



Prof Surjit Singh

Professor Surjit Singh, a diehard movie fanatic, period.
He is a retired Theoretical Physicist.
He has been watching Hindi movies since 1952, has been collecting Hindi songs, movies and magazines since 1969, and has been writing about these things since 1996.
He has had a website since 1999,

<https://hindi-movies-songs.com/joomla/>

REC. MUSIC. INDIAN. MISC

RMIM Articles:

4. Classical Music

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DEDICATION

Friends [including from (but not limited to) both the classic RMIM and the new RMIM] who encouraged me to keep up my craziness for films, specially Hindi films of the 30s and 40s

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Immense debt is owed to the pioneers, the regulars, the lurkers, the posters, the warriors, the fanatics, the contributors of articles, photos, videos, and songs, the maintainers, the moderators, the meet holders, the meet attenders, the commemorative preparers, the quizzers, the photographers, the videographers, the airport drivers, the behind-the-sceners, the software writers, and other forgotten RMIMers.

A big thanks to my wife Harmesh, and three children, Jai, Libby, and Raja, and, special huggable thanks to Benjamin, for always being there for me.

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PREFACE

In the early days of the Internet, I used to read news and other stuff about India on the Yahoo portal and its directories. One day, one of my Indian students told me about Mailing Lists. So, I started reading some of those, e.g. soc.culture.indian. From there I discovered rec.music.indian.misc, which I learnt how to read on Deja News.

This was early 1995 and I was teaching at the Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX. I read the FAQ, the articles, and lurked for a while. I noticed that apart from the lyrics, the most common questions appeared to be about the movie cast, and the list of songs. So, my early posts were on helping people using the now legendary and pioneering Hindi Film Geet Kosh (HFGK) by Har Mandir Singh “Hamraaz”. I also helped with the identification of lesser known characters in the movies, specially some of whom had famous songs picturized on them.

I learned a lot from some very knowledgeable RMIMers, e.g. Vish Krishnan, Rajan Parrikar, guri, Ashok Dhareshwar, Chetan Vinchhi, and the late Satish Kalra, to name a few. I and Harmesh enjoyed participating in the quizzes. From 1995 to now (2017) a good part of my waking hours have been spent on the Web, and a big chunk of that has been devoted to interacting with fellow RMIMers.

A few years ago, Suresh Chandvankar, the Honorary Secretary of the Society of Indian Record Collectors, asked me to contribute an article on RMIM for the Society’s magazine, The Record News. I started to write slowly and carefully taking my own time, but soon realized that there was no way to write briefly about RMIM. So I asked him if he could devote a whole issue of the magazine to RMIM! He said that magazine was no longer being published, but why don’t I write a book on RMIM. It was an excellent suggestion, because so much original valuable content has been generated by RMIMers that it should be collected before it disappears. So on the Facebook RMIM group, I started to collect pdf files of various posted articles. It is a work in progress and is continuing.

In the meantime, January 1, 2017 was the 25th anniversary of RMIM. I thought about writing a mini version of the book to go with the Silver Jubilee meet being planned for Bangalore, India. But there was not enough time and I was discouraged. Then, Pavan Jha asked if I was going to attend and Anup Pandey mused that it would be great if I could release the book during the meet. That was enough incentive to get to work. There was no way to include everything, so I had to select. Result is in your hands. The big book is called Omnibus, I decided to call this version the Minibus :)

I decided to keep the book a surprise. I had to have an accomplice from Bangalore to distribute the book at the meet. I chose Chetan Vinchhi, he agreed readily. But when I finished the ms on April 2 and asked my US and Indian printers if they could print and deliver 50 copies to Bangalore by the 7th evening, they said no way. Again Chetan came to the rescue, and he, along with Ashok Dhareshwar, was able to keep the secret and deliver the book on time. Amazing people we have in RMIM!

In preparation for the big Omnibus, I looked at the material. It turns out that we have generated thousands of relevant posts, hundreds of articles, thousand of song lyrics, hundreds of quizzes like Rim Jhim Geeton Ki, Chitrahhar, etc, and dozens of individual series like A Sher A Day, Abhi To Main Jawan Hoon, Fill in the Blanks, to name a few. All this would have come to thousands of pages. What I plan to do is a series of books on different topics, about 200-300 pages each. I will make the pdfs available for free to download and also have the paperbacks to buy on Amazon and Pothi.

I am starting with the Articles, there will be 3-4 books on Articles, this one is on Classical Music.

RMIM Archive Article "32".

Hindi Film songs based on Classical Ragas

Song:	aai ri mai to prem diwani mera dard na jane koi (Hindi)
Raag:-	Bhimpalasi
Singer:-	Lata
Movie:-	Navbahar
MD:-	Roshan
Song:	aaj gawat men mero jhum ke (Hindi)
Raag:-	Desi
Singer:-	Pt. Paluskar + Amir Khan
Movie:-	Baiju Bawara
MD:-	Naushad
Song:	aansu bhari hai je jeewan ki rahen (Hindi)
Raag:-	Yaman (Jhap Taal)
Singer:-	Mukesh
Movie:-	Parvarish
MD:-	Dattaram
Song:	aap ko pyar chupane ki buri aadat hai (Hindi)
Raag:-	Desh
Singer:-	Rafi + Suman (?)
Movie:-	Neela Akash
MD:-	Madan Mohan
Song:	aap yun hi agar humse milte rahe dekhiye ek din pyaar ho jaayega(Hindi)
Raag:-	Kedar
Singer:-	Asha + Rafi
Movie:-	Ek Musafir Ek Hasina
MD:-	O.P.N
Song:	aawaz de ke mujhe tum bulao (Hindi)
Raag:-	Shivaranjani (Jhap Taal)
Singer:-	Rafi + Lata
Movie:-	Professor
MD:-	Shankar Jaikishan
Song:	ai ri jane na dungi maito apne piya ke sang door door (Hindi)
Raag:-	Kamod
Singer:-	Lata
Movie:-	Chitralkha
MD:-	Roshan
Song:	ang anga ranga chalkaye (Hindi)
Raag:-	Yaman
Singer:-	Sulakshna Pundit
Movie:-	Sankalp
MD:-	Khaiyyam
Song:	ankhiyan sangh ankhiyan lage aaj (Hindi)
Raag:-	Malkauns
Singer:-	Rafi
Movie:-	Bada Aadami
MD:-	Chitragupta
Song:	ayo kahan se ghanashyam (Hindi)
Raag:-	Khamaj
Singer:-	Manna Dey
Movie:-	Buddha Mil Gaya

MD:- RD Burman
 Song: baad muddat ki ye ghadi aai aap aye to zindagi aai(Hindi)
 Raag:- Chaya Nat
 Singer:- Rafi + Suman
 Movie:- Jahan Ara
 MD:- Madan Mohan
 Song: baharon ne mera chaman loot kar (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pилоo (Jhap Taal)
 Singer:- Mukesh
 Movie:- ??
 MD:- ??
 Song: balma anadi mana bhaye (Hindi)
 Raag:- Hemanta
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Bahurani
 MD:- C Ramachandra
 Song: bedardi DagabaaZ Ja Tu Nahin Balma Mora Ja Ja Jare Ja (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bageshri
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- BluffMaster
 MD:- Kalyanji Anandji
 Song: beena madhur madhur kuch bol (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhimpalasi
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- ??
 MD:- ??
 Song: bekas pe karam kijiye sarkare madina (Hindi)
 Raag:- Kedar
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Mughal-e-Azam
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: bhajan bina chain naa aye ram (Hindi)
 Raag:- Kalawati
 Singer:- Manhar or Shailendra Singh
 Movie:- Rafoochakkar
 MD:- ??
 Song: biraj me holi khelat nand lal (Hindi)
 Raag:- Kafi
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Godaan
 MD:- Ravi Shankar
 Song: bol re papihara papihara (Hindi)
 Raag:- Miyan Malhar
 Singer:- Vani Jayaram
 Movie:- Guddi
 MD:- Vasant Desai
 Song: bole to bansuri kahin bajatee sunayee re (Hindi)
 Raag:- Kedar
 Singer:- Yesudas
 Movie:- Saawan ko aane do
 MD:- Rajkamal
 Song: boliye surilee boliyan (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bihag
 Singer:- Bhupendra + Sulakshna Pandit

Movie:- Grihapraves
 MD:- Kanu Roy
 Song: chahe to mora jiyaa laile (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pilo
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Mamta
 MD:- Roshan
 Song: chain nahin aye kahan din jaye (Hindi)
 Raag:- Chaya Nat
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Samundar
 MD:- Madan Mohan
 Song: chanda re ja re re piya ko sandesa mera kahiyo ja (Hindi)
 Raag:- Chaya Nat
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Ziddi
 MD:- Anil Biswas
 Song: chandan sa badan chanchal chitawan (Hindi)
 Raag:- Yaman Kalyan
 Singer:- Mukesh
 Movie:- Saraswatichandra
 MD:- Kalyanji Anandji
 Song: chita nandan aage nachungi (Hindi)
 Raag:- Jaunpuri
 Singer:- Asha
 Movie:- ??
 MD:- ??
 Song: choota sa baalama ankhiyana need udai le gayo (Hindi)
 Raag:- Tilang
 Singer:- Asha
 Movie:- Raagini
 MD:- OP Naiyyar
 Song: chupgaye tare nazare ai kya baat ho gai tune kahal gaya din me raat ho gai (Hindi)
 Raag:- Mishra Tilang
 Singer:- Rafi + Lata
 Movie:- Do Raaste
 MD:- Lakshmikant Pyarelal
 Song: dar lage garaje badariya mai kaha karun kit jaun (Hindi)
 Raag:- Sur malhar
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Raam Rajya
 MD:- ??
 Song: darshan do ghanshyam naath more ankhiyan pyasi re (Hindi)
 Raag:- Kedar
 Singer:- Manna
 Movie:- ??
 MD:- ??
 Song: dile betab ko scene se laga hoga (Hindi)
 Raag:- Yaman
 Singer:- Lata + Rafi
 Movie:- Palaki
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: diwana kahke aaj mujhe phir pukariye (Hindi)
 Raag:- Mishra Gaara

Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Muzlim
 MD:- Ravi
 Song: ek shahenshah ne banawa ke hansi Taj Mahal(Hindi)
 Raag:- Lalit
 Singer:- Rafi+Lata
 Movie:- Leader
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: garajat barsat sawan ayo re (Hindi)
 Raag:- Gauda Malhar
 Singer:- Suman K + Kamal Barot
 Movie:- Barsaat ki Raat
 MD:- Roshan
 Song: geet gaya pathharon ne (Hindi)
 Raag:- Durga
 Singer:- Kishori Amonkar
 Movie:- Geet gaya pathharon ne
 MD:- Ram Lal
 Song: ghar aaja ghir aye badara sanwariya (Hindi)
 Raag:- Maal Gunji
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Chote Nawab
 MD:- RD Burman (1st song)
 Song: ghunghat ke pat khol re tohe piya milenge (Hindi)
 Raag:- Jaunpuri
 Singer:- Geeta Dutt
 Movie:- Jogan
 MD:- ??
 Song: gori tore nainwa kajar bin kare kare (Hindi)
 Raag:- Desh
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Main suhagan hun
 MD:- Chitragupta/Lacchi Ram (?)
 Song: gulshan gulshan sholaye gul ke (Hindi)
 Raag:- Raageshree
 Singer:- Mehdi Hasan
 Movie:- ??
 MD:- ??
 Song: hai agar dushman dushman jamaana gam nahin(Hindi)
 Raag:- Kalawati
 Singer:- Asha & ??
 Movie:- Hum kissi se kum nahin
 MD:- R.D.Burman
 Song: hai re wo din kyun na aye (Hindi)
 Raag:- Kalawati
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Anuradha
 MD:- Ravi Shankar
 Song: hale dil unko sunaya na gaya Lata (Hindi)
 Raag:- Sur malhar
 Singer:- ??
 Movie:- ??
 MD:- ??
 Song: hamare dil se na jana dhokha na khana (Hindi)

Raag:- Bihag
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Udan Khatola
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: hum bekudi me tum ko pukare chale gaye (Hindi)
 Raag:- Chaya Nat
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Kala Pani
 MD:- SD Burman
 Song: humko man ki shakti dena (Hindi)
 Raag:- Kedar
 Singer:- Vani Jayaram
 Movie:- Guddi
 MD:- Vasant Desai
 Song: insaf ka mandir hai ye bhagwan ka ghar hai (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhairavi
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Amar
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: is modse jaate hain (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pahadi
 Singer:- Lata + Kishore
 Movie:- Aandhi
 MD:- RD Burman
 Song: isharon Isharon mein dil lenewale (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pahadi
 Singer:- Lata + Rafi
 Movie:- Kashmir Ki Kali
 MD:- OP Nayyar
 Song: itna to yaad hai mujhe ki tumse mulakat hui baad me jane kya hua (Hindi)
 Raag:- Mishra Tilang
 Singer:- Rafi + Lata
 Movie:- Mehboob ki Mehndi
 MD:- Lakshmikant Pyarelal
 Song: ja re badara bairi jare ja re (Hindi)
 Raag:- Yaman
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Bahana
 MD:- Madan Mohan
 Song: ja to se nahin bolun kanhaiya (Hindi)
 Raag:- Hansadhvani (Teen Tal)
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Parivaar
 MD:- Salil Chaudhari
 Song: jaa-jaa re ai pathikwa(Hindi)
 Raag:- Todi-Gurjari
 Singer:- Lata+Hridaynath
 Movie:- Lekin
 MD:- Hridaynath Mangeshkar
 Song: jaag darde ishk jaag dil ko bekarar kar (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bageshri
 Singer:- Hemant + Lata
 Movie:- Anarkali
 MD:- C Ramachandra

Song: jaane kahan gaye wo din (Hindi)
 Raag:- Mishra Shivanjani
 Singer:- Mukesh
 Movie:- Mera Naam Joker
 MD:- Shankar Jaikishan
 Song: jab deep jale ana jab sham dhale ana (Hindi)
 Raag:- Yaman Kalyan
 Singer:- Yesudas
 Movie:- Chitchor
 MD:- Ravindra Jain
 Song: jahaan daal daal par sone ki cheediyaan karti hai basera woh bharat desh hai mera (Hindi)
 Raag:- Shuddha Kalyan
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Sikandar-ei-azam
 MD:- Husnlal Bhagatram/Hansaraj Behl??
 Song: jamunaa kinare aaja chaliya pukare aaja raadha jaye naa(Hindi)
 Raag:- Marubihag
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Mehbooba
 MD:- RD Burman
 Song: jane kaise sapano me kho gai ankhiyan (Hindi)
 Raag:- Maaj Khamaj (or Tilak Shyam ??)
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Anuradha
 MD:- Ravi Shankar
 Song: jaye to jayen kahan samjhe ga kaun yahan (Hindi)
 Raag:- Jaunpuri
 Singer:- Talat
 Movie:- Taxi Driver
 MD:- SD Burman
 Song: jeewan dor tumhi sangh bandhi (Hindi)
 Raag:- Yaman Kalyan
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Parasmani or Sati Savitri?
 MD:- Lakshmikant Pyarelal
 Song: jhanak jhanak tori baje payaliya (Hindi)
 Raag:- Darbari Kannada
 Singer:- Manna Dey
 Movie:- ??
 MD:- RDB
 Song: jhankaar payal ki tose binati kare (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhimpalasi
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Naag Devata
 MD:- SN Tripathi
 Song: jhoomati chali hawa yaad aa gaya koi (Hindi)
 Raag:- Sohini
 Singer:- Mukesh
 Movie:- Sangeet Samraat Tansen
 MD:- SN Tripathi
 Song: jhoothay naina bolay(Hindi)
 Raag:- Todi-Bilaskhan
 Singer:- Asha Bhosle+Satyasheel
 Movie:- Lekin

MD:- Hridaynath Mangeshkar
 Song: jiya le gayo re mora sanwariya (Hindi)
 Raag:- Yaman Kalyan
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Anpadh
 MD:- Madan Mohan
 Song: jogan ban jaungi saiyan tore karan (Hindi)
 Raag:- Khamaj , Des??, Maand ??
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Shabab
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: jyot se jyot jagate chalo prem ki ganga bahate chalo (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhairavi
 Singer:- Mukesh
 Movie:- Sant Gyaneshwar
 MD:- Lakshmikant Pyarelal
 Song: jyoti kalsh chalke (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhopali
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Bhabhi ki Chudiyon
 MD:- Sudhir Phadke
 Song: kaali ghodi dwar khadi(Hindi)
 Raag:- Saarang (?)
 Singer:- Yesudas + Hemanti Shukla
 Movie:- Chasme Baddur
 MD:- Rajkamal
 Song: kaanha kanha aan padi re tere dwar (Hindi)
 Raag:- Maaj Khamaj
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Aman
 MD:- Shankar Jaikishan
 Song: kahan se aie badara dhulta jaye kajara (Hindi)
 Raag:- Megha
 Singer:- Yesudas + Hemanti Shukla
 Movie:- Chashme Baddur
 MD:- Rajkamal
 Song: kahe tarasaye jiyara (Hindi)
 Raag:- Kalawati
 Singer:- Lata + Asha
 Movie:- Chitrlekha
 MD:- Roshan
 Song: kahin deep jale kahin dil (Hindi)
 Raag:- Shivananjani
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Bees Saal Baad
 MD:- Hemant
 Song: kaise aun jamuna ke tir re (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhairavi
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Devata
 MD:- C Ramachandra
 Song: kaise dina bite kaise biti ratiyan piya jane na (Hindi)
 Raag:- Maaj Khamaj
 Singer:- Lata

Movie:-	Anuradha
MD:-	Ravi Shankar
Song: kaise samajhaun bade na-samajh ho (Hindi)	
Raag:-	Bhairavi
Singer:-	Rafi + Asha
Movie:-	Sooraj
MD:-	Shankar Jaikishan
Song: kaun aya mere man ke dware (Hindi)	
Raag:-	Raageshree
Singer:-	Manna Dey
Movie:-	Dekh Kabira Roya
MD:-	Madan Mohan
Song: kaun gali gayo shyam (Hindi)	
Raag:-	Mishra Piloo
Singer:-	Parveen Sultana
Movie:-	Pakeezah
MD:-	Gulam Mohammad
Song: ketaki gulab juhi champak ban phule (Hindi)	
Raag:-	Basant Bahar
Singer:-	Manna Dey + Bhimsen Joshi
Movie:-	Basant Bahar
MD:-	Shankar Jaikishan
Song: khabar meri naa lini re bahut din bite bite re bahut din bite (Hindi)	
Raag:-	Mishra Shivananjani
Singer:-	Lata
Movie:-	Sant Gyaneshwar
MD:-	Laxmikant Pyarelal
Song: koi sagar dil ko behlata nahin (Hindi)	
Raag:-	Janasammohini
Singer:-	Rafi
Movie:-	Dil Diya Dard Liya
MD:-	Naushad
Song: kuch to log kahenge (Hindi)	
Raag:-	Khamaj
Singer:-	Kishore
Movie:-	Amar Prem
MD:-	RD Burman
Song: kuhu kuhu bole koyaliya (four verses in Sohini, Bahar, Jaunpuri and Yaman respectively)(Hindi)	
Raag:-	Sohini
Singer:-	Lata + Rafi
Movie:-	Swarna Sundari
MD:-	Adi Narayan Rao
Song: laga chunari me daag chupaun kaise (Hindi)	
Raag:-	Bhairavi
Singer:-	Manna Dey
Movie:-	Dil Hi To Hai
MD:-	Roshan
Song: babul mora naihar chhuto hi jaaye(Hindi)	
Raag:-	Bhairavi
Singer:-	K.L.Saigal
Movie:-	Street Singer
MD:-	Pankaj Mullick
Song: lau laga ke geet gaa ke (Hindi)	
Raag:-	Yaman Kalyan

Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Bhabi Ki Chudiyen
 MD:- Sudhir Phadke
 Song: madhuban me radhika naache re (Hindi)
 Raag:- Hameer
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Kohinoor
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: maine rang li aaj chunariya sajana tore rang me (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pilo
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Dulhan Ek Raat Ki
 MD:- Madan Mohan
 Song: man re tu kahe na dhir dhare (Hindi)
 Raag:- Yaman Kalyan
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Chitrlehha
 MD:- Roshan
 Song: man tarapat hari darshan ko aaj (Hindi)
 Raag:- Malkauns
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Baiju Bawara
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: man-mohan man me ho tumhi(Hindi)
 Raag:- Adana (similar to Darbaari Kanada)
 Singer:- Manna+Rafi+Suman Kalyanpur
 Movie:- Kaise Kahun
 MD:- SD Burman
 Song: mana mohana bade jhutte (Hindi)
 Raag:- Jayjaywanti (Ek Taal)
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Seema
 MD:- Shankar Jaikishan
 Song: mausam hai ashikana (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pahadi
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Pakeezah
 MD:- Gulam Mohammad
 Song: mere naina sawan bhado phir bhi mera man pyaasa (Hindi)
 Raag:- Shivanjani
 Singer:- Kishore/Lata
 Movie:- Mehbooba
 MD:- RD Burman
 Song: meri veena tum bin roye Sajana Sajana Sajana(Hindi)
 Raag:- Ahir Bhairav
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Dekh Kabira Roy
 MD:- Madan Mohan
 Song: meri yaad me tum na ansu bahana na dil ko jalana mujhe bhul jana (Hindi)
 Raag:- Asawari
 Singer:- Talat
 Movie:- Madhosh
 MD:- Madan Mohan
 Song: mithe Bol Bole Bole Payaliya(Hindi)

Raag:- Bhairavi
 Singer:- Bhupender + Lata
 Movie:- Kinaara
 MD:- RDB
 Song: mohe bhul gaye sanwariya (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhairav
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Baiju Bawara
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: moohe panaghat pe nand lal cheeda gayo re (Hindi)
 Raag:- Gaara
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Mughal-e-Azam
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: more ankhon me bas gaya koi re mohe neend na aye kya karun (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pahadi
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Barsaat
 MD:- Shankar Jaikishan (1st song)
 Song: mose chal kiye jaye hai re hai hai dekho saiyan beiman(Hindi)
 Raag:- Jhinjhoti
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Guide
 MD:- SD Burman
 Song: mujhe tumse kuch bhi na chahiye mujhe mere haal pe choda do (Hindi)
 Raag:- Darbari Kannada
 Singer:- Mukesh
 Movie:- Kanhaiya
 MD:- Shankar Jaikishan
 Song: nabile na bole na bole re (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bageshri
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Aazad
 MD:- C Ramachandra
 Song: nain so Nain Nahin Milao (Hindi)
 Raag:- Malgunji
 Singer:- Lata + Hemant
 Movie:- Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baje
 MD:- Vasant Desai
 Song: nazar lagi raja tore bungle par (Hindi)
 Raag:- Khamaj
 Singer:- Asha
 Movie:- Kaala Pani
 MD:- SD Burman
 Song: o Duniya Ke Rakhwale (Hindi)
 Raag:- Darbari Kannada
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Baiju Bawra
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: o jaane wale ho sake to laut ke ana (Hindi)
 Raag:- Jog
 Singer:- Mukesh
 Movie:- Bandini
 MD:- SD Burman

Song: pal do pal ka saath hamara (Hindi)
 Raag:- Kedar
 Singer:- Asha + Rafi
 Movie:- The Burning Train
 MD:- RD Burman
 Song: pankh hoti to ud ati re (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhopali
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Sehra
 MD:- Ramlal
 Song: payal wali dekhna yahin pe kahin dil hai (Hindi)
 Raag:- Marubihag
 Singer:- Kishore
 Movie:- Ek Raaz
 MD:- Chitragupta
 Song: payalia banwari baje (Hindi)
 Raag:- Maarwa
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Saaz aur Aawaz
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: pucho na kaise maine raina bitai (Hindi)
 Raag:- Ahir Bhairav (variant of teentAl: addhA taal, also 16 betas)
 Singer:- Manna Dey
 Movie:- Meri Soorat Teri Ankhen
 MD:- SD Burman
 Song: raadhaa jaaye naa (Hindi)
 Raag:- Marubihaag
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- ??
 MD:- ??
 Song: radhike tune bansuri churai(Hindi)
 Raag:- Adana (similar to Darbaari Kanada)
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Beti Bete
 MD:- Shankar Jaikishan
 Song: rasik Balma (Hindi)
 Raag:- Shuddha Kalyan
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Chori Chori
 MD:- Shankar Jaikishan
 Song: saajan ki galiyan choda chale dil roya ansu beh na sake (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pahadi
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Baazar
 MD:- Shyam Sundar
 Song: saanware saanware(Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhairavi
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Anuradha
 MD:- Ravi Shankar
 Song: sajana sangh kaahe maha lagaye (Hindi)
 Raag:- Tilang
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Main Nashe Me Hun

MD:- Shankar Jaikishan
 Song: sajna sajanaa kahe bhul gaye din pyar ke (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhairavi
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Chand Mere Aja
 MD:- Chitragupta
 Song: sapta suran teen graama(Hindi)
 Raag:- chArtAl (or chautAl) - not a raga (12 beats)
 Singer:- K.L.Saigal
 Movie:- Tansen
 MD:- ??
 Song: subah aur sham kam hi kam kyun nahin lete piya pyar ka naam(Hindi)
 Raag:- Kalawati
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Uljhan
 MD:- Kalyanji Anandji
 Song: suhani raat dhal chuki na jane tum kab aoge (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pahadi
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Dulari
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: tere mere beech me kaisa hai ye bandhan anjaana (Hindi)
 Raag:- Mishra Shivanjani
 Singer:- SP Balasubramaniam
 Movie:- Ek Duje Ke Liye
 MD:- Lakshmikant Pyarelal
 Song: tere naina talash karen (Hindi)
 Raag:- Anandi (or Nand) + Chhaaya Nut
 Singer:- Manna Dey
 Movie:- Talaash
 MD:- SD Burman
 Song: tere sur aur mere geet (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bihag
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Goonj Uthi Shehnai
 MD:- Vasant Desai
 Song: to jahan jahan chalega mera saaya saath hoga(Hindi)
 Raag:- Anandi (or Nand)
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Mera Saya
 MD:- Madan Mohan
 Song: tod diya dil mera tune ai bewafa (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pahadi
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Dulari
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: tu Ganga ki mauj mai jamuna ka dhara (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhairavi
 Singer:- Rafi
 Movie:- Baiju Bawara
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: tu hai mera prema devata (Hindi)
 Raag:- Lalit
 Singer:- Rafi + Manna

Movie:- Kalpana
 MD:- OP Naiyyar
 Song: tu jo mere sur mein (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pilo (for the most part)
 Singer:- Yesudas + Lata
 Movie:- Chit Chor
 MD:- Ravindra Jain
 Song: tum to pyaar ho sajana mohe tum se pyara aur na koi(Hindi)
 Raag:- Marubihag
 Singer:- Lata + Rafi
 Movie:- Sehra
 MD:- Ramlal
 Song: tumhe dekhti hun to lagta hai aise ki jaise yugon se(Hindi)
 Raag:- Mishra Shivanjani
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- ??
 MD:- Jaidev
 Song: tumhe zindagi ke ujale mubarak (Hindi)
 Raag:- Darabari Kannada (Jhap Taal)
 Singer:- Mukesh
 Movie:- Poornima
 MD:- Kalyanji Anandji
 Song: unhi koi mil gaya tha sare raah chalte chalte(Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhopali + Kalyan (Taal: Kaharava)
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Pakeezah
 MD:- Gulam Mohammad
 Song: uthaye ja unke sitam aur jiye jaa unhi muskurae jaa (Hindi)
 Raag:- Kedar ?
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Andaaz
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: vande mataram(Hindi)
 Raag:- Bhairavi (nonfilm raag: Des)
 Singer:- Lata,Hemant
 Movie:- Anandmath
 MD:- Hemant Kumar
 Song: bor aayi gayaa aandhiyaara (Hindi)
 Raag:- Bilaawal
 Singer:- Manna Dey and Harindranath Chattopadhyay
 Movie:- Baawarchi
 MD:- Madan Mohan
 Song: yaad mein teri jaag jaag ke hum raat bhur karwate(Hindi)
 Raag:- Darbari Kannada
 Singer:- Rafi + Lata
 Movie:- Mere Mehboob
 MD:- Naushad
 Song: ye dil aur unki nigahon ke saye (Hindi)
 Raag:- Pahadi
 Singer:- Lata
 Movie:- Prem Parvat
 MD:- Jaidev

RMIM Archive Article "228".

Immortals: Baiju Bawra vs. Tansen

Posted by: moin@ellis.uchicago.edu (irfan moinuddin)

Sources: "Some immortals of Hindustani Music" by Smt. Susheela Misra

RMIM music-lovers,

All of you must have heard of Baiju Bawra. And I don't know anybody who hasn't heard of Tansen. So, I am greatly excited to bring to you the immortalized story of the clash of the immortals: Baiju Bawra vs. Tansen. The following is a narration of the story by Sushila Misra in her book entitled "Some Immortals of Hindustani Music".

First some background concerning the motion picture entitled Baiju Bawra, which portrays Tansen and Baiju Bawra (also an excerpt):

Baiju Bawra's name is generally taken in the same breath as Tansen's and both have become legendary figures in Hindustani music. Stories of their mutual rivalry and musical contests have held the public imagination for such a long time that a motion picture entitled 'Baiju Bawra' and its songs became an all-time hit chiefly because of the two famous khayal maestros Ustad Amir Khan and Pt D.V. Paluskar who did playback singing for the roles of Tansen and Baiju Bawra respectively. The embellishments they provided to the melodies made for immense popularity. Although these two great masters flourished during the golden age of dhruvpad, the film's music director took the liberty of placing them in the khayal era, obviously because modern audiences can appreciate khayal singing which is in vogue now, while very few can relish the dying dhruvpad form today.

Now, the story, with some narration about Baiju's life:

Baiju was born in a poor brahmin family in village Chapaner in Gujarat; his realname was Baijnath Misra. He lost his father early in life, and his young widowed mother had to struggle hard to bring him up all alone. An ardent devotee of "Murali Manohar Krishna" (the Lord of the flute), she used to tell the boy numerous stories about Krishna. Naturally, Baiju became an equally devout Krishna-bhakta, and he spent the major part of his life as a religious mendicant and sangita-sadhaka (Music devotee). Baiju's mother decided to leave her unhappy native village to go and live in Brindavan where she could spend all her time worshipping Krishna ("Bhagawan Banke Behari". After a long and exhausting trek, the young mother and son reached the banks of river Yamuna in Brindavan. As they rested, Swami Haridas happened to pass that way on his way to his humble astram in Nidhuban Nikunj after his bath in the river. Through his supernatural insight, he was able to foresee the great musical gifts and potentials in the boy as in the case of Tanna Misra (Tansen's boyhood name) later. When Swami Haridas sought the permission of Baiju's mother, she was only overjoyed that her little son would

now be groomed by the great saint-musician, and that she could now devote all her time to worship "Banke Bihari" in the temple. Swami Haridas took Baiju under his care and trained him according to the ancient Gurukula traditions. With his extraordinary musical gifts, his rigorous sadhana, and the saintly guru's blessings, Baiju became an outstanding dhruvpad singer and an excellent composer, with a highly devotional temperament that made him turn away from worldly wealth and material possessions. According to the story, one day when Baiju was practising Raga kedara in a deeply meditative mood in a secluded place, he was disturbed by the wailing of a newly born infant from a bush nearby. He was amazed and delighted to find a lovely baby boy who had obviously been abandoned in that lonely spot by a heartless mother. Baijnath had so far been totally free from any worldly attachments; but his compassionate nature induced him to pick up the helpless infant and take him home. Ironically, he became as deeply attached to the boy as if he were his own son. Baiju named him Gopal, trained him into a fine musician, and he also placed him under his own guru Swami Haridas for advanced training.

Baiju's fame spread and he was invited by the Raja of Chanderi to become his court musician. In Chanderi, Baiju was held in high esteem. Gopal also gained wide popularity, and two pretty and talented girls-- Kala and Prabha, became his disciples. After some time, Gopal married Prabha. When a little girl was born to them, they named her Meera. Baiju's cup of happiness was full. He was deeply attached to his family, and little Meera became the apple of his eye. According to some scholars, it was about this time that Baiju was invited to Gwalior where reached the height of his fame. He became the music-guru of the talented Rani Mirganayani.

Baiju and family lived mostly in Chanderi. Once when he had gone out of Chanderi, Gopal was sitting in a lonely place and elaborating a dhruvpad in Raga Kalyan (Yaman) so beautifully that his music attracted some Kashmiri merchants on their way to Gwalior. Knowing that their cultured ruler would be pleased to have such an accomplished musician as his court artiste, they tempted Gopal with many baits such as wealth, honour, gifts and fame. Gopal succumbed and became a selfish and ungrateful son and an avaricious person, forgetting all the love and care that Baiju had lavished on him and his family and all the precious musical wealth that Baiju had lovingly passed to him. Without waiting for Baiju's return, and without even taking the permission of Raja Rajsingh, their kind royal patron, Gopal at once left for Kashmir, forcing his unwilling little family also to accompany him. When Baiju returned, logging to be with his little Meera, and found them gone, the shock was so deep that he lost his mental balance. Soon he came to be known as "Baiju Bawra", the eccentric or "crazy Baiju".

He left his empty home like a religious mendicant and began to wander from place to place, looking for his little Meera. Careless about his food and clothes and wandering through woods, dales, and across lonely mountains, he became an object of pity, although his musical excellence remained undiminished. Hearing

of the tragic turn in his favourite disciple's life, Swami Haridas is said to have shed tears of sorrow. Tansen had heard such high words of praise from their guru about Baiju that he yearned to meet his guru-bhai. Tansen had already become a favourite court-musician of Raja Ramachandra Badhela of Rewa State to whom the former confided his wish. With the royal patron's consent, Tansen decided to try a ruse to find the wandering and homeless Baiju. Like the kings of ancient times, he announced a musical Digvijaya in which he challenged all contemporary musicians to come for a musical contest with him. When the challenge reached Baiju's ears, he felt that as a senior disciple of Swami Haridas, he had to vindicate his own reputation. He accepted the challenge and reached the venue which had been grandly decorated for the most widely publicised contest.

Tansen was there in his rich courtly garments, while Baiju arrived in his tattered clothes. The details of the contest between these two masters bring to mind many of the colourful Ragmala paintings. As Tansen commenced his masterly unfolding of Ragini Todi (perhaps his own creation Miyan-ki-Todi), the deer from the neighbouring forests came leaping and stood listening entranced. Tansen put a costly necklace around the neck of one of them. As soon as he stopped singing, the entire herd rushed back into the woods. Now it was for Baiju to meet the challenge of attracting the deer back into the palace and retrieving Tansen's costly necklace.

Baiju is believed to have accomplished this amazing feat through his rendering of Raja Mrganjini which could mean "a raga that could hypnotize mrga or deer," or a gaga named after Rani Mri-ganayani.

Now it was Baiju's turn to challenge Tansen. According to legends he sung Raga Malkauns so powerfully that a stone slab in front melted and then he inserted his precious Tanpura into the wax-like liquid which solidified as soon as he stopped singing. Tansen had to melt the stone through some appropriate and potent raga and retrieve Baiju's precious Tanpura intact. Tansen needed no more proofs to identify the great Baiju about whom he had heard such high praise from their saintly guru Swami Haridas. Tansen touched the feet of his senior "guru-bhai" and the two great musicians embraced each other with tears of love in their eyes.

Though clearly fictitious, the story conveys the power of music and the admirable ability of the musicians.

RMIM Archive Article "91".

Classical Singers in Hindi Films

Efforts of:

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These are some of the songs from Hindi films which have been sung by trained classical musicians.

1. Baiju bawra: "Aaj gaawat man mero"; Naushad: DV Paluskar and Amir Khan.
2. Shabab: "Daya karo giridhar gopal"; Naushad; Amir Khan
3. Mughal-e-azam: "Prem jogan ban ke"; Naushad; Bade Ghulam Ali
4. Geet gaya pattharon ne: Title song; Ramlal; Kishori Amonkar
5. Sant Tulsidas: "Ram prabhu adhar"; Ram Kadam; Bhimsen Joshi
6. Bawarchi: "Kahe kanha karat barjori"; Madan Mohan; Lakshmi Shankar
7. Bhumika: "Mandar baju re"; Vanraj Bhatia; Saraswati Rane
8. Gaman: "Aaya sanwariya tohe garwa laga loon"; Jaidev; Hira Devi Mishra
9. Main tushi tere angan ki, "Saiyan rooth gaye"; Laxmikant-Pyarelal; Shobha Gurtu
10. Kudrat: "Hamen tumse pyar kitna"; R.D.Burman; Parveen Sultana
11. Jhanak jhanak payal baje: title song; Vasant Desai; Amir Khan
12. Mughal-e-azam: "Shubha din aayo"; Naushad; Bade Ghulam Ali
13. Vijeta: sequence in which Rekha is 'riyaazing': ? :Vasantrao Deshpande
14. Umrao Jaan:raagmala;Khaiyaam:Ghulam Mustafa Khan,Shahida Khan,Runa Prasad.
15. Bhumika: "Ghat ghat mein ram ramaiyya"; Vanraj Bhatia : Pt. Firoz Dastur
16. Razia Sultan: "shub ghaDi aayi"; Khayyam:Parveen Sultana
17. Razia Sultan: a tarana; Khayyam: Parveen Sultana
18. Pakeezah: "kaun gali gayo shaam"; Naushad: Parveen Sultana
19. Pakeezah: "Bandhan Baandho" ; Naushad: Shobha Gurtu
20. Raagini: "Jogiya Mere Ghar Aaye"; O P Nayyar:Amir Khan
21. Raagini: "Chhed Diye Mere Dil Ke Taar."; O P Nayyar:Amir Khan
22. Umrao Jaan:"Jhoola kinne dala" ;Khaiyaam:Shahida Khan
23. Rang Birangi:"Mruganayanee Chandramukhi";?:Dr. Vishwasrao Deshpande
24. Basant Bahar:"Ketaki Gulaab Juhi Champak ban phoole"; SJ:Bhimsen Joshi
25. Sursangam: "";LP:Rajan and Sajan Mishra

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Some of these songs are there in a HMV cassette of mid-1980s called "Classics from Films: Classical Artists Sing for Films."

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If you want to add anything to the above list, mail it to subraman@cs.umn.edu.

RMIM Archive Article "144".

Instruments in Indian Music

Posted by: uusharma@uxa.ecn.bgu.edu (Vandana Sharma)

SITAR

Sitar is the most popular stringed instrument of India and has been in use for about 700 years. It is fashioned from a seasoned gourd and teakwood and has twenty metal frets with six or seven playing strings and nineteen sympathetic strings below. It is played with a plectrum worn on the finger. Sitar has a long and complex heritage; its origin goes back to the ancient Veena. In the 13th century, Amir Khusru, in order to make the instrument more flexible, reversed the order of the strings and made the frets moveable. Ravi Shankar, the great musician-artist brought changes and a new perspective.

SAROD

Sarod is another popular stringed instrument. The body is carved from a single piece of well-seasoned teakwood and the belly covered with goat skin. There are four main strings, six rhythm and drone strings and fifteen sympathetic strings, all made of metal. These are played by striking with a plectrum made of a coconut shell. The Sarod has no frets. Sarod has been found in carvings of the 1st century in Champa temple and also in paintings in the Ajanta caves. It also has a similarity with the Rabab of Afghanistan and Kashmir. The instrument was modified by Amir Khusru in the 13th century. A definite change was made by Ustad Ali Akbar Khan in shape of the instrument for improving the tonal quality.

SARANGI

The name derives from Sau Rangi meaning 100 colours. Sarangi is played with a bow and has four main strings and as many as forty resonant strings. It is generally used to accompany singers but can also be a solo instrument.

TANPURA

Tanpura is a four or five stringed instrument which gives the essential drone background to all Indian music.

ESRAJ

Esraj is played with a bow and has many strings. It is one of the major instruments of North India.

SANTOOR

Santoor is a North Indian instrument originating from Kashmir. It has more than a hundred strings which run across a hollow rectangular box and the strings are struck by a pair of slim carved walnut mallets.

VICITRA VEENA

Vichitra Veena is a comparatively recent addition to

the Veena family. It is a fretless stringed instrument with four main strings, three drone and rhythm strings and eleven to thirteen resonating strings. The strings are plucked by a plectrum on the index or middle finger of the right hand.

VIOLIN

Violin was introduced to India about 300 years ago and is a very important string instrument in the South of India. It is played in a sitting position and is held between the right foot and the left shoulder.

TABLA

Tabla is the overall term for two drums, which are played as accompaniment to North Indian music and dance. The musician uses the base of the palm as well as the fingers to produce great variations in sounds. The right hand drum is tuned to the tonic dominant or sub-dominant and the left-hand drum acts as the base.

PAKHAWAJ

Pakhawaj is a long bodied wooden drum with both ends covered in skin and is the most traditional drum of North India. Played horizontally with the fingers and palms of both hands, the right hand surface is tuned to the pitch required and the left hand surface provides the base.

MRIDANGAM

Mridangam is similar in appearance to the Pakhawaj but the ends have a different texture. It is the most used drum in South Indian music.

DHOLAK

Dholak is a side drum, cylindrical in shape, bored out of solid wood. Its pitch is variable and is an essential accompaniment for folk music of North India.

JAL TARANG

Jal Tarang is essentially a water-xylophone. It is made up of a series of china bowls of varying sizes and they are filled with varying levels of water. These are then played with two light sticks.

PUNG

Pung is a long bodied drum with both ends covered in skin and plays an important role in Manipuri dancing when it is played by men and women, either in a sitting position or standing position.

FLUTE

Flute is found in every part of India, carved from bamboo it is made in every possible size. It is usually played in a vertical position.

SHEHNAI

Shehnai is a double reeded wind instrument with a widening tube towards the lower end. There are eight or nine holes, the upper seven for playing, the lower ones for tuning. The Shehnai is considered auspicious and is played on all festive occasions in India.

RMIM Archive Article "283".

Historical perspective on India Music and Definitions

Introduction to the Music of India

Posted by: uusharma@uxa.ecn.bgu.edu (Vandana Sharma)

Source:

Published by the Centre of Indian Arts, London during the Sanskritik 7th Festival of Arts of India under the artistic direction of Birendra Shankar.

When I carefully read the following article, it made a good deal of sense to me and gave me a fairly good intro to Indian music.

I think it would be a good idea to discuss the aspects and theory of Indian music, those that are mentioned in the article as well as those that are not. If there are concepts that are unknown or confusing to you, point them out. If you are unaware of some of the music terminology used in the article, please ask. I'm sure our RMIM gurus are still around to help us out! And, of course, I am here as well to help with the basic theory of music.

-Vandana

Once a King asked a sage how to make sculptures of the Gods. The sage said, "Someone who does not know the laws of painting could never understand the laws of sculpture. Someone who has no knowledge of the principles of instrumental music cannot know the laws of dancing. Someone who does not understand the art of vocal music cannot understand the principles of instrumental music."

It is through the medium of the arts that people of different nations and backgrounds are able to communicate and understand each other better. The West is becoming more familiar with Indian music - it is no longer merely an exotic expression of the East, but is reaching an ever growing and more knowledgeable and appreciative audience.

HISTORY

The music of India and its history are too complex to be described briefly. Nevertheless a brief introduction will help those who are new to Indian music; they will no doubt be more influenced by what they hear than by what they read but a foreknowledge of certain theoretical points may assist their appreciation.

HERITAGE

Indian music has a very long, unbroken tradition - the accumulated heritage of centuries. The origin can be traced back to Vedic days - nearly two thousand years. The culture of India today is an outcome of the interaction and interweaving of races and cultures, both indigenous and foreign; and it is the study of the contribution of these various races and tribes that gives us the picture of the evolution of Indian music. The Negrito, the Mongoloid, the Dravidian, and the Aryan, have all contributed to the complexity of Indian culture.

North Indian music is popularly known as Hindustani music and South Indian as Karnatic; their origin is the same, only the approach and style are different. When and how the two main schools crystallized would be an interesting study but the earliest treatises of Indian music do not make any distinction between Northern and Southern schools.

INFLUENCES

One of the strongest and most significant influences has perhaps been

that of Islam (and of Persian music); a few centuries of Muslim invasion and rule brought in its wake a changed perspective in the style of Northern Indian music, rather than in its structure. Not being part of the religious ritual it was necessarily fostered outside the places of worship; hence an element of physical pleasure, particularly of the courtier, became predominant.

It is interesting to note the influence of Indian music on sculpture and particularly painting. Painters have portrayed the theme of the Raga and they have named their paintings after the Ragas and Raginis. Both paintings and sculpture concentrate on creating contained, volume-filled forms. Great care is taken to keep the basis simple. The moving line and contained space complement each other, giving each other meaning. This is exactly analogous to the character of Indian musical melody, which moves in smooth united motions, including within its curves definite units of musical form.

STRUCTURE

The tradition of Indian music should be understood in the context of Indian life and thought. The theory and practice of Indian music are the logical result of a consistent development, a distinctive process, which plays an integral part in Indian history and culture. One should not listen to Indian music and judge it in terms of Western music or any other musical form. It would be like judging Beethoven or Brahms in terms of Raga (the basis of Indian melody) and Tala (the basis of Indian rhythm). Ideally, the western listener is requested to forget counterpoint, harmony, and mixed tone colours and to relax into the rhythmic and melodic patterns of a great cultural heritage.

Each melodic structure of Raga has something akin to a distinct personality subject to a prevailing mood. Early Indian writers on music, carried this idea further and endowed the Ragas with the status of minor divinities, with names derived from various sources, often indicating the origin or associations of the individual Ragas. In theoretical works on music each Raga was described in a short verse formula, which enabled the artist to visualise its essential personality during meditation prior to the performance. This borrowing of the meditational technique used in Hindu worship enabled the musician to enter into the mood of a particular Raga and thus perform successfully.

TECHNICAL ASPECT

Raga is neither a scale, nor a mode. It is, however, a scientific, precise, subtle, and aesthetic melodic form with its own peculiar ascending and descending movement which consists of either a full octave, or a series of six or five notes. An omission of a jarring or dissonant note, or an emphasis on a particular note, or the slide from one note to another, and the use of microtones along with other subtleties, distinguish one Raga from the other. There are 72 'melas', or parent scales, on which Ragas are based.

Raga has its own principal mood such as tranquility, devotion, eroticism, loneliness, pathos, heroism, etc. In Indian music there is above all an awareness between man and nature, each acting and reacting on the other, and hence each Raga is associated, according to its mood, with a particular time of the day, night or a season. Improvisation is an essential feature of Indian music, depending upon the imagination and the creativity of an artist; a great artist can communicate and instill in his listener the mood of the Raga.

'Tala' is the second important factor in Indian music. These are

rhythmic cycles ranging from 3 to 108 beats. The division in a Tala and the stress on the first beat, called 'Sum', are the most important features of these cycles. Talas having the same number of beats may have a stress on different beats, e.g. a bar of 10 beats may be divided as: 2-3-2-3, or 3-3-4, or 3-4-3. Within the framework of the fixed beats the drummer can improvise to the same extent as the principal artists after going their separate ways, come back together with an accent or stress on the first beat. Thus, the 'Sum' becomes the most important beat of emphasis throughout a recital of Indian music, since this urge for unity and its fulfilment are the most rewarding experience.

GLOSSARY (General)

Alap: is the first movement of the Raga. It is a slow, serene movement acting as an invocation and it gradually develops the Raga.

Jor: begins with the added element of rhythm which (combining with the weaving of innumerable melodic patterns) gradually gains in tempo and brings the raga to the final movement.

Jhala: is the final movement and climax. It is played with a very fast action of the plectrum which is worn on the right index finger.

Gat: is the fixed composition. A gat can be in any Tala and can be spread over from 2 to 16 of its rhythmic cycles in any tempo, slow, medium or fast.

A Gat (for a fixed composition), whether vocal or instrumental, has generally two sections. The first part is called "pallavi" - South Indian term - or "asthayi" - North Indian term - which opens the composition and is generally confined to the lower and middle octaves. The following part of the composition is called the "anupallavi" (or antara) which usually extends from the middle to upper octaves. In South Indian music further melodic sections called "charana" follows the "anupallavi."

TALAS

Dadra rhythmic cycle of 6 beats divided 3-3.

Rupak rhythmic cycle of 7 beats divided 3-2-2.

Jhaptal rhythmic cycle of 10 beats divided 2-3-2-3.

Ektal rhythmic cycle of 12.

Adha-Chautal rhythmic cycle of 14 beats divided 2-4-4-4.

Teen-Tal rhythmic cycle of 16 beats divided 4-4-4-4.

(Northern Form)

Dhrupad compositions have four parts or stanzas, viz. Asthayi, Antra, Sanchari and Abhog. Dhrupad is accompanied only by the Tanpura and Pankhawaj. Dhrupad is considered to be the oldest classical vocal forms of Hindustani music.

Hori Dhamar: These compositions are akin to Dhrupad and enjoy identical status. Despite the variations in the themes of these compositions, all of them are associated with the festival of Holi (playing of colors) and the compositions are all of 14 beats time cycle.

Khayal: The Dhrupad style of music was replaced by the romantic Khayal (the word Khayal means imagination, idea). The most important features of a Khayal are 'Tans' or the running glides over notes and 'Bol-tans' which clearly distinguish it from 'Dhrupad'. The slow (Vilambit) and fast (Drut) styles of Khayal are the two recognised types today.

Tappa: This is a distinct style having its origin in the Punjab. Its beauty lies in the quick and intricate display of various permutations and combinations of notes. It is strange that even though the Tappa lyrics are in Punjabi, Tappa is not sung in the Punjab. Banares and

Gwalior are the strongholds of Tappa. Bengal has also been greatly influenced by the Tappa style.

Thumri: Thumri originated in the Eastern part of Uttar Pradesh. Its most distinct feature is the erotic subject matter picturesquely portraying the various episodes from the lives of Lord Krishna and Radha. The beauty of Thumri lies in the artist's ability to convey musically as many shades of meaning as the words of a song can bear. It is a much freer form than 'Khayal'.

(Southern Form)

Varnam: A composition usually sung or played at the beginning of a recital. It reveals the general form of the Raga. The Varnam is made up of two parts: 1) The Purvanga or first half and 2) The Uttaranga or second half. The two halves are almost equal in length.

Kriti: A composed song set to a certain Raga and fixed Tala (rhythmic) cycle. It is a highly evolved musical form.

Ragam: A melodic improvisation in free rhythm played without mridangam (drum) accompaniment.

Tanam: Another style of melodic improvisation in free rhythm.

Pallavi: This is a short pre-composed melodic theme with words and set to one cycle of tala. Here the soloist improvises new melodies built around the word pallavi.

Trikalam: Is the section where the Pallavi is played in three tempi keeping the Tala constant.

Swara-Kalpana: Is the improvised section performed with the drummer in medium and fast speeds.

Rangamalika: This is the final part of the Pallavi where the soloist improvises freely and comes back to the original theme at the end.

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RMIM Archive Article "62".

Great Master's series Great Masters 2: Ustad Bismillah Khan - The Shehnai Maestro!

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)
Sources: "Down Melody Lane" (1984) by G.N. Joshi

The second installment of the Great Masters series follows. This week's feature is on Ustad Bismillah Khan and it is taken from G.N. Joshi's 1984 book "Down Melody Lane".

The shehnai is perhaps the most popular of all the instruments in Indian music, because it sounds extremely sweet. It is an ancient wind instrument played all over India. It is played morning and evening at the time of prayer in most big temples, during holy festivals, and on all auspicious occasions. The sound of a shehnai at once fills the atmosphere with a soothing sweetness and sublime peace. This small instrument, hardly two feet long, produces magic notes that hypnotize listeners.

Bismillah Khan, the most outstanding and world-famous shehnai player, has attained astonishing mastery over the instrument. He was born in a small village in Bihar about 60 years ago. He spent his childhood in the holy city of Varanasi, on the banks of the Ganga, where his uncle was the official shehnai player in the famous Visvanath temple. It was due to this that Bismillah became interested in playing the Shehnai. At an early age, he familiarized himself with various forms of the music of UP, such as Thumri, Chaiti, Kajri, Sawani etc. Later he studied Khayal music and mastered a large number of ragas.

I met and heard Bismillah for the first time in 1941, when he came to our studio for a recording. At that time his elder brother also played with him. Both the brothers were expert players, but the famous Urdu saying "Bade bhai so bade bhai, lekin chhote bhai - Subhanallah!" perfectly described the brothers. When they played together Bismillah Khan always played down his own part as he did not wish to overshadow his brother. 'Even though I have the ability, I must always remember that he is my elder brother' he always said with humility and modesty. I ventured to question him about this after the death of his elder brother. He said again, 'He was my elder brother, hence it was not proper for me to play better than him'.

Bismillah Khan's party included three or four accompanists, one of whom gave him the main complementary support. Instead of a tabla, a duggi player provided rhythm accompaniment. Nowadays, Bismillah Khan has a tabla also. The duggi consists of two drums, like a tabla and dugga, but smaller in size. The duggi has neither the resounding quality of the tabla nor the peculiarity that the tabla has of sustaining the frequencies of a note (aas) but since it is the traditional instrument in UP, Bismillah Khan prefers to have it.

Ever since Ali Akbar Khan and Ravi Shankar introduced Indian music to the West, a number of Indian musicians have been invited

to perform abroad. It was therefore hardly surprising that a musician of Bismillah Khan's calibre should be one of them. In 1964, when I visited London and Europe, I found that many music lovers in UK, France, Germany and other countries had already come under the spell of Bismillah's LP records. On my return I repeatedly urged Bismillah Khan to accept invitations from those countries. But he was mortally afraid of air travel and hence avoided going abroad. When in 1965, he received an invitation to play in Europe, he made impossible demands just to get out of it. The LP records which we used to release every three or four months further increased the interest of western listeners. In 1966 he again received through the Indian government a flattering invitation from the UK to participate in the famous Edinburgh festival. He resorted to his old tactic of making impossible demands such as, 'I won't go by plane, I want 10 people to accompany me and I want so much remuneration besides...!', etc etc. This was done in the hope that the invitation would be withdrawn. But he was pressurized into accepting the invitation by a very senior official in the Indian government who offered him fresh inducements. Bismillah Khan agreed to go to Edinburgh, but on one condition. He demanded that he and his staff should be first taken, at state expense, on a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. This wish was granted and, at last, Bismillah Khan boarded a plane. He completed the Haj pilgrimage at state expense and, fortified by prayers and blessings received from Allah, reached England safely. Bismillah Khan was the star attraction at the Edinburgh festival that year. His shehnai, sometimes soft and sweet, sometimes vibrantly alive with sonorously rich alapi, filled the air and brought the vast audience under its magic spell. The next day the papers were full of lavish praise for his divine performance. The following year, he received an invitation from the USA. Having realised how comfortable it is to travel by air, he did not raise any objections. He toured all over America regaling millions of people. He has since become a veteran air traveller and is always willing to visit any country of the world.

The Government of India bestowed on him the title "Padmashri"; later he was further honoured by the title "Padmabhusan", and now the "Padmavibhusan" has been conferred on him. In spite of being glorified in this manner he remained as modest as ever. When invited for a recording he always came without demur. He once had a program at seven in the evening, and had a reservation on a early morning train the next day. At my request he came to our studio at about midnight, after the concert. By early dawn had recorded material sufficient for two records. After having breakfast in our studio he went straight to the station to catch the train.

I was always trying to find new ways to increase the sales of our records. When the jugalbandi record of Ravi Shankar's sitar and Ali Akbar's sarod proved to be a hit, I decided to record a jugalbandi of the shehnai with some other instrument. A jugalbandi of the shehnai and the sitar was used in the film played by Bismillah Khan and Sitar Nawaz Abdul Halim Jaffar Khan. When I put my idea to Halim Jaffar he said to me candidly, in the picture'. Also the jugalbandi in the film lasted for only three

minutes. An LP record, 20 minutes long, would not according to him, be able to hold the interest of the listeners. The sitar sounds very soft and gentle compared to the vibrant and powerful notes of the shehnai. The volume of a sitar can be electrically magnified only up to a certain limit. Any further increase will result in distortion (This is true of all musical instruments). I therefore gave up the idea for the time being. But when Bismillah Khan went abroad to perform in the Edinburgh festival where Ustad Vilayat Khan also was giving a sitar recital, I grabbed the opportunity. Through our London office we were successful in bringing an LP with these two star artists on the shehnai and the sitar.

After this successful experiment, the idea of making another of the shehnai and some other instrument gripped me. The famous violinist Pandit V.G. Jog was at that time a producer at AIR Bombay. I made this proposal to him. Jog immediately favoured the idea and in a few days a joint programme of shehnai and the violin sponsored by All India Radio was held before a select audience. The programme, in my opinion, was not a success and was not at all what I had expected it to be. However, I still felt that it could be done well and came up with an idea which I discussed with my friend Pandit Jog. I suggested that the two instruments having similar tonal qualities would sound well together if they were played in different octaves. When, for instance, Bismillah Khan played in the Taar Saptak, Pandit Jog could play in the Mandra and Madhya saptak, and when Khansaheb was in the lower saptak, Pandit Jog could play in the Taar saptak. There would thus be a striking contrast in tone, pitch and timbre. The artistry of both the veteran players would be emphasized and there would be a perfect blending of the two instruments. When we did this and issued the record, true to my expectation, it was a thundering success.

During my 7-month trip around the world, no fresh record of Bismillah Khan was made. As soon as I resumed duty after my return in March 1971, I decided to record two fast selling artists who had not been available during my absence. They were Bismillah Khan and Bhimsen Joshi. The annual music festival of Sur Singar Samshad usually takes place in Bombay in April every year and it is usually inaugurated by Bismillah Khan. I therefore sent him a telegram and a letter asking him to spare time for a recording during his visit to the city.

As a member of the governing body of the Sur Singar Samshad I attended a meeting at the residence of its director Mr. Brijnarayan. Bismillah Khan also dropped in at the time of the meeting which was held on a Thursday. The sammelan was to open on Saturday and we therefore agreed to have a recording session the previous morning, that is, Friday.

Friday is the Muslim day of prayer, and devout Muslims take particular care not to miss their noon prayer. Khan Saheb therefore agreed to do the recording from 8.30 in the morning so that he would be able to attend the Jumma after the recording. Accordingly I came to the studio at 8.30 on the dot. I was followed almost immediately by Bismillah Khan's accompanists. Soon afterwards Khan Saheb came up in the lift. I went to greet him and was

surprised to see him in dark glasses and all the more perplexed to see him wearing them so early in the morning. Bismillah gave an explanation. Bombay at that time was in the grip of a particularly infectious eye epidemic-conjunctivitis-and Khan Saheb had fallen victim to it. He said to me, 'I couldn't sleep at all last night and I'm feeling very miserable'. I said, 'You shouldn't have bothered to come then'. 'Oh no! I couldn't do that,' he said, smiling. 'I gave you my word that I would come at 8.30. I didn't want you to say that I don't keep my promises'. I was touched to the core. A true artist is always careful to preserve good relations with his friends. Khan Saheb really looked as if he was in great pain. Seeing him thus I said, 'We will cancel the recording'. He took his seat on the platform and in two hours he recorded two ragas and a thumri for an LP. I was standing right in front of him. He was holding the shehnai to his lips and was completely engrossed in the haunting music that poured out from the tiny instrument. He played on, completely oblivious of his discomfort and his streaming eyes. He finished the magnificent recording and asked me if I wanted more! What I miss most after my retirement from HMV is the pleasure I used to get from Bismillah Khan's shehnai. I am sure that by God's grace, he will continue to delight millions in our country and abroad for many years to come.

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "334".

Great Masters 2a: Bismillah Khan

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)

Source: India Today

Author: Inderjit Badhwar

Namashkar.

I found the following attached feature unexpectedly while foraging in a friend's 'circulating' library (aka the raddi shop).

Bismillah Khan is a musician extraordinaire, nonpareil in his handling and treatment of the swara. Viewed specifically from the prism of the swara, with all that it entails, he is indisputably the greatest Hindustani instrumentalist of our times. The Ustad's music is readily accessible to all but it is deceptively simple, its nuance audible only to the patient, careful ear and its complex structure and content visible only to the eye of analysis. However, to Bismillah, complexity is not an end in itself but a means towards aesthetic fulfillment, and, as he himself hints, towards realising the most uplifting in music and bathing in its wake. In this respect his art is reminiscent of Bach. And in these times when the term "genius" is much misunderstood, misapplied and abused, it is Bismillah's name that lends substance and credence to the word.

Warm regards,

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BISMILLAH KHAN - A Mystic Union

A steady, rhythmic thudding fills the air as hundreds of young Shias who have marched in the procession to the ziyarat of the martyred Imam Hussein in Varanasi - a replica of the shrine in Karbala, Iraq - beat their chests and sing a dirge. Bismillah Khan, who is part of this alam ka juloos stands at the entrance to the tomb, holding aloft the alam (Hussain's standard) in the memory of the slain grandson of Prophet Mohammed. He tries to join in the song but his mouth quivers and he starts to sob openly, wiping his tears with corners of the flag. Veiled women in black weep as the lengthening shadow of the neem tree brings in the evening. Aya hai karbala mein gharib-ul watan koi, the mourners sing, sub kuchh hai is jahan mein lekin mere karim, bhai ko zibah hote na dekhe bahen koi (let no sister ever suffer the fate of having to watch her brother slaughtered). On this special day of prayer and mourning, Khan Sahib has already spent two hours at the shrine which includes replicas of the rauzaas (tombs) of Fatima Zehra, the Prophet's daughter, and Hazrat Abbas, Hussain's younger brother. He has visited each site, dressed in a white kurta and pyjama, offered incense and prostrated himself in adulation. As he completes his rounds, stopping finally at the rauzaa of Imam Hussain, he reads out the names of the 72 shaheeds (martyrs) of Karbala, who were butchered in the 7th century A.D. when Hussain refused to assent to Yezid's Caliphate. His head bowed, arms stretched out in supplication, Khan Sahib mutters a prayer: "You gave me everything. You gave me your life. Ya Khuda, Ya Rahmatkaar. My tears are the tears of gratitude." When finally the long evening turns into dusk, he washes his feet and settles down on arthritic knees, swathed

in heavy bandages, to two hours of namaaz - a lonely, beatific figure doubled over in pain and ecstasy.

"Music, sur, namaaz. It is the same thing. We reach Allah in different ways. A musician can learn. He can play beautifully. But unless he can mix his music with religion, unless he strives to meet God, he will only have kalaa (art) but no assar (mystical union). He will always stand at the ocean and never reach the heights of purity."

Khan Saheb is soaked in religion. It is his sustaining life-force. But it is this same religion that damns music, condemns it as an act of rape. For the Shias, music is haraam (taboo). But for the man who took the shehnai out of the wedding processions and naubatkhanaas - the shehnai player, traditionally was to be heard and not seen - and who was able to weave patterns of dazzling intricacy into his music as he brought it to the centre-stage of classical respectability, his instrument is also his Quran. Where others see conflicts and contradictions between music and religion, he sees only a divine unity.

"When maulvis and maulanais ask me about this, I tell them, sometimes with irritation, that I can't explain it. I feel it. I feel it. If music is haraam then why has it reached such heights? Why does it make me soar towards heaven? The religion of music is one. All others are different. I tell the maulanais, this is the only haqeeqat (reality). This is the world. My namaaz is the seven shuddh and five komal surs. And if this is haraam, then I say: aur haraam karo, aur haraam karo (if music be a thing of sin, sin on)."

"I was once in an argument with some Shia maulavis in Iraq. They were all well-versed in their subject and were making several effective arguments about reasons why music ought to be damned. At first I was left speechless. Then I closed my eyes and began to sing Raga Bhairav: Allah-hee....Allah-hee....Allah-hee...I continued to raise the pitch. I opened my eyes and I asked them: 'Is this haraam? I'm calling God. I'm thinking of Him, I'm searching for Him. Isn't this namaaz? Why do you call my search haraam?'" They fell silent.

Each year, on the eighth day of Muharram, this devotee of the Shia faith who refuses to touch the reed of his shehnai with his lips unless he has offered his namaaz before sunrise, engages himself in his own private drama of religious apostasy. Dressed simply in white, he leads a procession, like a mischievous Pied Piper of rebellion, playing a silver shehnai reserved specially for the occasion. The procession winds its way through Varanasi's Byzantine lanes to the rauzaa of Imam Hussain. Here, just inside the gate, he sits cross-legged on the dusty ground in the fashion of a mendicant street minstrel and play for hours, weeping copiously all the time, while the audience pitches coins into his lap.

This is simple man. A man of tenderness, a gentle private man, yet given to unbridled display of emotion. When he laughs, the ground shakes. At 70, he is an immensely handsome man with a princely beard and eyes which glint with boyish mischief, his only "bad habit" he apologises, is smoking Wills cigarettes which he puffs with obvious relish. There is nothing about him that bespeaks his fame - his honorary doctorates, his Padma Vibhushan, his concerts in almost every capital around the world, his dozens of best-selling record albums. On India's first Republic Day ceremony it was Khan Sahib who poured his heart out in Raaga Kaafi from the Red Fort. On a more pop level it

was Khan Sahib who composed that magic film number 'Dil ka khilauna hai toot gaya' for the film Goonj Uthi Shehnai. He has made money but spent it just as fast. He supports nearly 100 relatives, including 10 children.

His house in Varanasi, in Sarai Harha, is an ample but decrepit structure. His living room which also serves as guest room, is sparsely furnished with creaky wooden benches and a large takht on which, at given time of the day, his children perform namaaz, oblivious of guests and visitors. Still in incessant demand as a player he travels by train regularly with his troupe, often by second class. He hates to fly. And when travel arrangements are being made, the house buzzes with activity as instruments are laid out, ancient steel trunks and torn British Airways flight-bags are packed with clothes and lunch boxes stuffed with rice and samosas. The shehnai player, whose name is familiar even to the international jet set as that of Ravi Shankar, travels by cycle rickshaw. And as he wheels down the city's streets at the head of a caravan of rickshaws, smiling at well wishers, he looks as happy as a British Lord in a Rolls Royce.

Until Bismillah Khan burst upon the centre-stage of Indian music with his strange little instrument at the All-India Music Conference in Calcutta in 1937 at the age of 20, the shehnai was considered an instrument reserved for wedding processions or Hindu religious rituals. His ancestors were court musicians in the princely state of Dumraon in Bihar. His uncle, the late Ali Bux 'Vilayatu', was a shehnai player attached to Varanasi's Vishwanath Temple. Khan Sahib remembers him as a hard task master, "who may not be able to conjure up the rain with his playing but would bring you to tears in a minute."

"I was never interested in studies. While others were at their books, I used to sneak out and play marbles or blow on Mamu's (uncle's) shehnai. He always knew I would be a shehnai-player."

Even as a devout Shia, Khan Sahib is also a devotee of Saraswati, the Hindu Goddess of music. And at the age of 12, he recalls, he received a signal - a peculiarly Hindu signal - that his sadhana had been rewarded. He recalls:

"Mamu used to do his riyaz (practice) at the temple of Balaji (an avtaar of Vishnu) for 18 years. He told me to do the same thing. I would begin my riyaz at the mandir at 7 pm and end at 11 pm during which time I usually played four ragas. After a year and half, Mamu told me, 'if you see anything just don't talk about it'. One night as I was playing, deep in meditation, I smelled something. It was an indescribable scent, something like sandalwood and jasmine and incense. I thought it was aroma of Ganges. But the scent got more powerful. I opened my eyes - and when I speak about it I still get goose flesh - when I opened my eyes, there was Balaji standing right next to me, kamandal in hand, exactly as he is pictured. My door was locked from inside. Nobody was allowed to enter when I did my riyaz. He said 'play, son'. But I was in cold sweat. I stopped playing."

"He smiled, and disappeared. I unlocked the door. I thought a faqir may have come in. I took a lantern and searched all streets. They were empty. I ran home, ate quickly and slept. Mamu had understood what had happened. But he teased me, pretending he knew nothing, But as I blurted out the experience, Mamu slapped me, because he had asked

me earlier not to talk about anything that might happen to me. Then he kissed me and asked me to go and buy vegetables. Mamu always told me 'never look back, keep going forward'. Even now I go to Balaji's mandir alone, at night and play all by myself. When I play before others, in my heart I'm listening to my gurus. In my heart, they clap for me at the appropriate time."

"In music, the sur is a clean thing, it is a pure thing. It cannot be deceived and it cannot deceive anybody. It is like a mirror in which you see the world, in which I see my own face when I play. When I start playing, the mind wanders here and there and takes me with it. But all the time I am striving for the assar. But when that comes, when the sur clicks, it is like I am unconscious and the heart has taken over. Sometimes I don't understand who is playing. Or I feel that I am playing at the mazaar, or in front of ancient sages. And all I can think of is 'he mere maalik tu mujhe lele (God, take me away), tu hi nirankaar, tu hee phool aur phal mein (God, You alone are formless, You alone in flower or fruit).'"

"I am getting old now. Not in my heart. But in my body. The heart yearns to go on and on but this body sometimes tires and these wretched knees start aching after four hours of playing. And I now have that all-too-human worry. Thirty years ago, I used to think I had conquered or was about to conquer the world. What foolishness! Now I say, Bismillah, you haven't reached anywhere. The world may know and listen to your ragas, but Bismillah, life will soon finish and your yearnings will still remain. This music is still an ocean. I want to cross it. But I have barely reached the shore. I haven't yet even taken a dip in it."

Khan Sahib has not groomed a disciple. He teaches students when he has the time but there is no special heir. Of his six sons - Mahtab, Nayab, Hussein, Famin, Kazim, and Nazim - the youngest, Nazim, plays the tabla.

"The days of adaab (old world manners) are gone," he says. "Musicians now go to school. They do not do sadhana with gurus. They want instant results. But the great old masters who did their penance - Fayyaz Khan, Abdul Karim Khan, Onkar Nath - died poor. No one knows about their sacrifices. Consider Swami Haridas. He produced Tansen. But no one knows Swami Haridas. They had no time for their own lives. No time for their families, their children. They are very few in this age who can do the real riyaz. You have to have the ability to wipe yourself out. You have to get up before sunrise on freezing mornings, offer namaaz, go to the mandir, and begin practice. These days musicians want to rise at 10 am to go to music schools. But which music school has produced a Fayyaz or an Abdul Karim Khan? I say, leave those schools aur aao maidan mein (and come out into the real battle). But you have to have the discipline and the tenacity. Someone like me can give his time to a student, but the taker has to be willing to take, to wrest that time from his guru. He must find the time for his own tapasya. I remember when I was a boy and often my guru, tired from the day, would retire at 4 am. I would be awake. I had been waiting for him. I used to go to his bedroom and begin pressing his tired feet. He would look at me and he would know what I wanted. He would shake off his slumber and come alive. He would give me his shehnai and tell me: 'all right son, start playing.'"

RMIM Archive Article "64".

Great Master's series **Great Masters 4: Satyam Shivam Sundaram - Ravi Shankar's Music!**

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)

Sources: "Down Melody Lane" (1984) by G.N. Joshi

The melodious strains of Ravi Shankar's sitar have carried Indian music across the seven seas. Ravi Shankar is now a world famous personality. His recitals in India and abroad draw huge crowds. Millions of fans gather to hear him. Films are being made about his life. Ravi Shankar had ridden the crest of popularity for over 30 years and this popularity shows no signs of abatement. This era in music could truly be called the Ravi Shankar era. He has contributed a golden page to the history of Indian classical music.

I met Ravi Shankar in 1940. He is about 10 years younger than me, and at that time he was in his twenties. Fair and slim, this curly haired youth worked with me in the studio for some time. Even in those early days his intelligence and dedication to music were apparent. I always felt that his tremendous creative ability was being wasted in the HMV studio and that he would soon do much better for himself. This was proved to be correct when, a few years later, Pandit Ravi Shankar's magnificent music conquered the world, and his fame reached great heights. Pandit Ravi Shankar's father was an eminent barrister and a very high official in a princely state. Ravi Shankar had a happy childhood. His was a family of artists, and all his brothers have become famous in different artistic spheres. His eldest brother was the world renowned dancer Uday Shankar, the two other brothers Sachin Shankar and Rajendra Shankar are also very well known.

Ravi Shankar studied music and learnt to play the sitar under the guidance of Ustad Allaudin Khan. His sangeet sadhana was as strenuous and gruelling as the tapasya (penance) done in the olden days by ascetics seeking knowledge in the ashrams of their gurus. Living with Ustad Allaudin Khan and pursuing his study, Ravi Shankar had to undergo rigorous trials. The Ustad was a difficult master. At times Ravi Shankar was even subjected to physical punishment. Coming as he did from an affluent and very highly placed family, it was very difficult for him to bear the hard work and humiliating treatment. One day he tried to run away from the guru's home. A friend, however, brought him back from the station.

(**Insert**): This friend was the Ustad's now-famous son, Ali Akbar Khan. There's an interesting story about this incident and curious readers are referred to Ravi Shankar's autobiography "My Music, My Life". It should be available at the university libraries.....Rajan).

The next morning Ustad Allaudin Khan came to know of Ravi Shankar's attempt to escape. The Ustad was so upset at this that he burst into tears and embraced his pupil. Ustad Allaudin Khan not only imparted his treasure of knowledge to this favourite

disciple, but in addition bestowed upon him the hand of his daughter Annapurna in marriage.

Although Ustad Allaudin Khan was a Muslim by birth, his general behaviour, his style of living and his dress were those of an orthodox Hindu. I had the opportunity to meet Allaudin Khan and to observe him closely when I visited Jodhpur with Ravi Shankar on an invitation from the maharaja. I first saw him in the early hours of the morning. He was wearing a brahminic style dhoti and was offering puja to Laxmi and Saraswati. He looked exactly like one's concept of a pious freshly bathed learned brahmin scholar of vedic times.

When Ali Akbar Khan and Ravi Shankar combined their skills at mehfils and on records, and presented their artistic craftsmanship on the sarod and sitar, they received tremendous ovations. In search of wider audiences they proceeded to Europe from where, encouraged by their success, they went on to America. Their tremendous popularity in America induced them to stay there to try new experiments and set new trends in music. They have both spent the greater part of their last few years outside India, and, in their separate ways won countless fans through their concerts. Pandit Ravi Shankar started a music school, the Kinnara school, at Los Angeles in California, but he very recently closed it and has returned to India with the intention of starting an Ashram in the holy city of Varanasi. Ali Akbar, however, has decided to stay on in San Rafael, to coach Americans in the art of playing Indian classical music. In his efforts to induce Western listeners to appreciate and enjoy Indian music, Ravi Shankar adopted a technique of presentation different from the old traditional style. Naturally there arose the fear that Indian tradition and prestige of Indian music might suffer in the process. Critics accused Ravi Shankar of polluting the high and chaste standard of presentation and even feared that the purity of ragas was at stake. It is, however, true that from the point of view of acquainting Western listeners with Indian music and training them to listen to and enjoy the artistic beauty of our music, the method and course adopted by Ravi Shankar was the correct one. Through his novel technique of presentation, he taught Western listeners what to look for in our music for real appreciation and enjoyment. Sitar, which sell moderately well in India, were exported in thousands to America and other Western countries. This proved the popularity and success of Ravi Shankar. In 1969, he was cited as 'Musician of the Year' by one of the leading organs of America's musical industry, Billboard Magazine. Enticed by Ravi Shankar and his sitar, George Harrison of the famous group, the Beatles, came to Bombay some years ago. While he was there he gave a demonstration of Indian music in our studio, and I was witness to the miraculous achievement of Pandit Ravi Shankar. In his never ending quest for novel ideas, and to successfully arrange a meeting between the music of the East and West, Ravi Shankar made an LP record entitled 'Sitar Concerto' supported entirely by a Western orchestra in London. This record will undoubtedly be a great asset in considerably increasing the interest of Western listeners in Indian music. I, however, honestly feel that such a fusion of two styles so different from each oth-

er will never hold lastingly together. The classical nature of Ravi Shankar's sitar playing has remained pure and unaffected, inspite of his having stayed abroad for several years. He has mastered every aspect of sitar playing such as alap, jod, gat, zala, etc. During the alap movement he reveals the magnificent structure of a raga in a delightfully elaborate style. The jod and gat, that follow the alap movement, are so resplendent with the remarkable display by his artistic nimble fingers, that the audience remains completely hypnotized and spellbound. In spite of the great success that has come his way Ravi Shankar has remained a very humble person. Apart from his sitar playing Ravi Shankar has won a big name in other fields of music too. For a few years he conducted the orchestra in All India Radio, and at that time he made recordings of ragas presented in an entirely novel and unique way. He scored the background music for several Hindi films with great success. The films Kabuliwala and Pather Panchali need special mention in this connection. More creditable still is the fact that he is the first ever Indian artist to be selected to provide music for western films. Fame, honour and titles of every kind have been showered upon the great maestro. In 1957, at the Berlin film festival, there was conferred upon him the prestigious 'Silver Bear' award for the background music of Kabuliwala. The Indian government has already honoured him with the Padmabhushan.

(**Insert**: Didn't he get the Padmavibhushan recently? Will someone confirm?...Rajan)

I always consider it a great privilege to have a friend like him who, after winning such international acclaim, is still so modest and loving at heart.

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "65".

Great Master's series Great Masters 5: Mallika-e-Ghazal Begum Akhtar!

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)
Sources: "Down Melody Lane" (1984) by G.N. Joshi

Yo Music Lovers: Here I come once again with yet another instalment of Great Masters (the optical scanner makes life easier). To those fortunate few whom Begum Akhtar's music translates to instant orgasm, the following article should prove interesting. To others, who have no such luck - take it easy!:-)

Rajan

About 25 years ago I had arranged a mehfil of Pandit Bhimsen Joshi at my residence. A few select friends were invited, amongst whom was the late Ramubhaya Date of Indore. The mehfil was fixed for 4.30 in the afternoon but Ramubhaya arrived a little before the lunch hour. There was nothing unusual in this. Ramubhaya had often arrived thus and joined us at the table. I always appreciate such a simple and informal attitude, and so I heartily welcomed Ramubhaya to lunch with us. We did full justice to the food. After lunch Ramubhaya helped himself to paan. Normally I do not eat paan or supari but on that day, after the excellent lunch, I accepted the patti prepared by him. He also gave one each to my wife and daughter and said, 'Look, an excellent meal like this must be followed by paan, and along with it you must try this "Akhtari". Phir maja dekho!'

He produced from a small bottle a number of pills covered with silver leaf and gave one to each of us. The pills, chewed with the paan, were wonderful in flavour and taste. I said, 'Ramubhaya, this little Akhtari of yours and our Faizabadi Akhtari seem to be equally delicious in sweetness and fragrance.'

I have named these pills. I have listened to Begum Akhtar's singing countless times, and each time she so hypnotizes me that I take this pill with paan every ten or fifteen minutes just to keep the memory and aroma of her singing fresh in my mind. 'kalejava katar', that 'katar' has gone so deep that I will always remember her,' I said reminiscently.

Only those who were fortunate enough to see and hear Begum Akhtar in person would understand the full meaning of these words.

In 1914 at Faizabad, a village in U.P., a teenaged girl made her debut as a singer and took listeners by storm. Those who heard her acknowledged her to be a singer of great promise. And from that day on she came to be known as Akhtari Faizabadi.

In due course, age brought about changes in her voice and style. Maturity and experience lend grace to an artist's presentation and make it blossom forth in its full beauty. Begum Akhtar, no wonder, very soon reached the heights of fame and popularity. The one-time Akhtari Faizabadi now came to be known as Begum Akhtar. 'Real beauty can weather any storm', turned out to be very true in her case. During recitals whenever she reached a

high note her voice would crack, but strangely enough this was considered by connoisseurs as the highlight of her recital. The audience would wait eagerly for that delicious crack in her voice.

There is virtually no difference between English lyrics, Marathi bhavgeets and Urdu ghazals. Eminent Urdu poets of yesteryear such as Mirza Ghalib, Daag, Jigar Muradabadi, Phani, Behejad Lucknowi Jaukh, Shakil Badayuni and Sahir Ludhianvi, and contemporary living poets like Majrooh Sultanpuri, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, or Josh Malihabadi have written ghazals which are the hot favourites of discerning readers of Urdu poetry and knowledgeable listeners of ghazal singing.

In order to become a successful bhavgeet or ghazal singer it is very necessary to select a lyric which is easy to understand, and has meaningful verses, with flashes of playful poetic imagination. Having come across such a piece of poetry the singer has to put it across musically in a suitable tune with a complete understanding of the poetry, in perfect diction and in an expressively emotional style. Begum Akhtar possessed all the qualities that are so vital for a good ghazal singer. The notes which she produced were so limpid, so hauntingly sweet, that the audience was immediately captivated. She had the uncanny knack of choosing the right kind of ghazal and adorning it in a befitting tune; she would render it so endearingly that her every note would grip the hearts of the audience.

At 15, she cut her first disc for the Megaphone Record Company - again one of the sister concerns of H.M.V. I did not have the good fortune to hear her when she was in her heyday. I first saw and met her in the year 1952. My friend Nawab Zahir Yar Jung of Hyderabad (a close relation of the late Nizam) was on a visit to Bombay and he was staying in Krishna Nivas on Marine Drive. The wealthy are famous for their vices or fads, but this aristocratic friend of mine had only one 'vice', and that was his passion for good music. Nawab Saheb was also exceptionally generous. He bestowed his wealth liberally on singers and musicians. During his two month stay in Bombay it was my pleasant job to take a new outstanding talented artist to Nawab Saheb's residence every evening. It was part of his daily routine to enjoy the music of a newcomer for an hour or two, after which Begum Akhtar would invariably wind up the music session with a thumri, dadra or lilting ghazal. Nawab Saheb would then present each artist with Bidagi in the form of gold mohurs. Intoxicated by the sweet music the Nawab and I would then have a sumptuous Hyderabad style dinner at which Begum Akhtar would also join us.

The late Rai Bahadur Chunilal, one of the directors of Bombay Talkies, had a son who was passionately fond of music. One day our manager, Mr. H. C. Lal, came to me with the boy and told me to give him all possible musical guidance. I gave him a tanpura and told him to sing. He sang a ghazal and a thumri which had been broadcast by Begum Akhtar on the radio. These gave me ample indication of his musical talent. After that, for a few months, whenever we had the studio free he would come and would do his riyaz on the tanpura. Later the young boy enlisted in the army,

but the rigours and discipline of military life clashed with his artistic nature, therefore he got out of the forces and accepted a job in All India Radio. While in Lucknow and Delhi he had opportunities to listen to various illustrious singers. It was in Lucknow that he met Begum Akhtar in person and developed a lasting friendship with her.

Whenever Begum Akhtar came to Bombay for programmes, she stayed at the Sea Green South Hotel on Marine Drive. It was my privilege and practice to be with her every evening during her stay. The music-mad son of Rai Bahadur Chunilal had by now turned his attention to films and had become a music director. During Begum Akhtar's stay in Bombay he also would come to the hotel to meet her.

He chose many beautiful compositions sung by Begum Akhtar and gave them his own tunes in order to incorporate them in films. His artistic creativity found a new outlet in Begum Akhtar's ghazals and very soon he became a famous and popular music director. Dastan, Hakikat, Bahana, Mera Saya, Suhagan, Wo Kaun Thi, Bhai Bhai and Chirag were some of the films for which he wrote his superb music.

This gifted person was none other than Madan Mohan, who passed away at an early age.

I got Begum Akhtar for recordings several times during her visits to Bombay. A very strange incident took place at one of the recording sessions. The Muslims are usually extremely fond of devotional songs - religious songs about Allah, Paigamber, Khwaja Saheb Ajmeri, Mecca, Medina or the Kaaba are always in great demand. Years ago a song, Urdu poet Behejad Lucknowi and recorded by Begum Akhtar, was a hit all over the country. She had not cut another religious record after that. Therefore, that evening, I pressed her to record a couple of naats (religious songs) and she agreed.

I always used to be under great tension during recording sessions, from the moment the artist entered the studio till the recording was successfully completed. It was always an ordeal for me, as I had to keep the artist in a pleasant mood and humour his or her whims. I had to be very observant of the likes and dislikes of these artists and arrange everything to their liking. Some loved perfumes, some liked fragrant flowers, some preferred to have maghai paans; some took delight in having knowledgeable listeners around, while others resented the presence of outsiders. One notable Gujarati singer had to be surrounded by a bevy of beautiful young girls while the recording was in progress. 'They produce electricity in me,' he said. He always brought a consignment of these 'batteries' with him. It was a very bothersome and taxing job to have to constantly cater to the demands of these artists and to keep them in a good mood.

On this particular day Begum Akhtar was in excellent form. We had just completed the recording of two bewitching ghazals and were getting ready for the recording of naats, when my Punjabi boss walked in casually. On being told that she was recording two naats, the officer said, with a knowledgeable air, 'Look here, Begumsab, we have recorded some really good naats sung by famous

qawals like Ismail Azad Qawal and Usuf Azad Qawal of Bhendi Bazaar and these records sell like hot cakes. I suggest you also sing in the same style.' I was taken aback by his audacity. To suggest to an illustrious singer of national repute like Begum Akhtar that she should copy the manner and style of an ordinary qawal of Bhendi Bazaar was terribly insulting. Begum Akhtar was red and speechless with anger and indignation. She controlled herself, and pushing the harmonium away, lit a cigarette and began smoking furiously. I immediately saw that all hopes of further recording that evening had gone up in smoke. The officer went away after a while, not even aware of his blunder. Begum Akhtar was still red in the face and was puffing at her cigarette in an agitated manner. I said to her, 'Begumsab, we won't do any more recording today. I am as upset as you are. We will proceed with the recording tomorrow; please forget the incident and sing in your usual style.' Kudhon ke Badshah set foot inside the studio. How dare he make such silly and rude suggestions!' However, by the next morning she had regained her normal poise, and I met her at the hotel and brought her to complete the recording. Begum Akhtar recorded the naats in her usual captivating style.

My boss had absolutely no business to tender such uncalled-for advice to the great artist, but there was nothing I could do about it. For a long time after, whenever Begum Akhtar came to our studios, she would ask me, 'Woh Kudhon ke Badshah kahan hai?' In 1970 I officially retired after 32 years of service, but the company prevailed upon me to go to Delhi on an important mission. In the archives department of the central office of All India Radio is a large collection of tapes and discs of eminent artists from all over India. I was deputed to select recordings of deceased artists to be used for commercial records.

During my absence a recording of Begum Akhtar was made in our studio. She usually had a tanpura, tabla, harmonium and sarangi to accompany her, but this time the recording was carried out with an orchestral accompaniment under the supervision of a music director from the films. When I heard the tape of the recording on my return to Bombay, my first reaction was decidedly unfavourable. I sincerely felt that Begum Akhtar had not sung with her usual abandon and free style. Her voice sounded restrained to me. After the astayee each antara was preceded by various instruments like the sitar or flute, in the style of a film song.

Because of these musical interludes to which she was not at all used, her singing sounded rather artificial. The recording, therefore, was no more than ordinary. This was my reaction and I casually voiced it aloud. Someone who heard my remark repeated it to Begum Akhtar. We had been close friends for a long time and my unfavourable reaction to her recording made her miserable. So much so that she cancelled all her engagements for the day and sat in her room deep in gloom, lamenting her 'bad' performance. I came to know of this and, putting aside all work, I hurried to Sea Green South Hotel. She was lying in her room; she had not taken any food and her eyes were red and swollen with weeping. The moment she saw me she burst into tears. It was a tremendous shock to see her in this state. That a chance remark of mine

should have caused her so much pain was unbearable to me. She had complete faith in my judgement and when she was told that I did not like her recording she had concluded that she had given a most wretched performance. I had thus unintentionally caused her a lot of anguish. The thought of this brought tears to my eyes also. Later, when we had both regained our composure, I explained that it was not her singing that had displeased me, but the fact that she had not been given a chance to sing in her normal unrestrained style and to display her talents. At last she was pacified; all doubts vanished from her mind and she was convinced that I had meant no offence to her. The atmosphere cleared as if by magic. Both of us then partook of food, but in spite of her regained tranquillity, she cancelled a musical sitting arranged for that night as she did not feel physically and mentally up to it. Such was the extreme sensitivity of her nature.

In the year 1971, on my return from a world tour, the company persuaded me to work for them again. I therefore had one more chance to record Begum Akhtar. This was the last recording made by her and on this occasion she excelled herself. After the recording she asked me mischievously, 'Do you think I sang well today?' In August 1974 I went to America. While there I got the sad news of her death in Ahmedabad. For days I was haunted by memories of the many recording sessions, the many mehfiles we had enjoyed. Thoughts of our long association and friendship since 1951 brought tears to my eyes. I paid mute tribute to cherished memories of her which are all she left behind and offered my last salutation to her - 'Alwida...'

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "66".

Great Master's series Great Masters 6:Ustad Ali Akbar Khan - Musician or Magician?

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)

Sources: "Down Melody Lane" (1984) by G.N. Joshi

"Trifles make perfection but perfection is no trifle", so goes an old saying. Ustad Ali Akbar Khan is the personification of perfection in music. In this, the sixth episode of the Great Masters series, G.N. Joshi, formerly of the HMV recording company, shares some of his thoughts on Ali Akbar Khan. The feature resides in Joshi's 1984 book, "Down Melody Lane".

Rajan

I owe deep gratitude to the late Maharaja of Jodhpur for my close association and friendship with Ustad Ali Akbar Khan and Pandit Ravi Shankar. Both of them, too, owe him a great deal. But for the liberal patronage this generous music loving prince gave to the duo in their early years, they would not have been what they are today. Credit goes to both these artists for putting the classical music of India on the map of world music. It was Ali Akbar who, with the enthusiastic support and cooperation of the great violin player Yehudi Menuhin, cut for the first time in the late 1950s a long-playing disc of Hindustani music in New York and acquainted the Western musical world with the bewitching magic and artistry of our raga-music.

When I first heard Ali Akbar play the sarod he was in his 20s. I still remember vividly the stunning impact of his playing on the entire audience. My heart throbbed with the divine touch of his music and I felt the presence of a future superstar. He stole the show that night, and from then on it has been an onward march for him to worldwide fame and popularity.

I met him and heard him again in the year 1945. In the intervening period, he had been groomed with care by his illustrious father, the late Ustad Allaudin Khan. Although the sarod has always been his forte, Ali Akbar learnt to play various instruments in different styles - dhrupad, dhamar and khayal - from his father, and the percussion instruments pakhawaj and tabla from his uncle. He was made to practise for a gruelling 15 to 18 hours every day during his training period. No wonder that in due course he attained the status of an Ustad and emerged a shining and expertly chiselled model musician of world fame. After the death of his patron the Maharaja of Jodhpur in an air crash, Ali Akbar set out to discover new horizons and bring more people under the spell of his music. Even today he is a globe-trotter, carrying the blazing torch of Indian classical music to distant lands. He has founded colleges to teach Indian music in Japan, Canada and the U.S.A. During my visit to the U.S.A. in 1977 he invited me to give a lecture demonstration in his college of music, at San Rafael in California. For me it was a revealing experience. The audience that evening consisted of his

American students, one of whom provided me with very competent accompaniment on the harmonium. The entire group listened to my discourse and demonstration with appreciation and knowledgeable interest.

Although he has not had any formal academic education, by virtue of having lived in developed Western countries Ali Akbar Khan has a very progressive and broad outlook. In the year 1958, he gave me his wholehearted cooperation in conducting experiments to determine the moods of different ragas.

The notes of a raga have a character peculiar to itself. While expounding a melody through the skilful manipulation of these notes, a performer paints before his listeners an attractive musical picture of the raga, and during the development carries them through an emotional experience in keeping with the mood of that particular raga. Experts in the art of drawing and painting have also attempted pictorial representations of ragas. These paintings are mostly in miniature and are to be found displayed in art museums in the big cities of India. They are in varied style - most prominent being the Rajput, the Mughal and the Bengali styles. In various books written on Indian music both by foreigners and Indians, these miniatures are displayed to enrich the attraction of the book with their attractive colours and interesting thematic character. Usually there is, at the top or bottom of the painting, an ancient Sanskrit or Hindi couplet describing the raga.

It is interesting to observe that in all these paintings by artists in different places, at different periods and in different styles, the subject and objects are almost the same. Usually the young maiden - lovelorn - is depicted in a garden in full bloom, in company with a parrot or peacock, a cow or a deer. Occasionally she is with a youth - her lover- or a female companion. These are painted in a riot of colours, mostly green, yellow, blue and red. There is no expression on the face of the maiden and one has to visualize and imagine her mental condition by reading the couplet and from the established conventions about the mood attached to the raga. Even if there is a change in the couplet or in the picture it would not be noticed nor would it affect the artistic merit of the picture. I felt that all these paintings were results of the artists' imaginations and had little to do with the notes or moods of the ragas. I was therefore eager to find out if there was any correlation between 'line and colour' on the one hand and 'music' on the other.

To arrive at a satisfactory conclusion, it was necessary to conduct an experiment. I therefore invited a galaxy of painters of nationwide and international repute to our studios one night. I explained to them individually the purpose of the get-together and I brought Ustad Ali Akbar to perform for the experiment. He was, like me, curious and anxious to know the basis for these illustrations, hence his ready cooperation. That night he gave a masterly exposition of Ragas Darbari and Malkauns on his sarod. During the marathon session lasting over 4 hours he gave very elaborate treatment to the melodies and put over a superb performance. All the painters present were carried to dizzy heights of ecstasy and pleasure, When at the end of the performance they

came out of their trance, each of them was overwhelmed by the respective moods of the 2 ragas.

Towards dawn the mehfil came to an end. Before leaving the painters promised to send their pictures depicting the moods of the two ragas in a week or so, but not one of them did so, even after 3 weeks. When I met them to ask the reason for the delay, some of them requested me to let them hear a vocal rendering of the ragas in addition to the instrumental recital they had heard.

'It will then be easier for us to crystallize and express our ideas in colour,' they said.

I agreed to this and persuaded no less a person than Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan to partake in experiment number two. Khan Saheb was intrigued by the novel idea of the experiment. He too sang the same ragas, Darbari Kanada and Malkauns, for two hours each, before the distinguished gathering of painters. Mr. K. K. Hebbar the renowned artist was the only one to confess frankly, that it was impossible for him to draw pictures of the ragas in this way. All the other artists once again promised to send their pictures in a few days, but none of them ever did.

The question as to whether these 2 branches of art - painting and music - are correlated is still undecided and this depresses me greatly. Whenever Ali Akbar Khan comes to India and meets me, his first question is whether I have made any fresh findings on this subject. I still have hopes of conducting another experiment and this time I am going to lay down the condition that the painters must draw on the spot, while listening to the expositions of the ragas.

****Insert: Four or five years back, there was a similar "experiment" done with Bhimsen Joshi and M.F. Hussein. I forget the details of what actually accrued. Would someone care to elaborate??....Rajan ****

Some years ago Ali Akbar wrote the music score for the Bengali film Kshudhito Pashan (Hungry Stones) which became very popular. It gives ample proof of Ali Akbar's fantastic imagination. He played the tape of background music for this film to me, and explained how he had made full use of various musical instruments. The skilful blending of the sarangi and sarod was a treat for my ears. Ever since I heard this combination of instruments, I have wanted to make a recording of a jugalbandi between these two instruments. Since 1954 Ali Akbar has been abroad. For the sarangi I could find no other artist to match him except the famous sarangi nawaz Pandit Ramnarayan. Both of them have agreed to make this recording, but as luck will have it, whenever Ali Akbar is on a visit to India Ramnarayan is abroad, and so this jugalbandi recording has yet to be made.

Ali Akbar, although at the pinnacle of success, is a very simple and modest person. He prefers to dress in the Indian tradition, in a long white malmal zabba and snow white pajamas. If an engagement is fixed for 10.30 Ali Akbar will invariably be there by 10.25. For the recordings he always comes fully decided on which ragas he will record and on many occasions has presented entirely new ragas of his own creation. Ragas Chandranandan, Prabhakali, Gauri-Manjiri, Hindol-Hem, Lajavanti are examples. Ragas Lajavanti and Prabhakali are his favourites and he has

named his two daughters after them.

While recording is in progress he is so completely absorbed in his playing that he is oblivious of time. Even so, when I, with great reluctance, would touch him softly to bring him out of his trance, he always managed to achieve in a moment a perfect finish to his performance. This, more than anything else, proves the complete mastery and control he possesses over his instruments, the swar and the taal.

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "67".

Great Master's series **Great Masters 7: Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan**

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)
Sources: "Down Melody Lane" (1984) by G.N. Joshi

Salaam Aleikum and Namashkaar! Continuing our series of biographical anecdotes, our first offering of 1992 features the doyen of Patiala Gharana and one of India's (and the world's) greatest vocalists - Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan.

Rajan

While film stars continued to fascinate the people with their singing and acting, a new class of gifted classical singers and instrumentalists was being born.

Film music has a tremendous attraction for the masses and it has great commercial value. But, like the films, its appeal is short-lived. A popular film and its songs may hold the public interest for some time, but as other films come along the old film and its songs are gradually forgotten.

It is not so with classical music, which has a lasting hold on the interest of listeners. Even though records of classical music do not sell as fast as film records, their value to music lovers does not decline.

In 1944 the Vikramaditya Sangit Parishad was held in the Bombay University Convocation Hall. An artist from Punjab presented Raga Marwa and a thumri, as they had never been presented before, and will never be presented again. This was how Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan introduced himself to lovers of classical music in Bombay. Raga Marwa, which he selected as his opening item, has a combination of notes -komal rishab and shudha dhaivat- which sounds very pensive and persuasive. The Ustad's melodious voice and his most arresting style gripped the listeners from the start. He unfolded before the amazed audience a most attractive and elaborate picture of Raga Marwa.

The almost effortless phirat of his voice, which ranged through three octaves -Mandra, Madhya and Taar-elevated the artist and the listeners to immeasurable heights of musical experience. This was Bade Gulam Ali's maiden appearance in this city. He came, he sang, and he conquered the entire musical world of Bombay.

The audience that day was star-studded. Eminent artists like (father of Ali Akbar Khan and guru of Pandit Ravi Shankar), the famous sarod player from Gwalior-Ustad Hafiz Ali Khan (father of the young sarod player Amjad Ali Khan), Marhoom Ustad Alla Diya Khan and many others were seen nodding in appreciation of Bade Gulam Ali's performance.

Ustad Alla Diya Khan with his snow-white mustache and fair complexion, was a very impressive person. He had settled in Bombay a few years before, but having stayed many years in Kolhapur, he

always dressed in the Maharashtrian style. He looked very dignified, clad in a pure white dhoti in Brahminic style, an open collared coat, shining pump shoes and a turban tied in the impressive Kolhapuri fashion. Amidst the galaxy of artists he looked like an emperor holding his darbar. M. R. Jayakar honoured him that night with the title: 'The Mount Everest of classical music'.

This was a significant night, not only because I heard Bade Gulam Ali, but also because it was the last appearance of Ustad Alla Diya Khan in such an august assembly. That night the Ustad was flanked by his disciple Surashri Kesarbai Kerkar on the right and his son on the left as tanpura accompanists. This was indeed an unforgettable experience.

Bade Gulam Ali Khan was the biggest attraction of the evening. In this, his very first visit, I managed to bring him to our studio to record a few of his choicest khayals and thumris. He sang lilting thumris like *Yad piya ki aaye*, *Katena birahaki raat*, *Tirachhi Nazariya ke baan* and *Premke fandeme aakar sajani*, and these records, cut almost forty years ago, are still popular with listeners, not only in India, but all over the world.

Bade Gulam Ali Khan had an impressive physique and the lofty gait of a monarch. It was hard to believe that this broad-faced, bewhiskered giant was capable of producing such sweet, soul-stirring notes. A year after our first meeting, on the occasion of my elder daughter's birthday, I invited Bade Gulam Ali to my place for dinner. It was a pleasant surprise to see the great Ustad at the dinner table, consuming, with great relish, a whole chicken, nearly two dozen chappatis and more than a kilo of mithai (sweetmeats), and still more amazing was his 4 hour musical recital immediately afterwards. I thanked him profusely and jocularly remarked that people would always remember him as *rangila gavaiyya* and *rasila khawaiyya* (a versatile singer and an appreciative gourmet). Bade Gulam Ali was also an excellent cook. On many occasions for several years thereafter, he pressed on me delicious dishes such as mutton paya and karela mutton which he had prepared himself.

Bade Gulam Ali hailed from Lahore in Punjab. It was his heartfelt desire that I, who was by now one of his dear friends and great admirers, should visit him in Lahore. A chance to respond to this invitation came very soon. Mr. Z. A. Bokhari the then station director of All India Radio, Bombay, offered me a chain booking to broadcast from the Lucknow, Delhi and Lahore radio stations. I spent most of my stay in Lahore with the great Ustad. Walking with him through the Hiramandi park of Lahore city I felt as if I was walking by the side of a majestic elephant who was parading through the streets, accepting the reverent salutations of numerous admirers. He lavishly showered hospitality on me. This was the end of the year 1945.

During his short visit to Bombay in 1948 I fixed up a recording session with him. In the afternoon, when I had everything arranged for recording in our studio, he telephoned to say that he was not feeling well enough to record. I insisted that he should come over and that we would not do any recording but we would have a nice long chat and dinner. Very reluctantly he accepted

my pressing invitation. Before he came I had to plan a strategy whereby I would be able to persuade him to strain his vocal chords. I gave a hundred rupee note to my peon Sakharam and instructed him to procure a bottle of Scotch, which was the Ustad's favourite drink. Sakharam was to bring the bottle and the glasses into the studio only when I gave him the signal to do so.

I had arranged things in the studio in such a manner that I could start recording at a moment's notice. I instructed that the accompanying musicians be kept waiting in an ante-room. I escorted the great Ustad into the studio, assuring him that we would not do any recording but would have just an interesting and enjoyable evening. On the spacious wooden platform were two tanpuras already tuned to suit his pitch. The Ustad, a man of generous proportions, always preferred to sit cross-legged on the platform instead of on a chair. I seated myself near him with one tanpura close at hand. While we conversed I casually started playing on the strings of the tanpura. 'Khan Saheb,' I said, 'I want to know why followers of the Gwalior gharana prefer to use tivra dhaivat, in Raga Lalat, instead of komal dhaivat which sounds so much sweeter.' With the sound of the tanpura playing in the background Khan Saheb could not resist demonstrating why komal dhaivat is preferable to tivra dhaivat. I noticed with satisfaction that my strategy was succeeding.

Unseen by him, I gave the signal to Sakharam who walked in with the bottle and the glasses. Noticing this, the Ustad looked happier, though he protested mildly. I said to him, 'Since we are not going to do any recording we might as well have a gay time.' I came up with another question while the maestro was enjoying the drink. 'Why is it that some singers use both tivra and komal nishads in Raga Adana? Is it correct to do so?' I refilled Khan Saheb's glass, and he who had been sitting in a relaxed position so far sat upright in his usual singing posture, fully inspired and in the mood to sing. He picked up the other tanpura which was close to him and began to demonstrate how Raga Adana should be rendered.

I allowed him to sing for a while and then said, 'Khan Saheb, your voice is in absolutely top form!' He guessed the implication of my remark, and smiling a little mischievously he said, 'So, you do want to do a recording'. Taking this as a form of consent, I immediately summoned the accompanists and in a few minutes all was ready for the recording.

Khan Saheb was indeed in great form that night. The next two hours literally flew by. He sang one enchanting song after another, and we were able to record such immortal pieces as Aaye na baalam, kya karun sajani, Naina more taras rahe hatn and Prem ki maar katar, to name a few. Like a person possessed Khan Saheb poured his heart and soul into the magic notes. He did not even know how many songs he recorded; this after having been determined not to record at all. During a short respite I handed him a fresh glass. After taking a sip from it he said, 'Joshi Saheb, you must have cast a spell on me. I was determined not to sing. How many have you recorded?' I smiled and replied, 'We need only 2 more.'

We had a hearty laugh and thus the memorable recording session came to a close. Outside it had rained very hard and inside the studio we had had torrents of music.

Bade Gulam Ali's study of music was extensive. While discussing any aspect of music, he would make intelligent observations that would surprise and impress the most learned and knowledgeable persons. A seminar was once arranged under the auspices of the Sur Singar Samsad. In Hindustani classical music, ragas are ascribed particular hours of the day or night for their exposition. The point under discussion at the seminar was whether there was any scientific reason for this convention or whether it was just a result of custom and tradition. Bade Gulam Ali gave his opinion with practical demonstrations. According to him ragas are divided into two types. A raga of the first type may be played between 12 noon and 12 midnight. Ragas of the second type may be played at any time from midnight to 12 noon. The ragas in the first section are known as 'Purva ragas' and those of the second section as 'Uttar ragas'. A saptak is also divided into two parts or 'tetrachords'. The first contains Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, and the second the other four notes, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa. In the purva ragas the vadi swara (the prime or 'life' note of the raga) is taken from the first tetrachord and therefore these ragas are known as purvangavadi ragas. In the same way, the vadi swara in the uttar ragas is usually taken from the second tetrachord, i.e., Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa, and these ragas are called uttarangavadi ragas. When the vadi swara is either 'Sa' or 'Pa', there is no time restriction for the performance of that raga. He also propounded another theory explaining why a particular raga should be sung at a particular time and why, if it is rendered accordingly, it is more effective and appreciated by the listeners.

The 24 hours of the day are divided as follows:

- (1) 4 in the morning to 7 in the morning.
- (2) 7 in the morning to 10 in the morning.
- (3) 10 in the morning to 4 in the afternoon.
- (4) 4 in the afternoon to 7 in the evening.
- (5) 7 in the evening to 10 at night.
- (6) 10 at night to 4 in the morning.

It will be observed that in the ragas of the first and fourth divisions the 2nd note rishabh and 6th note dhaivat are komal swaras. These ragas are also known as Sandhiprakash ragas. Bhairava of the morning variety and Purvi of the evening, having these notes, are Sandhiprakash ragas. Khan Saheb explained how just a slight change of half a note in the structure of the octave changes the raga from a morning to an evening one. In Raga Bhairava the 4th note, madhyam, is shudha, while in Purvi the 4th note is half a note higher, that is tivra madhyama. He also demonstrated and explained the difference between the morning raga Todi and the afternoon raga Multani. Although both have identically the same notes in the octave, they differ from one another owing to different vadi samvadi notes and different chalan.

In the same way ragas in the 2nd and 5th parts have the 2nd note rishabh and the 6th note dhaivat as shudha notes. The ragas of

the 3rd and 6th parts have the 3rd note gandhara and the 7th note nishad komal.

Khan Saheb however added that this theory was based on his observations of general practices. He was of the firm opinion that the theory of division of ragas according to time has some scientific basis and that physicists should be able to arrive at some final explanation after experiments.

Ragas are also seasonal melodies. For example, Raga Malhar is associated with the rainy season and Raga Vasant with spring. One evening during the monsoon I had the good fortune to find Bade Gulam Ali in a very exuberant mood. From the balcony of his flat on Malabar Hill one could see the turbulent sea with its rising mountains of waves. This exhibition of nature's strength always inspired Khan Saheb and that day he gave vocal expression to his feelings, in a number of variations of Raga Malhar. He reeled out gamak taans when there was a clap of thunder. He would be inspired by a flash of lightning to indulge in a brilliant 'Phirat', and when it poured cats and dogs, the result would be a torrent of powerful taans ranging over two to three octaves. It sounded as if a jugalbandi programme was in progress between Nature and this great man. Bade Gulam Ali was very generous in sharing his knowledge and rare compositions with deserving persons. And what is more, he did not feel it below his dignity to accept compositions not known to him. There was a frequent exchange of such knowledge and compositions between my guru Gunidas and Khan Saheb. I have often enjoyed such musical

Insert: Gunidas referred here is Pandit Jagannathbua Purohit...Rajan

discussions and exchanges at Khan Saheb's residence in the company of my Guruji and Professor B. R. Deodhar.

Bade Gulam Ali had a lively wit and sense of humour. His elder son Karamat Ali, who lived in Pakistan, was on a visit to his father when Bade Gulam Ali introduced him to me as 'my Bade Shahzade - Karamat Ali'. When I inquired about the nature of his profession, Bade Gulam Ali gave a loud burst of laughter and, pointing to four or five little children playing nearby, he said, 'Look, that is his Karamat.' Karamat Ali joined in our burst of laughter.

His younger son, Munawar Ali, was his constant companion and was being groomed to succeed him. He always accompanied Khan Saheb on the tanpura and being so close to his father, he imbibed the vast treasure of his father's musical knowledge. Naturally with such training and all the makings of a first grade artist, everyone expected him to follow in Bade Gulam Ali's footsteps. Unfortunately, however, Bade Gulam Ali had always kept Munawar under his wing. Consequently, Munawar did not learn the art of performing independently and in spite of the vast knowledge he received from his father, this gifted but unlucky singer is still struggling to make a name for himself.

Bade Gulam Ali's brother Ustad Barakat Ali Khan also had great talent. The sweetness and phirat of his voice sometimes surpassed that of Bade Gulam Ali. Bade Gulam Ali, however, allowed his brother to accompany him on the harmonium but never to sing with him in public. Therefore Barakat Ali remained unknown to

most music lovers in India. It is difficult to say for what reason Bade Gulam Ali always kept his son Munawar and brother Barakat Ali in the background, not giving them a chance to display their talents independently. I had the good fortune to hear Bade Gulam Ali and Barakat Ali sing together in the same Mehfil when I was a guest of Nawab Zahir Yar Jung at the Basheerbag palace in Hyderabad.

The Jainophone Record Company of Lahore, which was a sister concern of H.M.V., was the first to market Barakat Ali's records.

Of these Bagome pade zule, Ek sitam aur lakh adaen and Ufari jawani haye jamane have made his name immortal.

In 1962 Barakat Ali came on a visit to Bombay. At my request he made three records, one of ghazals and the other two very lilt-ing dadras. At this recording session. Barakat Ali was in the mood and willing to record many more songs but my boss (the same 'Kudhon ke Badshah' mentioned before) came in the way. He was of the opinion that we could record more when Barakat Ali next came to the city. I helplessly obeyed and, after making three records, Barakat Ali returned to Pakistan never to come back.

Only a few months later he passed away in Karachi. I felt extremely upset with my boss for coming in the way of my recording more of this gifted musician's work. Years later I was able to lay my hands on some of Barakat Ali's tape recordings from which I got enough material for two LPs. Although we embarked on the production of LP records in 1960, I could not get Bade Gulam Ali for LP recording till 1963, There is a story behind this.

In 1959 we received from our head office a copy of the first Indian classical LP record, featuring Ustad Ali Akbar Khan on the Sarod. The record had an introduction by the world renowned violinist Yehudi Menuhin. Obviously, it was meant for Western audiences. I was asked to evaluate the sales potential of LP records in India. Until then all our records had been made on 78 R.P.M. and were 3 minutes and 20 seconds long. Most classical musicians found it very difficult to do justice to a raga and give their best within such a short time. The LP record would be 5 times the length of a 78 R.P.M. record and I felt that this would be very welcome, not only to the performers but also to listeners and lovers of classical music. However, an LP disc would cost more than Rs. 30 in those days, and considering the pockets of Indian listeners, I had to be very cautious, bearing in mind the sales aspect of the venture.

I was, however, very anxious to have the facility of putting classical music on a long playing record and hence advised our head office to send to us 300 copies of Ustad Ali Akbar Khan's record. These, when put in the market, sold out very quickly. Hence it was obvious that, in spite of their high price, the market was ready to absorb LP records. I took this as the green signal to bring stalwarts in the classical field before the microphone for such microgroove recordings. To persuade an artist to record was always a problem. Apart from the conservative outlook of our musicians, their performing form, health and condition of voice had to be considered. To add to this, artists usually put a very high price on their performance, Bade Gulam Ali, like others, had always complained about the inadequate

length of records. Therefore, when I approached him, telling him that he would be able to get about 17 to 18 minutes per side, he was very happy and immediately consented. 'Very good' he said, 'I will do the recording but I have a request. On the previous occasions, you paid me on a royalty basis, but this time I want cash.'

I tried to reason with him as to how a royalty agreement would be more advantageous to him in the long run. But he was very adamant so I asked how much he would expect in cash. 'I want only a lakh of rupees,' he said.

This was an impossible demand, and I told him so. I decided, therefore, to drop Bade Gulam Ali for the time being.

During the next few months I recorded artists like Nazakat Ali, Salamat Ali, Bhimsen Joshi, Ustad Amir Khan, Bismillah Khan and several others on LPs. These records found quite a big market and became popular. Whenever we brought out a new LP I made it a point to show a copy of it to Bade Gulam Ali. The LP records always had very attractive covers and these tempted Bade Gulam Ali to agree to my proposal. The demand for a lakh of rupees was the main hurdle. My bosses also tried to reason with him, but this only made Bade Gulam Ali more obstinate. 'If you are not ready to pay my fees I will go and record abroad,' was his final answer to them.

I had however not given up hope. I kept up friendly relations with him and persisted in my persuasive tactics. In the course of 6 months Khan Saheb climbed down from a lakh to 45 thousand, and after another 4 months he agreed on 25 thousand, from which he would not budge. >From the commercial point of view, film records with their huge sales potential are most profitable to the company. Records of classical music, even by a top artist, would never have such a large sale in a short period. The company, being always eager to get quick returns and a large turnover, was naturally reluctant to enter into a cash contract. Therefore Bade Gulam Ali's demand for 25 thousand was also unacceptable.

One more year passed, and around 1962 his health started deteriorating. This affected his voice and performance. Early in 1963 he gave a concert at Shivaji Mandir, the theatre in the Dadar area of Bombay. Of course, I attended it. With Munawar Ali accompanying him on the tanpura, Bade Gulam Ali started with Raga Bhoop. After some alap he started the Bandish. But instead of giving it his usual slow and thorough treatment, he very soon switched over to Sargams. It was obvious that he found it difficult to keep his voice steady and stable on the raga notes. In my opinion the concert was an absolute failure. More than 60% of the singing was done by the son. Whenever I attended his concerts it was my practice to meet him after the concert. But on this occasion I was so painfully disturbed in my mind that I went home without meeting him. The thought of this rich treasure slowly but steadily dwindling caused me much mental anguish. The next day, however, I could not resist the temptation of meeting him. He had noticed my absence after the concert the previous night, and wanted to know the reason for it. I told him the truth. Previous to this appearance in Shivaji Mandir I had no-

ticed distinct signs of decline in his health and performance. I said to him, 'What you presented a month ago at Akola you could not present yesterday and what you achieved yesterday you may not be able to give tomorrow. This is really a very serious state of affairs. An artist of your calibre is born, maybe, once in a century. For God's sake listen to me and make an LP record.'

For a few moments he looked worried and pensive, then he said, 'Very well, I will make only one record. I will sing one morning and one evening raga. The morning raga must be recorded in the morning and the evening raga at the appropriate time.'

I was delighted beyond words, and asked when we could do the recording.

A very important film recording was scheduled for the next day, but as I was getting Bade Gulam Ali after years of patient waiting, I arranged to cancel the film recording the following evening. I drove him to the studio in my car. On the way he said, 'Joshi saheb, I am doing this for your sake, but I want you to give me at least some cash.' I was moved almost to tears at these words and I felt that had I the authority and power, I would have thrown open the cash boxes of the company and asked him to help himself. I said to him, 'I am indeed grateful to you and overwhelmed at his sign of your affection for me. I will give you some cash but please do not ask me how much it will be. Whatever I give you after the recording would be out of love and respect for you and you will have to accept it in the same spirit.' This touched his artistic soul and soon the commercial side of the recording was forgotten. That night he rendered raga Darbari Kanada with Munawar giving him only instrumental support on the tanpura. Before we started I told him that he would get about 19 minutes for the performance. 'All right, but it would have been nice if you had given me half an hour,' he said. However, since Munawar was not allowed to sing with him, Khan Saheb soon found the strain too much. After just 10 minutes of singing he showed signs of being tired and wanted to find out how much longer he would have to sing. Instead of the allotted 19 minutes he finished in around 17 minutes. Sweating profusely he remarked, 'Are Bhai, 15 minutes of singing for you here is equivalent to 3 hours singing in a mehfil'.

We played back the raga recorded by him. This gave him the rest he badly needed and it also gladdened him to listen to his delightful performance. He then said, 'Now I would like to sing Malkauns.' I did not remind him of his earlier stipulation. It was to my advantage to keep him in good humour. In the following hour Malkauns was satisfactorily recorded. At last I had got an LP record out of him. Then I reminded him, 'Khan Saheb, you promised to sing one morning raga.' shall do it tomorrow morning.'

The following morning he sang first Raga Gunakali and then something that sounded to me like Khambavati or Rageshri. He told me that it was neither, but was known as Kaushi Dhani.

Thus, instead of one, I succeeded in bagging 2 LP records. Finding him in a very amiable mood and quite happy about his performance, I felt it would be a good idea to get something more out

of him. So I said, with your listeners and a must in your mehfil. So you must record it.' would be a good idea to put it on a semi long playing (extended play) 45 R.P.M. disc. So I said ,to him, 'You sing it only for about 7 minutes'. Thus I got him to record the beautiful bhajan. Then I reminded him of the other side of the disc. He smiled and said, 'You are very smart; last time, I remember. you got 10 songs out of me when I did not want to record even a single one.'

I said, 'But Khan Saheb, every record has to have 2 sides; you must give me one more piece.' I suggested the thumri Kanakar mar jagaye-Bamna ka chora and he readily accepted my suggestion since this was also his pet song.

In this manner he eventually gave us 2 LPs and one extended play record. I prevailed upon him to sign a royalty contract. but, as promised, I paid him Rs. 5000/- in cash, as advance against royalty. Once again the fact was proved, that a genuine artist values affection more than money.

This recording had been delayed for more than two and a half years because of his unreasonable demand for a lakh of rupees. His failing voice is evident in these records. If he had only agreed to my requests earlier, we would have had a number of recordings of this great artist which would have been appreciated by millions of his fans. Just a few months after this his health deteriorated further.

My friend Nawab Zahir Yar Jung, a true patron and lover of music, took Khan Saheb to Hyderabad and looked after him till he breathed his last in the Basheerbag palace. It was here that I had heard his memorable mehfil with Barakat Ali on the harmonium, and it was here that the mehfil of his life came to an end. He left behind a priceless and glorious heritage of music. For me, besides this, there remain very fond and enduring memories of his warm-heartedness and intelligence.

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "72".

Great Master's series Great Masters 12: Vishnu Digambar Paluskar

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)

Sources: An Introduction to Indian Music" by B. Chaitanya Deva

Namashkaar! Today's episode of "Great Masters" features Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar.

The Gadgils were a family of Brahmins in the village, Palus, in Maharashtra. One of them is said to have had a vision of the Divine and blessed by it and from then on this family became something special and came to be known as the Paluskars, the original name being forgotten. Into this family, Vishnu Digambar was born on August 18, 1872 at Kurundwad, the principal town of an Indian Vishnu's father, Digambar Gopal Paluskar, was a Keertankar (singer of Keertan - a religious discourse). Keertan in Maharashtra, like the Harikatha Kalakshepam in South India, is a kind of story-telling of puranic legends, in song, verse and prose; Digambar was one such singer of puranas. Vishnu, naturally, from childhood acquired a taste and bent for singing, as he accompanied his father during the latter's concerts. He was also studying at a local school in Kurundwad, due to the kind interest taken in the young boy by the raja of the principality.

Near Kurundwad, is a small town called Narsobachi Wadi, where every year a festival, Datta Jayanti, is celebrated with great eclat, fireworks and all. Vishnu, like millions of others, was an active participant; on one such occasion of merriment a cracker burst near his face, damaging his eyes permanently. No treatment at Kurundwad was of any avail; the boy was then sent to the neighbouring town, Miraj, where the royal physician, Dr. Bhadbhade tried his best but failed to restore vision to the poor lad.

Both the avenues - academic studies and that of keertankar - were cut off to Vishnu. Dr. Bhadbhade, who had listened to the boy's devotional songs felt that he could blossom out into a musician. With the consent of Digambar Paluskar, he spoke to the Raja of Miraj. The ruler was quick to realize the talents of the child and put him under the guidance of Balakrishna Bua lchalkaranjekar.

Balakrishna Bua was the doyen of musicians in Maharashtra. The grand old man had learnt singing in Gwalior under eminent masters and was highly respected for his knowledge of the art. Paluskar studied with him till about 1896. It was a hard and strenuous discipleship, for there were no regular courses, no regular lessons and everything depended on the moods of the teacher. Besides, one had to do all the household chores for the guru and his family. This kind of apprenticeship - guru kula vasa - was difficult but paid dividends in the long run. Vishnu was very successful and this, perhaps, raised the ire in his fellow students. They were all the more jealous of him, for he was quite

intimate with the royal family, which they were not. It is possible that they poisoned the Bua's mind against Vishnu; in any case, the relation between the two became strained. So Paluskar, along with two of his friends, left Miraj; and after visiting many places reached Baroda. This city like Gwalior was then a well-known seat of learning and art, and he decided to settle there. News of the arrival of a young singer and his attractive music slowly reached the Maharaja. In course of time an invitation to sing at the Court came and he gave a commendable performance in the royal presence. The Maharani was pleased with the young man and presented him with lavish gifts and a friendly warning - he had better leave Baroda as local musicians were becoming too envious for him to be safe!

From there he toured Saurashtra, Gwalior, Mathura, Bharatpur, Delhi and reached Punjab. While in Saurashtra he gave a public concert charging a nominal fee - a scandalous thing to do and a complete departure from tradition. For traditionally concerts were always either in the chambers of a rich patron or in a temple.

While at Mathura he studied the Brij dialect in which exist some of the finest compositions in Hindustani music and this helped to a great extent his understanding the beauty of the language of these songs. Punjab was really the starting point of the most significant aspect of Vishnu Digambar's life. He lived in Amritsar for some time, but soon shifted to Okara in Montgomery District to be the tutor of Sir Khemsingh's children. After a few months of stay there, he came to Lahore; and here on May 5, 1901 he founded the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya. This is one of the most interesting turning points in the history of modern music, as it was the first school run by a middle class musician without the direct patronage of rajas and maharajas. The vidyalaya (school) was run by public support, donations from the richer classes and funds raised by the concerts of Vishnu Digambar - it was truly a school of the people for the people.

Here he brought together a set of pupils whom he trained not only in music, but also inculcated in them a respect for the art and a missionary zeal. This group of his early students became later some of the most distinguished performers and teachers in North India. What was more important was the atmosphere in the institution: while there was strict discipline in musical training, there was stricter discipline in moral training. The usual odium attached to the clan of musicians was thus removed and they began to be treated with respect.

Paluskar now felt that his activities needed expansion and, therefore, came to Bombay in September, 1908 to found a branch of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya there. Gradually, as the work in this city increased, the school at Lahore was shifted to Bombay. Even the printing press which he had established in Lahore to print books in music was taken over to the new precincts. Vishnu Digambar's fame as teacher spread and hundreds of students began to pour into his vidyalaya.

Before long it became necessary to increase facilities for teaching; with the help of loans from friends, a building to house the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya was built in 1915. A little later even a

hostel for students was constructed. All this involved considerable borrowing of money and Paluskar came under huge debts. Even with the best of efforts it became almost impossible for him to discharge the loans. He gave concerts at various places to collect the necessary funds but this never fetched him sufficient money. In 1924, when he was on a concert tour, his creditors attached his properties and auctioned them to realize their debts. Paluskar must have been a heart-broken man after this. The cause for which he had struggled so far received an irretrievable setback. He had, however, one satisfaction: he had created a number of zealous disciples who went to almost every region of the land, established schools and taught selflessly.

Even while in Bombay, Vishnu Paluskar had started Sri Ram Nam Adhar Ashram in Nasik; to this hermitage he moved in 1924. From this as centre he travelled widely in India and Nepal. But his health was running down and the Raja of Miraj shifted the ailing musician to Miraj, the town which had seen the rise of Paluskar's career. There he passed away on August 21, 1931 to the music of the sacred chant of Rama's name.

The domestic life of Vishnu Digambar was disappointing in a sense. Of his three sisters, one had become a widow and lived with him, along with her children. He had twelve of his own; but all of them except one died young. The last, a son, was Dattatreya. Even he could not get the advantage of studying with his father, for Vishnu Digambar died when the boy was only eleven years of age. Dattatreya later came under the care of the senior pupils of Paluskar and grew into a very highly promising singer. But, as ill-fate would have it, Dattatreya Vishnu Paluskar died young suddenly in 1955.

Vishnu Digambar Paluskar was a towering figure in the field of music; a musician of a high order, a great teacher, a man of uncompromising moral courage and a soul imbued with the awareness of the social values of art. As an artiste he was a very popular and successful one. The training he had had with the great Ichalkaranjekar was a thorough one and Paluskar himself was endowed with an attractive voice and musical sensitivity. His apprenticeship under his father as keertankar might have given him a sense of the dramatic in artistic presentation.

Wherever he went, he drew an appreciative audience and was honoured by princely patrons. But characteristically, he spent all the fortune he amassed to further the cause of music. More than any other aspect of his musical career - which was dynamic in every direction - was his deeply religious approach to the art. To him music was a path to God-realization and could not be divorced from moral commitments. The ways that most musicians lived were far from clean. The texts of songs even in kheyals were sometimes nauseating - and even today one cannot often meet kheyals of really good poetic worth in Hindustani music. Paluskar felt that these kept the more intelligent section of society away from music. To remedy the situation, he brought in a strict living and behaviour in his school. His own conduct was above reproach and he saw to it that his students were of exemplary character. As for the songs, he either composed new ones with cleaner content or altered the words of older ones, keeping

their tunes unchanged. These efforts gradually had their effect. More and more students - particularly girls - came out to join his Vidyalaya; society began to feel that even if music was not a very paying profession, it, at least, was not a debasing one. Towards the end of his life his time was devoted almost entirely to religious music and finally his end also came amidst the singing of Ram dhun (Rama's name.)

With very few exceptions, Paluskar was undoubtedly the most renowned teacher of music of recent times. Many great musicians were not necessarily great teachers and many well-known ustads and pandits were not necessarily fine musicians. But Vishnu Digambar was both an artiste and a teacher of high order. His most notable task was the opening of the musical world to amateurs, for traditionally it was almost impossible for outsiders to enter into the clannish monopolies of the ustads.

Paluskar himself had learnt music the hard way and must have seen the inordinate wastage of time and energy on the part of the student in non-musical activities of 'serving' the guru. He, therefore, founded schools which ran on regular syllabi. Books with notations of songs to help the student were published. Theory of music was taught on a systematic basis. It was the pioneering efforts of Paluskar and Bhatkhande that have become the incentive for music to be considered academic enough to be included in the courses of studies in universities. Institutionalizing musical training has been the most significant trend set by these two savants. Obviously, all this was well intentioned. But whether it really has been creatively effective is a question that is raised in many quarters: for, often, it is felt and said that it has spread an interest in the art but has lessened the depth of understanding.

It was an era when musicians were socially looked down upon. They were illiterate, uncouth and immoral. Paluskar had had bitter experiences of his own guru being treated in a disdainful manner. He was determined to show to the world that musicians were as good and great as anyone else! It is said that a maharaja wanted to listen to Vishnu Digambar and fixed a time for the soiree, at the musician's house. At the appointed time, the king and his retinue gathered and the singer began. After a while, the ruler, wanting to smoke lighted his cigar. To Paluskar, it was not only unpleasant but an insult. Being blind, he did not know who was smoking, but, in any case, he ordered that the smoking be stopped. The embarrassed aide whispered into his ears, "How can it be? It is the maharaja and I dare not ask him to desist". Paluskar exclaimed, "What do you mean by maharaja; I am the maharaja in my room! Ask him to stop it or get out".

More than anything, Vishnu Digambar's contribution is to the social values attached to music and musicians. An art which was once held sacred, as a royal road to realization, a science which was the fifth veda, had fallen into bad days. It had taken to nothing but Bohemian pleasures - almost - and musicians were, as apart from being musicians, not welcome as very pleasant citizens. Paluskar had to fight against the orthodoxy of the 'elite' who looked askance at the art and artists and against the professionals who would not step out of their secretive guilds.

It was an arduous, thankless and challenging task. But he did succeed. He was able to persuade society that music was a fine ne art and musicians were not necessarily a despicable tribe. Great social and political men of his time like Gopala Krishna Gokhale, Mrs. Annie Besant and Mahatma Gandhi recognized his missionary work and social awareness. Paluskar's Ram dhun, "Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram" was sung at the head of the famous Dandi March led by Gandhiji in 1930 and his "Vande Mataram" was invariably heard at the sessions of the then Indian National Congress. Thanks to Paluskar, today one can become a musician without having to bow his head in shame.

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "107".

Great Master's series Great Masters 12a: Acharya Vishnu Digambar

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Sources: "Great masters of Hindustani Music" by Smt. Susheela Misra

Namashkar!

This is a nice supplement to the first article on this noblest of souls that comprised "Great Masters 12."

Rajan Parrikar

Music was one of the casualties of foreign rule in our country. In the lethargic age which preceded our political struggle, this fine art fell from its high pedestal into low, illiterate society, and lay there uncared for, and looked down upon. It were the two Vishnus, Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande and Vishnu Digambar Paluskar who salvaged our music which had been submerged for years under the cold waves of public apathy and alien contempt.

Early in this century, along with the freedom revolution, there began an awakening of interest in our fine arts too. The two individuals responsible for this awakening were the two Vishnus who dedicated their lives to this great cause. But for the life-long efforts of Vishnu Digambar and Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, our music would still have remained an inaccessible art imprisoned in the un-remitting clutches of a few narrow-minded and illiterate professionals. Thanks to these two reformers, however, today Hindustani classical music is no longer confined to an esoteric circle, but is an art within the reach of every aspiring home. To them goes the credit and thanks for the rehabilitation and restoration of music to a highly respected and admired position. No wonder, therefore, that musicians of many Gharanas sink their mutual differences at least to pay homage to these two savants every year. Pt Digambar's *Punya-Thithi* is observed and celebrated: in August, and Pt Bhatkhande's in September.

Vishnu Digambar's father, Pdt. Digambar Gopal Paluskar, was a well-known Keertankar and a favorite of the Raja Dajisahib of Kurundwad (14 miles south of Miraj). Originally the Paluskar family-name was "Gadgil", but as they hailed from the village Palus, they came to be known as the "Paluskar" family. Born in Kurundwad on 18th August (*Raksha-Bandhan* day) in 1872, Vishnu was brought up in the luxurious palace-atmosphere because he was a close friend and playmate of the Raja's son, Srimant Nanasahib. They were educated together and their sacred thread-ceremonies were celebrated together. Vishnu and his elder brother Gopal often used to accompany their father during his Keertans, with the *Jhanjh* and *Manjeera*. Even as a boy, Vishnu became a favourite with everyone because of his good looks, sweet voice, and melodious *Bhajans*. Since he was a very intelligent boy, his teachers were sure that he would one day become a high Government official. But fate intervened and gave an unexpected twist to his

career. During the annual festivities and fireworks in the Dattatreya temple, a piece exploded over his face and damaged his eyes. The Raja Saheb got the best doctors for his treatment. Although the facial injuries were cured marvelously, the boy's eyesight was damaged for ever. The doctor (Trimbakrao) suggested that the boy should be trained in music. Accordingly, the Raja of Kurundwad sent him to Miraj and put him under the training of Pdt. Balakrishnabuwa Ichalkaranjekar, the founder of Khayal music in Maharashtra, who had received his training under great masters like Devjibuwa (disciple of the Dhrupadiya Chintamani Misra), Vasudeobuwa Joshi (disciple of the famed Hassu Khan of Gwalior) and Mohammad Khan (son of Hassu Khan). For years, Vishnu underwent arduous training in the old-fashioned Gurukula style, doing all the domestic chores in the guru's home, washing clothes and utensils, cutting up firewood, filling pots of water, sweeping and cleaning floors, cooking etc. After nine years of rigorous musical training in Miraj, at last Pdt. Balakrishnabuwa permitted Vishnu to set out on his own in 1916 to give solo recitals. At the time he ventured into the field of music, there was a stigma attached to the profession of music, and musicians were looked down upon in society. He felt deeply pained at the contemptuous treatment meted out to music and its devotees. This sparked off his keen ambition to secure for musicians as high a status in society as that enjoyed by any other profession. And as we all know, he succeeded in this noble mission of his, as a result of his life-long efforts. At 25, his voice was in excellent form and his recital in the Ram-mandir of Baroda was acclaimed by all; his fame spread. Rani Jamnabai who had adopted Maharaja Sayajirao as her son invited Vishnu into her palace for recitals. She liked his music so much that she detained him in Baroda for 4 months. Great artistes like Khan Saheb Nasir Khan (percussion maestro of the darbar) and Ghulab Singh (the famous Tabla maestro) became his admirers. In his music they detected the grand style of Ustad Mohammad Khan (son of Hassu Khan, and brother of Rahmat Khan). The Rani greatly wished to engage Vishnu as a Darbari-gayak at Rs 400 per month, but Vishnu declined, as he wanted to tour various parts of the country, learn different styles and enrich his own repertoire.

Sri B.R. Deodhar recounts a mystical experience of his Guruji. It is said that once Pdt. Vishnu Digambar met a great "Bairagi" (ascetic-renouncer) and that this meeting left a deep influence on Digambar. Until then, he had been full of over-confidence about his music and his behaviour tended to be a bit "arrogant". After hearing the Bairagi's divinely-inspired and melodious music in the solitude of the Girnar mountains, Vishnu felt extremely humble, and fell at his feet begging for his forgiveness. The Sadhu blessed him and advised him- "Your chosen path is very noble. But you must shed all your arrogance and learn the virtue of humility. Only then can you succeed in your noble mission. Start your work in the Punjab".

>From there Pdt. Vishnu Digambar went on a long tour of various places like Kathiawad, Gwalior, Aligarh, Mathura, Jullundur, Amritsar, Lahore, Kashmir, Rawalpindi, Bharatpur and so on. In Mathura he stayed on for some months in order to study the

theoretical aspect of music in the library, to master Hindi and Brajbhasha, and to think out a notation system, After touring the Punjab, he started his very first Gandharwa Mahavidyalaya in Lahore in the year 1901. The inaugural function was presided over by Justice P.C.Chatterji, and the palatial Haveli of Raja Ram-singh was hired on rent at Rs 13 per month ! Although no students joined in the beginning, gradually more and more students came in, and the staff consisted of teachers trained free of charge by Pdt. Digambar himself. Among the staff were Keshavrao Datar Govindrao Apte, Vishnu A. Kashalkar, Keshavrao Kale, Yashwantrao Mugholkar and others. From 1904 Digambar began to actively co-operate in the Swadeshi Movement by singing patriotic songs along with his groups of students and quietening the most noisy throngs through the magic of his grand voice which needed no microphone. His rendering of the prayer-song "Raghupathi Raghava Rajaram" was one of Gandhiji's favourites. Important citizens of Lahore like Lala Lajpatrai, and Swami Sraddhananda, and other social leaders became his admirers and friends. By his own personality and his clean and noble living, he won for himself as well as for his profession, a respected place in the highest society. With his impressive personality, sweet and powerful voice, and fine training, he was splendidly equipped for the mission of promoting love and respect for the art of Music all over the North. Once, a critic tried to tease him by asking: "Panditji, how many Tansens have you produced?". With his ready wit he cleverly retorted that he had trained a very large number of "Kaansens" (connoisseurs of Music) all over the country.

The Mahavidyalaya in Lahore had been started in the very teeth of opposition, and there was a constant shortage of funds, but Pdt. Digambar and his brave band of co-workers pulled on somehow. At one stage, they were so bankrupt that they apprehended that the school might have to be closed down but at that critical hour came a windfall in the form of an invitation from the Maharaja of Kashmir. Vishnu Digambar accepted the offer gladly. By his successful recitals in Kashmir he earned enough money and the life-long patronage of the Raja, so that thereafter, he was not only able to run the school on a stable basis but also to maintain and support a large number of poor but talented students in his school. Being a strict disciplinarian as well as of a very charitable disposition, he commanded great respect and affection. In an atmosphere of mutual concord and under a systematic routine the students were trained not only in vocal and instrumental music, but they were also taught to repair musical instruments and run their own printing press and journal. Well aware of the importance of proper publicity, Vishnu Digambar saw to it that the school's work and activities were brought before the public eye from time to time through journals and newspapers. What with his own regular practice, the conscientious lessons to students and the extensive tours he undertook along with his groups of students, his was indeed a very busy life. The example of his own pure life and the unsullied atmosphere of the school gradually broke down all the existing prejudices against music, and attracted larger and larger numbers of boys and girls from respected families. Branches of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya spread into

various other towns like Bombay Poona and Allahabad, and the strength swelled. Though the songs were taught by rote, they were also published with notations in the School-Journals. Among the many Journals and books published in their own printing press were "Sangeeta (costing 2 annas per issue !), Sangeeta-Baala-Prasad" in 3 volumes, "Sangeeta Baala- bodha", "Raga Pravesa" and so on. Pdt. Digambar himself used to teach in the classes until he trained a large number of eminent disciples like Narayan Moreswar Khare (who later on, stayed with Mahatma Gandhi in Sabarmati), Vinayakrao Patwardhan, Narayanrao and Shankarrao Vyas, V.A. Kashalkar, Pdt. Omkarnath Thakur, Wamanrao Thakar, Wamanrao Padhye, Venkatesh Modak, Keshavrao Kale and Datar Rambhau Ash-tekhar, Govindrao Apte, Yashwantrao, B.R.Deodhar and so many others. His own son Dattatreya Vishnu Paluskar outshone them all, flashed like a meteor in the musical firmament but alas ! was snatched away by the cruel hands of death at the youthful age of 34 ! Pdt. Vishnu Digambar's personal life was full of tragedy. In 1882, he had been married to Vithabai, the sister of Balwantrao (the post- master of Kurundwad), and 12 children were born to them but tragically 11 of them died in their infancy, while Dattatreya (or Bapurao as he was fondly called), the 12th son who lived long enough to become an excellent and most popular classical musician was snatched away in the prime of his life and at the peak of his musical career by a rare virus infection of the brain which could not be cured in spite of the best and most prompt medical attention. But D.V.Paluskar's popularity has not waned even after the passage of so many years (he was born on 18/5/1921, and he died in 1955) as is evident from the large number of his gramophone records that adorn tapes of this melodious musician.

Perhaps it was the tragic loss of 11 children that made Pdt. Digambar so intensely religious-minded, and turned his attention to Ramayan Keertan and so on. From classical music, his interest seems to have shifted to devotional and patriotic songs. His Schools contributed not a little towards the popularisation of music all over the country. Instead of cringing for fiftful patronage of a few interested royal patrons, Digambar turned towards the masses for support and appreciation. He undertook musical tours from time to time and sang along with his students too in public halls. These concerts were accessible to rich and poor alike through moderate tickets. Among the many factors that helped him to captivate huge audiences and acquire admirers were his melodious and powerful voice, his dignified personality (with the long loose robes, and flowing beard, like a seer) and his capacity to cater to every type of audience. He could sing before an audience of thousands without the aid of any microphone. Moreover, he could serve highbrow stuff for real connoisseurs, national songs for the patriotic-minded, devotional music for the pious, Abhangs for the people of Pandharpur and Maand renderings for the Marwaris ! His admirers and disciples have recorded for us many instances where scoffers of Panditji's work were put to shame on witnessing the spell which his music cast over mammoth audiences, or instances where the highest authorities of a State intervened to protect his person from

jealous rivals who sneakily tried to harm him. A professional musician moving on terms of social equality with respected national leaders and social leaders, and with exalted persons of other "respected" professions was indeed a rare sight in those days. That was Pdt. Digambar's great ambition and achievement. Through his untiring efforts, he gradually managed to secure a place for our music in the highest and most snobbish parties of fashionable Lahore. His own disciplined and clean personal life was a great inspiration to all those who came into contact with him. In his Gandharva Vidyalayas he stressed the importance of prayers, strict self-discipline, and clean living. He selected the Padas of Meera, Nanak, Tulsidas, Surdas and other saint-poets and set them in appropriate ragas and talas to be sung as classical songs.

His Gandharva Maha-Vidyalaya in Bombay which was inaugurated by His Holiness Sri Jagatguru Shankaracharya, attracted students from all castes and creeds in the cosmopolitan city. He founded the Ramnam Adhar Ashram in Nasik. Along with his pupils and co-workers he toured all over this country and also visited Burma, giving performances and popularising Indian music. A great patriot and an impassioned singer, he became one of the favourite Bhajan-singers of Mahatma Gandhi. So successfully did he utilize his art for inspiring patriotism that no political meeting or Congress session in Lahore, Ahmedabad etc. was complete without his powerful music. "Raghupati Raghava Rajaram", "Vande Maataram", "Jaya Jagadisha Hare", "Rachaa Prabhu Toone" have all come to be associated specially with Pdt. Vishnu Digambar. His spirited defiance of the unreasonable ban on "Vande Maataram" at the Cocanada Congress was given deserved praise and publicity in all the national newspapers. His emotional rendering of "Raghupati Raghava Rajaram" after his musical discourses got such a hold over people's hearts that during his Hyderabad trip, it is said that people of all religions joined him in singing it!

Towards the last phase of his life, Digambar became more and more spiritual-minded, a real Bhakta of Sri Rama, spending long hours in solitude, praying and singing. With his handsome face, and the serene and pious expression on his noble face, he was an imposing figure. In 1930 he had paralytic stroke. Through sheer will-power and self-discipline, he recovered enough to be able to walk about with the aid of a walking-stick. On 20th August 1931 it was the auspicious Tulsi Jayanti Day. He devoted the whole day for prayers and requested his students to sit beside him and sing Bhajans. These continued until he gently slipped away from this earthly existence on 21st August 1931.

Sadly, he lived in an era when even the greatest music could not be recorded and preserved for future generations. Death mercilessly silenced the creative genius of Vishnu Digambar's brilliant son Dattatreya in 1955 at the young age of 34. But we have at least his AIR recordings and gramophone records to cherish and preserve glimpses of the beautiful music of this worthy son of a really great and noble father who was "a great evangelist of Hindustani music".

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "63".

Great Master's series Great Masters 3: Pandit D.V. Paluskar - talent extraordinaire!

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)
Sources: "Down Melody Lane" (1984) by G.N. Joshi

Namashkaar! The saga of the Great Masters series continues. Today's entree brings home the flavour of the musical genius of Pandit D.V. Paluskar. A prodigy of sorts, Pandit Paluskar's forte was the presentation of Ragas "in a nutshell". To expound a Raga in all its ramifications in a 3 to 4 minute timespan is a formidable task. And D.V. Paluskar had no equal in this business. His recordings of short, brisk pieces are a collector's item. To those who have problems digesting vocal Indian classical music, Pandit Paluskar's treatment of Ragas constitutes the ideal hors d'oeuvre. It has the essence of technique, beauty and by consequence, simplicity. Err..sorry about the meanderings above. Got carried away. Before I quit, here's one of Pandit Paluskar's immortal cheezs set to Raga Gaud Saarang:

Piyu palan laage mori akhiyaan
Alibin piyu moraa jiya ghabaraave
Chaiin na nahin aave, ghadi pal cHhin cHhin raina
Palan laage mori...
Veer pathakvaa lejaa sandeshwaa
Piyasan kahiye, hamri bina tumare daras ko
Birahaaaa...
Palan laage mori

Rajan

I first saw Pandit D.V. Paluskar as a little boy in the Shree Ram Mandir at Panchavati, Nasik in the year 1925. He was then about 5 or 6 years old and had come with his father, Sangeet Bhaskar Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. Vishnu Digambar was singing the bhajan Raghupati Raghav Rajaram. The atmosphere all around was intensely devotional. Looking at the boy who was staring at his father with rapt attention, I wondered whether the lad had inherited any of his father's gifts, and whether he would carry on the tradition of Vishnu Digambar. In due course he did become a very brilliant and accomplished singer in his own right; a worthy successor to his most illustrious father.

At the time of his father's death, D.V. was only 10 years old. He had studied music under the guidance of Pandit Vinayakrao Patwardhan and Pandit Narayanrao Vyas but he did not adopt or copy the peculiar gayaki of the Gandhrava Mahavidhyalaya. Instead he evolved and developed his own style. He had a clear and melodious voice, admirably suited to the type of music he favoured. His alap clearly outlined the raga he sang; then followed the bandish embellished by beautiful taans in an effortless enchanting style. Both Pandit Vinayakrao Patwardhan and Pandit Narayan Vyas probably connived at his spirit of independence because he was the son of their guru. This was a blessing in disguise as it en-

couraged the young D.V. to develop his own independent style. D.V. Paluskar was very, very modest. He was known to his intimates as them. He never spoke ill of anyone, was of a quiet disposition and completely free from any vice. He arrived for recordings punctually and fully prepared. Recording sessions with him were therefore most enjoyable and not in the least bothersome. He had complete mastery over his art and sang with perfection, ease and confidence, while we captured his magic artistry on our discs.

He cut his first disc in 1944. Like Pandit Narayanrao Vyas, Bapurao mastered the technique of presenting an attractive and complete picture of any raga in just 3 minutes and 15 seconds, for recording. For his first recording he chose to sing four khayals in the ragas Bahar, Tilak Kamod, Kedar and Bilaskhani Todi. He also rendered his father's favourite bhajan Raghupati Raghav Rajaram along with another one by Sant Surdas. I got him for recording again in 1947 when he recorded ragas Gaud Malhar, Ramkali, Hans Kinkini and Marwa. This time also he recorded two bhajans - Chalo mana Ganga Jamuna tir and Lachiman dhire chalo. At my request he recorded two Marathi songs also but unfortunately they failed to click commercially. On account of his melodious voice, chaste style and attractive renderings, all the recordings of his classical music became immensely popular and still continue to sell in large numbers.

In 1952 Bapurao introduced me to a fair and handsome teenage boy who was his close relative and who played well on the violin. Bapurao requested me to take him on our music staff. Fortunately we needed a hand just then, so I got him the job. In our studio, recordings were made in different languages and styles. Ghazals and qawalis in Urdu, bhavgeets in Marathi, garba and ras in Gujarati, and Hindustani classical music - all these were often recorded in our studios. It was therefore the job of this youngster to provide accompaniment to all these types of music. This helped him extend his knowledge and constant practice brought polish to his play. I suggested to him that he should also learn and practise writing music. Within a short period he assiduously mastered this too. It helped him very much later in life. Soon after he was offered a better job in the Films Division and I readily relieved him.

The new job had better prospects - both financial and artistic. This young boy is now a man - the famous violinist D.K. Datar, popular all over India for his chaste and entertaining violin recitals.

A scene in jugalbandi form between Tansen and Baiju is enacted in the film Baiju Bawra. My friend Naushad Ali who wrote the music for this picture had requested me to suggest classical singers for this duet. I suggested the names of Bapurao Paluskar and Ustad Amir Khan. Bapurao had to be cajoled into accepting the assignment. He was afraid that by singing in films he would spoil his style. I however reasoned with him that he would have absolute freedom to expound and present the composition in his own style without any interference. Thus assured, he sang in the jugalbandi form with Ustad Amir Khan. The two great artists matched in every respect and therefore this jugalbandi perfor-

mance proved to be the most interesting and the highlight of the film.

The discs used for recording purposes in those days had a serious drawback. After the recording they could not be played back even once. The tape recorders introduced later were improvements on this, as a recorded tape could be played back any number of times and unwanted parts could be erased. There was another advantage in the technique of tape recording. Previously all singers from the film companies had to come to our studio to record their film songs again. But with the invention of tape recording, we could transfer the songs to the tape from the soundtrack of the films. The duration of one side of an ordinary 78 rpm record is only 3(1/4) minutes whereas the songs in films were sometimes longer, upto 4 or 5 minutes. A music director therefore would edit and cut such songs to the required length. This gave me an idea. Most classical musicians complained that it was very difficult for them to give a perfectly satisfactory performance in just 3(1/4) minutes. I therefore felt that if allowed to perform unrestrained for 15 to 20 minutes, they could be taped and later an edited version of the performance could be used on a disc. The artists would be happy and give their best, and the listeners would enjoy the cream of their artistry. I therefore decided to conduct this interesting but very difficult experiment.

The experiment was undoubtedly a very complicated one. The operation required most skilful split second splicing and extremely careful editing to make a 3(1/4) minute piece out of a 15 to 20 minute performance. It was of the utmost importance that the edited version contained all the ingredients of a skilled and imaginative performance. The editing had to be done so perfectly as to defy detection. The consistency of the entire gayaki had to be preserved, the taans had to follow each other in their natural sequence and the layakari had to be scrupulously maintained in the perfect rhythmic cycle. All this had to be accomplished without upsetting the overall structure of the raga and the gayaki. For the experiment my choice fell on Bapurao Paluskar. When approached he enthusiastically agreed to cooperate. During the Ganapati festival of 1955 he had a number of singing assignments, the last one being at Vile Parle. He promised to come immediately after the last engagement and accordingly he came but he was very tired after the exertions of the successful programme. He wanted to postpone the experiment to a later date, but I told him that it did not matter very much if his voice was not in good shape because the recording was intended to be for experimental purposes alone and not for issue. It was about 2.30 pm when we went to the studio and made arrangements for the session. He was to leave for Pune at 5.00 pm by the Deccan Queen. I persuaded him to record a 20 minute long exposition of a raga which could cover the full length of our tape.

Thereupon he sang and recorded Raga Shri. After the recording I rushed him off to the station in my car and waved him off. That was the last I saw of him. Hardly 3 weeks later he was suddenly taken ill with a mysterious illness and died on 26th October 1955. It was the Dassera day and the news gave the entire music world a stunning shock. The recording made by me three weeks ear-

lier proved to be his last. >From this 20 minute experimental tape of Raga Shri, I had to reconstruct a homogenous performance of the raga to fit on a 78 rpm record. I achieved this intricate task after listening to the tape repeatedly for over 18 hours. I dissected the tape into details of artistic presentation and while joining and reassembling the selected passages I had to be very alert and meticulous to ensure that the result sounded like one complete unbroken performance. Taana and boltaans had to come in their proper order, and the uniformity of laya and correctness of rhythmic accompaniment had to be maintained throughout. Mr. Madgaonkar, our recording engineer, performed the surgical operation of cutting and joining the pieces under my direction, and the entire operation was carried out successfully. When I played this 6(1/2) recording to the late Pandit S.N. Ratanjankar (who was then considered to be the greatest authority on Indian classical music) he never even suspected that it was in fact an abridged edition of a 20 minute performance. He congratulated me and our recording engineer and expressed his desire that we should record his performance in the same way. Accordingly we recorded Raga Yamani Bilawal sung by him, with V.G. Jog accompanying on the violin. Both edited versions - Bapurao Paluskar's and Ratanjankar's - when put in the market kept selling for years without a single person discovering that they were edited. This disc actually consisted of more than 10 pieces of Bapurao's performance joined together. After the advent of the LP records this method was not necessary as an artist now had a much longer recording time than on the original 78 rpm records. Usually after a record was issued the original was sent to our factory in Dumdum. I had kept a copy of the tape of the Raga Shri since this experiment had been my own. Bapurao died before LP records were introduced. I therefore thought of issuing the 20 minute performance of Raga Shri on an LP. The recording was just long enough for one side of an LP disc. As the maestro was no more I chose 6 pieces from his earlier 78 rpm recordings for the other side. However this proposal of mine was rejected by the technical department in our factory on the ground that the recording of Raga Shri was technically faulty. Since the recording was only meant as an experiment, I had ignored the fact that Bapurao's voice sounded husky and tired. The performance was quite up to the standard in other respects. A tough controversy ensued between me and the technical department over this. I pleaded for the release of this record, pointing out the circumstances under which the recording was done. The popularity of the artist who was no more was still very great, as the sales of his other recordings indicated. Therefore the issue of this record, though technically imperfect, was justifiable. After a two-year battle of words my viewpoint was accepted and the LP disc is, even today, on our prestige repertoire. When I bade goodbye to Bapurao at V.T. station, he had promised to come back for recording within a month, but alas, that was not to be. Cruel destiny snatched him away suddenly and prematurely, when he was only 34 and at the height of his career. >From the archives of the All India Radio in Delhi, years later, I was able to obtain just enough tapes of his radio broadcasts for one more LP.

This contains Ragas Kamod and Bageshri. The two LPs and the few earlier recordings are the only legacies this inimitable maestro has left behind as specimens of his scholarship and proficiency as a classical singer.

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "74".

Great Master's series Great Masters 14: Ustad Amir Khan

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Sources: "Down Melody Lane" (1984) by G.N. Joshi

Namashkaar!! This is the fourteenth instalment of Great Masters and the first one this Fall. And it features the late Ustad Amir Khan.

Amir Khan's artistry was of a very high order. Traditional yet heretical, complex yet effortless, profound yet supremely simple—such was the ambivalence of his style.

If you ask me for a reco on Darbaari Kanada, I shall point to Amir Khan. Hansadwani? I shall again point to Amir Khan. And Malkauns? Sorry, go to Amir Khan.

Today, given the frills and trills that our "Ustads" and "Pandits" employ to impress audiences the world over, it is Amir Khan's music that serves a silent admonition.

The death of Ustad Amir Khan in a tragic motor accident in Calcutta a few years ago has created a void in the world of Hindustani classical music. At the present time, when there is a dearth of such gifted artists, his death is an irreparable loss. Had he lived longer he would have had, at least, a number of able and talented disciples to carry on the tradition of his gharana.

In the last 25 years some artists have, by their revolutionary spirit, progressive outlook and creative faculties brought about radical changes in the style of presentation of classical music.

Ustad Amir Khan was such an artist. Like Kumar Gandharva. Amir Khan disregarded the age-old, conventional traditions, and with his intelligence and talent evolved an entirely original style of presentation. He also succeeded in gaining the approval and recognition of critics and connoisseurs.

Amir Khan was born at Indore in 1912. Music was in his blood; his ancestors had been musicians in the Mughal courts. His father was an expert sarangi and veena player. A mehfil of Amir Khan's was always a pleasant experience. He had a very impressive and magnetic personality. At his concerts he would always sit in the posture of a yogi doing his tapasya, with closed eyes and deep meditation. He maintained the same position till the end of his concert. His smiling countenance, a total lack of gesticulation or facial distortion, his absolute concentration on the song, and the slow, gradual build-up of a raga picture invariably kept his audience completely engrossed. He had, for accompaniment, two tanpuras tuned to perfection, a subdued harmonium and a tabla with a straight, simple but steady laya. An atmosphere of solemnity and tranquillity pervaded his concerts, in striking contrast with the noisy and sometimes unmusical gymnastic bouts some singers have with the tabla players that entertain listeners with acrobatics rather than providing them with aesthetic delight.

He had cultivated his voice till it was as exquisitely chiselled as a piece of sculpture. While presenting a raga he unfolded it

with extreme skill, delicacy and purity. At times, when an ascending note appeared to be suspended in mid-air, he unexpectedly made a lightning play on that note, holding the audience spellbound. Because of his inborn, instinctive knowledge of avakash, kal and laya he was able to make his voice sound as if he was singing swaras from two different octaves simultaneously, treating his audience to a unique celestial experience. His mastery over layakari and the swaras was complete. His taans though complicated, and full of artistic twists, were executed in an easy and graceful way. He had an amazingly wide range of pitch, and he moved majestically through this span with his liquid golden voice. Listeners were always favourably impressed by his gayaki and skilled display of tonal beauty. He did not agree with the popular notion that the tarana was just a tongue-twisting exercise with a meaningless cluster of words, involving a lot of vocal jugglery in an ever-increasing tempo. He always put into a tarana a Persian couplet interwoven in the apparently meaningless 'Dir tun, tan, din yalali, yalallum', and honestly believed that these syllables did have some mysterious and mystic import. According to him it was the Persian scholar Amir Khusro who invented the tarana. Amir Khan was very keen on establishing this theory by carrying out research to unravel the hidden meanings of the tarana. But cruel destiny snatched him away and his mission was left unaccomplished.

Amir Khan's presentation was always thoughtful and methodical and he rarely indulged in repetitive phrases. The thorough treatment he gave each raga naturally required considerable time for flawless elaboration. It was well-nigh impossible to get a satisfactory exposition from him in just 3 minutes. It was therefore only in the late 1960s that I could have him to record for a long-playing disc. It was not an easy job to bring him before the mike, though obtaining his consent was not all that difficult. Even to approach him posed a very big problem for me. Amir Khan lived, in those days, in very disreputable surroundings, where it was considered very objectionable for any gentleman to go, even during the day. This is the locality a little beyond and opposite the Congress House on Vallabhhai Patel Road, near the Kennedy bridge. It is inhabited by professional singing and dancing girls, as well as prostitutes. Amir Khan was giving tuitions to some of these singing girls for his living and therefore had to stay in one of the buildings on the third floor. Later, when his financial position improved, he shifted to a flat on Peddar Road. Just beyond the building where Amir Khan lived was the residence of an elderly singer by the name of Gangabai. Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan and Ahmad Jan Tirakhwa often stayed with her. This shows that even women of these professions were treated with respect as artists, in artistic circles. As the recording executive of H.M.V. I had to contact artists regardless of time and place.

To obtain Amir Khan's agreement for the recording I had to meet him, and therefore it was incumbent on me to visit his residence. I was greatly put off when I learnt about the locality where he stayed. I was afraid of what people would say if they observed me entering a house of ill repute. Any outsider would

naturally draw his own conclusions, not knowing that an eminent singer was living in that building. If I had, out of fear of social stigma, refrained from going to visit Amir Khan, his great artistry would have gone unrecorded. The idea of securing his consent for recording together with a keen sense of duty prompted me to enter the building, eyes downcast, not looking about me till I entered Amir Khan's room on the 3rd floor. Once in his room I cheered up, and I talked to him for an hour or two. After that I visited him often. We exchanged views on music and gharanas, and such visits gave me opportunities to study his likes and dislikes. These visits also gave him confidence in me. After a couple of months and 4 or 5 such visits, he agreed to come for a recording. Some more time was lost in persuading him to agree to the terms of payment. Finally this hurdle too was crossed. Yet Amir Khan went on cancelling dates, giving fresh ones and then again postponing the recording on some flimsy ground. I got fed up with his dilly-dallying and, in spite of my great regard and respect for him, I justifiably felt very annoyed. Ultimately one day I plucked up my courage and said to him, 'If I had approached God Almighty as many times as I have come to you, he would have blessed me, but all I can get from you is the promise of a future date.'

Seeing my exasperation he became thoughtful, smiled a little and replied, 'Please do not disbelieve me. Name any day of this week and I will keep the appointment.'

True to his word he came on the day I named, and I got from him his first long-playing disc. His favourite ragas were Marwa, Darbari Kanada and Malkauns. It is indeed rare these days to hear Raga Marwa as it was presented by Bade Gulam Ali and Amir Khan. His first LP was received with tremendous enthusiasm by the public. This delighted Amir Khan, and he was more than ready for another recording. In spite of this I had to put in a lot of effort and time to bring him to the studio again. This time he made an LP containing ragas Lalit and Megh and this was all that could be obtained from him before he was lost to the world.

It was my ardent desire to record as many eminent artists as was possible and to get out of each as much as I could to preserve their art for posterity. Bade Gulam Ali, Alla Diya Khan, Amir Khan, Kesarbai Kerkar, Rajaballi, Amanat Ali, all these and others of that generation had extremely old fashioned, conservative outlooks and were peculiarly obstinate when it came to recording their talents. This attitude prevented me from fully achieving my goal, and a wealth of art vanished along with these great singers.

I felt very distressed at Amir Khan's sudden death. I still have feelings of great disappointment and frustration when I think of the number of opportunities I lost.

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "108".

Great Master's series Great Masters 14a: Yogician Amir Khansaheb

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Sources: "Great masters of Hindustani Music" by Smt. Susheela Misra

Namashkar!

The music of Khansaheb was pansophic in its conception, manna for the soul, an afflatus to purification of the self. In sum, the distillate of the most sublime in the Bharatiya tradition. To borrow a bit from a sentiment expressed in a similar context by Shri Bertrand Russell: it is artistry of men like Amir Khan that makes the human race worth preserving!

The charming Susheela Misra once again, on this Yogi of a musician.

Rajan Parrikar

Fourteenth February 1974 was an ill-fated day for Hindustani music because it lost two great stalwarts on the same day. Pt. Srikrishna Narayan Ratanjankar succumbed to protracted illness. Ustad Amir Khan in the height of his form and fame, was tragically killed in a car accident. Although in his early sixties the Ustad was still a force to reckon with in North Indian music, and had it not been for that grievous accident, he might have easily gone on dominating the music world for another decade or so. The world of Indian music went into mourning on 13th February 1974, and there were public condolence-meetings in numerous cities. Programmes of tributes to the two departed maestros were broadcast from all the important Stations of All India Radio.

Born in April 1912 in Kalanaur, Amir Khan began his musical training as a Sarangi-disciple of his own father Ustad Shahmir Khan, a noted Sarangi player who had learnt his art from Chajju Khan and Nazir Khan of the Bhandibazar gharana. Amir Khan's early grooming in Sarangi was only the foundation of his musical edifice. He had a vision and imagination of his own for higher artistic flights. Being a reputed artiste and a warm friendly person, Shahmir Khan's hospitable home was a veritable rendezvous of many great contemporary maestros like Ustads Allabande Khan, Jafruddin, Nasiruddin Khan, Beenkar Wahid Khan, Rajab Ali Khan, Hafeez Khan, Sarangi-nawaz Bundu Khan, Beenkar Murad Khan and several others. Thus, although Amir Khans's early musical training commenced with Sarangi, the impressionable and intelligent youngster was constantly exposed to the various vocal gharanas of the times. Gradually, Shahmir Khan himself began to devote more time to Amir Khan's vocal training in which merukhand (or Khandmeru) practice and sargam-singing were specially emphasised. Moulded by the styles of three great giants of his younger days, namely, Ustads Bahre Wahid Khan, Rajab Ali Khan and Aman Ali Khan, Amir Khan evolved his own stylistic school which came to be known as "the Indore Gharana."

In fact, Amir Khan was a self-taught musician. He assimilated the

distinctive features of the gayakis that appealed to his aesthetic sense and were in perfect accord with his voice. The style that he evolved was a unique fusion of intellect and emotion, of technique and temperament, of talent and imagination. His style was a synthesis of three different styles. He assimilated the colour and spirit of Wahid Khan's style, (with its chastity of swara intonation and a richly soporific effect of melodic elaboration) so well that Ustad Wahid Khan blessed him. "Long shall my music live in you after I am gone". The slow Khayal is rendered in such a slow tempo that it has "the langour of unfinished sleep." This style originated in the Merukhand style of the Bhindibazar-gharana. This generally strove to produce the permutations and combinations of a given set of notes. These are like mathematical exercises with little artistic effect in a concert. The development of the Vilambit Khayal was marked by deep serenity. The concept of an extra slow tempo with a slow and meticulous unfolding of the raga and the "cheez" was taken from Ustad Bahere Wahid Khan. His taans were clearly influenced by the eloquent ones of Ustad Rajab Ali Khan. In sargam-singing, he revealed his admiration for Ustad Aman Ali Khan.

During his early sojourn in Bombay, Amir Khan had become a close friend of Late Aman Ali Khan. Amir Khan always maintained that had Aman Ali Khan lived longer he would have been the former's "confreere in the world of music". This newly amalgamated "Indore" style of Ustad Amir Khan captivated and influenced a whole generation of younger musicians of all categories through the contemplative and reposeful beauty of his slow, leisurely Badhat (elaboration) enlivened by the "exuberance of his proliferating sargams" and rushing taans. So tremendous has been the impact of his distinctive "gayaki" on the rising generation of young Hindustani vocalists that Amir Khan commanded a large following among the younger aspirants. He no longer remained as an isolated individual. For years, he remained one of the most sought after classical vocalists of his times. What set him apart from his contemporary artistes was the fact that he never made any concessions to popular tastes, but always stuck to his pure, almost puritanical, highbrow style. "His music combined the massive dignity of Dhruvpad with the ornate vividness of Khayal". There are some musicians of the Kirana school who argue that the words of the Khayals are of no importance! But Amir Khan held different views. He used to say: "The poetic element in Khayal is as vital as its melodic element. An artiste has to have a poet's imagination to be a good musician". Amir Khan has proved that "chaste refined music does not lack listener-response", for, he strictly remained uncontaminated by the present craze for showiness. The tall, handsome Ustad had a dignified concert presence. His dignity of bearing and his posture of Yogic calm on the stage struck a perfect accord with the serene grandeur of his music. It was as though his musical thought was in tune with some ideal of beauty and he was striving to communicate it to his charmed audience". As Prof Sushil Kumar Saxena wrote (in the Sangeet Natak Akademy Journal 31) "An Amir Khan swara was at once a tuning of the self, a calm that spreads while Ghulam Ali's glows with a pulpy luminosity."

Amir Khan's forte was the exaggeratedly slow or *ati vilambit* Khayal which he developed in a most leisurely mood with deep serenity and contemplativeness. While his ardent admirers found this part of his concert absolutely engrossing, there were others who found it "excruciatingly slow" or even "insipid"! He always avoided Sarangi accompaniment, and wanted nothing more than a steady, plain *Theka* from his *Tabla* accompanist. His favourite slow *talas* were *Jhoomra* and *Tilwada*. Words were subservient to the "absolute music" that he sang, and naturally, "bol-alaps" and "Bol taans" were conspicuously absent in his singing. In the course of his prolonged unfoldment of the *vilambit Khayal asthayi*, Amir Khan would sometimes render flashing "meteoric taans". His "taans" were marked by many graces like elegant *gamaks*, *lahak* and clear "daanas" (clarity of each note). It was natural that the *Ustad* always chose highly serious, expansive, traditional *ragas* like *Todi*, *Bhairav*, *Lalit*, *Marwa*, *Puriya*, *Mal-kauns*, *Kedara*, *Darbari*, *Multani*, *Poorvi*, *Abhogi*, *Chandrakauns* and so on. Even the lighter *ragas* like *Hamsadhwani* acquired a serious expansive mood when rendered by Amir Khan. His rich, mellow voice was at its best in the deep, dignified "mandra" notes (lower notes). His voice had some inherent limitations, but he shrewdly evolved a style to suit his voice.

Summing up the essence of his father's vocal style, Ekram Ahmad Khan (the eldest son of the *Ustad*) wrote :

"Amongst the elder maestros of music, Khan Saheb was intensely devoted to Rajab Ali Khan of Dewas, and Aman Ali Khan of *Bhindi-bazar*. He also studied the styles of Bahere Wahid Khan and Abdul Karim Khan and amalgamated the essence of the styles of these four maestros with his own intellectual approach to music, and conceived what is now known as the *Indore gharana* of music". During the first 25 years of his life, Amir Khan devoted considerable time to *sargam*-singing, what is known as "Merukhand practice" consisting of varied permutations and combinations of kaleidoscopic *swara*-patterns. These complicated "Khandameru" *sargams*, and flashing meteoric taans brightened his reposeful *vilambit Khayals* now and then. The "Merukhand" style of singing is mentioned in the 14th century Sanskrit classic *Sangeeta-ratnakara* of Sarangdeva.

Another significant aspect of Amir Khan's art imparting it a unique quality, was his refined voice and the way he moulded it to suit his chosen style. Endowed with the face of an intellectual, his temperament, like his music, was serene, unruffled. He never lost his temper. He extended the same courtesy to all, big and small, and listened attentively to even lesser artistes. Humility was native to him, his judgements were generous, and he was above petty jealousies.

Although Amir Khan never rendered *Thumris* in his concerts, his disciples speak of the exquisite way in which he rendered *Thumris* for them in his intimate home-circle. His "cultured" voice was suited for the melodious *Thumri* style also. Amir Khan's sole concession to the speed-loving contemporary listeners was the *Tarana* in which he did considerable research. According to him, the *Tarana*-syllables have a mystical significance. Although his voice was at its best in the lower notes, it could also soar and sweep

across far-off swaras with nimble grace. Such was the influence of his music that in an era of impatient listeners, Ustad Amir Khan was able to instil, by the example of his own art, a genuine and widespread love for serious, contemplative music into the hearts of young music lovers all over the country. He was strongly against the idea of any short-cuts to success in music. Even when Amir Khan did playback singing for some films, he refused to cut adrift from his classical moorings. The songs he rendered were always in highly classical style and in ragas like Darbari, Adana, Megh, Desi, Puriya Dhanasri etc. In his tribute to the Ustad, Prof S.K. Saxena writes in the Sangeet Natak Akademi Journal :

"Amir Khan was different and solitary because of his absolute indifference to the reactions of his audience while he was singing. He never seemed to make a conscious endeavour to please the audience. He faced them majestically, with his music alone, and with pure classicality--- Often his music seemed strangely disembodied from raga-tala distinctions into a kind of musical incense borne aloft on the very wings of devotion-- His music, at its best, was rarely a dazzle. It would be rather an influence, an atmosphere which would just be with us till long after the recital".

There was a time when Amir Khan was a rage in Calcutta and no music conference there was complete without his recital. The Films Division of the Government of India has brought out a documentary film on his life in recognition of his great contribution to Hindustani music. For his eminence as a performing artiste and for his significant contributions to classical music, he was crowned with many honours such as the Fellowship of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the Presidential Award, Padma Bhushan (1971) and the Swar Vilas from Sur Singar Samsad (1971). But these honours and his large following in the music world left him untouched. Amir Khan continued to be a very simple individual "accessible to all and sundry", and he never assumed any airs like some of his contemporaries. Though not educated in the formal sense, he was a highly sophisticated person who moved with dignity in the highest society where he was genuinely revered. It was considered a privilege to be his friend. Through his own efforts, he learnt Hindi, Urdu, Persian and a bit of Sanskrit, and he studied the writings of Guru Nanak, Vivekananda, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and others. Khan Saheb's son Ekram Ahmad Khan writes that it was these studies and his close friendship with Narayan Swami (of Calcutta) that led to his unique blend of Sufism. "Khan Saheb", writes his son, "was a Sufi in the true sense of the word--- a man without any specific religious ties, a man totally devoted to the oneness of mankind, a true citizen of the World". Amir Khan was a good composer and some of his compositions reflect these religious convictions of his. One instance is "Laaj rakh lijo mori, Saheb, Sattar, Nirankar, Jai ke Daata, Tu Raheem Ram Teri maaya aparampar, Mohe tore karam pe aadhar Jag ke daata---." Whenever I heard Amir Khan singing the Khayal in Bairagi beginning with the words-- "Man sumirat nis din tumharo naam", I felt that the words and the spirit of the raga were most aptly suited for Amir Khan's musical temperament.

Since 1968, Khan Saheb used to go to U.S.A in alternate years to

spend the summer with his son Ekram Ahmad Khan, a graduate in chemical engineering from McGill University who has settled down in U.S.A as an Engineering Manager in Canada. [Sounds odd, doesn't it? Maybe he lives in Buffalo and drives to Toronto for work:-). I wonder where Ekram is today and if he has any private unissued recordings of the Khansaheb - RP]

Amir Khan also used to go as a visiting professor of music at the State University of New York at New Paltz where "he planted not only the seeds of his music among the students, but also left behind the legacy of his Sufi philosophy".

Unassuming in his ways, Amir Khan had the capacity to adjust himself perfectly to his environments. He seemed equally at home among the humble as well as among the highly sophisticated. What a pity that this great artiste was snatched away in the peak of his career! Here was a rare classicist who sustained his art by pure devotion, and yet enjoyed wide popularity.

Even now, more than 7 years after his untimely death, Amir Khan's music is still a living force because his voice is being frequently heard over AIR through his recordings in the Archives and his Long Playing Records. The Indore gharana of Amir Khan continues to live on through his pupils like Amarnath, Kanan, Srikant Bakre, Singh Brothers, Kankana Banerji, Poorabi Mukherji and others. There are many others whose singing has been obviously coloured by the style of Amir Khan. The singer is gone, but his music is still with us.

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "76".

Great Master's series Great Masters 16: Kishori Amonkar - The Consummate Master!

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)

Sources: Sangeet Kalavihar (Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidhyalaya Prakashan) April-May 1988. Thanks are due Shri Arun Parvatkar, Head Librarian - Kala Academy, Panjim, Goa, for making available the same.

KISHORI AMONKAR - The Consummate Master!

Part XVI of Great Masters, the first one this year, features Kishori Amonkar, L'Enfant Terrible de Hindustani Music:-). Born in 1932, this music genius from Goa has attained such mastery over her art that she can justifiably claim to be the sole heir to the exacting standards set by her predecessors- her illustrious mother, Mogubai Kurdikar, and the formidable Surashree Kesarbai Kerkar. The following article is taken from a commemorative issue of Sangeet Kalavihar (Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidhyalaya Prakashan) April-May 1988. Thanks are due Shri Arun Parvatkar, Head Librarian - Kala Academy, Panjim, Goa, for making available the same.

Rajan Parrikar

To know Smt. Kishori Amonkar is to know genius. She has in her a concentrated essence of the good, the bad and the beautiful that any genius could boast of.

I have known Kishoritai now for many a year, yet I find that the passage of time does not help me to bind in words her elusive and many dimensional personality. It is one thing to know her and another to write about her. Like a great poet, she can say "Yes. I contradict myself. I contain many." And look at the variety within her - a concrete love for the abstract, a sharp analytical power to dissect systematically an intellectual problem and also an ability to synthesise beautifully the diverse shades of thought, a unique intensity to fathom the mystery of music, a scientific approach towards the ancient and modern theories of Art and Art Creation, a child-like faith in Guru Raghavendra Swami, a sense of wonder of being lost in the fantastic, illogical world of fairy tales and a strong belief in superstitions. All these colourful bits of a jigsaw puzzle refuse to form a very sedate straight picture. At the most one can say, she is a superstitious rationalist and an adult who continues to be child.

"I love to be a child. I know that I am foolish and obstinate as a child. But this state is very precious for me." Kishoritai said to me one evening, with her tanpuras standing in front as mute witnesses, "But at the same time, let me tell you I will not be a child in my Art," she added vehemently. Her witnesses must have silently consented. For when her fingers play on their strings, the musical instruments are thrilled with the touch of a master. Kishoritai tunes her tanpura with the precision of a

scientist. It has to be the exact shade of 'nishad', the correct She believes that playing the tanpura well is of utmost importance - even more important than tuning it. " Then how does one do it ? " I asked. Pausing only for the well anticipated question to end, she replied, " Well, it is an art. You see, though the frequencies of the notes vary, their sound level should be the same. One should strike the next string in such a manner that the sound of the second is blended into the first and so on and thus thereby there is being established sacred serious, musical cyclic pattern. Of course it inspires me to sing, but at times I am afraid even to mingle my own vocal notes into that divine sound. However, one thing I must state that the scientific rendering of a tanpura is different from its aesthetical rendering; in the case of the latter, the stress is significant."

And when she is tuning the tanpura - to the admiration of some, whilst testing the patience of many - she is a picture of concentration. Her eyes gently shut, one hand adjusting the beads below, the other stretching out towards the knobs at the other end, she becomes an object of beauty for any photographer, a portrait painter or even all ordinary viewer.

And when the tanpuras are tuned to perfection, we have beautifully spanned for our ears a musical rainbow. And the colour is the colour of love. For, this artiste, has a profound love for notes, musical instruments, musicians and music; in fact, anything and everything that is musical. Her love, more than her scholarship, makes her ask, "I wonder from where these these notes come? "

A musicologist, a musician or a commoner could as well give an appropriate answer. But that will never satisfy her. She has in her a unique combination of a child, mystic and artist. The seen world she does love but the pull and the insight into the unseen world is more fascinating. Her imagination then knows no bounds "How must be the home of these notes ? How do they behave with each other ? I wish I could see them, then I would be able to talk to them."

Actually, the notes are as familiar to her as her face, in fact definitely more so, for she has spent much more time with her tanpura than with a mirror.

She is an ideal student of her subject. She has thought consistently and deeply on the various problems that face a creative artist. The hard core of her philosophy of Music is her faith in its power to transcend the material world and touch the spiritual. Her notes are divine and their singing is sacred. With her singing, a concert hall is transformed into a temple and the listeners become her Guru Raghavendra. Therefore, after a concert, whenever and wherever, she humbly bows down her head at the people in front- this gesture has an added dimension.

There are two different beings that harmoniously dwell in her - one a romanticist and the other a classicist. She herself does not very much like this classification. She feels that an artist is an artist. All other nomenclatures are secondary. Her approach toward Art is spiritual. She believes that realism is depicted in art to take you to the ideal, and the ideal is self-realisation - for the singer as well as for the listener. Like

a true romanticist, she has an undying urge to reach out to Beauty. Her singing has its birth in the beautiful and it merges too in the beautiful.

She said to me some years ago, "People say that I look beautiful when I sing. Today I seem to have got an answer. When I sing, I want everything to be beautiful - my notes, my rhythm and myself too. My desire is so intense that on the stage you have beauty personified, not Kishori looking beautiful." And how true it is! Her search for beauty does not turn her into an escapist. She is aware of the ugliness of life, its sordidness, its darkness and drabness. Yet she is convinced that when Art touches it, it does not wipe it out, but the innate strength of an art-medium makes it different. There is sorrow and joy inexplicably experienced together. Whereas, in life most often than not, they are mutually exclusive. In her heaven of art, a rose does have a thorn, and a thorn does prick, but its pain leads to peace. That is the uniqueness of art. Music may thrive on and be enriched by the depth and expanse of a 'Karuna Rasa' or 'Shringar Rasa', but it ultimately culminates in 'Shanti Rasa' that is

If Kishoritai adores Beauty, she worships Truth and therefore respects knowledge. Knowledge for her is not trapped wholly in books or fettered only in laboratories. She believes that knowledge is free. It can be found anytime, anywhere. You meet it like friend in a marketplace, or like a "bhakta" you are blessed by its "darshan" in the "santum sanctorum" of a temple. Yet, I must tell you, that Kishoritai is a treasurer of books, and as a student of science in Jai Hind College, had done some of the best dissection work in the Botany laboratory. Her love for books is natural and has grown with time. At times she intuitively buys a very good book. Some of the rarest titles in English Literature have been presented to me by Kishoritai, having bought the books in a bookshop, at various airports or on the pavement. She herself possesses one of the best libraries on aesthetics. Like gems, her books are well taken care of. They are neatly covered and bound. She will go to any extent to get a book she intently wants. Once she had wanted a book on "Indian Aesthetics" by Dr. Pandey. She searched for it high and low, She leafed through all the shops in Bombay, Delhi, Allahabad and other smaller cities in India as well. The search was futile. But Kishoritai did not give in. And when she did get a copy of the book in a University Library, she got the whole significant part of the book cyclostyled. Today, it is one of her proud possessions, to be admired by the connoisseurs and not to be lent even to an ardent book lover.

It is well known that Dnyaneshwar, Tukaram, Surdas and Meera are her "singing partners" but few may know that Bharat Muni, Sarangdev, Narad and Anandvardhan- the great ancient literary masters-- are her 'thought companions." She is extremely happy in their company and it gives her equal joy to sing them or talk about them.

Kishoritai feels intently and thinks deeply. You cannot segregate "feeling" in life from "feeling" in art; for their roots go right down to that land which everyone owns but no one knows--- i.e. the human mind. As far as feeling is concerned for Kishori-

tai, every- thing in this area is a "little more" than what the other people experience. For her the ruby-mud of her beloved Goa is a "little more" red; and its "sapphire- sky" a "little more" blue. Jasmine, Champak, Roses and Lilies, all these flowers are more fragrant when they have to be offered to Guru Raghavendra Swami; at the same time a "more expensive" saree is "less expensive" if it is to be given to her mother Mai. And if Mai is unwell, Kishoritai is terribly disturbed. She repeatedly rings up her younger sister Lalitai's place and keeps on enquiring about Mai's health. At that time, it is easier for Lalitai to nurse Mai than attend her Tai's frequent and demanding phone calls. Not satisfied with what she hears, Kishoritai then decides to rely on her own eyes. She straight- as she is - dashes to Mai. "How are you Mai?" her transparent concern for her mother is evident in the curve of the question. And as soon as Mai says, "I am having a stomach ache or a little palpitation," Kishoritai leaves her side to sit besides the telephone. Then she rings up a Doctor or two. She rings up the Doctor so often and with so much of urgency that she makes the Doctor sick. But her Doctors know well that though a rebel in the field of music, she is also a nervous, highly strung daughter. They therefore smilingly take the "doses" she gives them. And only when Mai says that "she is feeling a little better" Kishoritai is at a little peace with herself. But her health is not even considered when it is a question of her music concerts. With a temperature as high as 103 raging in her body, I have seen her give all excellent full fledged concert in Dadar. She has also rendered a 3 1/2 hour programme on our Saint- Poet Dynaneshar in a Bombay Hall, with the excruciating and relentless agony of a Herpes infection running a deadly line of pain on her face across the nose. I can still see her holding her tanpura in her right hand and with the left hand dipping cotton in a medicinal solution and applying it to her face. One had only to see it to believe it. That is the fierce intensity she has for her music. It is almost inhuman or superhuman.

Thinking -intuitive, creative thinking - is also an innate part of her music. Her razor sharp intelligence is used to gently reach and unfold a particular "bhava" in a bhajan, a thumari, a ghazal or raga. Kishori tai firmly believes that "feeling" is the soul of music. She has thought long and lovinly about the various "bhavas" in art; how their subtle shades emerge and re-emerge, and one being prominent, surges forward towards the formation of a "rasa". Her study of "rasa theory" is very comprehensive. But everything that she reads in the ancient texts and whatever she herself experiences in the fire of the creative process is to be accepted only if it stands the test of actual music rendered.

Like a sincere hard-working student, she still gets up early in the morning to study and interpret the texts and spends or invests some time with the textual notes. Then after an interval of some kitchen work, she turns to and becomes one with her musical notes. The journey from the world of words to the universe of "sa-re-ga-ma" is as smooth as the sliding of the finger from one string to the other of her tanpura.

Kishoritai has given immeasurable joy to her listeners - through her music and her lectures. By now, she has become a renowned exponent of the "Rasa Theory of Music". She is an excellent speaker, being clear in thought and lucid in expression. She has given lectures - series of lectures all over India. She carries the same brand of fire in her speeches as in her musical rendering. I remember its early beginning.

It was the year 1977; Place: New Delhi. Smt. Kishoritai Amonkar had been invited to participate in an International Seminar on Arts to be held in the capital of India. Her paper was entitled "Music and Communication" The audience comprised of writers, musicians, dancers, painters, poets, sculptors and architects of national and international renown. In fact, they were the people who must have been more on the platform - on the other side of creation - than on the receiving side.

In the presence of such an illustrious and discerning listeners, Kishoritai read her paper with the ease of a professional and a fervour of a reformer. The text, born and bred on experience was appealing and thought-provoking and the diction was perfect, her breath-control remarkable with the right pauses and correct stress. The thunderous applause at the end "communicated" the listeners' feeling of appreciation. The impact of the paper was further seen when the Indian and Foreign Delegates attended her concert at 'Ashoka Hotel' the following day and made it a point to tell her of the same. As one dancer then remarked "Is it necessary to read the paper also so well? Can you not leave anything to others?"

That is Kishoritai -
Perfectionist and a dreamer,
Lover of words and notes,
Colour and stones,
An old understanding friend,
A singer, setting a new trend,
Bound to music and its Redeemer too.

And now finally about her Music. Kishoritai doesn't sing music, she breathes it. Then what can one write about it? It is like trying to describe and give one's impression of a beautiful sunrise. The sun of her "Bhairav" or "Bhup" is the same; yet, just as, every dawn is new, so also the "ragas" are different with every rendering. Her Music is as fresh as dew and as ancient as the earth.

Here I acknowledge my utter helplessness to do justice to her singing. Much has been written about it, and many are still trying to write about it. She like her mother Mai has also been awarded a 'Padma-bhushan'. It is indeed a rare feat for a mother and daughter to get one of the highest National awards in the same field - i. e. Hindustani Classical Music. Kishoritai sings with utmost intensity and sincerity. She believes in introspection and guidance from the ancient sages and seers, therefore the evolvement of her "raga" is different from others. Like a staunch classicist she wants to maintain the purity and the discipline of the "bhava" in a "raga". She is totally convinced that in order to depict the "true and living raga" in future, one must progress towards the past- wherein lies knowledge that is eternal

and Absolute. Trying to analyse the subtle nuances of her music
I find that the river of words merges into the sea of silence.
We can only pray that may Kishoritai continue to sing for a long
long time; and may we all be blessed to listen to that divine
melody.

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Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "77".

M.S.Subbalakshmi - GENIUS OF SONG series. (part 17)

Great Masters

Posted by: "Rajan P. Parrikar" (parrikar@mimicad.Colorado.EDU)

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Author: Dr. Gowri Ramnarayan

GENIUS OF SONG

by

Dr. Gowri Ramnarayan

FRONTLINE, December 31, 1993

"We walked 30 miles to hear you today but arrived only at the very end. We waited in the hope of offering our respects to you before returning to our village."

The speakers were a dust-streaked couple in crumpled sari and dhoti in remote Ayalur in Tamil Nadu's Thanjavur district - where Carnatic vocalist M.S. Subbulakshmi had given a concert as the finale of a week-long temple festival. Her name had drawn from villages miles around, thousands who were at that time returning with no thought or word beyond the exhilaration her vocal music had wrought.

Drained by the two-and-a-half hour performance and passage through the adulation of the packed crowds, the (then) 70-year-old musician had no thought but of rest during the early journey of the next day. But she would not, could not, send the couple away disappointed. "Let us sing at least one song for them." The younger accompanist to whom she said this asked, "Do you know it is midnight now?" With a smile MS began to sing with the same earnestness and attention she had shown earlier on the stage. For her, music was ever a matter of reverence.

Another instance illustrates her appeal to the cognoscenti: It was with more than the usual trepidation that M.S. Subbulakshmi faced a distinguished audience of needle-sharp rasikas and fellow musicians at the Music Academy in Madras one evening in the 1950s. She was about to present a pallavi in Raga Begada, "Kailasapate, pasupate, umapate, namostute," across the Adi tala cycle. This was a challenge to her virtuosity in rhythm-charged ragam-tanam-pallavi techniques. Star-singer though she already was, she was not particularly known for pallavi pyrotechnics. What followed was no different from the typical Subbulakshmi concert - thunderous applause greeted her at every stage of the unfolding.

The pallavi piece had been the idea of a musician friend and mentor Musiri Subramania Iyer. MS had enthusiastically rehearsed it with the active encouragement of violinist Tiruvalangadu Sundaresa Iyer, whose tuft-waving shouts of "bhesh, bhesh!" had punctuated the practice sessions.

The Alathur brothers, known to be masters of laya and pallavi exposition, were to call on MS the next day and offer their congratulations. "We have no words to describe the beauty and balance

of your presentation. What anchored every part firmly to a finished whole was the accent on the Raga and the bhava you brought to it. This is what makes your music so enchanting, so durable. This is what the great Dakshinamurthi Pillai found to be special in your singing years ago." With that the mists parted and MS was back in shy girlhood.

Kunjamma (as she was known to those close to her), brought up with all the rigorous strictness that her mother could impose upon her training in art as in life, had sung at a wedding in the household of Dakshinamurthi Pillai, the venerable percussionist from Pudukkottai. The event had drawn a galaxy of artists - including the upcoming Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Musiri Subramania Iyer, Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar, Rajamanickam Pillai, Rajaratnam Pillai, Palghat Mani Iyer, G.N. Balasubramaniam and the Alathur brothers.

The next day, in the midst of this starry assembly, Dakshinamurthi Pillai suddenly smote his head with vehemence. "Andavane! (oh God!) How will you save your throats for a lifetime if you engage in vocal gymnastics? Leave all that to us drummers. Singers must emphasize the raga and the bhava so that you preserve your voice and let it gain in timbre. That little girl there, she knows this already. Didn't we hear her yesterday? Wasn't it satisfying? Touch our hearts?" At that public praise, Kunjamma shrank even more behind her mother in the corner. Lost in memories, Subbulakshmi's narrative trembles. Those were times to recall with tears. She was blessed by every senior musician who came home to sing and play before or listen to her musician mother Shanmukhavadiyu playing the veena. Some were legendary figures like Tirukkodikaval Krishna Iyer, Veena Seshanna of Mysore, Ponuswami Pillai, Naina Pillai, Chittoor Subramaniam Pillai, Venkataramana Dass of Vizianagaram. Invariably, Kunjamma would be jerked forward to sing. "Though I would always be encouraged and appreciated by them, I never lost my timidity." She recalls that some of them would teach her a song or two - as did the great Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyenger.

"What were you like in those days?" brings a change in mood. "You can see it in the old pictures," she laughs. "A side parting in thick curls pressed down with lots of oil, a huge dot covering most of my forehead, the half-saree pinned to the puff-sleeved blouse with long brooch and longer safety pin, eardrops, nose-rings and bangles of imitation gold...Oh I forgot. The long plait was tied up with a banana stem strip! Or a ribbon which never matched." Getting ready for the stage meant also the addition of a row of medals on the shoulder.

MS has been sheltered and protected through 78 years now. Like everybody else, she has had ups and downs, faced hurdles and setbacks, known heart-break. As an artist in India, she has scaled unrivalled peaks of fame. Through these public and personal happenings, she continues to radiate the childlike innocence of the old portraits. Yet what lingers on her face is not the look of naivete, or inexperience. It is a sense of inner peace and timeless faith lining her gentleness.

A perceptive profile of Subbulakshmi states: "Success and fame bring in their train friends and adulation, as well as jealousy

and carping critics. She has been paid the most extravagant tributes by musicians, scholars, high dignitaries of State...I have also heard others dismiss her as a pretty singer with a pretty voice who has built up a reputation on false values. She herself takes all this in her stride." It ends with a tribute to the beauty and grace of her music and looks to its maturing into greatness. The year was 1955.

That she has reached this greatness will hardly be challenged, even by critics of her style - or those who play the devil's advocate. She has been the recipient of the highest awards and honours the nation could bestow upon an artist short of the Bharat Ratna, and of significant international recognition.

But the impressive list of distinctions can hardly explain the MS mystique. Certainly it has to do with her extraordinary voice, which continues to ring in the mind with vibrant power and clarity, whether heard from near or far or any angle. That her music is not diminished by the absence of instrumental accompaniment is knowledge treasured by those privileged to hear her in private.

It was realised by the multitudes on occasions when her devotional songs were telecast by Doordarshan, as at the time of Indira Gandhi's assassination.

A whole range of explanations are offered for the primeval resonance of her voice - from the metaphysical to the physical. There are pious devotees who believe it to be a gift as a result of oblations of honey through her previous births! An ENT specialist, on the other hand, declares it has to do with the unusual arrangement of her vocal chords. To hear her is to be spellbound - the experience of more than three generations of men and women in many parts of the world. Over the years, the voice and charisma have melded to irresistibility nonpareil. Admirers range from old-timers, hep youngsters, fellow artists, householders, ascetics, religious and political leaders, atheists, scientists and fact-finders and pundits, to philistines.

Princes and heads of state have bowed to her music, as when the (then) Maharana of Udaipur said to MS and husband T. Sadasivam: "In the old days I would have exchanged my whole kingdom for this Kalyani raga. Now I shall give you whatever help you need by way of horses and elephants in location shooting." The occasion was the filming of Meera, produced by Sadasivam with MS in the lead. Jawaharlal Nehru's tribute to her, "Who am I before the queen of song?" has been publicised widely as has been Mahatma Gandhi's request, shortly before he was gunned down by a Hindu fanatic on January 30, 1948. A message had been sent to Madras that Gandhiji wished MS to render his favourite bhajan, "Hari tum haro," and a response had gone from husband Sadasivam to the effect that she did not know how to sing this particular bhajan, somebody else could sing "Hari tum haro", and she could sing another bhajan. A reply had promptly come back on behalf of the Mahatma: "I should prefer to hear it SPOKEN by Subbulakshmi than SUNG by others." Nearly half a century after this incident, MS and Sadasivam recall that she heard the news of Gandhiji's assassination when she was listening to a relay of the Thyagaraja Utsavam (festival) and immediately her own singing of "Hari tum haro" came on the air. She swooned from the shock.

Had not Gandhiji called upon her at a prayer meeting in 1947 at Birla House in Bombay, "Subbulakshmi, Ramdhun tum gao" (You sing the Ramdhun)? His choice of songs and his manner of recognition show that the Mahatma was thinking beyond music. It was that special quality she invokes of peace and bliss, not just with her voice, but from the depths of her own character - simple, devout and spirituelle.

Often lay persons with no liking of classical music still play her devotional verses as an every morning ritual. The suprabhaktams on the deities of Tirupati, Kasi, Rameshwaram and Kamakshi of Kanchi thrill pilgrims at dawn in temples from Kedarnath to Kanyakumari. In the midst of roadside blasts of film songs, if an occasional "Kaatinile varum geetham" of "Chaakar rakho ji" come on, the pedestrian is arrested into paused listening. There are others who swear that listening to her recorded music helped them tide over troubled times, even traumas and tragedies. In this writer's personal experience, there was the instance of a dear friend, a Hyderabad girl, who repeatedly asked for "any MS music" as she bravely faced death from third degree burns. More remarkable is her popularity outside the Carnatic belt. According to traditional stereotype, the North Indian is supposed to be indifferent to Carnatic music, but MS concerts draw large audiences in Jalandhar and Jaipur, Kanpur and Bhopal, Pune and Baroda, notwithstanding the predominance of the heavy pieces in Telugu, Sanskrit and Kannada by composers ranging from Thyagaraja to Yoganarasimham. The initial recognition, of course, came through the bhajans in Hindi that she rendered for the film Meera in 1944.

Delightedly surrendering her title "The Nightingale of India" to MS, Sarojini Naidu introduced her in the film's first reel. A slender MS with downcast eyes, corkscrew curls blowing, hands twisting her pallav, is overwhelmed as Naidu heaps tributes with this prophecy to her countrymen, "You will be proud that India in this generation has produced so supreme an artist."

Since then, MS recitals have always included bhajans - of Meera first and later Tulsidas, Kabir, Surdas, Nanak and abhangs of Tukaram. A few have heard her sing chhote khayals and thumris ("Na manoongi, Mishra Khamaj); "Neer bharan kaise jaaon," Tilakamod; "Mano mano kanhaiyya," Jonpuri), that she learnt in the 1930s from Dwijenderlal Roy in Calcutta and later from Siddheshwari Devi of Benares. The latter spent some months in Madras teaching MS thumris and tappas. It was a lesson in assiduity to see the two great women seated on the mat, facing each other and practising with intense interest the Yaman scales over and over again, with Siddheshwari Devi rolling the beads to keep the 108 count.

To many North Indian business barons, an MS recital at a family wedding is not a status symbol but a blessing on the young couple. With excellent singers in Bombay who can sing bhajans with the greater ease of mother tongue spontaneity, why did they insist on a bhajan concert by MS? A Bombay-based industrialist's reply to the naive question was, "True! We can listen to good music by others. But no one else can create this feeling which takes us straight to heaven."

Hindustani musicians themselves have never stinted praise. Veteran Alladiya Khan was charmed by her Pantuvarali (Puriya Dhanashri); Bade Ghulam Ali Khan had announced she was "Suswaralakshmi Subbulakshmi," and Roshanara Begum had been ecstatic over her full-length concert. Others from Ravi Shankar to Pandit Jasraj and Amjad Ali Khan have been unfailing admirers. Vilayat Khan folds both his hands and closes his eyes as he speaks her name.

This recognition first came in the 1930s in a Calcutta studio when MS played Narada in Savithri. (This film launched the nationalist Tamil weekly Kalki, a joint venture of husband Sadasivam and writer R. Krishnamurthi). The MS recordings would gather other distinguished artists, K.L. Saigal, Pahari Sanyal, Kananbala, Keskar and Pannalal Ghosh (later to play Krishna's flute in Meera). Dilipkumar Roy was another admirer who was later to teach her bhajans and Rabindra Sangeet.

"They would make me sing again and again, especially the song 'Bruhi mukundeti,' with its lightning sangati in the end," MS recalls happily (in Tamil). "In those days we had no sense of competition or oneupmanship. We enjoyed good music wherever we found it." Old-timers remember that in the film too, as Narada descended from the sky in jerks, but still singing that enthralling song, the theatre resounded to applause. In the Bombay studio where the Meera score was recorded, it was the same story. Artists who came for other recordings would stop by and become rapt listeners. A thin newcomer, two long plaits dangling behind, refused to record her song after the MS session. "Not now, not after THAT!" She went on to become a legend in her own right as Lata Mangeshkar, while continuing to remain a devoted MS fan. Another MS achievement was that, virtually for the first time, she astonished the Westerner into an appreciation of Carnatic music. In the 1960s, the few Indian musicians known outside the country were Hindustani instrumentalists. In the Western world, hardly anyone knew of the complex Carnatic system, which was deemed inexportable. Why, even North Indians found it indigestible. In a conversation with Jawaharlal Nehru, Sadasivam remarked that the West might prefer instrumental to vocal music. "Yes," said Panditji, tapping his fingers. Then looking straight at MS he broke into a smile, "But not in YOUR case!" MS always adds, "By God's grace, what he said came true when I sang at the Edinburgh Festival, at the United Nations and at Carnegie Hall."

On the eve of a public concert in New York, U.N. Chef de Cabinet and Carnatic music expert C.V. Narasimhan was disquieted at the prospect of rejection by the redoubtable critic of the New York Times. He was to call ecstatically the next morning. "You have won. The press overflows with praise." So it did after everyone of the string of concerts that MS gave in the US and in some parts of Europe before all-white audiences, most of whom were strangers to any music from India.

The New York Times said: "Subbulakshmi's vocal communication transcends words. The cliché of 'the voice used as an instrument' never seemed more appropriate. It could fly flutteringly or carry on a lively dialogue with the accompanists. Subbulakshmi and her ensemble are a revelation to Western ears. Their return can

be awaited with only eagerness." Dr. W. Adriaansz, Professor of Music, University of Washington, wrote: "For many, the concert by Mrs. Subbulakshmi meant their first encounter with the music of South India and it was extremely gratifying that in her the necessary factors for the basis of a successful contact between her music and a new audience - highly developed artistry as well as stage presence - were so convincingly present...without any doubt (she) belongs to the best representants of this music."

This writer witnessed that kind of wondrous rapture in Moscow when MS performed before a select group of Russian musicians and musicologists in 1988. Midway through the singing a woman came up with flowers. She touched her eyes first and then her heart to communicate her bursting feelings. That this was a shared experience became evident when the applause and the audience followed MS as she left the hall, down the staircase, to the car on the street, until she drove away.

The question still remains unanswered: What is this almost transcendental quality behind the unfailing rapture? In the West, such responses are not unknown to the music from great composers like Mozart and Beethoven. Many would attribute it to the Indian bhakti tradition of poetry and song to which the singer belongs. The 6th-7th century cult of the Nayanmars and the Alwars, spread through Chaitanya and Jayadeva, as the people's movement of Basavanna and Mahadeviyakka, inspired Namdev and Tukaram, Surdas, Tulsidas and that extraordinary woman saint Meerabai, who spurned queenship and wifehood in her restless quest of the Lord. The bhakti polarities of seeking and finding, loss and conquest, desire and fulfilment are realised in their verses.

Precisely these aspects mark Subbulakshmi's singing. This is true of those portions without verbal elements, like the raga alapana. Just as the devotee individuates the deity through incantation and description - detailing every limb, look and ornamentation - the singer shapes the raga, always starting with clear strokes to pedestal its identity and going on to breathe it to form and life. The enunciation of the antara gandhara (Sankarabharanam, Khambhoji, Pantuvarali, Kedaragowla) in the upper register - as a long-held note, as the end-point of embellishments, or the pivot of note clusters, mounts to fever pitch. Hands sculpt the air, face turns upwards, eyes gaze at the beyond, and suddenly there comes the madhyama/panchama climax and the rounded process of conclusion, all accomplished with seemingly effortless grace. After plumbing the depths and soaring to the heights, the listener emerges into quietude. That is how the Meera archetype gets superimposed in this Tamil daughter of the 20th century. What is MS like in real life? The answer would be: except for the taut-nerved hypersensitivity of all great artists, no different from any other South Indian housewife, mother and grandmother of her generation. Fame, the approbation of the world's haut monde and glitterati, the adoration of hundreds of thousands, have left her transparently untouched. Home needs and little chores are given the same attention that she gives momentous affairs. She is meticulous and neat in personal life, even in the delicate lines of the kolam she draws everyday. She excels at putting all kinds of visitors at ease, with a genuine interest in what they have to

say of themselves. Gifts which please her most are strings of jasmine and mild French perfumes.

In appearance and lifestyle, she remains conservative: the long pallav of her handloom cottons or silks tucked round the waist, flower-wreathed "kondai", diamond nose and ear rings, glass bangles between gold, not to forget the row of kumkum and vibhuti from many temples dotting the turmeric-washed forehead. regular in the performance of puja and shloka-recitation, she is a strict follower of all the prescribed rituals of the sumangali householder. "My mother-in-law told me before she left for Kasi" would precede these observances.

Owning no jewels beyond what she wears and quick to give away the silk sarees gifted to her by admirers, she has never tried to appear younger than she is. Thousands see her as the embodiment of grace and ancient tradition of Indian womanhood - kind, considerate, compassionate, soft-spoken, self-sacrificing and somewhat unworldly. She breathes the tenderness of the mother to the child, the bhakta to the god.

Looking at her self-effacing deportment, one has to remind oneself forcefully that she is a world-travelled artist, a globally-acclaimed career person who has changed the definition and image of Carnatic music in the 20th century. A first-time foreign listener at her concert was quick to note the ethereality of the MS image. "It is not right to describe her as the Maria Callas of India. Callas has fans, frenzied legions of them. But not devotees! MS does not sing, she makes divinity manifest."

How did MS train this voice, develop grasping power, and learn to refract emotional colours through it? How did she absorb the aesthetics and techniques of a hoary musical tradition?

Born in the temple town of Madurai on September 16, 1916, to veena player Shanmukhavadi (her initial M.S. record the birthplace and mother's name), little Kunjamma, brother Saktivel and sister Vadivambal grew up surrounded and filled by music. Grandmother Akkammal had been a violinist. Their tiny home in the narrow, cattle-lounging Hanumantharayan lane was close to Meenakshi temple. Whenever the deity was taken in procession through the main streets, the nadaswaram players would stop where this lane branched off and play their best for Shanmukhavadi's approval.

"My earliest interest in music was focussed on the raga. I would try to reproduce the pipers as well as I could. My mother played and rehearsed constantly. No formal lessons, but I absorbed a whole wealth by listening and humming along with the veena." Much later, experts were to wonder at the way in which MS vocally rendered some of the rare and singular gamakas and prayogas of both veena and nadaswaram.

The family was rich only in music. Otherwise, for mother and children, and for the numerous uncles and aunts who crowded their home, it was a frugal existence. For the two girls it was confinement within the home, while the brother enjoyed a little more freedom.

Vadivambal died too early to fulfil her promise as a veena player. But for Subbulakshmi it was to be vocal music. The coconut was broken and offerings were made to god and guru Madurai Srinivasa Iyengar. But the lessons could not go beyond the

foundations because the guru passed away. "I also learnt Hindustani music for a short spell from Pandit Narayan Rao Vyas. 'Syama Sundara' which I sang in the film Seva Sadan was one of the pieces he taught me. I listened to a lot of good music on the radio (the neighbours'; we didn't own one!) from the window sill above the staircase. I loved to hear Abdul Kareem Khan and Bade Ghulam Ali Khan in the silence of the night."

Her formal schooling was stopped in class 5 when a teacher's beating brought on an attack of whooping cough. But she practiced music for long hours, lost in the vibrations of the tambura which she would tune reverently. The MS hallmark of sruti suddham can be traced to a game she evolved in her childhood. As she sang, she would stop playing the drone at intervals and check if she continued to maintain the pitch with and without it. Throughout the day she would sound the shadja panchama notes and pluck the strings to see if she was still aligned to them.

This natural ability, consciously developed through a kind of yoga, is responsible for the electrifying effect her opening syllables have on the audience, whether she plumbs the depths (mandara sanchara) or scales the heights (tara sanchara) of a fantastic voice range. Another little known fact of her early life was her fascination for the mridangam which she learnt to play from brother Saktivel.

Intrigued by the gramophone records, Kunjamma would roll a piece of paper for the "speaker" (as in the logo of His Master's Voice) and sing into it for hours. This game became real when she accompanied her mother to Madras and cut her first disc at the age of 10. The songs were "Marakat vadivu" and "Oothukuzhiyinile" in an impossibly high pitch. In fact, it was through the Columbia Gramophone Company records that she was first noticed in the city - before she was 15 years old.

To balance and leaven maternal stringency, there was lawyer-father Subramania Iyer who lived a few streets away. In the faded photograph which hangs in her home today, his soft look and sensitive features bear an unmistakable resemblance to his "Rajathippa" (princess darling). That is how he called his pet daughter. He was wont to saying that he would arrange her marriage with a 'good boy' who would love and cherish her music. Not a singer himself, he was a true rasika and bhakta. In the early Ramanavami festivals he organised, there would be puja, music and procession each day. How wonderful it felt to the little girl when his strong loving hands picked her up and placed her next to the picture of Rama taken round the streets on a chariot! The recollection of such scenes from her childhood brings real happiness to her today.

The first stage appearance? "When it heppened, I felt only annoyance at being yanked from my favourite game - making mud pies. Someone picked me up, dusted my hands and skirt, carried me to the nearby Sethupati School where my mother was playing before 50 to 100 people. In those days that was the usual concert attendance. At mother's bidding I sang a couple of songs. I was too young for the smiles and the claps to mean much. I was thinking more of returning to the mud."

>From regular vocal accompaniment in Shanmukhavadvu's veena con-

certs, MS graduated to solo performances. Of her debut at the Madras Music Academy when she was 17, a connoisseur wrote: "When she, with her mother by her side (who played the tambura for the daughter), as a winsome girl in her teens, ascended the dais in 1934 and burst into classical songs, experienced musicians of the top rank vied with one another in expressing their delight in this new find." Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar came forward with loud hyperboles. Tiger Varadachariar nodded approval. Karaikudi Sambavisa Iyer was to say later, "Child, you carry the veena in your throat."

At this time Thiagarajan Sadasivam entered her life as a dashing suitor. He became her husband in 1940. Kasturi Srinivasan, Editor, The Hindu, was instrumental in arranging their marriage at Tirunelmalai. He insisted on registering it and also witnessed it. He remained a lifelong friend and guide. With that began Subbulakshmi's ascent from being a south Indian celebrity to a national, even world, figure; and from a brilliant young virtuoso to the consummate artist she is today.

Her image, the course of her career, the direction of her music - they were all carefully fashioned by Sadasivam who, from the earliest stage, had a clear vision of what she was one day to attain. This freedom fighter, who sang nationalist songs himself in public while courting lathicharge and arrest, introduced MS to the great Congress leaders - Rajaji, Nehru and Gandhiji. Sadasivam, who made an early mark in the advertising field and in publishing, has always been the organiser.

To Sadasivam and MS the means have always been as important as the end. And therefore, though he persuaded her to act in a few movies with specific financial objectives in mind, they were on idealistic and chaste themes, with the accent on music. Sakuntalai featured songs still remembered today, by MS and G.N. Balasubramaniam - "Anandamen solvene", "Premaiyil" and the sparkling "Manamohananga." Sadasivam also inspired MS to sing lyrics steeped in patriotism such as those of Subramania Bharati ("Oli padaitha kanninai") and Bankimchandra Chatterji ("Bande mataram"). Their ardour was such that they prepared to walk out of the then Corporation Radio, Madras, when refused permission to include one of these songs in the programme.

If MS is today regarded as a symbol of national integration, one reason is the inclusion in her repertoire of compositions in languages from many parts of India. This catholicity was consciously developed at the insistence of Sadasivam who sees music not as an aesthetic exercise, but as a vehicle for spreading spirituality among the populace. For this reason he has insisted on her giving predominance to bhava and bhakti in alapana, kriti and niraval, while minimising technical displays in pallavi rendition and kalpanaswara. Though MS had learnt pallavis from the old stalwart Mazaha-varayanandal Subburama Bhagavatar, she readily followed her husband's instructions.

Believing that his wife's wealth of voice should not be used for personal gain, Sadasivam channelled the proceeds of the concerts into charitable endowments. Starting in 1944 with five concerts for the Kasturba Memorial Fund, this has grown into a public service contribution of major proportions. Many causes and institu-

tions (medical, scientific, research, educational, religious and charitable) have benefited from MS raising over Rs. 2 crore thus far from singing.

What is responsible for the flawless presentation of an MS 'Concert'? Undoubtedly it is the shrewd programming masterminded by Sadasivam to suit each place and event. While this strategist designs the format and all the numbers from varnam to the lighter tukkadas, the combination of composers and languages, the main and ancillary ragas of the evening, he also allots the duration for each individual piece. MS herself lays out and embellishes the major pieces mentally, rehearsing constantly, even if outwardly engaged in other activities. She says: "We can only bring out a fraction of the thousand ideas we get at home. The stage is a constant examination ground." >From his seat in front, Sadasivam signals changes likely to please the day's audience. But the couple have also made experiments, propagated lesser known/unknown composers, or flouted hidebound conservatism by championing the Tamil Isai cause of the 1940s.

Recognising sahitya as an integral part of Carnatic music, MS has cultivated impeccable diction in the different languages of the lyrics she sings. She is known for attention to every detail such as breath control, pauses in the right places, voice modulation, changes in emphasis and breaking phrases in to their proper components. These techniques highlight the meaning. Here her knowledge of Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Sanskrit and Hindi is of immense help.

To watch her learn a new composition is an experience in itself. For the Annamacharya kritis (five cassettes produced for the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam), the lyrics were read repeatedly with an expert in Telugu to explicate the sense as also methods of splitting the words and syllables for the musical score; the whole rehearsed until neither text nor notation was required at the recording session. Even, more awesome was her mastery of that magnificent edifice, the mela ragamalika by Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan, a string of 72 ragas mostly rare, with hair's breadth variation between them. The Sanskrit libretto was equally taxing. But the finished product had natural ease and flow. When he heard it the Paramacharya of Kanchi pronounced his blessing: "This will last as long as the sun and the moon stand in the skies."

The MS classical repertoire in several languages is a formidable one, representing composers from the ancient to the contemporaneous. She acquired this from several musicians and scholars over the years, from guru Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Seithur Sundaresa Bhattar, Musiri Subramania Iyer, Papanasam Sivan, T.L Venkatarama Iyer, Turaiyur Rajagopala Sarma, Mayavaram Krishna Iyer, K.V. Narayanaswami, S. Ramanathan, Nedunuri Krishnamurti et al. She learnt a few padams from dancer Balasaraswati as well as from T. Brinda, both scions of the Dhanammal family renowned for this music. With a voice particularly suited for these delicate and quintessential depictions of ragabhava, MS soon shed them from her repertoire, perhaps because of their sensuous content. In the architectonics of kriti rendition, MS is inimitable, whether in simple structures or in the careful tier-by-tier

build-up of "Giripai" (Sahana), "Dasarathe" (Todi), "Chakkani Raja" (Kharaharapriya) or "Sri Subrahmanyaya namaste" (Khambhoji). She is meticulous in maintaining the authenticity of pathan-tara as taught to her, drawing this a clear line between rachita (composed) and kalpita (improvised) sangita. However, the songs do get modulated and inflected according to her personal genius. That is why "Durusuga" (Saveri) sung by MS and Musiri (from whom she learnt it) become different experiences for the listener. When she sang his composition "Brochevarevarura" in Khamas, eminent musician Mysore Vasudevachar said, "the daughter had only black beads and glass bangles when she got married. I feel like her father when she visits him now in a dazzle of jewel and silks." Her understanding of the texts and the distinct flavours infused into the score by each composer make for variations in the same raga when she sings different kritis in it. Her "Needu charana," "Talli ninni," "Nidhitsala sukhama," "Birana brova yite" and "Bhajare chita," all in Kalyani, reflect different moods and facets of bhakti.

The universality of her appeal owes in large measure to the vast collection of songs in several languages over and above the impressive range of classical compositions. Whether Hindi, Gujarati bhajan, Marathi abhang, Rabindra sangeet, Sanskrit sloka or Tamil Tiruppugazh, they are all marked by lyrical allure, poignant feeling and philosophic content. Thus the lighter numbers acquire a seriousness of their own. As critic and admirer Dr. V.K. Narayana Menon saw it: "She is, no doubt, constrained to sing music she would rather not. But that is the price one has to pay for being a celebrity. A musician is at once an artist and a public entertainer and it is not easy to set aside the wishes of large sections of one's audience. This is not succumbing to popular acclamation. It is a kind of invested responsibility."

MS does not flinch from self-criticism. What seems satisfactory while in the emotion-charged stage ambience is reviewed for improvements. She tells you that she had to work on varja ragas for easier control. At 78 one finds her still learning, rehearsing new pieces, with notebooks balanced on sruti box.

Though she had the maturity and wisdom to transcend showmanship and mere technical virtuosity, a critique noted, "She was the earliest to compete with male vidwans in the form and substance of the concert, including niraval, swara and pallavi singing, a fact hardly noticed in her early years because it was accomplished with a quiet innocence and humility which have characterised her eventful life."

Guru Semmangudi also singles out three aspects of technical perfection as special to the MS style. "No other woman can sing the tanam like her. For me her reach in the lower octave, rare among women, is as impressive as her obvious essays in the higher. Thirdly I would rate her niraval singing among the best I have heard from women."

Particularly in the niraval the listener can perceive her vidwat - in the permutations of rhythm, in the spacing of syllables, in the perfect anuswaras connecting the curves, the sangati blitzes at crucial spots, the remarkable length of phrasing and the karvai balam (strength in dwelling on a single note). Through these

technical feats, she retains and enhances the qualities of raga and the sahitya, seeing them as inseparable. "Kadambavana nilaye" (Sri Kamakoti; Saveri); "Rama, rama, rama yanutsu" (Ennaganu; Pantuvarali) and those wordy lines in "Tiruvadicharanam" (Khambhaji) where the devotee begs the Lord to save him from countless rebirths - these have long been lingering niraval experiences.

There is a school of thought that Subbulakshmi is a natural genius, that her music is not so much cerebral as inspired. However, the discerning listener knows how her music is crafted and polished; how the conscious and the unconscious elements are balanced. On those rare occasions when she is introduced to talk about her approach she says: "The ragaswarupa must be established at once. Don't keep the listener in suspense as to whether it is Purvikalyani or Pantuvarali. This difference must come through in the way you dwell on the notes common to both ragas, even before the introduction of dissimilar notes. In Sankarabharanam stress the rishabha, but in Kalyani accent the gandhara quickly."

She goes on to sing differences in treatment between Durbar and Nayaki, Saurashtram and Chakravakam, Devgandhari and Arabhi. At a crowded wedding she can suddenly call your attention to the distant nadaswaram's mishandling of Sriranjini to sound those phrases exclusive to Ritigowla. She can fascinate with her demonstration of tonal levels of every note in Bhairavi, their inter-relationships, permissible degrees of oscillation. "Much of this I kept discovering as I listened and sang. Learning the veena from Vidwan K.S. Nayaranaswami later in life was very beneficial in this search to understand raga intricacies."

Yet, popular rather than critical acclaim has more often not been the outcome of the MS efforts. She arouses devotion more than analytical scrutiny, despite her undoubted musicianship. In a nation quick to canonise and deify, she was first transformed into a saint, then to a veena-holding Saraswati - the goddess of learning and the arts.

The golden voice is a divine gift which cannot fail the possessor, who remains a stranger to the struggles and labours of the less gifted. However, a 1968 commendation by T.T. Krishnamachari (Ananda Vikatan) recognises the truth. "She has the maturity to keep on learning. Training, feeling, and grasping power, she has them all. God has given her a good voice. She has made excellent use of that voice through practice. No one can become an expert without labour. A good voice by itself will not make for great art, though, as far as I know, no one (but MS) has been blessed with a voice of such sweetness."

Through her long career MS had drawn strength both on and off the stage from Radha (Viswanathan). Radha trained herself from childhood to vocally accompany MS in concerts. A major illness has curtailed her supportive role for the last 12 years, a loss which MS feels deeply.

The miracle of her performing full-length concerts at her age she attributes to the two gurus the Sadasivams have revered all their lives: the sage of Kanchi and the Sai Baba of Puttuparthi. For, at 78, MS continues to increase in mellow artistry. Her commitment is evident in the ways in which she manages to overcome the handicaps of old age and physical frailty.

The warbles and trills of youth - the fine careless rapture of the careless bird in springtime - gave way in course of time to richness of timbre, to chiselled, polished execution. The brika flashes and organised raga edifices with high note crescendos were replaced by longer journeys into less-trodden ways in the middle and lower registers. These explorations are now undertaken in the freedom and ripeness of an autumn majesty. Retaining the sonorous sweetness and vitality through all these years of upward growth, "MS music" now makes an even more ravishing impact on the mind. "As I grow older, I feel more and more overwhelmed by the music." One sees this happening at times on the stage. Then she has to exercise great control just to go on singing.

Not the least of her achievements in over six decades of singing is the development of style of her own. This is not based on identifiable techniques of execution, but on the communication of a mood, of an ecstasy of emotion. What the ancient theoreticians called rasadhvani, when art became an experience of that ultimate bliss within and without, both immanent and transcendent. This was accomplished through auchitya - a wide term which embraces contextual appropriateness, adaptation of parts to one another and to the whole, a fitness of things, and poetic harmony. And MS exemplifies them all in her choice of raga and sahitya, balance of mood and technique, in her "mike sense" and timing, in the consonance she establishes with her accompanists and audience.

Towards the end of each recital MS sounds the cymbals in eyes-closed concentration for the Rajaji hymn "Kurai onrum illai " (I have no regrets). It becomes obvious that for all the splendour of her music, it is her image as a saintly person which will probably endure long after this century, just as in the case of Meerabai. For, in the highest tradition of the Indian way of life, Subbulakshmi links her art with the spiritual quest, where humility and perseverance assure the sadhaka of grace.

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "106".

Great Master's series Great Masters 22: Aftab-e-Mousiqui Faiyaz

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)

Sources: "Great Masters of Hindustani Music" by Susheela Misra.

Namashkar!

The various gharanas in Hindustani music constitute a rich heritage of artistic traditions, which has been transmitted to us orally through generations of great musicians. The Gwalior, Agra, Kirana, Delhi, Jaipur, Atrauli, Patiala and other gharanas have produced some of our greatest maestros such as Haddu-Hassu Khans, Tanras Khan, Ghagge Khuda Bux, Rahmat Khan, Alia-Fattu, Umrao Khan, Ghulam Abbas Khan, Nathan Khan, and so many others. Ustad Faiyaz Khan popularly called "Aftab-e-Mousiqui", was "the ultimate flowering of the genius of the Agra or Rangila Gharana." He summed up in himself the finest traditions of his gharana and was its greatest exponent in recent times. He belonged passionately to his age, "and yet, he belonged to an infinitely more glorious past of our music and its traditions".

Faiyaz Khan's musical lineage goes back to Tansen himself. His family is traced back to Alakhdas, Malukdas and then to Haji Sujjan Khan (son of Alakhdas who became a Muslim.) Genius, musical ancestry, and training combined to give us this wonderful artist-one of the most reputed and respected exponents of Hindustani classical music in recent times. He had the exceptional good fortune of receiving his talim in Dhrupad singing from his grand father, Ghulam Abbas Khan; and in Dhamar from his grand uncle, Ustad Kallan Khan, both of whom were leading musicians of the rangila gharana in the second half of the last century. Kallan Khan was the younger brother of Ghulam Abbas Khan and, therefore, the grand-uncle of Faiyaz Khan Sahib. Ghulam Abbas Khan was his maternal grandfather, and Rangeela Ramzan Khan his paternal great grandfather. Faiyaz Khan's uncle, Fida Hussain was a court musician in Tonk (Rajputana). Faiyaz was born at Sikandra near Agra in 1880 and he died in Baroda on 5th November 1950. As his father Safdar Hussain died very early, his grandfather adopted him and brought him up as his own son. Ghulam Abbas Khan, the son of the great Ghagge Khuda Bux and an intimate friend of Bairam Khan, not only imparted to the boy the authentic taleem of his gharana, but also took the promising young Faiyaz on a "pilgrimage of music", visiting all the important centres of music, listening to great contemporary musicians, and bringing him practical experience in concert singing. By the time he was 18, Faiyaz Khan had become such a "polished" artist that he began to give recitals in places like Bombay, Calcutta and Gwalior. Once at Bombay, 24 year-old Faiyaz got a chance to hear the great Miyanjan Khan, a pupil of the great Fateh Ali Khan of Patiala. Immediately after him, Faiyaz was asked to sing. At first he copied Miyanjan Khan's Multani in the latter's style and then he demon-

strated in his own style-both in such a masterly way that Miyan-jan Khan embraced the young singer and exclaimed in genuine appreciation: "Tum hi ustad ho" (you are a true descendant of the masters of the art.) It was an age of gentlemen-musicians.

In addition to all the valuable training and experience given to him by his loving grandfather-(Nana)-cum-Ustad, there was Faiyaz's own native genius "an eternally intangible factor" that shapes the destinies of great men. Ghulam Abbas Khan, who is said to have lived to the incredible old age of 120, saw his favourite grandson mature into a maestro with a grand future ahead of him. Once when certain mischief mongers tried to arrange a competition between the great Bhaskar Buwa Bhakle and the young Faiyaz Khan, the former is reported to have been so impressed with Faiyaz's performance that he refused to stand up as a rival, and to the utter disappointment of the men behind the mischief, embraced him "as a brother."

In 1908, a grand competition was arranged in Mysore between Ustad Faiyaz Khan and Ustad Hafiz Khan of the Mysore Durbar. Both sang for hours and sang so splendidly that it became difficult to decide who should get the first prize. Nevertheless, the Maharaja who felt enraptured by Faiyaz Khan's music conferred on him the title of 'Aftab-o-Mausiqui' meaning "the sun of music." Soon after this, the Lahore All India Music Conference gave him the title of 'Sangeet Chudamani.' At another famous All India music conference organised by Pdt. Bhatkhandeji, Faiyaz Khan was selected as the top most khayal-singer of the day. It was no wonder then that Pdt Bhatkhandeji chose him as the guru of his favourite pupil, Sri Krishna Narayan Ratanjankar and took him to Kashmir, from where his fame spread far and wide.

At an All India Music Conference held in Baroda, which was attended by more than 400 singers, Faiyaz Khan captivated the audience so deeply that they showed their appreciation by handing over to him a purse of 33,000 rupees.

Though Ustad Faiyaz Khan had settled down in Baroda as a court musician, he was always travelling because no music conference was deemed incomplete without his performance. Thanks to All India Radio, thousands of his admirers all over the country used to be thrilled by his rich velvety voice whenever he broadcast from Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta or Lucknow. To the last, he remained the President of the All India Society for Contemporary Music.

As one of the privileged few in whose home, the Aftab-e-Mausiqui gave several informal all-night music soirees, I feel at a loss for words when I try to describe the spellbinding effect of his voice, a rich, masculine, sonorous, trembling with emotion, a voice capable of a thousand nuances and shades moods and fancies, turns and twists, a voice that touched the very chords of the listeners' hearts. His voice was at its grandest in the mandra (lower) notes. Its range was not wide, in fact, it was quite limited in the taar saptak (higher octave), but in these 2 or 2 1/2 octaves he used to bring out "a living picture of the raga pulsating with life and personality."

Steeped in the Dhrupad Dhamar alap traditions of his gharana, he was the only musician who could hold even a lay audience in a spell while he sang his full-blooded alap in its purest tradi-

tional form. His music was a fine blending of intelligence, imagination and emotion. With what effortless charm and creative energy, the Ustad used to evoke the ethos of the raga, build up the theme of the bandish, and touch the emotions of the listeners. There was intense mutual admiration between the Aftab-e-Mausiqui and Thirakwa, the tabla-wizard. One can have an idea of his musical versatility, when one remembers how he could render anything, from a Dhrupad to a Ghazal with equal ease and mastery, and how he was always in his element whether in a crowded conference hall, in a grand old darbar, or in a friend's informal drawing room. Each raga was 'a living personality' for him. Often he used to say; " One must play with a Raga with a lover's passion. One must learn to love it to pay court to it, like a cavalier, and then alone can a musician tell the story of joy and grief; of laughter and tears. Music must please and move."

He was aware of the appeal, of simplicity and spontaneity and never resorted to any display of vocal acrobatics. It was his genuine passion for ragas that enabled Faiyaz Khan to visualise each raga as a sentient being through which he could unravel for us a vast range of emotions. Those who have their favourites among Ragas like Darbari, Jaijaiwanti, Des, Anandi, Nat Behag, Todi, Ramkali, Jaunpuri, Jogiya, Bhairavi, Pilu, Kafi, Barwa, Bageshwari, Sohini, etc, will always remember how he could evoke varied emotions and how amazingly he could travel from the colourful and the romantic to the sombre and the pathetic, then from the realms of fancy, conceit to youthful gusto. "By turns, they felt the glowing mind disturbed, delighted raised, refined - - rapt, inspired."

There was a grandeur in his sweeping alaps, dignity and vigour in his boltans, and joy in his bolbant. The Aftab-e-Mausiqui has enriched the Agra school of music as no one else has done. His style, though essentially of the rangila gharana, was a superb blend of the characteristics of that plus traces of the Gwalior style, enlivened by his own creative inspiration. Though his music had its roots in time-honoured tradition he was no conservative. "Of course", he said once, "one must realise that our present-day music has fallen from the heights of its past glory. Yet I am an inveterate optimist and believe that some good will come out of the present revival."

Ustad Faiyaz Khan's music had certain distinguishing traits. Blessed with a powerful voice capable of many minute modulations, he could easily sway his audiences whether he sang dignified Dhrupads, playful Horis or Dhamars, artistic Khayals, or tuneful Dadras. The dignity of his khayal-singing was reminiscent of the grand style of musicians like Haddu Khan and Hassu Khan. His renderings of Thumri and Dadra are said to have been like those of the great Moizzuddin. As a discerning music critic has said: "He converted even Ghazals into very presentable things... From alap to Thumri, his genius occupied a range which mediocre talents cannot even survey." His deep knowledge of, and long practice in, each raga, can be gauged when one hears how during his stay in Kashmir with Pdt. Bhatkhandeji, he sang Rag Yaman for hours daily, for one full month. His style of alap, bant barhat and Tankartab was remarkable. He has composed many songs under

the pseudonym "Prem Piya" and contributed many old songs to Bhatkhande's "Kramik Pustakmala." Though fully aware of the limitations of the textbook teaching in music schools and colleges, he was sensible enough to admit:

"I recommend textbooks for beginners only. But a textbook cannot produce a musician. Music institutions should concentrate more on Gayaki or style. How can the music of Tansen be turned into a textbook? Music in this country was handed down orally from generation to generation with the help of memory and tradition and has flourished up to this time." The Ustad's opinion on broadcasting was characteristically humorous: "I like it immensely, except for the red light which is the signal for a forced landing. I enjoy being on the air."

While people used to admire his flawless diction in Urdu, Hindi, etc, they used to be amazed at his graceful and fine pronunciation of Braj-Bhasha in which a large number of Khayals, Dhamars, etc, are couched. This was because Faiyaz Khan spent his early years in the Braj-Bhasha areas like Mathura, Agra, Atrauli, etc. His father-in-law, Mahboob Khan of Atrauli, was none other than the reputed composer Daras Piya whose khayals in ragas like. Jog, Anandi, etc, are still so popular. Another relation--Saras Piya--was a wellknown composer who lived a recluse's life in Mathura. The song Man Mohan Brij ko Rasiya (in Paraj) which Faiyaz Khan has made famous, is a sample of Saras Piya's compositions. Faiyaz Khan himself composed many songs under the penname Prem Piya. In his youthful "halcyon days" Faiyaz Khan sat in the company of great artists like Moizzuddin, Bhaiya Ganapatrao and Malkajan. That was how he had imbibed the romantic Thumri style and could render Dadras and Ghazals so imaginatively. Many a time I have witnessed Faiyaz Khan rendering the Bhairavi Thumri "Babul Mora" and drawing tears out of the listeners' eyes. Faiyaz Khan used to say that Malkajan's Bhairavi-Thumris were peerless. And Malka even in her obscure later years never missed the Ustad's concerts in Calcutta. Unlike some highbrow musicians, Faiyaz Khan never looked down on light classical types of songs. He used to say:- "It is not a child's play to sing a Thumri or a Ghazal. The essence is the bol-but one has to be very imaginative and original." Even into a simple Dadra he could pour a lot of genuine emotion.

In spite of his short stature, Ustad Faiyaz Khan had a dignified personality. It is said that in his younger days he used to look so courtly in his gold embroidered black achkan, black cap, and imposing moustache, that once he was mistaken for the ruler himself in a certain darbar. Though he had no school education he had an innate sense of culture which enabled him to appreciate the good things of life. A thorough gentleman, he was generous, tender hearted and full of warmth with a capacity for lasting friendships. Modest and unassuming, courteous and polite, he combined greatness with childlike simplicity. The Ustad never hurt others' feelings, could never tolerate slander or gossip. People from all walks of life were drawn to him by his suavity, natural culture, humility and kind heartedness. As an artist he was surrounded by admirers wherever he went.

It was in small and exclusive, informal private soirees that the

true qualities of the man and his music were fully revealed. No amateur's music was too insignificant for this great Ustad. He had a word of encouragement for every young aspirant in the art. Even in his late sixties, he carried with him the exotic atmosphere of the Moghul court.

Among the well-known pupils that the Ustad left behind may be mentioned Ustad Khadim Hussain Khan (the Central Akademy Award Winner of 1978), Latafat Hussain (now teaching in the ITC Research Akademy Calcutta), the late Dr. S. N. Ratanjankar, Pt. Dilip Chandra Vedi, Ata Hussain Khan, and the youngest of them all- Sharafat Hussain Khan. In the words of his great admirer late Dr S. K. Chaubey:

"He was the last of the race of giants. The like of him will not be born again. He was a gift-a national asset. As time widens the gulf between the noble dead and the hopeful living, he stands out as a beacon-light, a bulwark of genius and tradition, whose inspiration will not be wasted even on the most cynical among us. " A widower for years, Faiyaz Khan left behind no child when he died in 1950, but he was mourned by thousands of admirers all over the country. The passing of Faiyaz Khan Saheb marked the end of a great era in music. Though, he was 70, his music had retained a youthful vigour, and a variety that age could not wither. He was a maestro and a phenomenon in the world of Hindustani music, and "his art symbolised the grand evolution of Hindustani music from the ancient Dhruvad - Dhamar to the more modern Khayal - Thumri." His music was characterised by dignity, grandeur and rich emotion.

It is indeed a pity that gramophone records do him no justice. Even his long tapes and LP Discs hardly give glimpses into his grand world of music. But those of us who have been lucky to hear him in person will never cease mourning: "Daiya Kahan gaye we log" (Where have those great ones gone"?)

Rajan Parrikar

RMIM Archive Article "417".

Great Master's series **Great Masters 28: Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, the Chaturpandit**

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@colorado.edu)

Sources: Great Masters of Hindustani Music by Susheela Mishra

Namashkar.

We reproduce here, in Great Masters 28, Susheela Mishra's brief account of Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande. It does scant justice to the man, his life and times, and his monumental contributions to Hindustani music. It is hoped that this piece will serve only as a tempting hors d'oeuvre preceding a fuller course of study of the great "Chaturpandit", which, by the way, is a nice little pun. It is Bhatkhande's nom-de-plume but also alludes to the clever, ingenious, devious and sometimes surreptitious measures he employed as he wheeled away compositions from their unwilling guardians.

Warm regards,

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>From: Great Masters of Hindustani Music by Smt. Susheela Mishra
Chaturpandit Bhatkhande

by

Susheela Mishra

Towards the end of the last century, Hindustani music had run into "doldrums". Music had become the monopoly of a small coterie of illiterate professionals who jealously guarded their art. Living luxuriously under lavish courtly patronage, these narrow-minded custodians of music took care not to create rivals out of their own pupils. Gradually, these professionals acquired disrepute, and the Muse whom they served fell from her high pedestal into the depths of public apathy and alien contempt. The so called "intellectuals" began to look down with "moral horror" on this noble art. No other country in the world had placed music so contemptuously low, and "nowhere were the natural instincts of the young, for music and rhythm so completely repressed, censored, and banned, as they happened to be in the country that Vishnu Narain was born to serve". An utterly selfless and dedicated music-devotee was needed to create order out of chaos, to restore harmony into disharmony, and to salvage and re-install the fallen image of the Muse once again on a lofty pedestal, for us to worship today.

Born on the auspicious Gokulashtami day of 1860, Vishnu Narain Bhatkhande was destined to play a most significant role in the renaissance of Hindustani classical music. In the words of a cultured royal patron of music who was a contemporary and a great admirer of Panditji, "When Bhatkhande resolved to translate his love for Hindustani Music into a continued, unwearied day-to-day programme of service, he had to confront social, intellectual, and finally, professional prejudices. These took shape as positive obstacles, definite active resistance. He had to face all this very early in life, even as a student seeking no more than information and enlightenment, and later on, as a crusader in the cause of classical

music".

A lesser man, or a man inspired by a lesser passion for music would have fled from the field defeated and crushed by the endless obstacles in his path. But Bhatkhande's was really a dedicated life, inspired by a single, undivided aim. In the words of the late D.P. Mukerji:- "If the renaissance of classical music in the North is due to one man than to any other, it was due to Bhatkhande."

Born into a cultured, though not well-to-do, Maharashtrian family in Balukeshwar, Bombay, Gajanan (as he was called in his childhood) was gifted with rare musical talent, intense love for the art, a remarkably shrewd brain, indefatigable powers of industry, an impressive personality, and most winning manners. Equipped with so many great qualities, it is no wonder that he finally succeeded in the gigantic tasks of reawakening "the sense of history and pride among people who had slept over this vital aspect of Indian culture", of reconciling the theory and practice of music, and of collecting and putting at the disposal of music lovers, thousands of traditional compositions hitherto closely locked up by the professionals.

Bhatkhande's life and work fall into four clear stages: The first stage consisted of his own preparation period, his musical training, and his important association with Gayan Uttejank Mandal of Bombay. His earliest musical education was imparted to him by his pious mother who could beautifully sing passages from the works of great saints and devotees. He had inherited a sweet voice from his mother, and a keen musical ear from his father who could play on the Qanoon. He learnt the flute, Sitar and vocal music from some very eminent gurus like Jairajgir, Raojibua Belbagkar, Ali Husain Khan, Vilayat Hussain Khan and others. Along with his academic studies, he devoted nearly 15 years to the study of all the available ancient music-treatises in Sanskrit, Telugu, Bengali, Gujarati, Urdu, German, Greek and English with the help of scholars and interpreters. After taking his B.A. and LL. B. degrees, Vishnu Narain joined the Karachi High Court and became a very successful lawyer. But his highly successful legal career was only a brief interlude in the life of this Sangeet-Bhakta who was destined for work of a nobler kind. With the death of his young wife and only daughter, he decided to give up Law and dedicate his entire life to the cause of Music. He had earned just enough to keep his body and soul together; and that was all that this devotee needed for the simple life of ceaseless service for music that he had chalked out for himself.

The next stage in Bhatkhande's life was a period of extensive touring for the purpose of deep musical research, study, and discussions with the ustads and pandits all over the country. He toured the entire length and breadth of the country from Kashmir to Rameshwaram, and from Surat and Broach to Calcutta and Puri. He visited all the important music libraries, avidly going through ancient Granthas, and meeting every living authority on music then. His bulky private diary running into hundreds of pages gives us glimpses into the pattern of frugal living and high thinking that he had set for himself. For instance, it was one of his self imposed rules that he would devote every day of his tour entirely for study in music libraries, and never waste a single day for amusements like sight seeing or social engagements. By his infinite patience, persuasive ways, and utter sincerity of purpose, Bhatkhande was gradually able to break down the

opposition and suspicion of some of the great ustads of the day. Those who scorned him for "looting the great treasures of Ustads," stayed to become his associates, teachers, and friends. Among the many who helped him immensely were great Ustads like Mohammad Ali Khan, Asgar Ali Khan and Ahmed Ali Khan of Jaipur; they gave him more than 300 precious compositions of the Manarang Gharana.

Then followed a period of prolific publications. After pondering deeply over the voluminous materials he had collected during his exhaustive study-cum-research tours, Panditji sifted the valuable materials and set about the magnanimous work of publishing all this laboriously collected material in a large number of volumes in Sanskrit, Marathi, Hindi and English such as: Abhinavaragamanjari, Abhinavatalamanjari, Lakshya Sangeetam, the Hindustani Sangeet Paddhati, the Kramik series in 6 volumes, the Swara-malika and Geet Malika series, Grantha sangeetam, Bhavi Sangeetam, A Short Historical Survey of Music, Philosophy of Music, and so on. Thus he has unstintingly spread out before the music loving public his entire musical wealth. As he himself wrote:- "My sole object has been to place before my educated, music-loving brothers and sisters, the present condition of the Art". The fact that he published all his works under his pen-names "Vishnu Sharma" or "Chaturpandit" shows his utter indifference to fame. Besides hundreds of traditional Dhrupads, Dhamars, Khayals, Sadras, Taraanas, Chaturangs, Thumris, etc. that he has published with notations in his Kramik series, he has also composed and included in this series, scores of his own compositions, mostly Khayals and Lakshangeets (nearly 250 or so) under his pseudonym "Chatura". He also published several ancient music-granthas whose manuscripts he had salvaged during his country-wide tours.

Although Bhatkhande shunned fame, it came to him unsought. His fame spread. The cultured rulers of various states like Baroda, Gwalior, Rampur, Dharampur, Akbarpur etc. became his staunch supporters and admirers. They sent students to study music at his feet. Under his inspiration, and direction, music colleges sprang up in various places like Baroda, Gwalior, Lucknow, Bombay, Nagpur and so on. Besides these institutions which Panditji used to visit and guide till the end of his life, there were several others which uniformly followed his system of teaching, syllabus, textbooks and notations. There are critics galore who "pooh pooh" at the idea of learning music in music colleges. But if you ask these critics how else interest in classical music can be awakened widely, they have no alternative constructive suggestions to offer. It is not possible for every music-student or music-lover to go and stay with a guru for years and years trying to squeeze out some "ilm" out of him by propitiating him with services. A well-known music connoisseur who is no more with us today, wrote : "Bhatkhande has done perhaps most for the reawakening of interest in Indian music and its proper development through its organisation in educational institutions throughout Northern India. In the provinces where he started music colleges, his efforts have borne a rich harvest by training up batches of accomplished music teachers who have spread far and wide the gospel of this great and noble heritage of our country".

Rightly called the "Father of Music Conferences", Pandit Bhatkhande was the life and soul of five consecutive All India Music Conferences held in Baroda, Delhi, Lucknow (twice) and Varanasi. These conferences

were not merely entertaining but were highly educative as well, since they provided a common platform for musicians and musicologists from all over the North and South to listen to one another, to discuss, and come to an agreement on disputed aspects of music. These conferences achieved a lot for Hindustani classical music and paved the way for the Chaturpandit's favourite dream. "The mighty mansion of music," he wrote, "should become accessible to all - rich and poor, high and low, girls and boys - irrespective of age, and social status." Today All India Music Conferences are the order of the day not only in big cities, but in smaller towns as well.

Bhatkhande's ceaseless efforts for music continued till he became helplessly bedridden in 1933 with a tragic attack of paralysis and thigh fracture. It is a strange coincidence that this great "Sangeeta-Bhakta" who came into this world on the auspicious day of Lord Krishna's birth, shook off his mortal coils on an equally auspicious Ganesh Chaturthi day (1936). The wealth that he earned in his life-time of service to music is the eternal gratitude of music-lovers. Year after year, during Ganesh Chaturthi week, lovers of Hindustani music get together in numerous places all over Maharashtra and North India to pay grateful homage to this unforgettable architect and great law giver of modern Hindustani music.

RMIM Archive Article "404".

Raga Vachaspati (Series on Hindustani ragas inspired by Carnatic ragas)

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: Raga Vachaspati - a composition

Namashkar.

Some time back, in private conversation, I was asked about Carnatic rAgas that have in recent times made their way into the Hindustani prANali. This post shall mark the beginning of an irregular series dealing with such rAgas. I shall restrict myself to the relatively uncommon ones (Hamsadhwani is, for instance, an example of the common type).

In this piece, we will present a beautiful composition on Shri Krishna in the 64th melakarta flagship rAga, Vachaspati. The rAga has been popular for sometime now primarily with the Hindustani instrumentalists but not too many vocal compositions are to be found. The nominal scale employed is: S R G m P D n. We invite recommendations from Carnatic aficionados for what they think are their representative recordings in Vachaspati.

The composition below is fairly easy to work through. The nuance and embellishment and improvisation around the basic skeletal piece takes a little musical maturity. But I believe the essence of the bandish is easily gotten with the notation below and some practice.

Feedback to: parrikar@colorado.edu

Warm regards,

r

Raga: Vachaspati

Tala: Teental (brisk)

kara murali banmAla gale' (kara = hand)

kunDalan chhabi ati nyAri hai

mor mukuTa pitAmbara shobhe'

Shyam murata ati pyAri hai

Key:

- (1) All shuddha notes in caps (M=shuddha madhyam, m=tivra madhyam)
- (2) The " and ' following a note denotes its tAr-saptak and mandra-saptak affiliation, respectively.
- (3) The grace note is enclosed in parenthesis of the type () and it operates on the note immediately following it.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
											Pm	Gm	PD	Pm	GR
											ka....ra.....			mu....ra	
S	-	S	S	S (R)N'	R	R (R)G	-	-			P (P)m	m	m	m	P
li....		ba...na...m	A.....	la	ga....le.....						kun.....	Da.....	la....na		
D	D	D (n)S"	nD	S"n	DP	nD	P	-	-						

chha.bi	a.....ti	nyA.....ri.....	hai.....												
Antara:															
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
													(P)m	P	P
													mo....ra	mu	
S" S"	S" - (R")n	- S" R"	S" - S" - -	G" G"	m"										
ku...Ta	pi.....tAm.....ba...ra	sho.....bhe.....	Shya..ma	mu											
R" G"	S" R" n - S" -	nD S"n DP													
ra...ta	a.....ti	nyA.....ri.....	hai.....												

RMIM Archive Article "405".

Raga Hamsanarayani (Series on Hindustani ragas inspired by Carnatic ragas)

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: On Raga Hamsanarayani
Namashkar.

Next in line for Carnatic-inspired Hindustani imports: Raga Hamsanarayani (hamsanArAyaNi). It is ajanya of the 51st melakarta Kamavardhini corresponding to the Poorvi thATA in the Hindustani system. It comprises the following sequence: S r G m(tivra) P d N The A/A set of the rAga may be stated as:

S r G m P, P S":S" N P, m G r S

As can be seen, Raga Hamsanarayani omits the dhaivat altogether. In its Hindustani avatAr the rAga is relatively linear and not saddled with unduly heavy meends or gamakas like, say, Shree. The pancham is a pivotal swara and the S-P consonance is exploited to pleasing effect. The nishAd appears in an alpatva role and is either rendered durbal or omitted altogether in ascent.

A sample chalan may be inserted at this point:

S, G r S, R G, GmP, P, m G, P P S", S" N P, m G, m G r S

Raga Hamsanarayani is not heard too often in Hindustani baithaks which is to be regretted since it has such a beautiful melodic personality. I have heard private renditions of it from people back home. There are superb commercial and non-commercial recordings of Bismillah Khan, of course. What are the other Hindustani recordings?

Hamsanarayani has been around the Hindustani block for quite a while given that it is recorded in works such as those by Bhatkhande. The composition offered below is also reported in Bhatkhande although it differs in some respects from his version.

Also, Subbarao reports two kinds of Hamsanarayani, the other belonging to the Marwa thATA with an additional suddha dhaivat. He remarks that that type is not in vogue; I am not familiar with it either.

Finally, we hope to hear of Carnatic compositions/recordings and comments on Hamsanarayani from the Carnatic punters.

Warm regards,

r

Raga: Hamsanarayani
Tala: Teental (druta)
bhaja mana Narayana hamsa-nAma
poorata sab tere mana ke kAm
nAma leta wAko vipata na peerata
jAya sarana chatura tu nirbhimAna
Glossary:
vipata = misfortune

sarana = refuge (=sharaNa)
 nirbhimAna = without any pride

Key:

- (1) All shuddha notes in caps (M=shuddha madhyam, m=tivra madhyam)
- (2) The " and ' following a note denotes its tAr-saptak and mandra-saptak affiliation, respectively.
- (3) The grace note is enclosed in parenthesis of the type () and it operates on the note immediately following it.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
												G (G)r		G	m
												bha..ja		ma....na	
Gm	P	P	-	m	G	P	mP	m	G	r	S	r	-	G	r
nA.....	rA.....	ya...Na	ham.....	sa	nA.....	ma						poo.....	ra.....	ta	
S	S	P	-	m	G	m	G	m	G	r	S				
sa...ba	te.....	re....			ma...na	ke	kA.....	ma							

Antara:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
												P	-	S"	S"
												nA.....	ma	le	
-	S"	S"	S"	r"	r"	G"	r"	S"	-	S"	S"	m	G	G	S"
.....ta	wA...ko	vi...pa...ta	na	pee.....	ra...ta							jA.....	ya	sa	
N	P	m	P	m	G	m	G	m	G	r	S				
ra...na	cha..tu...ra	tu	ni...ra...bhi...m	A.....	na										

RMIM Archive Article "406".

Raga Ahiri Todi (Series on Hindustani ragas inspired by Carnatic ragas)

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: On Raga Ahiri Todi

Namashkar.

Today's entree - Raga Ahiri Todi (ahIrI toDI). A short note and a composition follow. The provenance of this melodic organism is the Carnatic melakartA #10, Natakapriya (nATakapriyA) which features the following sequence: S r g M(shuddha) P D n. A little consideration shows that this scale can be generated by an appropriate murchhAnA/grAha bheda on Charukeshi (take the "new" Sa to be the pancham of chArukeshi). We invite comments and recommendations on rAga nATakapriyA from the Carnatic fellas.

On the Hindustani stage, the rAga is assigned a toDi-ang via an appropriate Andolan about r g. The name provides a clue to its Ahir Bhairav antecedents and it is seen that the uttarAnga portion of the scale subscribes to that rAga. Although the rishab used is komal, it is manifested in two flavours. One is via the toDi-like rishab-gandhAr pair and the other is the 'Ahir Bhairav rishab' found in, for instance, D' n' r, S. This detail makes for an engaging melodic intercourse.

The madhyam is very strong and may be considered its vAdi swara. The r g m passage is reminiscent of Bilaskhani Todi (and by extension, Bhairavi) and creates the associated tirobhAva. The treatment of the pancham is interesting. In the first mode, one may use it to test the waters from the safety of the nyAsa madhyam (M, M P M etc) before attempting a skirmish in the uttarAnga. In the second mode it simply serves as a stepping stone from which to flit across the poorvAnga/uttarAnga region demarcator.

Equipped with the foregoing snippets, a chalan may now be formulated: S, D' n' r, S, r g, r g M, (g)r g r S..., M, M P M, M P D n D P M, D n r", S",

P D n D P M, g M P M, r g r S

From this parent scale, Ravi Shankar has abstracted a beautiful melody and created Raga Parmeshwari. By rendering the pancham varjya (i.e. eliminating it) he has developed a plaintive, yet exceedingly sweet, rAga. Without the pancham, there is occasion for a tirobhAva of Bageshree in addition to the Ahir Bhairav and todi-like facets. A careful hearing of Parmeshwari should lead to a fuller appreciation of its parent melody and the manner in which pancham enters the frame. Would the rAga be enhanced if laced by an occasional pancham (a la Bageshree)? That's something to think about. Parmeshwari has grown beyond its puerperal instrumental affiliation and has made its way up

into vocal territory. Ratanjankar has a few compositions out. Abhisheki too is said to teach the rAga and perhaps present it in performance. I know one of his students has a recording released. Offhand I do not recall any light/filmi compositions that are Ahiri Todi/ Parmeshwari-ish. We again extend an invitation to Vish Krishnan (or Sir Vish, as he is referred to in some circles) to shed some more of his pocket change. Perhaps he has, in the course of his C-fishing, occasionally drifted into Ahiri Todi waters. Let's wait and see. Another little detail: Subbarao lists an Ahiri Todi that is quite different from the one described here. I do not subscribe to his nomenclature in this instance.

The composition proffered is due to Ramashreya "Ramrang" Jha of Allahabad, amongst the finest living Hindustani vAggyekArs. He is a selfless teacher and a highly learned man, with a natural flair for swara and sAhitya. Among his well-known disciples is the promising young vocalist Shubha Mudgal. It belongs to my privileged moments to have had him explain and demonstrate the following bandish (over the telephone!).

Warm regards,

r

ps: Shri Senders, the short note on virAT bhairav will hit the screen in a day or two.

Raga: Ahiri Todi

Tala: Teental (druta)

Composer: Ramashreya "Ramrang" Jha

mahimA tere nAma ki barani na jAye

baranata hAre Shiva SanakAdi, Adi muni Narada Sharda

mahimA nAma ki Rama te bhAri, veda purAna pukAri,

sumirata nAma "rAmrang" TAre geedh ajAmil ki ApadA

Glossary:

mahimA = glory

barani/baranata = varNan, description/exposition

SanakAdi = Sanaka plus the other 3 sons of Brahma

geedh = greedy (comes from the same root word for "vulture" - geedhaDa)

ajAmil = base

ApadA = distress

Key:

- (1) All shuddha notes in caps (M=shuddha madhyam, m=tivra madhyam)
- (2) The " and ' following a note denotes its tAr-saptak and mandra-saptak affiliation, respectively.
- (3) The grace note is enclosed in parenthesis of the type () and it operates on the note immediately following it.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
											n	(D)P	D	PM	P
											ma....hi....mA			te....re	
M	g	-	r	S	r	g	M	P	D	MP	(D)n	(n)D	PM	P	P
nA.....	ma		ki	ba...ra...ni	na	jA....ye					ba....ra....na.....ta				
M	-	M	P	D	n	S"	r"	S"r"	g"	r"	nS"	r"	S"	(D)n	D
hA.....re	shi..va		sa.....na...kA.....di								A.....di			mu....ni	
MG	M	P	D	S"n	DS"	nD	PM	gr	gr	S					
nA.....ra...da	shA.....ra...dA.....														

Antara:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

										(n)D	(D)P	D	-	n	
S"	-	S"	S"	S"	-	r"	g"	r"	-	S"					
nA.....	ma	ki	rA.....	ma	te	bhA.....	ri	ve.....	da.....	pu					
S"	n	D	P	PD	n	D	P	M	-	-	M	g	r	S	r
rA.....	na	pu...	kA.....	ri.....							su....	mi....	ra.....	ta	
g	rg	M (M)	g (M)	g	M	P	D	PD	n	D	S"	n	D	P	M
nA.....	ma	rA.....	ma...	ran..	ga	TA.....	re	gee.....	dha....	a					
P	D	n	S"	S"n	DS"	nD	PM	gr	gr	S					
jA.....	mi...la	ki.....	A.....	pa...dA.....											

RMIM Archive Article "407".

Raga Viyogavarali (Series on Hindustani ragas inspired by Carnatic ragas)

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: On Raga Viyogavarali
Namashkar.

First off, my deep apologies for posting some more music-related material. I shall consider looking into conducting some straw-polls about musicians and supplying concert-announcements but until then please bear with this.

Continuing with our exploration of the Carnatic-Hindustani nexus, we next present Raga Viyogavarali (viyogavarALi). The rAga is a conception of S.N. Ratanjankar. It belongs to the 9th melakartA "Dhenuka" which employs the following sequence: S r g M(shuddha) P d N. The scale forms a grAha-bhedam pair with melakartA #56 Shanmukhapriya if its (Dhenuka's) Sa is translated to the madhyam). Subbarao says that melakartA rAga Dhenuka is not very popular and cites a composition of Tyagaraja in Telugu (Teliyaleru Rama). We invite comments from the Carnatic side about other compositions and/or recordings.

In developing Viyogavarali, Ratanjankar has completely eliminated the pancham from the parent melakartA. He has also assigned a toDi-anga to the melody.

The A/A set is as follows:

S r M d N S"::S" N d M, r g, r, S

It is seen that in ascent, both the gandhAr and pancham are absent. The descent employs vakra sachAras. In particular, the gandhAr is approached from the madhyam via a detour to the komal rishab, to wit: M, r g, r S. The nyAsa swaras are the dhaivat (vAdi), the rishab (samvAdi) and the madhyam. The link from the komal dhaivat down to the shuddha madhyam is often via a meenD. There is a tirobhAva of Raga Todi at times but it is quickly dispatched by the Andolan around the shuddha madhyam. The r g facet of the toDi-anga is, however, retained throughout. A possible chalan is:

S, (N')d', N' S...r g, r, S, r M, M (N)d M, d N d M, (g)r g, r, S

Raga Viyogavarali is a very attractive rAga and deserves wider popularity. It will be interesting to see what lighter melodies exist in the parent scale and we can count on the likes of Abhinav Jawadekar, Vish Krishnan and other to fill us in with some additional material.

The composition offered is of Ratanjankar and appropriately speaks of viyoga. It is hoped that the interested will have fun working through it.

Warm regards,

r

Raga: Viyogavarali

Tala: Teental (druta)

Composer: Shrikrishna Narayan Ratanjankar

binati yahi na jaiyo Mathura nagari

Gokula-dhAm chhANDi

bhaye udAs nara-nAri sab jeeva-janta grAma Gokula ke

tore binA ghara-ANganA ujARi

Key:

(1) All shuddha notes in caps (M=shuddha madhyam, m=tivra madhyam)

(2) The " and ' following a note denotes its tAr-saptak and mandra-saptak affiliation, respectively.

(3) The grace note is enclosed in parenthesis of the type () and it operates on the note immediately following it.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
											d	M	(g)r	g	r
													bi....na....ti....		ya
S	-	M	dN	S"(N)d	M	(g)r	g	r	S	(g)r	g	r	S	-	
hi....		na	jai.....yo....			ma...thu..rA.....					na....ga....ri....go.....				
r	M	dN	S"r" g"	r"	S"(g)r	g	r	S							
ku...la		dhA.....	ma....			chh..AN...Di.....									

Antara:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
													M	(N)d	N
														bha...ye	u
S"	-	S"	r"	S"	r"	g"	r"	-	S"	(N)d	N	d	d	M	-
dA.....	sa	na...ra	nA.....ri....			sa....ba					jee.....va		jan....		
M	r	g	r	S	-	r	M	(g)r	g	rS	r	M	(N)d	N	S"
ta	grA.....	ma	go.....ku...la			ke.....					to....re		bi....nA.....		
-(g)"r"	g"	r"	S"(N)d	N	d	M	-	M							
.	gha..ra	AN...ga...nA....				u....jA.....									

RMIM Archive Article "408".

Raga Salagavarali (Series on Hindustani ragas inspired by Carnatic ragas)

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: Raga Salagavarali

Namashkar.

Continuing with our thread on Carnatic-inspired Hindustani rAgas, we proffer today a composition in Raga Salagavarali (sAlagavarALi, also known as Salagavarali Todi). This rAga was developed by S.N. Ratanjankar (SNR) and it has roots in the 46th melakartA "shadvidhmArgini" (S r g m(tivra) P D n). I understand that Balamuralikrishna has a recording in Raga Shadvidhmargini and we shall have the Carnatic aficionados fill in the details on this and other recordings that may exist.

Raga Salagavarali drops the madhyam altogether. The A/A set may be devised as: S r g P D n D S"::S" n D P g (P)r g r S

The nishAd is rendered durbal in ascent - D n D S"- for instance.

The rishab receives a distinct grace of the pancham in descent

- P (P)r g r S - There is the toDi-like Andolan around the komal

rishab and gandhAr and here the rishab is allowed a grace of the gandhAr

- (g)r g r, S. The nyAsa on the komal nishAd and dhaivat in the

mandra saptak lends characteristic serenity to the development.

This rAga has been magnificently implemented by Jeetendra Abisheki in

his celebrated composition from the marAthi drama (Yayati-Devyani?):

ghe'ee chhanda makarand, priya hA milind...(Abisheki has set the same

lyrics to another tune in Raga Dhani, rendered superbly by Vasant Rao

Deshpande). This is often called a 'light' composition but there is

nothing light about it. It demands the highest imagination, a deep

understanding of and complete mastery over swara and sAhitya. To anyone

familiar with Abisheki's work it is at once clear that he is a composer

of the highest class, the type of which doesn't swing by too often. His

creation in Salagavarali brings that rAga home to its root melakartA by

beautifully injecting a vivAdi dosha in a couple of locations via the

arresting use of the tivra madhyam.

We have already posted (some years ago) a profile on S.N. Ratanjankar

as part of Great Masters and newcomers are encouraged to read it.

His role and influence on the post-independence resurgence of Hindustani

music have been signal. The fertile musical ambience spawned at the

erstwhile Morris College at Lucknow under Ratanjankar's stewardship

hasn't yet been duplicated. Ratanjankar's prehensibility in rAgadhAri, his

extensive knowledge of both the Hindustani and Carnatic systems are

probably

unrivalled. A musician of no mean ability, an outstanding teacher, a gifted

composer, a scholar of exceptional standing, and above all, a lifelong

student

is how one may characterize the man. I was exposed in some detail to his compositions around 1980 when his well-known disciple V.R. Athavale took up the Directorship of the Hindustani faculty at Kala Academy in Panjim, Goa. Athavale-sahab would periodically conduct workshops and expound on arcane rAgas,

many a times demonstrating via Ratanjankar's bandishes. In retrospect, to my

great regret, I didn't pick Athavale's brains as I should have and only had a passing acquaintance with him. He was very approachable, always enthusiastic

and kindly. It is not too well-known that Ratanjankar has composed several varNams in AditAla and other Carnatic tAlas in Hindustani rAgas. I

understand

that Prof. Ramesh Gangolli of the University of Washington at Seattle had the late K.G. Ginde record over 300 of Ratanjankar's compositions for archival purposes.

And now on to the composition, but before that a digression:

I found an interesting passage in "S. Chandrasekhar - The Man Behind the Legend" edited by Kameshwar Wali and released a few months ago. It is a collection of essays and personal recollections of Chandra by his relatives, friends and scientific colleagues. The following is taken from the first essay by his wife Lalitha entitled "My Everlasting Flame" and has musical relevance.

"...There is no question that one of the strongest of our memories of India was its music. Chandra loved to hear me sing. In those days when Chandra used to drive every week from Williams Bay [*see my comments below - RP] to Chicago to give lectures and also to attend to the Journal work, it used to be my habit to sing to him during our long drive back to Williams Bay. This very good habit of mine slackened somewhat after we moved permanently to Chicago. But the interest returned fortunately,

and I would say I sang to him very often during the many months before he died. A week before he died I sang a song to him about Krishna lifting the Gowardhana mountain to cut off the sunlight during the great war of the Mahabharata. "Won't you sing it again?" he asked.

"No, Chandra, I have another song I want to sing to you now; but I will sing it again later." But that "later" did not happen. The day before he died I had planned to sing still another song to him that I had heard years ago at a concert and had never learnt to sing it before! Somehow it came back to me and it was beautiful. It was about Ganapati, son of Shiva. Everyone loved Ganapati, but he was also a scholar, and transcribed the Mahabharata when Vyasa dictated the epic. "Shall I sing it to you, Chandra?" "No, Lalitha, I am not feeling well. Some other time," he replied. That "some other time" did not come around since Chandra died the next day..."

* The Chicago Astronomy dept was based at the Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay, Wisconsin, and Chandra spent his first 18 years there, before he moved to the main campus in Chicago in the 1950s and joined the Physics dept proper. Chandra would drive every week to Chicago to give his course. This was not without controversy. His presence at the Chicago

campus was initially opposed by some members of the faculty including the Physics dean at the time due to his colour (this was the 1940s). Many Americans then (and some few now) believed that the ability to manipulate mathematical equations was solely the preserve of men with a blanched skin. But Chicago had a great man in its President - Robert M. Hutchins - who squelched the ugliness with a decisive one-liner memo to the faculty: "Professor Chandrasekhar WILL give these lectures." And that was that. End of digression.

Raga: Salagavarali
Tala: Teental
Composer: Shrikrishna Narayan Ratanjankar
sumira "sujana" Ghanashyam nAma nita
anAtha nAtha Narayana
patita uddhAraNa parama pavitra
karatAra jin rachyo sansAra
wohi aparampAra mana

Glossary:
sujan = also Ratanjankar's nom de plume
patita = fallen
uddhAraNa = deliverance, salvation
aparampAra = boundless

Key:

- (1) All shuddha notes in caps (M=shuddha madhyam, m=tivra madhyam)
- (2) The " and ' following a note denotes its tAr-saptak and mandra-saptak affiliation, respectively.
- (3) The grace note is enclosed in parenthesis of the type () and it operates on the note immediately following it.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
								(g)r	g	r	S	S	(S)n	S	r
								su...mi....ra		su....ja....na			gha...na		
g	-	g	(P)r	g	r	S	S	(g)r	g	P	P	(n)D	n	D	P
shyA.....ma		nA.....ma		ni...ta		a....nA.....tha									
nA.....tha															
-	P	D	P	(P)r	g	r	S								
.	nA.....rA.....ya...Na														

Antara:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
											P	D	n	(n)D	D
											pa....ti....ta.....			u	
S"	-	S"	S"	S"	n	D	P	(n)d	n	D	P	P	(P)g	-	(P)r
ddhA.....ra...Na		pa...ra...ma		pa...vi.....tra		ka....ra....tA.....ra									
-	(g)r	g	P	(P)r	g	-	(g)r	g	(P)r	S	S	S	(S)g"	-	(g)"r"
.	ji...na	ra...chyo.....		san.....sA.....ra		wo....hi.....									a
S"	S"	S"(P)r	g	r	S	S									
pa...ram.....pA.....ra		ma...na													

RMIM Archive Article "409".

Raga Devaranjani Series on Hindustani ragas inspired by (Carnatic ragas)

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Namashkar.

In this week's installment of Carnatic-inspired rAgas we present Raga Devaranjani, also known as Devaranji. It is derived from the 15th melakarta, Mayamalavagaula, which corresponds to the Bhairav thATa in the Hindustani paramparA: S r G M(shuddha) P d N. A brief profile of the Hindustanised version follows. We invite comments from Carnatic folks on their version and/or recommendations of representative recordings.

Raga Devaranjani has the peculiarity that both the rishab and gandhAr swaras are varjya. It also comes in two primary flavours, one with the shuddha nishAd only and the other that employs both. It is the latter type that will be our concern here.

The aroha/avaroha set may be stated as follows:

S M, M P d (N)S"::S" (n)d P, d n d P, P M S
uuu--->meenD

A sample chalan will illuminate the features of this exquisite, meenD and shruti-replete rAga:

S, (n')d' (n')d' S....., S M, M P, (n)d (n)d S".....,
S" (N)d, P d n d P, M (M)S
uuuu--->meenD

The madhyam and pancham are nyAsa swaras; the interplay between the madhyam and shadaj lends the rAga a beauty all its own; both the nishAds help supply the kaN/sparsh to the shadaj and dhaivat as indicated; the role of komal nishAd is occasionally strengthened in bandish for ranjakatva. Central to the rAga is the unusual meenD from the madhyam to the shadaj. Such type of meenD is found in some others rAgas too (eg. Khambavati of the Gwalior school - see D.V. Paluskar's recording) but it is underscored here due to the absence of the rishab and gandhAr. It is not possible in to accurately convey the meenD dynamics via the written word. For a beautiful demonstration of an analogous (interval and effect-wise, albeit a little quick) meenD we refer you to Lata's very well-known film number (this reference was brought to my attention by my friend Nachiketa Sharma): O basanti pavan pAgal...Notice the handling of the second "nA jA." The subtleties of India's musical aesthetics, its shruti and swara-related appurtenances, came so easily to this supremely endowed Mangeshkar girl. There is much of profit for even a student of classical music in her output during the prime years - the 1950s - under master tunesmiths such as Madan Mohan, Roshan, Anil Biswas,

Naushad, S.D. Burman and errr- why not say it - Shankar-Jaikishan.
 The following composition quickly becomes addictive once you get
 its flow. Patwardhan lists this bandish, although the version below
 might differ slightly over some details. The words of the shabad
 by Nanak are beautiful and bespeak his desire to cast off all wordly
 attachments. For a series of discussions on Guru Granth-derived
 bandishes, see the December 1997 archives of the newsgroup.
 Footnote: a swara in square brackets here represents a khaTkA. It is
 a very rapid one-shot intonation around a swara. In the instance
 below, [n] effectively is the very rapidly intoned cluster S"ndn.
 In the first aproximation, one may set [n] = n.

Warm regards,

r

Raga: Devaranjani

Tala: Teental

Shabad: Guru Nanak

bhookhyo mana mAyA urjhAyo

jo-jo karma kiyo lAlach lagi

tihi-tihi Ap bandhAyo

samajh nA paDi vishaya rasa rAchyO

yash Hari ko bisrAyo

Glossary:

urjhAyo = preoccupied, entangled

jo-jo = jaise-jaise

lAlach = greed

tihi-tihi = vaise-vaise

vishaya = wordly things

rAchyO = to be attached

Key:

- (1) All shuddha notes in caps (M=shuddha madhyam, m=tivra madhyam)
- (2) The " and ' following a note denotes its tAr-saptak and mandra-saptak affiliation, respectively.
- (3) The grace note is enclosed in parenthesis of the type () and it operates on the note immediately following it.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
								Pd	[n]	(n)d	-	P	P	d	M
								bhoo.....khyo...				ma....na		mA.....	
M	-	MP	dP	M	-	(M)S	-(n')d'	-(n')d'	-			S	-	S	S
yA....		u....ra...jhA.....yo....					jo....	jo....				kar.....ma		ki	
M	-	(S)M	-	M	M	P	P	(n)d	d	S"	S"	N	d	d	n
yo....		lA.....la...cha	la...gi				ti...hi	ti....hi				A.....pa			
ban															
d	P	d	(P)M	P	M	M	(M)S								
dhA.....															

Antara:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
								M	M	M	M	P	(n)d	-	(n)d
								sa...ma....jha	nA			pa....Di.....		vi	
d	d	S"	S"	S"	-	S"	-	S"	S"	M"	M"	M"	S"	S"	S"
sha..ya	ra...sa	rA.....chyO..						ya...sha	ha....ri			ko.....		bi....sa	
P	d	(P)M	M	P	M	M	(M)S								
rA.....															

RMIM Archive Article "410".

Raga Megharanjani (Series on Hindustani ragas inspired by Carnatic ragas)

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: On Raga Megharanjani
Namashkar.

Continuing with the chapter on Hindustani rAgas having roots in Carnatic music we present today Raga Megharanjani. It is a janya of the 15th melakartA, Mayamalavagaula (the corresponding Hindustani thATa is Bhairav). The rAga is an apposite riposte to Raga Devaranjani discussed earlier, in the sense that it completely drops the pancham and dhaivat swaras. This necessarily gives rise to the wide-intervallic meenDs so characteristic of these two rAgas.

A possible A/A set is:

S, r G M, N S"::S" N S" M, G r S
uuuu--->meenD

The rishab is komal, rest all are shuddha swaras. A trace of tivra madhyam is occasionally introduced (see below). The happening event here is the huge meenD from the tAr shadaj back to the shuddha madhyam. M is a very strong and dwelling on it is essential. Although the rAga is derived from the Bhairav parent scale, the treatment of the rishab is not Bhairav-like. Instead, in the Hindustani version, the rAga is seasoned with the Lalit-ang. And sometimes, the link is made explicit by the Lalitesque chromatic use of the shuddha and tivra madhyam.

A sample chalan is now offered:

S, N' r G M, G r G, (G)M, M N S", S", r", N r" S", S" M, m (G)M
uuuu

Megharanjani is ideally suited for slow, relaxed development and dhrupadiYAs will do well in it. It deserves to be popularised. The following composition of S.N. Ratanjankar illustrates all its key features. There are very minor deviations in the antara that reflect my own taste and interpretation based on my hearing of this composition. The follow-up to Devaranjani (by Ramaprasad K V) listed a Carnatic recording. Are there more?

Warm regards,

r

Raga: Megharanjani

Tala: JhaptAla (slow-medium, to allow for meenDs)

Composer: S.N. Ratanjankar

dAnava dalan dheera veera gambheera hai
nAyaka sakala shresTHa dAni dayavant hai
japata jAko nAma taRat dukha-dand hai
bhakta-vatsala krupAvant guNavanta hai

Glossary:

dAnava = demons

dalan = killing
 dayavant = possessed of compassion
 taRat = ward off
 dukha-dand = sorrow and conflict/confusion
 bhakta-vatsala = lover of devotees
 krupAvant = possessed of benevolence
 guNavanta = possessed of virtue

Key:

- (1) All shuddha notes in caps (M=shuddha madhyam, m=tivra madhyam)
- (2) The " and ' following a note denotes its tAr-saptak and mandra-saptak affiliation, respectively.
- (3) The grace note is enclosed in parenthesis of the type () and it operates on the note immediately following it.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
N'	r	(M)G	M	M	M	M	(G)M	-	M
dA.....	na.....	va	da.....	la.....	na	dhee.....	ra		
(G)M	-	m	(G)M	-	G	-	r	(r)G	-
vee.....	ra	gam.....	bhee.....	ra	hai.....				
(G)M	-	M	M	(S")N	N	S" (S")r"	-	S"	
nA.....	ya.....	ka	sa.....	ka.....	la	shresh.....	THa		
NS"	-	M	(G)M	M	(M)G	-	r	(r)G	-
dA.....	ni	da.....	ya.....	van.....	ta	hai.....			

Antara:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
(G)M	M	M	(S")N	S"	S"	-	r"	-	S"
ja.....	pa.....	ta	jA.....	ko.....	nA.....	ma			
N	N	r"	G"	r"	G"	r"G"	r"	S"	-
ta.....	Ra.....	ta	du.....	kha	dan.....	da	hai.....		
S"	-	S" (S")r"	-	S"	S"	r"	S"	-	
bha.....	kta	vat.....	sa.....	la	kru.....	pA.....			
S"	-	M	M	M	(M)G	-	r	(r)G	-
van.....	ta	gu.....	Na.....	van.....	ta	hai.....			

RMIM Archive Article "411".

Raga Basant Mukhari Series on Hindustani ragas inspired by (Carnatic ragas)

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: On Raga Basant Mukhari

Namashkar.

The next offering in the series featuring relatively uncommon Hindustani rAgas, inspired or derived from the Carnatic paramparA, is Raga Basant Mukhari (basant mukhAri). A brief note follows. The rAga is a janya of the 14th melakartA Vakulabharana (vakulAbharaNa), is scalically sampoorNa, and employs the following sequence: S r G M(shuddha) P d n.

Subbarao in his "Raganidhi" lists two rAgas deploying this scale, one of which takes on the melakartA name. The other is the first (sampoorNa-sampoorNa) of the two types of Basant Mukharis extant. We invite comments from the Carnatic experts on the distinguishing features of these two rAgas and suggestions of recordings/compositions.

The circulation of Basant Mukhari in the Hindustani stream follows the efforts of S.N. Ratanjankar. The A/A set is as follows:

S r G M P d n S"::S" n d P, M, G M (G)r S

It is obvious from the above that the poorvAnga is scalically akin to Bhairav and the uttarAnga to Bhairavi. It is, in fact, the deft interplay of these two that the character of Basant Mukhari owes much to. Let us briefly hint at how that swarUpa might be made manifest.

The signature of Bhairav largely comes from its attack on the komal rishab, viz., G M (G)r, S and S (G)r (G)r S. These features are retained. In addition the "Bhairavi rishab", i.e., the rishab as implemented in Bhairavi, contributes its mite. For instance, S, r n' d' P', d'n'SrS... The madhyam dominates and the melodic action in Basant Mukhari gravitates towards that swara. The importance accorded the pancham is slightly less than that of the madhyam, but not by much. Once again, the pancham is approached in either of two ways: the Bhairav-approach and the Bhairavi-approach. As an example of the former we have: G M (n)d (n)d P; and for the latter: P d n S", r" n (n)d P. It is this juxtaposition, casual but definite, of Bhairav now, Bhairavi next, then Bhairav, then Bhairavi - in formal terminology, the precipitation of AvirbhAva and tirobhAva - that makes for the sui generis of Basant Mukhari.

A sample chalan may now be inserted:

G M P d [n] d P, r" n d P, G M (n)d P, M G M, P m (G)r, S

The swara in square brackets above indicates a kampita-like gamaka, which enhances the beauty of that passage.

There are a few good recordings available. Mr Khan of San Rafael and Mr R. Shankar of Encinitas have both recorded the rAga, although I do not recall their treatment in detail other than to say they're "good." I have listened to a marvellous private recording of Basavraj Rajguru

(thanks to his disciple Nachiketa Sharma) that has him rendering a vilambit kHayAl in roopak. Basavraj's treatment goes a trifle light on the Bhairav angle and instead the Bhairavi ang preponderates. Mr Ajoy Chakraborty has also recorded the rAga but you won't catch me recommending this mediocre, listless, garden-variety bongwit to anybody even on a moonless night. But you might still want to check it out for the rAga treatment. The scale of Basant Mukhari falls out of a moorchanna on the scale of Kirwani and vice-versa. For instance, the madhyam of B-Mukhari treated as the shadaj yields the latter. For a film composition based on the Basant Mukhari scale, one that comes to mind is by the recently deceased Talatiya Mahmood (doyen of the ronA-dhonA brigade, inspiration of the soft, sentimental and caring nineties man) from the film 'Patita' under Shankar-Jaikishan's baton: andhe jahAN ke andhe rAste jAye to jAyeiN kahAN... The composition offered below is the well-known Ratanjankar classic and speaks of our old friend, the horny Hindustani hag (55 yrs old but looks not a day under 90), pining for her studmuffin.

Warm regards,

r

Raga: Basant Mukhari

Tala: Teental

Composer: S.N. Ratanjankar

uThata jiyA hooka suni koyala kooka

birahA agan jaRi raina-dinA

nahiN chaina paDe mohe, kAri karuN

lagan lagi milave ko chAhe

jiyA nahiN mAnata

nisdin neera jhaRe nainana soN, kAri karuN

Glossary:

hooka = pang

birahA = pain of separation

Key:

- (1) All shuddha notes in caps (M=shuddha madhyam, m=tivra madhyam)
- (2) The " and ' following a note denotes its tAr-saptak and mandra-saptak affiliation, respectively.
- (3) The grace note is enclosed in parenthesis of the type () and it operates on the note immediately following it.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
											(n)d	(P)M	P	(M)G	M
											u.....THa...ta			ji.....yA	
P	-	P	P	P	(n)d	n	S"(n)d	-	P	n	d	P	M	P	
hoo.....ka		su...ni	ko...ya...la	koo.....ka	bi....ra....hA.....	a									
G	M	(G)r	S	r"	-	n	S"(n)d	n	(n)d	P	Pd	nS"	n	d	
ga...na	ja...Ri	rai.....na	di...nA....	na....hiN	chai.....na	pa									
P	MP	(M)G	M	rG	MP	MG	M	(G)r	-	S					
De.....	mo...he	kA.....ri	ka...ruN.....												

Antara:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

RMIM ARTICLES: CLASSICAL MUSIC

									P	P	(n)d	-	n		
									la....ga....na.....				la		
S"	-	-	P	d	nS"	r	S"	(n)d	P	-	(G)M	(G)r	-	(M)P	M
gi.....			mi....	la....	ve....		ko	chA..	he.....		ji....	yA.....			
na....	hiN														
r	-	S	S	-	SS	M	(M)G	P	-	(n)d	(n)d	(d)S"	-	n	d
mA.....	na....	ta	.	nisa.di...na	nee.....	ra		jha...Re.....						nai....	
PM	P	M	G	rG	MP	MG	(G)M	(G)r	-	S					
na...na	soN...		kA.....	ri	ka...ruN.....										

RMIM Archive Article "412".

Raga Charukeshi (Series on Hindustani ragas inspired by Carnatic ragas)

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: Bandish in Raga Charukeshi

Namashkar.

It is known to every child (even women!) that 99.9998% of all Indians (100% in bongland) have zero knowledge of music, but that they have "tremendous respect" for musicians. With bandish in one hand and a glass of orange juice (freshly-squeezed) in the other, we invite our Indian berthers, behens and all the beloved hindustani hags to consider joining the remaining 0.0002%.

Humbly yours, I remain

r - your friendly and lovable (not to mention charming) correspondent.

On to the music now:

Raga Charukeshi is a relatively recent import from Carnatic music. However, in its Hindustani manifestation it has assumed a form all its own. The scale is heptatonic and employs the (see key below) S R G M P d n swaras. Flavours from a few popular Hindustani rAgas are recruited pari passu and integrated seamlessly. However, Charukeshi is no hybrid; it is an original, with solidity of form and character. Some sample phrases include:

S R, R G, G M, M (G)R ---> note the Nat-like patterns

S (n')d', d' n ' S R S ---> D-Kanada anyone?

G R G M P, P d (n)d (n)d n S" ---> latter half reminiscent of Jaunpuri.

S G M (M)n d P, d (P)M, M P (M)G, M G R S (n')d' and so on.

Important swaras (for nyAsa) are R, G and P. n is kept weak.

This is an exquisite bandish and its key musical content can be extracted easily from the notated version below. It does, of course, take some familiarity with the rAga and musical maturity to supply the nuance since it is not immediately evident from the notation.

I suspect the text is from the Guru Granth Sahib but I am not sure. The style is certainly reminiscent of many a shabad therein.

Raga: Charukeshi

Tala: Madya/Drut laya Teentala

kAhe manA tu jag bharmAyA (O Mind, why are you so disoriented?)

param-maram ko samajh na pAyA (You grasped not the essence of the Highest Truth)

neh kiyo nA Hari-nAma so (By not contemplating on the Lord's name)

janam ganwAyo kanchan kAyA (You've rendered this life worthless)

Key:

- All shuddha swaras in caps; komal in small case.
- The " mark following a note denotes the tAr saptak, the ' mark denotes the mandra saptak.
- Swaras enclosed in parenthesis are grace/shade notes.
- Special nuances are marked under the text below and are self-explanatory.

Asthaie:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 S" n dP MP M
 kA.....he..... ma
 ^^^^^^^

Subject: Bandish in Raga Charukeshi
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S R, R G, G M, M (G)R ---> note the Nat-like patterns
 S (n')d', d' n ' S R S ---> D-Kanada anyone?
 G R G M P, P d (n)d (n)d n S" ---> latter half reminiscent of Jaunpuri.
 S G M (M)n d P, d (P)M, M P (M)G, M G R S (n')d' and so on.

Important swaras (for nyAsa) are R, G and P. n is kept weak.

This is an exquisite bandish and its key musical content can be extracted easily from the notated version below. It does, of course, take some familiarity with the rAga and musical maturity to supply the nuance since it is not immediately evident from the notation.

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Tala: Madya/Drut laya Teentala

kAhe manA tu jag bharmAyA (O Mind, why are you so disoriented?)
 param-maram ko samajh na pAyA (You grasped not the essence of the Highest Truth)
 neh kiyo nA Hari-nAma so (By not contemplating on the Lord's name)
 janam ganWayo kanchan kAyA (You've rendered this life worthless)

Key:

- All shuddha swaras in caps; komal in small case.
- The " mark following a note denotes the tAr saptak, the ' mark denotes the mandra saptak.
- Swaras enclosed in parenthesis are grace/shade notes.
- Special nuances are marked under the text below and are self-explanatory.

Asthaie:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 S" n dP MP M
 kA.....he..... ma
 ^^^^^^^<---slide
 G - - (G)M G R S R Sn' d'n' d' (n')d' (n')d' n' - n'
 nA..... tu ja...ga bha..ra...mA.....yA pa.....ra.ma..... ma
 S S R (n')S S (S)G M (M)n (d) - P
 ra...ma ko..... sa.....ma.jha nA pA.....yA
 uuuuuuuu

Subject: Bandish in Raga Charukeshi
 Namashkar.

It is known to every child (even women!) that 99.9998% of all Indians (100% in bongland) have zero knowledge of music, but that they have "tremendous respect" for musicians. With bandish in one hand and a glass of orange juice (freshly-squeezed) in the other, we invite our Indian berthers, behens and all the beloved hindustani hags to consider joining the remaining 0.0002%.

Humbly yours, I remain

r - your friendly and lovable (not to mention charming) correspondent.

On to the music now:

Raga Charukeshi is a relatively recent import from Carnatic music. However, in its Hindustani manifestation it has assumed a form all its own. The scale is heptatonic and employs the (see key below) S R G M P d n swaras. Flavours from a few popular Hindustani rAgas are recruited pari passu and integrated seamlessly. However, Charukeshi is no hybrid; it is an original, with solidity of form and character. Some sample phrases include:

S R, R G, G M, M (G)R ---> note the Nat-like patterns

S (n')d', d' n ' S R S ---> D-Kanada anyone?

G R G M P, P d (n)d (n)d n S" ---> latter half reminiscent of Jaunpuri.

S G M (M)n d P, d (P)M, M P (M)G, M G R S (n')d' and so on.

Important swaras (for nyÅsa) are R, G and P. n is kept weak.

This is an exquisite bandish and its key musical content can be extracted easily from the notated version below. It does, of course, take some familiarity with the rAga and musical maturity to supply the nuance since it is not immediately evident from the notation.

I suspect the text is from the Guru Granth Sahib but I am not sure. The style is certainly reminiscent of many a shabad therein.

Raga: Charukeshi

Tala: Madya/Drut laya Teentala

kAhe manA tu jag bharmAyA (O Mind, why are you so disoriented?)

param-maram ko samajh na pAyA (You grasped not the essence of the Highest Truth)

neh kiyo nA Hari-nAma so (By not contemplating on the Lord's name)

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- Swaras enclosed in parenthesis are grace/shade notes.
- Special nuances are marked under the text below and are self-explanatory.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
										S"	n	dP	MP	M	
										kA.....	he.....		ma		
											^^^^^^	<---	slide		
G	-	-	(G)M	G	R	S	R	Sn'	d'n'	d'	(n')d'	(n')d'	n'	-	n'
nA.....			tu	ja...ga	bha..ra...mA.....	yA					pa.....	ra.ma.....			ma
S	S	R	(n')S	S	(S)G	M	(M)n	(d)	-	P					
ra...ma	ko.....	sa.....	ma.jha		nA	pA.....	yA								
	uuuuuuuu	<---	meend												

Subject: Bandish in Raga Charukeshi

Namashkar.

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S R, R G, G M, M (G)R ---> note the Nat-like patterns

S (n')d', d' n ' S R S ---> D-Kanada anyone?

G R G M P, P d (n)d (n)d n S" ---> latter half reminiscent of Jaunpuri.

S G M (M)n d P, d (P)M, M P (M)G, M G R S (n')d' and so on.

Important swaras (for nyAsa) are R, G and P. n is kept weak.

This is an exquisite bandish and its key musical content can be extracted easily from the notated version below. It does, of course, take some familiarity with the rAga and musical maturity to supply the nuance since it is not immediately evident from the notation.

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Raga: Charukeshi

Tala: Madya/Drut laya Teentala

kAhe manA tu jag bharmAyA (O Mind, why are you so disoriented?)

param-maram ko samajh na pAyA (You grasped not the essence of the Highest Truth)

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- The " mark following a note denotes the tAr saptak, the ' mark denotes the mandra saptak.

- Swaras enclosed in parenthesis are grace/shade notes.

- Special nuances are marked under the text below and are self-explanatory.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
										S"	n	dP	MP	M	
										kA.....	he.....		ma		
											^^^^^^	<---	slide		
G	-	-	(G)M	G	R	S	R	Sn'	d'n'	d'	(n')d'	(n')d'	n'	-	n'
nA.....			tu	ja...ga	bha..ra...mA.....	yA		pa.....	ra.ma.....						ma
S	S	R	(n')S	S	(S)G	M	(M)n	(d)	-	P					
ra...ma	ko.....	sa.....	ma.jha		nA	pA.....	yA								
	uuuuuuuu	<---	meend					\$\$	<---	shake on the note	d				

antarA:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
											M	P	(n)d	(n)d	n
											ne.....	ha.....	ki		
S"	-	-	S"	R"G"	S"	-	R"	n	S"	(S")d	(d)P	P	P	(P)G"	G"
yo.....			Ha..ri.....				nA.....	ma	so.....	ja.....	na.....	ma			
gan															
											^^^^^^	slide	^^^^^^		
M"G"	R"	S"	n	(n)d	dn	S"	R"	(S")n	S"	(d)P					
wA.....	yo.....		kan.....	cha..na			kA.....	yA							
											^^^^^^	slide	^^^^^^		
M"G"	R"	S"	n	(n)d	dn	S"	R"	(S")n	S"	(d)P					
wA.....	yo.....		kan.....	cha..na			kA.....	yA							
											^^^^^^	<---	slide		

RMIM Archive Article "413".

Raga Suhag

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: Raga Suhag

Namashkar.

A couple of weeks ago I received a surprising email request for information on Raga Suhag. Surprising because this is a rather apracalit rAga.

Raga Suhag combines elements of rAgas Shankara, Maru-Bihag along with a trace of Vacaspati. The swaras deployed are: S R G m (tivra) P D n N. An A/A set may be devised as follows:

S G m P, G P N D S" N, S"::S" N P, n D P m G R S

UUU--->meenD

The Shankaric cluster of G P N D S" N is interplayed with Maru Bihag and the komal nishAd is injected in a peculiar manner that will soon become clear. These ideas are amplified in the sample phrases elucidated below. The attached bandish should help reinforce the overall flavour of the rAga. Some of you may have already sensed some similarities with another lesser-known derivative of Shankara, viz., Raga Shankara Aran.

S (m)G m P, P (m)G, G P N D S" N, N P

UUU

G m P S" N P, P n D P m G, (S)R S

UUU

G m P N, N P, N D S N, P n D P m G

UUU

Comments and feedback may be directed to: parrikar@colorado.edu

Warm regards,

r

ps: We have some thoughts on how we can make notated bandishes more palatable and widely available to the public and also the necessity of developing the skill for learning bandishes off written notation (and by extension, developing a facility for effective notating of bandish too). Within a few more years (with multi-media etc in full force in every home) we should be able to put up in the public domain a huge amount of easily accessible and assimiliable material and kick every Pandit Bonehead's and Ustad Hotshit's supermystical, supersecretive, supermysterious, superproprietary, supererogatory, superheterodyne, superstringed ass bigtime. More on this when we have more leisure. In the meanwhile, please savour the bandish.

Raga: Suhag

Tala: Teental

Krishna-murAri sudh mori leeje

tribhuvan swAmi antaryAmi

bega krupA ab keeje

daras binA atahi hota jiyA vyAkul

"Sughar" hiyA morA chheeje

Glossary:

tribhuvan = the three worlds (the universe)
 antaryAmi = knower of the innermost thoughts (the Supreme Being)
 vyAkul = distressed
 hiyA = hrudaya, heart
 chhee = touch (in BrajbhAsA)

Key:

- (1) All shuddha notes in caps (M=shuddha madhyam, m=tivra madhyam)
- (2) The " and ' following a note denotes its tAr-saptak and mandrasaptak affiliation, respectively.
- (3) The grace note is enclosed in parenthesis of the type () and it operates on the note immediately following it.

The usual disclaimers about supplying your own nuance and imagination at certain locations apply. The P n D molecule calls for delicate handling.

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
											G	P	N	D	S"	
											kri.....shNa....					mu
N	-	P (N)	D	N	P	n	D	Pm	Gm	G	(G)m	G	(R)S	R	S	
rA.....ri	su...dh	mo.....ri	lee.....je	tri...bhu...va.....na												
S	-	S	- (R)S	- (m)G	(P)m	(m)P	-	P	(m)G	m	P	N	N			
swA.....mi....	an.....ta...ra...yA.....mi	be.....ga.....														
kru																
NS"	G"R"	S"	S"	Pm	Gm	Pn	DP	Pm	Gm	G						
pA.....	a....ba	kee.....je.....														

Antara:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
											G	m	P	S"	S"	
											da....ra....sa.....					bi
S"	-	-	-	-	-	S"	R"	S"	-	-	S"	-	N	D	S"	
nA.....						a....ta....hi.....					ho.....ta.....				ji	
N	-	P	-	-	-	N	D	S"	N	-	S	S	m	G	G	
yA.....						vyA.....ku..la.....					su....gha...ra.....				hi	
P	-	N	N	Pm	Gm	Pn	DP	Pm	Gm	G						
yA.....	mo...ra	chhi.....je.....														

RMIM Archive Article "414".

Raga Desi

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: Raga Desi

Namashkar.

Raga Desi comes in 2 or 3 flavours depending primarily on how the dhaivat(s) is/are treated. Despite the variability, the rAga has a distinct signature to its identity.

The three basic types are grouped (I am ignoring the other ramifications such as Desi Todi, Uttari Desi etc in an attempt to keep the discussion focussed; as it is, it is not easy describing this very vakra rAga) according to their dhaivat affiliation:

(a) shuddha dhaivat only; (b) komal dhaivat only; and (c) both the komal and shuddha dhaivat. In the third kind, a further sub-classification is effected on the basis of the weight planted on one dhaivat relative to the other.

Despite these distractions, a sure pointer to a Desi is the following cluster of phrases:

R P (M)g, R g S R n' S

(M)R M P S" P, R g S R n' S

uuuu---> meenD

The R g S R n' S is characteristic to Desi, so is the meenD from the tAr shadaaj straight to the pancham. The use of the dhaivat(s), while not unimportant, is secondary to this defining profile.

When the shuddha dhaivat is taken it is via: RMPDMPS", S" P, P D (P)M P. When the komal dhaivat is employed, it replaces the shuddha dhaivat above (to a first approximation). Although these operations might seem trivial, the divergence in effect is significant and calls for caution in handling.

In the first instance, there is a possibility for a tirobhAva (the momentary reminder) of Raga Kafi whereas in the second case there can be a tirobhAva of Raga Asavari.

The A/A may now be formulated as (for a bi-dhaivat Desi):

Aroha: S, R g S R n' S, (M)R M P, D M P S"

Avaroha: S" P, D M P, (M)R M P d M P, R g S R n' S

uuu

The nishAd is weak, P and R and very strong. The gandhAr figures only in descent. The importance of dhaivat is idiosyncratic, as briefly discussed above.

In most of the Desis in current practice we hear both the dhaivats, one weighted much more than the other. Kesarbai's classic Desi, for example, primarily uses the komal dhaivat (and details of its structure are slightly different than the expose' above - the thing is, for anything you say about things Indian, the opposite is equally true:-). However, if you want to smoke out a Desi, the aforementioned algorithm still holds). The shuddha dhaivat is sprung occasionally via M P D n S"

but the integration is so beautiful as to make it seem as if it had been part of the family all along. Ratanjankar's school also maintains the preponderance of komal dhaivat. The manner in which the dhaivat(s) is/are handled in the hugely popular Desi number from the film Baiju Bawra by Amir Khan and D.V. Paluskar - Aj gAvat man mero - is left as a homework exercise. By the way, there is the famous story of the ustAd insisting on having Paluskar as his 'sparring' partner for this song overriding composer Naushad's misgivings, which perhaps someone else can recount. As always, the best way to help settle these ideas in the mind is to work through a bandish. The composition below is a sentimental favourite and exclusively courts the shuddha dhaivat. The words are due to Tulsidas (of Ramayan fame) and are written in Avadhi. They are in praise of Lord Shiva who was T's ishTadeva. Shubha Mudgal informs that the lyrics are from T's work, "VinayapatrikA." There is one line in the bandish I do not quite grasp the import of, as indicated.

Warm regards and yodlee yodleeooooo,

r

ps: Desi is a truly beautiful rAga; one way of ruining it to ask the old Imdad geezer Mr Imrat to play it. Another way of ruining it is to ask Mr Vilayat to sing it.

Raga: Desi

Tala: Ektala (druta)

Lyric: Tulsidasa

jANchiye Girijapati

Kasi jAsu bhavan

aNimAdika dAsi

avaDaradAni dravata

sutHi thore sakata na dekhi

deen kara joRe

Glossary:

jANchiye = examine, analyse (in this context, know)

kAsi = Kashi, Varanasi

aNimAdika = aNimA + Adika; aNimA refers to one of Shiva's

8 siddhis (what are the other 7?) which gives Him

the power to make Himself as small as the atom

dAsi = in service of

avaDaradAni = one who shows compassion for the weak and the downtrodden

dravata = one who is easily moved (emotionally)

deen = the wretched, the fallen, the poor

kara joRe = with hands joined

(Note: I don't quite understand (although I have a couple of

educated guesses) the penultimate line: sutHi thore sakata na dekhi.

Some input from those in the know would be helpful).

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
(M)R	M	P	D	(P)M	P	(M)g	R	g	R	S	-
jA....AN....chi...ye				gi....ri....jA.....					pa.....ti.....		
(M)R	-	M	-	P	-	PD	MP	S"	P	P	P
kA.....si.....				jA.....su.....					bha....va.....na		
S"R"	nS"	P	D	(P)M	P	(M)g	R	g	S	R	n'S
a.....Ni....mA.....				di....ka					dA.....si.....		

Antara:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
M	M	P	P	PD	MP	S"	-	-	S"	S"	S"
a.....va....Da....ra....				dA.....ni.....					dra....va.....ta		
n	S"	S"R"	g"	- (g")R"	S"	R" (R")n	(n)S"	P	P		

su....tHi tho.....re..... sa....ka....ta..... na
(P)R" - S" P - P PD MP (P)R g SR n'S
de.....khi dee.....na ka....ra jo.....Re.....

RMIM Archive Article "415".

Raga Yamani and Devgiri Bilawal

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar (parrikar@spot.colorado.edu)

Author: Rajan Parrikar

Subject: Yamani and Devgiri Bilawal

Namashkar.

In this quick and brief note two prakArs of Bilawal, Yamani Bilawal and Devgiri Bilawal, are discussed. Both of them exhibit vakra builds but their main themes are easy.

Throughout the discussion M=shuddha madhyam, m=tivra madhyam.

(a) Yamani Bilawal

The idea here is the implant of Yaman Kalyan phrases on the Bilawal root. Since there are a number of ways in which the details can be worked out there is divergence in the actual presentation across gharanic and regional boundaries. However, it is possible to extract a common core or at least envelope the major features. The notable exception is the version coming out of the Jaipur school.

The nominal aroha/avaroha set may stated as follows:

S R G P (N)D N S":S" N D P, m P G M RG R S

A Yamani Bilawal simulation can be done as follows:-

Start with the standard Bilawal outline:

G R G P, P M G, R G P (N)D N, S", S" (N)D P...

At this point insert elements of YamanK:

... P m P G M RG, G M D P m G M RG, R S, D' N' S N' R' S

Reassert Bilawal:

M G R G P, P M G, P (N)D N (D)P...

Slip in the YamanK strand again: m P, DPmP, G M RG, G M G R G (R)S

The key Bilawal phrases are: P (N)D N S" and S" (N)D P, P M G, G R G P M G (R)S

It is easily seen that the interface between the Bilawal and Kalyan is smooth and

the transitions smooth.

In the Yaman Kalyan portion of the phrasing, the tivra madhyam almost always follows

the pancham, is then followed by the shuddha madhyam, as in P m P GMRG or D P m GMRG

(note the quick cluster GMRG that is distinctive in Yamani Bilawal).

Neither of the

two madhyams is suited for prolonged stays, the nyAsa is on the pancham and gandhAr.

The "Bilawal madhyam" is featured as in P M G or G R G P M G, R G M R G (R)S. Overall

the rAga retains its Bilawal chassis. Y-Bilawal is primarily treated in the madhya

and tAr saptaks. Occasionally the komal nishAd is invoked in a Bilawal-like fashion,

to wit, S" (N)D n D P but its presence is not deemed essential. The Maihar

punters

occasionally bring in an explicit Yaman phrase of the kind: m D N S" or m D N R".

I don't find it appealing and it is best not to cut across the Bilawal profile in the

uttarAng. Such forays may lead to unnecessary accentuation of YamanK which is what

I suspect may have lead to Amit Chatterjee's stated discomfort.

Yamani Bilawal has not been recorded all that much commercially but radio recordings

exist (none that I can point to at this moment). Aside from Mansur, Ravi Shankar and

Nikhil Banerjee have recordings available, neither of which is wholly satisfactory.

Banerjee's gat is beautiful and he plays some breathtaking phrases but the treatment

is a trifle hurried. I wish we had a longer offering from him. Mr.

Shankar's recording

is a 3 or 4 minute quickie. Perhaps someone can add more recordings to the list.

(b) Devgiri Bilawal

The root and stem is again primarily Bilawal but seeded with elements of Yaman,

Shuddha Kalyan and Bihag. There is no tivra madhyam here (else it'll sound like

Yamani Bilawal). It employs peculiar clusters in the mandra saptak and the poorvAng

of the rAga which establish its signature.

A possible aroha/avaroha set is:

S, N' R G M G, P (N)D N S":S" (N)D P, GMGRG, R S (S)D' P' G, (R)S

The key identifiers of Devgiri are:

(1) G (G)R S, (S)D' P' G (this jump from the mandra pancham to the gandhAr is

characteristic of Devgiri and a sure pointer to its identity)

(2) D' N' D' S (N')R S

(3) N' R G M G R S, GRGMGRG, R S (Some people eschew this phrasing and supplant

it with: N'SRGRGMGRG, R S)

(4) G R G M (S)M G P, P G M G

(5) P', P' (N')D' N' S

Note that (1) and (2) are influences of Shuddha Kalyan, (3) is a Yaman import,

(4) a strain of Bihag and (5) the standard Bilawal countour replicated in the madhya saptak as well.

Putting together the ideas elucidated above we may devise a movement:

S, D' N' (S)D' S (N')R S, N' R G, N' G, MGRG R S (S)D' P G,

GMGRGP, P M G, N'SRGMGRG, (N')D' N' D' S (N')R S, P' (N')D' N' S...

For the komal nishAd the same considerations mentioned in the case of Yamani Bilawal apply. A relatively minor detail is that the GMRG group of Yamani Bilawal is sometimes used in Devgiri as well (as you'll see in the compositions listed below). It is a matter of taste.

It must be emphasised that the intonational nuance involved in (1), (2) and (3) must be experienced in a demonstration to get the gestalt of Devgiri Bilawal. The written description is incompetent in enucleating the delicacy and beauty contained. There are AIR recordings of Basavraj Rajguru and K.G. Ginde and these renditions circumscribe Devgiri completely (incidentally both of them sing the well-known vilambit kHayAl "ye banA byAhAn...". Ginde's drut bandish is the old Ratanjankar classic "mAno zarA ab mAnani..."). Ravi Shankar has recorded a brisk 5-7 minute gig that is mediocre but it offers a flavour of the Maihar interpretation (a stronger Shuddha Kalyan presence there). There is also a longer Allaudin Khan recording which is quite boring (read forgettable). I may add en passant that the interested may want to compare Devgiri with its close relative Alhaiyya Bilawal. Finally: I had posted a bandish of Yamani Bilawal some months ago. Two compositions in Devgiri Bilawal are now proffered. Hopefully some of you will have fun working through them.

Warm regards,

r

This composition is in honour of Vishnu's wife, Mrs Laxmi. The traditional bandish is based in Raga Tilak Kamod. A new tune in Devgiri is now offered.

1) Raga: Devgiri Bilawal

Tala: Roopak (madhya laya)

Text: Traditional

Music: Rajan P. Parrikar

prArthanA Mahalaxmi-mAte

rasarangA si sadA trAte

tav krupe mangal ghaDo

sant-sevA nitya lAbho

sadayi namito aji mAte

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N'	R	GM	G	-	(R)S	(D')P'	G	-	M	G	-	G	-
prA...	r.....	tha...nA	.	ma....	hA	la.....	xmi	mA.....	te.....				
GM	GR	G	P	-	P	-D (P)M	-	(G)R	R	GM	G	(R)S	
ra....	sa....	ran...gA.....	si	.sa....	dA	.	.	trA.....	te.....				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
P (PD)n	DP	MG	R	-	GP	N (N)D	N	S"	-	-	-	-	-
ta....	va	kru...pe.....	.	man....	ga....	la	gha...Do.....						
(S")N	R"	G"M"	G"	-	(R")S"	-	D	n	D	P	-	P	-
san.....	ta.	se.....	va.....	ni.....	tya	lA.....	bho.....						
GM	GR	G	P	P	P	-P	GP	DN	S"	M	-	GR	

SN'

sa....da....yi na....mi....to .a....ji..... mA.....te.....
 (a "smooth curve" does not have the full force of a meenD)

--

Our familiar horny hindustani hag is back again (the same one who is 58 years old (but looks 55), convent-educated and a virgin), this time stomping around town with jingle bells on her ankles. We suspect this is a subtle ploy to attract the attentions of her studmeister who is currently busy administering veeNA lessons to an up-and-coming&willing busty California blonde.

2) Raga: Devgiri Bilawal

Tala: TeentAla (ati drut)

Composer: Ratnakant "Premrang" Ramnathkar

jhananana bAjat pAyaliyAN mori re

mohe Dar lAgat kaise ghar ja'ooN

sabad sunat sab jAg parat log

piyA 'Premrang' kaise ke manA'ooN

Asthaie:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16											G	R	S	SN'

D'P'

jha....na....na.....na

G	-	-	GM	RG	RG	MP	M	G	-	-	GM	GR	G	P
---	---	---	----	----	----	----	---	---	---	---	----	----	---	---

-

bA.....ja...ta.....

pA....ya....li....yAN....

(N)D	N	S"(N)R"	S"	S"N	D	P	GM	RG	-	MG	P	M	G
------	---	---------	----	-----	---	---	----	----	---	----	---	---	---

(G)R

mo.....ri..... re.... mo...he . Da....ra

lA.....ga

G (G)R	S	N'	-	R	G	M	G (G)R	S
--------	---	----	---	---	---	---	--------	---

ta..... kai.....se gha.ra jA.....ooN

Antara:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16											P	P	N	(N)D

N

sa....ba....da.....

su

S"	-	-	-	-	-(S"N	R"	S"	-	-	(N)D	N	S"	N
----	---	---	---	---	-------	----	----	---	---	------	---	----	---

R"

na.....ta..... jA.....ga.....

pa

S"	N	S"	N	(N)D	N	P	-	GM	RG	-	(M)G	P	M	G
----	---	----	---	------	---	---	---	----	----	---	------	---	---	---

R

ra.....ta.... lo.....ga..... pi....yA

pre.....ma

G (G)R	S	N'	R	G	-	M	G (G)R	S
--------	---	----	---	---	---	---	--------	---

ran.....ga kai..se ke.... ma...nA.....ooN

ABOUT THE COMPILER

Professor Surjit Singh, a diehard movie fanatic, period. He is a retired Theoretical Physicist. He has been watching Hindi movies since 1952, has been collecting Hindi songs, movies and magazines since 1969, and has been writing about these things since 1996. He has had a website since 1999,

<https://hindi-movies-songs.com/joomla/>

OTHER BOOKS BY THE PUBLISHER

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