 2007 & Veer, 1983). The instrument is associated with the Hindu deity Lord Shiva. In the portrayals of the terracotta temples, the instrument is generally found in Shiva's hand. In a plaque of the Char Bangla temple at Baranagar in Murshidabad, West Bengal, Shiva is shown sitting on his mount holding a *damaru* in his right hand and a horn in the left (Figure 34). Besides, portrayals with the same theme are also seen in several temples located in Birbhum District (Figures 35 & 36). A portrayal depicts a beautifully carved figure, probably Lord Shiva in a standing position playing a *damaru* found in the Lakshmi Janardan temple at Debipur in Burdwan (Figure 37).



Figure 34: Lord Shiva on his bull; Char Bangla Temple (1755 AD), Baranagar, Murshidabad, West Bengal



Figure 35: Lord Shiva on his bull; Shiva Temple (circa mid-18<sup>th</sup> century), Ganpur, Birbhum, West Bengal



Figure 36: Lord Shiva on his bull; Raghunath Temple (1633 AD); Ghurisha, Birbhum, West Bengal



Figure 37: *Damrudhari*; Lakshmi Janardan Temple (circa 1844 AD), Debipur, Burdwan, West Bengal

## Discussion

The study found that the membranous percussion drums served primarily to offer rhythmic accompaniment. In the depictions, the *dhak* and the *dhol* are often seen as war drums and in wedding processions. It is noted that the *dhol* and the *kansi* (a brass plate struck by a wooden stick) served as accompanying instruments when the *dhak* was played. When it comes to mridangam, drummers are usually seen playing it with various dance forms, whereas the *khol* is deeply associated with Vaishnavism. The instrument is referred to as *srikhol* to musicians of the Vaishnava sect, and its use is mainly seen in *Nagar Sankirtan* (Vaishnava processions). While *baya-tabla* is often depicted as an accompanying instrument, musicians can also be seen playing it as a solo instrument. In the case of *nakkara*, depictions of musicians playing various sizes of this instrument or playing two same-size

*nakkaras* simultaneously are frequently seen on temple walls in scenes associated with warfare, hunting, processions, and the proclamation of a kingdom. It seems that the instrument was probably used during these particular events to convey special messages, draw attention or signal danger. Apart from that, its usage can also be seen during a joyous event, festivals, weddings, and other ceremonies, where the instrument has been used along with the *shehnai* or other instruments. It is important to note that men are exclusively seen playing *nakkara* in the depictions. While women are solely seen playing the duff. But, in the case of *dholak* and *dugi-tabla*, both male and female are often depicted as playing these instruments.

It appears that the musical instruments depicted on the temple walls reflect those that were prevalent during that time. References to these instruments can also be noted in several contemporary literature. Tarapada Santra (2008), a noted author, supports this notion by stating that the representations of diverse musical instruments, music and dance are found on the concerned temples' walls, a manifestation of the different musical instruments, music and various dances that used to be performed or practiced during the late medieval period. He further stated that the musical instruments found in the terracotta plaques may be compared to the musical instruments referenced in various *Mangalkavyas* of that time (p.80). The images presented below (Figures 38, 39, 40 & 41), sourced from the large work entitled "A Collection of Two Hundred and Fifty Colored Etchings Descriptive of the Manners, Customs and Dresses of the Hindoos" by Francois Baltazard Solvyns, published in 1799, exemplify this notion well. Solvyns, a Belgian artist, resided in Calcutta from 1790 to 1804. It is important to mention here that the drawings from which these two hundred and fifty colored Etchings were made were taken by him upon the spot to see and examine with his own eyes, and to delineate every object with the most minute accuracy (Miner, 1993 & Teltscher, 1995).



Figure 38: Dhak (Solvyns, 1810);  
<https://archive.org/details/11.-dhak>



Figure 39: Dhol (Solvyns, 1810);  
<https://archive.org/details/12.-dhol>



Figure 40: Nagara (Solvyns, 1810);  
<https://archive.org/details/17.-nagara>



Figure 41: Dholak (Solvyns, 1810);  
<https://archive.org/details/13.-dholak>

## Conclusion

In recent times, musicians who perform traditional instruments are increasingly rare, largely because of inadequate support and practice opportunities. Their artistry is often overlooked, and they receive minimal financial rewards. Technological advancement could be mentioned in this context. Musicians involved in traditional instruments are increasingly overshadowed by technology, as many audiences favour prerecorded sounds over authentic performances. Consequently, numerous artists have abandoned their practices. As time progresses, the majority of people will likely become increasingly unfamiliar with many traditional musical instruments due to technological advancements and the development of various sophisticated modern musical instruments. Consequently, it may be concluded that visual representations of these musical instruments found on the walls of these temples will certainly function as a significant



visual record for future generations to acquire knowledge about these traditional musical instruments and their roles in particular events during that era.

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