

PRESERVATION AND PROGRESS OF RELEVANT ASPECTS IN HINDUSTANI CLASSICAL & SEMI-CLASSICAL MUSIC: A STUDY

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Abstract

Hindustani Classical Music is an off-shoot of Indian Classical Music which evolved with several Forms and Styles during medieval period in northern India. Both the Classical and the Semi-classical genres as exercised and performed by the Court-musicians still exist through numerous compositions, known as Cheez or Bandish among the Gharana representatives and the common practitioners. Gharana as exclusive in Hindustani Classical Music brought about variety and versatility in the styles of presentation for performances. Raga being the core of Indian Classical Music and some individuals' utmost creative intellect, considered as the prevailing Cultural Tradition which naturally has enriched the repository of Hindustani Classical Music too through specified Forms and Styles in the medium of Bandish. This paper attempts to assemble various associated matters of the prevalent Classical and Semi-classical music towards proper assessment, maintenance and sustainable development among the practitioners belonging to institutional background as well as other conventional teaching-learning system of this society.

Keywords: *classical and semi-classical genres, cultural tradition, gharana, hindustani classical music, raga*

Introduction

*Hindustani music, an inseparable portion of Indian music began to be appeared as a separate entity during medieval period in northern India. This music comprised both Folk and Classical Forms. Folk music is region based; bounded with simple rhythm, simple tune, colloquial language or dialects. Classical music remains almost unchanged irrespective of regions. Another Form of music has been traced since from the age of the Vedas where regional or indigenous music was somehow modified and performed. This kind of music identified as *Deshi* music was also regional in nature and also different from Folk music. *Deshi* music was further modified; named as *Abhijata Deshi Sangeet* and was restricted to the elite class. Till the 15th Century A.D. three kinds of music was in vogue in India which may be defined as Temple-oriented music, *Abhijata Deshi Sangeet* or Court-music and Folk music. This reference is found in *Sangeet-Uponishad-Sar* written by *Acharya Vachanacharya Sudhkalash (Ghosh, 94)*. The *Abhijata Deshi Sangeet* was further modified and through evolution of Indian music *Prabandha Sangeet**

began to be developed country wide with a number of Classicized Forms during the beginning of the Christian era. During the period from 15th Century A.D. a trend was noticed to the formation of new Classicized Forms through intermixing or interchanging of different Prabandhas.

*Hindustani Classical Music evolved from Indian Classical Music through various Forms and Styles in northern India which began to be developed as well as flourished during the period from 14th century A.D. to 18th century A.D. with the abolition or alteration of the Prabandhas (Ghosh 26, 41). Starting from the 16th century A.D. some popular derivative forms of the Prabandhas such as *Dhrupad, Dhamar, Khyal, Tappa, Thumri, Tarana* etc. among other forms developed during these periods. The other forms comprised *Dharu, Sadra, Vishnupada, Ragmala, Tribat, Chaturang, Pancharang, Haptarang, Quaul, Gulnaksh* and so many which have become faded or obsolete in course of time.*

There is a very deep connection between the Folk Music and the Classical Music. Dhrupad, the Hindustani Classical Musical Form has been defined as a Folk Music

in Abul Fazal's *Aain-E-Aakbari*. *Khyal*, another *Hindustani* Classical Musical Form was also developed out of the Folk Music of Khairabad district; the music was modified as well as elevated to the Court of *Nawab* Hussain Shah Sharki. *Tappa* was a Folk Musical Form, exercised by the Camel-riders of Punjab. The style of Lucknow *Thumri* evolved from the Folk Musical Form of Ayodhya after modification. The ancient Indian *Ragas* such as *Kanada*, *Bongali*, *Jhinjhoti*, *Maalavi*, *Gujari*, *Gaud* etc. being the popular provincial tunes and some of which are obsolete today, were developed out of the Folk tunes (Roy, 97-98).

The problem of this research paper is practical oriented. There are still some other matters associated with, require lots of logical analysis. To save the age-old Musical Forms, proper documentation, clear conception on the terminologies, history and development related to the particular Form of Music, proper unification between the conventional and the institutional training systems in Music are necessary. An attempt has been made to furnish relevant information in support of this paper. Printing resources from books and periodicals have been used as Secondary Data. To justify with this paper a brief and compact discussion about the history and development of Indian Music as well as the Cultural Tradition of this country is essential.

Brief History & Development of Indian Music and Cultural Tradition

Indian ancient musicological treatises help us to know about the contemporary musical usages which at the same time make us aware of the social and the cultural infrastructure of old India. Musicology is the study of music which encourages both the theory and the practice. The *Siksha* of Narad Muni (1st century A.D.), The *Natyashashtra* of Bharat Muni (2nd century A.D.), The *Brihaddeshi* of Matanga Muni (5th/6th century A.D.), The *Sangeet Ratnakar* of Sharangadev (13th century A.D.) etc., the treatises in different time periods of the past, provide adequate information such as origin of the Vedic (classical) and the *Laukik* (regional) *Swaras* (musical notes); conception of *Marga* (classical) and *Deshi* (regional) *Sangeet* (music); *Rag-Raginis*, their classifications and so many other things.

Ancient India followed the *Parampara* (tradition) of *Acharya* or *Guru* (trainer) and *Shishya* (disciple). The *Acharyas* constituted *Parampara* through the chain of disciples to regulate the Social and Cultural infrastructure throughout the country. The Kings were the financial supporters for smooth conduction of this system. The *Parampara* encouraged researches, experimentations, manuscripts writing about various disciplines and other academic matters through generation of wise and dedicated disciples. The concepts of various matters on Music alike other subjects, in most of the cases, had maximum similarities with minimal controversies irrespective of regions of this country. The erudite people of Musicology from different parts of this country met themselves for regular intervals in the meetings through discussions and after unanimous decisions inferences were taken and the same were registered in the manuscripts as written documents. The entire processes occurred officially in front of the Kings (Ghosh, 94).

The *Acharya-Shishya Parampara* discontinued during medieval period. The Court-music came into prominence with the abolition of the old system. The so called *Gayak-Vadak-Nartak Parampara* (the musician class, involved into vocal music, instrumental music and dance) got privileged to the Royal Courts and a new trend of music with its branches began to be developed in course of time in northern India and gave birth to *Hindustani* Music. This musician class was the imitator of the music, prevalent in the old *Parampara* made by the *Acharyas*. The *Acharyas* shifted to the southern India and engaged themselves for the development of the music therein.

The *Acharyas* went on experimentations and attainment to the *Rag-Raginis* (*Ragas*) which explains unique creativeness and the exact rendition of Indian Classical Music. *Raga* is meant for the most essential element of Classical music which regulates articulation of sound and narration of the composition through *Swaras* and musical embellishments. Before the beginning of the Christian era, music was divided into *Marga* and *Deshi* (Prajnanananda, 44). *Marga* or *Gaandharva Sangeet* was bounded with certain rules of *Raga* (melody), *Taal* (beats), *Chhanda* (rhythm), *Dhatu* (tune), *Matu* (lyric), and *Geeti* (articulation) which remained unchanged irrespective of

regions. On the contrary, *Deshi Sangeet* expressed its regional trait and was devoid of excessiveness of musical elements like *Gaandharva Sangeet*. *Deshi Sangeet*, having modified with some musical elements of *Gaandharva Sangeet*, appeared as *Abhijaat Deshi Sangeet* and was named as *Prakirna* in Sanskrit or *Pakinnak* in native language. The *Prakirna* songs were further modified and the new form was called *Biprakirna*. Both *Prakirna* and *Biprakirna*, the two forms of *Abhijaat Deshi Sangeet*, were in vogue till the Christian era. *Marga Sangeet* became obsolete just after the Christian era. *Biprakirna* songs were modified again and in course of time *Prabandha Sangeet* evolved. With the advancement and demand of time, many a classical musical styles were developed in different forms and shapes out of different *Prabandhas* irrespective of North India and South India (**Goswami Preface: 10**). It has already been mentioned in the introduction that the Classical and Semi-classical Forms were created in the evolution of the *Prabandha Sangeet*.

Dhrupad, *Dhamar*, *Khyal*, *Tarana* etc. were once exercised and performed by the Court-musicians and those Classical Forms were known as *Darbari Sangeet* (Court-music). *Tappa* and *Thumri*, the two Semi-classical Forms were afterwards adopted as well as performed by the Court-musicians. Both the Classical and Semi-classical Forms, already mentioned, are still prevalent and popular as well among the *Gharana* representatives and the music practitioners. Among the above Forms *Dhrupad* and *Khyal* being the most effective Classical Forms through which *Raga* may rightly be expressed. The Court-musicians started to be recognized as certain *Gharana* representatives during the last phase of eighteenth century A.D. (**Ghosh, 99**). The Court-musicians made their exclusive styles of presentation in the performances which in course of time came to be known as different *Gharanas*. *Gharana* talks about innovative styles in presentation, powerful improvisation and consistent variety of features, maintaining certain steps called *Silsila* (**Ghosh, 99-100**). Differences of steps make the distinction from one *Gharana* to the other, despite being the basics of each *Gharana*. The *Gharana* system gradually crossed the barrier of lineage and extended to the trained disciples

from generation to generation (**Roy 3**). In course of time *Gharana* system came into existence both in Classical and Semi-classical Forms.

Gharana system does not entertain a mere imitation; it survives through *Taleem* (expertises) and proper improvisations. A particular *Gharana* is truly recognized by the consistent flow of practice and performances among the renowned Artistes (Performers) of at least consecutive three generations following the same tradition. Exponent/s of a particular *Gharana* may emerge with some innovative ideas which are adopted and practised by other representatives of the *Gharana* itself. Innovative ideas standardize the quality of *Gharana* Music to a higher degree and give birth to a *Gaayaki* (exclusive style) in course of time. A recognized *Gharana*, thus, flourishes with its exclusive characteristics. *Gharana* is usually named after a person or a place or a family. There are a number of renowned *Gharanas* such as *Gwalior Gharana*, *Agra Gharana*, *Kirana Gharana*, *Patiyala Gharana* and others, named according to different places. *Alladiya Gharana* is named after Ustad Alladiya Khan. Again *Seni* or *Senia Gharana*, *Quawaal Bacche Gharana* etc. are ideal examples, named after the families of Miyan Tansen and the *Quawaals* respectively.

This is very important to remember that the term *Taleem* being the most significant element in *Gharana* system where the Disciple undergoes training from the *Guru* or a *Gharana* exponent for years. The training will enable a learner under *Gharana* system to have expertise over the particular Form/s of *Hindustani* music. After the completion of training the learner is considered to be an able representative of a noted *Gharana*. The *Cheez* or the *Bandish* (composition) highly matters to the *Gharana* representatives because of its hint for exact rendition of the particular Form of music.

Dhrupad is assumed to have been reconstructed through modifications of the *Dhrupad* or *Dhurpad* by the genius of Raja Man Singh Tomar (1486 A.D. – 1516 A.D.), the king of Gwalior along with his associate music connoisseurs at the last phase of fifteenth century A.D. (**Roy, 79**). Raja Man did not stop himself only organizing the new musical style, but also founded an institution for the campaign of the same. Under his enlightened support

Dhrupad found a creative environment for growth. Tansen sang of his glory and mentioned him as his patron. It was in this atmosphere of a benign and cultured ruler that the *Dhrupad* blossomed (Deva, 100). *Dhrupad* evolved from *Dhrupa Prabandha*, an offshoot of *Salag-Suda Prabandha*.

Abul Fazal's *Ain-E-Aakbari*, Fakir-Ullah's *Raag-Darpan* and Mirza Khan's *Tuhfat-UI-Hind* produce sufficient information about the origin and development of *Khyal*. Amir Khusroo of Delhi (13th Century A.D.) and Sultan Hussain Shah Sharki of Jaunpur (15th Century A.D.) are acclaimed to have introduced and propagated this Musical Form in those texts. The credit of the creation of *Kalavanti Khyal* is bestowed to Niyamat Khan known as Shah Sadarang (18th Century A.D.), a descendant of Miyan Tansen (Ghosh, 28-30). *Khayal* was elevated to Court-music and gained its popularity from the reign of Shahjahan, the Mughal emperor (Mitra Preface: 12). The modern style of *Khayal*, alike the same of *Dhrupad*, flourished all over India from Gwalior. Shakkar Khan, Makkhan Khan, the disciples of Ustad Ghulam Rasool and their descendants are accredited the propagators of that style and which was known as *Quawaal BaccheKi Gayaki* (Mukhopadhyay, 78).

Classical or Classicized musical Forms and Styles imply exclusive and creative compositions of the individuals irrespective of ages which are real cultural treasure of our country. The Kings, the *Nawabs* and the *Zaminders* (owners of lands and wealth) played commendable role as Patrons for the promotion of Indian Art and Culture. There were many contemporary *Riyasat* (native lands or estates) under the kingship of certain rulers on the eve of the independence of India. Many of the rulers had keen interest and taste to different branches of Indian Art and Culture. Some of them were skilled in different genres of Indian Classical Music and Dance. The Royal Courts of Lucknow, Gwalior, Rampur, Jaipur, Betiya, Baroda etc. may be taken as good examples in this regard. *Nawab* Wazid Ali Shah (1847 A.D.-1854 A.D.) of Lucknow Royal Court, *Raja* Daulat Rao *Sindhya* and his descendants of Gwalior Royal Court, *Nawab* Kolbe Ali Khan and his descendants of Rampur Royal Court and many a rulers of other Royal Courts patronized many

performers of *Hindustani* Classical Music (Chakraborty, 23-62).

Critical Analysis & Necessary Measures for Sustainable Development

The old *Acharya-Shishya Parampara* is lost. The era of Court-music has also gone away. But the *Rag-Raginis* during the medieval period have not all become obsolete. Many a *Ragas* have left their ever-lasting effects which are being practised and performed in this modern age. There are still some *Ragas* which are rarely heard because of their unconventional usages. Both the Classical and Semi-classical genres are exercised as well as performed through the medium of *Bandish* in vocal music or the same of *Gat* (composition) in instrumental music. The basic structure of a *Raga* is properly designed in the traditional composition. So, learning from a trained or experienced *Guru* having erudition on *Rag-Raginis* is essential. *Ragdari*, the term is meant for the proper knowledge of a *Raga* by dint of which any Classical Form may properly be presented. The proper application of the Phrases (combination of musical notes, applicable in a particular *Raga*) helps a performer to establish a *Raga* appropriately and which needs proper learning. In case of Semi-classical music proper articulation, diction, sense of literature etc. might be essential elements for the exact rendition. Nowadays, the practice of *Hindustani* Classical Music has definitely increased among the youngsters. But at the same time, the contemplation of *Raga*, *Ragdari*, various forms as well as styles is decreasing. As a result, passion in music is found missing. Inappropriate vocalism, absence of exact embellishments, actually required for the *Raga* and meaningless as well as excessive jugglery of musical notes results into the performance mechanical and emotionless. All these stand in the way to the appreciation and excellence of *Hindustani* Classical Music.

A number of Composers both in Classical and Semi-classical genres have put their contributions through their wonderful compositions those of which are considered as real treasures in *Hindustani* music. This is very important to preserve all these compositions. Not only that, those compositions should be utilized through learning as well as performances. Those compositions

should be brought into the matter of syllabus under Higher Education Segment. As a result a clear conception about the Composers as well as the respective Compositions will develop among the learners and the music practitioners.

Gharana training helps a learner to understand different *Gayakis* apart from one's own. Various representations of the same *Raga*, according to *Gharana*, may be possible due to change the number of musical notes or change of *Thaats* or otherwise. Till now many a conventional *Ragas* are in use among the *Gharana* representatives and the same are heard from the renowned artistes following particular *Gharana* styles. Both the institutional learners and the traditional learners should look into this matter. Moreover, some books on *Hindustani* music are found where traditional Compositions have been registered in the form of notation. The learners should go through the books to assess the nature of the same conventional *Ragas* with differences. The learners should have clear knowledge about two conventional notation systems of *Hindustani* music made by Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande and Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar respectively. So, one should not ignore *Gharana* training; but at the same time, it is to be kept in mind that perfect blending of ideas, obtained from different *Gharana* Maestros will definitely boost up the dynamic character of *Raga* presentation.

Alaap plays a vital role to unfold a *Raga* through *Dhrupad*. In *Khyal* the portion of *Alaap* is replaced by *Vistaar*. Both *Alaap* and *Vistaar* imply the expression and expansion of that *Raga* through the medium of those Court-music Forms. *Prabandha Sangeet* was only Composition and devoid of *Alaap* or *Vistaar* and which lays the basic difference between *Prabandhas* and Court-music (Ghosh, 25). Present generation neglects *Alaap* in the presentation of *Dhrupad* and emphasizes on *Laykaris* (rhythmic patterns). Most of the students and learners perform today without being aware of the terminologies deeply associated with the particular genre of music and their proper positioning of the same how they be applied. This matter should be taken into consideration because errorless performance style will keep any Form of music intact for years.

Conclusion

Institutional training encourages logical explanations while traditional learners count only on performances. Music is a Performing Art; so performance highly matters but in a correct form and being aware of this matter. Theory is equally important because neglecting this matter will result decaying Cultural resources. Music Practitioners from all segments of the society should come into close contact regarding Performances and through healthy discussion, Seminar, Workshop will be able to remove confusion and drawbacks to a large extent.

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