



Test Preparation > UPSC CSE > Practice & Strategy > Crash Course

Kota Tribe

LESSON 7 OF 7



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TRIBES IN NEWS FOR UPSC CSE PRELIMS 2018

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❖ ABOUT ME :

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TODA TRIBE

&

KOTA TRIBE











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WHY IN NEWS :


 Recently, Tribal Research Centre (TRC) in Ooty refuted the Census Directorate report that Toda and Kota dialects are headed for extinction.

About Kota Tribe :


-  Kota tribe is thought to be indigenous to the **Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu.**
-  Their name Kota was given by outsiders.
-  They call themselves Kovs.
-  The Kota tribal language known as “Kov Mant” is a very old and rude dialect of **Kannada language** and is closely related to Toda Language.
-  Kotas consider themselves to be Hindus.
-  They **do not believe in caste system.**

HISTORY & IDENTIFICATION :

-  The Kotas are one of several small communities thought to be indigenous to the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu in south India.
-  The Indian government classifies the Kotas as a Scheduled Tribe. Their name "Kota" (Kota) was given by outsiders. They call themselves Kov.
-  Although the Kotas are few in number they have wide visibility in the urbanizing Nilgiris.




Once looked down upon as servants and eaters of carrion and buffalo flesh, the Kotas have managed to succeed in a number of occupations outside their traditional domain.




They often work as head postmasters, doctors, Government employees, and bankers and in other professional positions.




Educational standards are also rising

 No doubt the Kotas' success in a modern Indian setting is somehow related to the jack-of-all-trades character they always seem to have maintained.


 By shunning service relationships with the Badagas and Todas they have also removed the source of what they considered ill treatment on the part of these two local communities.

LOCATION :





 They occupy seven villages distributed rather widely throughout the Nilgiris District.

 Each village is situated near present or former settlements of Badagas, Todas, or Kurumbas.


DEMOGRAPHY :


 By their own estimates in 1990 the Kotas number 1,500—less than one-quarter of one percent of the district population of 1981, and an even smaller percentage today.

 Of these roughly 1,500 Kotas, probably fewer than 100 live in cities outside the Nilgiri District.

-  Epidemics and other unstable health conditions—and, possibly, endogamous Marriage practices among so few people—have resulted in relatively stable population figures over the past 150 years.
-  Kota proverbs and songs indicate a strong concern for this lack of growth.
-  Present sanitary conditions and general standards of living in the village are higher than those of other tribes and are continuing to improve.
-  The population is also growing, but not dramatically.

LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION:

 Kotas speak the Kota language or Ko-v Ma-nt, a Dravidian language closely related to Toda and also having strong linguistic affiliations with very early **Tamil and Malayalam**.

 All Kotas speak Badaga and Tamil also, as historically they have had to communicate with outsiders in languages other than their own.



History and Cultural Relations :



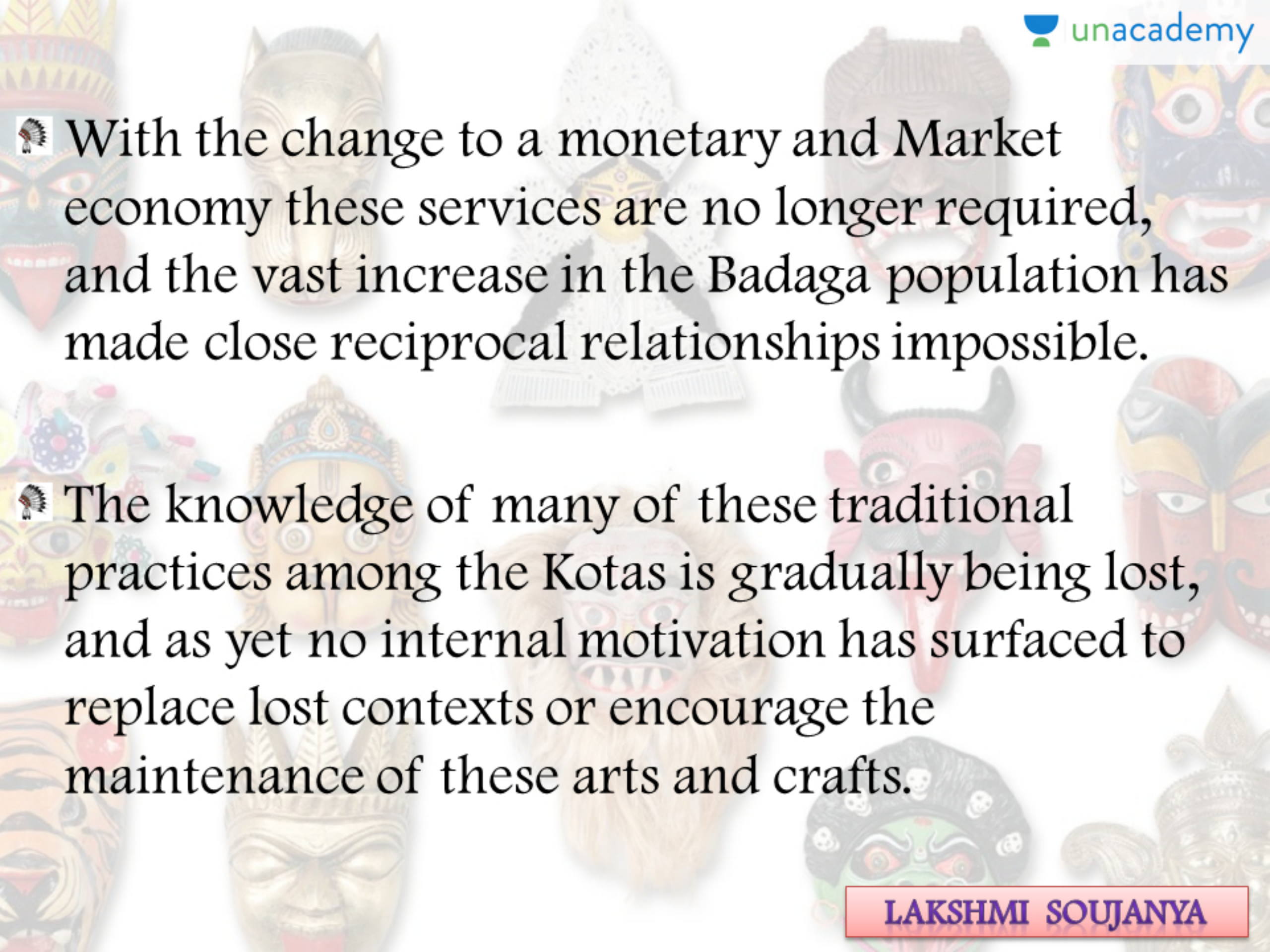
While some scholars and members of Nilgiri communities maintain that the Kotas were placed in the Nilgiris to render services for their neighbors, the Kotas believe themselves to be autochthons.



They describe a god who created the Kotas, Todas, and Kurumbas and taught them the skills they traditionally practiced in the Nilgiris.






For the neighboring Communities the Kotas provided music, iron articles and silver ornaments, baskets, pottery, and a variety of other specialized goods and services.


The background of the slide is a collage of various Indian masks, including those from Kathakali, Odissi, and other traditional Indian dance forms. The masks are in various colors and designs, some with intricate patterns and some with more abstract, stylized features. They are arranged in a way that they appear to be floating or layered over each other, creating a rich, textured background.

With the change to a monetary and Market economy these services are no longer required, and the vast increase in the Badaga population has made close reciprocal relationships impossible.


The knowledge of many of these traditional practices among the Kotas is gradually being lost, and as yet no internal motivation has surfaced to replace lost contexts or encourage the maintenance of these arts and crafts.

INDUSTRIAL ARTS :


-  Kota men have traditionally specialized in blacksmithing, silver-smithing, roof thatching, basket making, wood-and leatherworking, and musical-instrument making.
-  The skill for these crafts is often passed from father to son but almost anyone, except for priests in some cases, can do these jobs.
-  Women make pottery for domestic and ceremonial purposes.



In earlier times Kotas are said to have extracted ore from rocks quarried in the area; nowadays iron is purchased from the market in bar form or in various unrefined shapes, such as an unsharpened saw.








Carpentry is still practiced but few artisans can carve with the skill displayed on old Kota door frames and on the stone pillars in front of their temples.



Their long curved horns, called *kob*, used to be fashioned of buffalo horn. Now they are made of brass and Purchased from the Coimbatore Plains.

KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY :

-  Kota kinship terminology, like most Dravidian systems, classifies relatives into those who are marriageable and those who are not.
-  Because a father's brothers are classificatory fathers, the children of brothers cannot marry.
-  Likewise the children of sisters cannot marry.
-  Cross-cousin marriages, however, are common and indeed preferred.



Nowadays the girl's family may give money and goods to the married couple, but dowry is not part of the traditional system.

In fact the entire ceremony is very simple.

Unlike most south Indian Communities music is not played, except to welcome the wedding party to the village.


Some Kotas now host large receptions and broadcast film music to celebrate their weddings, but this is acknowledged to be a recent innovation.


RELIGIOUS BELIEFS


Kotas consider themselves Hindus and no Kotas have gone on record as converting to any other Religion, although one or two marriages have reportedly occurred between Kotas and Christians.

The major Kota deities are A-yno-r (father god) and Amno-r (mother goddess). A-yno-r, also called Kamati-cvara or Kamatra-ya in some villages, is identified with the Hindu god Shiva.




Some villages have a "big" and "small" A-yno-r (Doda-yno-r and Kuna-yno-r), but there is only one version of the goddess.

 Kana-tra-ya is a deity in the form of a stone and is found only in Ticga-r.

 Generally, Kota deities have no anthropomorphic representation, although once a year faces of silver ornaments are pasted onto the front of the A-yno-r and Amno-r temples.

 Today temples for the Hindu deities Krishna, Rangarama, Munisvara, Badrakaliamman, and Mariamman have also been erected by the Kotas, each in response to a particular need or supernatural event in the village.

 **DANCE :**

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- The traditional music instruments used by the Kota are still made by members of their own community.
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- A double-reed pipe or shawn is known as Kota kol.
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- It has a conical bore, six equidistant finger holes, a flaring wooden bell, and is made of dark wood.



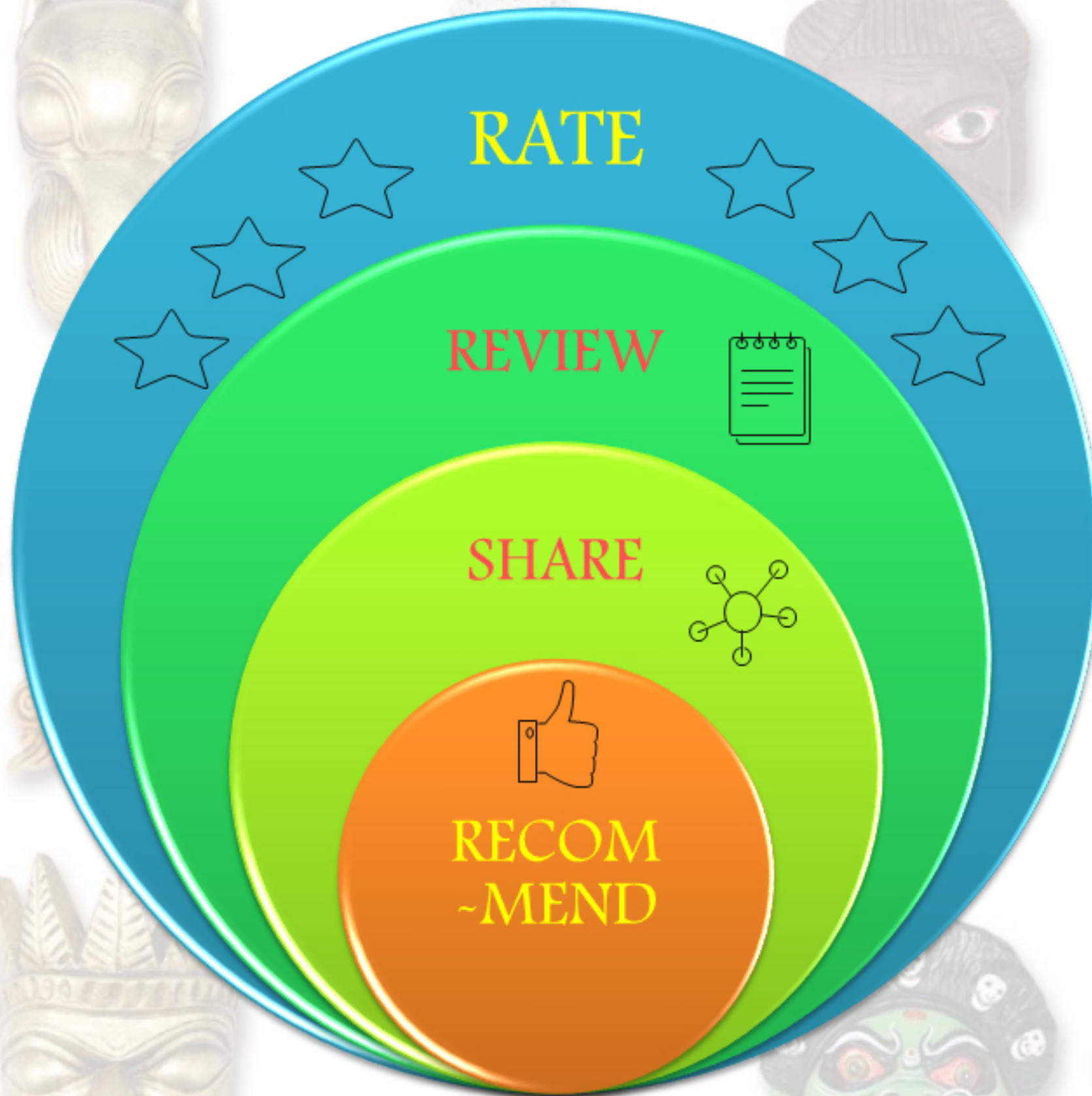
🦋 The holes may be adjusted with wax for fine tuning.

🦋 Players use circular breathing which involves the drawing of air the nose while expelling air from the cheeks into the instrument.

🦋 This enables them to produce a continuous melody.



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THANK
YOU

