



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: 6. Tutorials

Prof Surjit Singh

RMIM Articles: 6. Tutorials

Compiler

Professor Surjit Singh

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By professor toofaanii publishers, East Lansing, MI USA

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

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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.

Professor Surjit Singh
East Lansing, MI
September 2024

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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 Pothei.

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

RMIM Archive Article "330".

RMIM/C Archives..

Tanpura - C V Raman's paper

Posted by: Rajan Parrikar parrikar@rococo.colorado.edu

Author: C V Raman

Namashkar.

The following is the text of the original paper on the acoustic properties of the tAnpurA authored by Pandit C.V. Raman (I apologize very deeply to this newsgroup for using for the first time in its history the "Pandit" title on someone truly deserving of it). Pandit Raman won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930 and his family's contributions to knowledge and civilization have been singular. His brother, C.S. Ayyar, was an eminent musicologist (and a fairly controversial figure in Carnatic circles). Ayyar's daughter, Vidya Sankar, is an exceptional scholar-musician. And Ayyar's eldest son, Pandit S. Chandrasekhar - scholar and mathematician extraordinaire - did pioneering work in, among other areas, stellar structure for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1983. All this is of course very well known to even pre-kindergarten level children in all of India except bongland where they instead prefer to have zero knowledge and infinite humility at all times (except for the brief moment when they craft their resumes when both quantities assume the value zero).

On the subject of musical acoustics, the indispensibility of Fourier Methods as tools for analysis is today well-known. Not as well known is that Fourier had trouble getting his ideas accepted when he first presented them to the French Academy circa 1807. What is astonishing is that the germ of an idea was not picked up by any of the three mighty mathematical minds of France of the time - Pandit Laplace, Pandit Legendre and Ustad Lagrange - and Fourier came in for some stick at their hands. This seems surprising to us today, but the ideas of convergence were not fully developed or appreciated at that time and had to await another generation inaugurated by Pandit Cauchy. Photocopies of this paper (and some other related ones) were excavated and sent to me by Krishna Kunchithapadam of the University of Wisconsin - Madison (krisna@cs.wisc.edu) soon after the thread on Tanpura died some weeks ago on this group. Perhaps we will see a resurrection. Since the paper has been scanned a few typos may yet be alive.

I don't tune in so if someone wants a copy of the original (with figures et al) send email to: parrikar@rococo.colorado.edu

Warm regards,

r

>From: proceedings of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science 7 29-33 (1921).

On some Indian stringed instruments

C V RAMAN, M.A., D.Sc. (Hon.)

(Palit Professor of Physics in the Calcutta University)

(Plate I)

CONTENTS

I. Introduction II. The form of the bridge in the "Tanpura" and the "Veena" III. The failure of the Young-Helmholtz law IV. Outline of mechanical theory V. Summary

1. Introduction

A fascinating field for research offers itself in the scientific study of the numerous kinds of musical instruments to be found in India. Some of these instruments of indigenous origin are of undoubted antiquity and disclose a remarkable appreciation of acoustic principles. An investigation of their special features in comparison with those of instruments of other countries may be expected to yield results of great interest. An instance of the fruitfulness of the line of work here suggested is to be found in the present author's research on the Indian Musical Drums, which have been found to embody in a practical form the solution of the problem of loading a circular drumhead in such a manner as to make it give a harmonic succession of overtones in the same way as a stringed instrument (*). In the present paper it is proposed to offer a preliminary note on the results of the author's study of some Indian stringed instruments.

* See NATURE (London) 8 February 1920. A fuller account of the work on these musical drums is shortly to be published as a Bulletin of this Association.

2. The form of the bridge in the "Tanpura" and the "Veena"

The "Tanpura" and the "Veena" are two of the most highly valued indigenous stringed instruments intended to be excited by plucking. Plate I, figure 1 illustrates the form of the "Tanpura". This instrument has no frets and is intended merely to be used as a drone in accompaniment with vocal or other music. It has four metal "strings" which are stretched over a large resonant body and can be accurately tuned up to the right pitch by a simple device for continuous adjustment of tension. The remarkable feature of the "Tanpura" to which I wish to draw attention is the special form of bridge fixed to the resonant body over which the strings pass. The

strings do not come clear off the edge of a sharp bridge as in European stringed instruments, but pass over a curved wooden surface fixed to body which forms the bridge. The exact length of the string which actually touched the upper surface of the bridge is adjusted by slipping in a woollen or silken thread of suitable thickness between each string and the bridge below it and adjusting its position by trial. Generally the thread is moved forwards or backwards to such a position that the metal "string" just grazes the surface of the bridge. The description will be clearer on a reference to figure 3 above where the bridge and the string passing over it are indicated diagrammatically.

The "Veena" on the other hand is a fretted instrument intended for use in playing melodies (figure 2 in plate 1). The form of the bridge adopted in it differs from that of the "Tanpura" in two respects. The upper curved surface of the bridge in the "Veena" is of metal and the special mode of adjustment of contact by means of a thread used in the "Tanpura" is dispensed with, and the string merely comes off the curved upper surface of the bridge at a tangent, as indicated diagrammatically in figure 4. (No attempt is made in this figure to indicate the exact form of the lower part of the bridge).

The bridge of the "Veena" is also much higher above the body of the instrument than in the "Tanpura". Even when the strings are pressed down on the frets when the instrument is being played, the curvature of the upper surface of the bridge ensures the string always leaving the bridge at a tangent to it as shown.

3. The failure of the Young-Helmholtz law

The special form of bridge illustrated above has a very remarkable influence on the tone-quality. This can be most readily demonstrated in the "Tanpura". When the adjustment of contact of string and bridge is made carefully by trial the instrument is highly sonorous, giving a tone of fine musical quality. If on the other hand the grazing contact of string and bridge is rendered inoperative (as for instance by inserting a small piece of metal between the string and the surface of the bridge) the tone becomes dull and insipid. A similar remark applies also to the case of the "Veena," though the difference is less striking in the latter case.

In attempting to find an explanation for the difference in tone-quality produced by the special form of bridge, the author made a surprising observation, namely, that in the tone of the "Tanpura" or the "Veena," overtones may be heard powerfully which according to known acoustical principles should have been entirely absent. According to the law enunciated by Young and Helmholtz, if the string is plucked at a point of aliquot division, the harmonics having a node

at the point of excitation should be entirely absent. This law may be readily verified on an ordinary sonometer with the usual form of bridge. For this purpose, the position of the node should first be found exactly by trial by putting the finger in contact with the string and plucking elsewhere so as to elicit the overtones desired. Having found the position of the node, the string should be plucked exactly at that point and then again touched with the finger at the same point. On an ordinary sonometer, this results in the sound being immediately quenched inasmuch as the finger damps out all the partials except those having a node at the point touched, and the latter are not excited in the first instance in accordance with the Young-Helmholtz law. On trying the same experiment with the "Veena" or the "Tanpura", it will be found that the overtone having a node at the plucked point sings out powerfully. In fact the position of the plucked point hardly appears to make a difference in regard to the intensity of the overtones in the "Tanpura". This remarkable result is not due to any indefiniteness in the position of the node point, as the latter is found to be quite well defined as is shown by the fact that in order to demonstrate the effect successfully, the string must be plucked and then touched exactly at that right point, otherwise the sound is quenched. We are thus forced to the conclusion that the effect of the special form of bridge is completely to set aside the validity of the Young-Helmholtz law and actually to manufacture a powerful sequence of overtones including those which ought not to have been elicited according to that law.

4. Outline of a mechanical theory

Some photographs of the vibration-curves of a "Tanpura" string were made at the suggestion of the author by Mr Ahmed Shah Bukhari at the Government College, Lahore, last November. They showed that in consequence of the grazing contact at the bridge, the vibration of the string decreased in amplitude and altered its form at a much more rapid rate than when the grazing contact was considered ineffective. A more complete investigation is obviously desirable. >From first principles, however, it is obvious that in the "Tanpura" the forces exerted by the vibrating string on the bridge must be very different from what they would be for a bridge of ordinary form. It seems probable that by far the greater portion of the communication of energy to the bride occurs at or near the point of grazing contact. The forces exerted by the string on the bridge near this point are probably in the nature of impulses occurring once in each vibration of the string. This would explain the powerful retinue of overtones including even those absent initially in the vibration of the string. At a slightly later stage the reaction of the bridge on

the string would result in a modification of the vibration form of the latter and bring into existence partials absent initially in it. There would in fact be a continual transformation of energy of vibration of the fundamental vibration into the overtones.

The foregoing explanation of the character of the tones of the "Tanpura" would not be fully applicable to the "Veena" as the forces exerted by the string on the bridge in this case would not be purely of an impulsive character. There is however a certain portion of the bridge over which the string comes into intermittent contact during the vibration, and it seems very probable that the theory for this case is intermediate in character between that for the "Tanpura" and those for stringed instruments with bridges of the ordinary type. Further experimental work is needed in support of this view.

5. Summary

The present paper deals with the remarkable acoustic property of the "Tanpura" and the "Veena" which are two of the most highly reputed among Indian stringed instruments. The form of the bridge used in these instruments is quite different from that usually found in European stringed instruments. In the "Tanpura" the string passes over the wooden upper surface of the bridge which is curved to shape, and by insertion of a thread of wool or silk, a finely adjustable grazing contact of string and bridge is secured. In the "Veena" the upper surface of the bridge is of curved metal and the string leaves it at a tangent. The tones of these instruments show a remarkable, powerful series of overtones which gives them a bright and pleasing quality. Experiment with these instruments shows that the validity of the Young-Helmholtz law according to which partials having a node at the plucked point should not be excited is completely set aside. A possible mechanical explanation of this result is suggested.

RMIM Archive Article "20".

Definition of Ghazal

Posted by: abhay.avachat@blr.sni.de, avachat@sun7.mch.sni.de (Abhay Avachat)

Author: Abhay Avachat

Hi,

After my article on Madanmohan and Khaiyyam, some nettors asked me to clearly say, which poem can be called Ghazal. And also because of some statements I made in that article, I think it's my duty to give the 'definition' of Ghazal. Although, many would be knowing this, for some this information can be new, for some this will mean precise description of some general terms.

This article has become "technical", but I hope it's not boring. And I also hope, this is helpful for the Ghazal fans.

Instead of giving my personal views, I thought of quoting somebody who is an authority. There is book/dictionary/colection of Sher's titled "Aaina-e-ghazal", which IMHO is a treasure for every Ghazal fan. In this there is a long essay - "Ghazal kya hai ?" by Dr.Arshad Jamaal.

The essay is written in Hindi, and is about History of Ghazal, its development, its milestones, important Shayar's etc. One part of it describes the definition of Ghazal. The following is loosely based on that. The essay talks only about what IS a Ghazal. To that I have added in the following, what is NOT a Ghazal. So any mistakes in these parts, are mine. [These are enclosed in square brackets like this.]

Also one thing should be kept in mind that, this is not mathematics.

So "preciseness" of the "definition" should not be questioned.

Classical Definition of Ghazal

Ghazal in short, is a collection of Sher's which follow the rules of 'Matla', 'Maqta', 'Beher', 'Kaafiyaa' and 'Radif'. So to know what Ghazal is, it's necessary to know what these terms mean.

To understand these terms easily , we will take an example.

1. koi ummid bar nahin aati
koi surat nazar nahin aati
2. aage aati thi haale dil par hasi
ab kisi baat par nahin aati
3. hum wahan hain, jahan se humko bhi
kucch hamaari khabar nahin aati
4. kaabaa kis muh se jaaoge 'Ghalib'
sharm tumko magar nahin aati

What is a Sher ?

It's a poem of two lines. This definition is deceptively

simple. Please note that, every Sher is a poem in itself ! A Sher does not need, anything around it, to convey the message.

All the 4 stanzas in our example are independent poems, Sher's.

So Ghazal is necessarily a collection of two-line-poems called Sher.

[So the Rafi solo "rang aur noor ki baaraat kise pesh karu" is NOT a Ghazal, as every stanza is of 3 lines, and not 2.]

What are other restrictions ? Many, and important ones.

[Any collection of Sher's is not Ghazal. Some good examples are ; the famous Mukesh song from Yehoodi, "yeh mera deewanaapan hai" ; and the

title song of "dil apana aur preet parayi". Each stanza in these songs can be considered as an independent Sher, but they are NOT Ghazal's.

To understand, why, we have to wait till 'Kaafiyaa, 'Radif'.]

What is 'Beher' ?

'Beher' is the 'meter' of the Sher's. It can be considered as the length of the Sher. Both the lines in the Sher *MUST* be of same 'Beher'. And all the Sher's in one Ghazal *MUST* be of the same 'Beher'. There are 19 (!) kinds of 'Beher'. But in simple terms, 'Beher' is categorized in 3 classes. Short, medium, long.

[The examples in [] are my additions, from Hindi Films.]

Small :

ahale dairo-haram reh gaye

tere deewane kam reh gaye

[Also Talat song, "dil-e-nadan tuze hua kya hai"]

Medium :

umr jalwo me basar ho, ye zaruri to nahin

har shab-e-gam ki seher ho, ye zaruri to nahin

[And by Gulzar, "ruke ruke se kadam, ruk ke baar baar chale"]

Long :

ai mere humnashin, chal kahin aur chal, is chaman me ab apanaa guzaaraa nahin

baat hoti gulon ki, to seh lete hum, ab to kaaton pe bhi haq hamaaraa nahin

[The filmfare winner, "Manzile apani jagah hai" !! Yes ! It IS a

Ghazal. And the Shayar is Prakash Mehra !! surprise , surprise !!]

So Ghazal is a collection of Sher's of SAME 'Beher'.

What is 'Radif' ?

In a Ghazal, second line of all the Sher's *MUST* end with the *SAME* word/s. This repeating common words is the 'Radif' of the Ghazal.

In our example, the 'Radif' is "nahin aati".

[Sometimes, the Ghazal becomes known by its 'Radif'. eg. "jaraa aahista chal" sung by Pankaj Udhas. On RMIM we all know one Ghazal by the 'Radif' as "aahista aahista", don't we ? or is it 2 or 3 ? :-)]

What is 'Kaafiyaa' ?

'Kaafiyaa' is the rhyming pattern which all the words before 'Radif' *MUST* have.

In our example the 'Kaafiyaa' is "bar", "nazar", "par", "magar" etc. This is a necessary requirement. Something which is followed even in the exceptions to all these rules.

So Ghazal is a collection of Sher's of same 'Beher', ending in same 'Radif' and having same 'Kaafiyaa'.

[That's the reason, why "yeh mera diwanapan hai" etc. are NOT Ghazals. There is no common thing which can be called 'Kaafiyaa' and 'Radif'.]

What is 'Matla' ?

The first Sher in the Ghazal *MUST* have 'Radif' in its both lines. This Sher is called 'Matla' of the Ghazal and the Ghazal is usually known after its 'Matla'. There can be more than one 'Matla' in a Ghazal. In such a case the second one is called 'Matla-e-saani' or 'Husn-e-matla'.

In our example, the first Sher is the 'Matla'.

What is 'Maqta' ?

A Shayar usually has an alias ie. 'takhallus' eg. Mirza Asadullakhan used 'Ghalib' as his 'takhallus' and is known by that. Other examples are 'Daag' Dehlvi, 'Mir' Taqi Mir, Said 'Rahi', Ahmed 'Faraz' etc. There is a Sher in a Ghazal, the last one, which has the Shayar's 'takhallus' in it.

[A Shayar, can use the 'Maqta' very intelligently. He can "talk to himself" like one in our example. I have lots of favourite Sher's which are 'Maqta' of some Ghazal. Some gems are koi nam-o-nishan puchhe to ai kaasid bataa denaa, takhallus 'Daag' hai, aur aahiqon ke dil me rehte hai and

jab bhi milte hain, to kehte hain, "kaise ho 'Shakil'",
iske aage to koi baat nahin hoti hai

The first one uses the meaning of the 'takhallus' to create the magic, and the second one is just simple, simply beautiful.]

To summarize, Ghazal is a collection of Sher's (independent two-line poems), in which there is atleast one 'Matla', one 'Maqta' and all the Sher's are of same 'Beher' and have the same 'Kaafiyaa' and 'Radif'.

EXCEPTIONS AND IMP. POINTS TO NOTE

1. Ghazal is just a form. It is independent of any language. eg in Marathi also, there can be (and there are) good Ghazals.
2. Some Ghazal's do NOT have any 'Radif'. Rarely. Such Ghazal's are called "gair-muraddaf" Ghazal.
3. Although, every Sher, should be an independent poem in itself, it is possible, that all the Sher's are on the same theme. What famous

example can be other than "chupke chupke raat din aasun bahaanaa yaad hai".

4. In modern Urdu poetry, there are lots of Ghazal's which do NOT follow the restriction of same 'Beher' on both the lines of Sher. [My example in 'Maqta', the Sher by Shakil, is one.] But even in these Ghazal's, 'Kaafiyaa' and 'Radif' are present.

5. The restriction of 'Maqta' is really very loose. Many many Ghazal's do NOT have any 'Maqta'. [I think 'Maqta' was used in the earlier times, as a way to keep the credit. But since this is traditional, many Ghazal's do have a 'Maqta' just for the sake of it. Sometimes the name of the Shayar comes unnaturally in the last Sher of the Ghazal.]

So that's my long essay on Ghazal :-)

I hope it helps in clearing some doubts, and I also hope that atleast for some, the information was interesting and new.

- Abhay.

Ghazal rudaad hai naakaamiyon ki,
Ghazal mehrumiyon ki daastaan hai |
Ghazal riste hue zakhmon ka marham,
Ghazal ek chaaraa-e-dard-e-nihan hai |
Ghazal ka husn hi hai, husn-e-aalam,
Ghazal ka noor hi noor-e-jahan hai |
- Jagdish Bhatnagar 'Hayaat'

RMIM Archive Article "390".

Qawaali part 1

Posted by: Satish Subramanian

Source: Teginder Singh Dhanoa's paper in UC Davis

Author: Teginder Singh Dhanoa ez054777@ucdavis.edu

Hi all,

Seeing the recent discussions on qawwalis I am reposting an article by Teginder Singh Dhanoa. The author's original address (not sure if it is valid anymore) was ez054777@ucdavis.edu. The entire article was posted on RMIM couple of years back. I will post the article in 8 (hopefully cohesive) parts.

--

satish

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Qawwali - Devotional Songs of the Sufi Mystics
by
Teginder Singh Dhanoa

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Author's Note:

I am posting the following article in response to many inquiries about True Qawwali. This is a research paper I submitted for an independent research class at The University of California, Davis; December 1994. I have tried to do as much research as possible on the subject and I have tried to cite any ideas or thoughts that were not mine. If I have overlooked any citation, I humbly apologize. I do not claim to be an expert in Qawwali, Islam, or Sufism.

If I have overlooked anything, wrongly given data, or unknowingly offended anyone please let me know, also let me know if you have any INTELLIGENT comments or questions (please, nothing like you spelled a word wrong or that you put three spaces instead of two).

- Teginder Singh Dhanoa

Qawwali - Devotional Songs of the Sufi Mystics
(Introduction)

North India (see end note 1) is a land that has seen many syntheses. This was the land that European traders traveled through on their journeys to trading cities in other parts of India and China alike. The gypsies of Rajasthan migrated up to Northern India and adopted some of the Northerners'

traditions and proceeded to travel along the paths of traders. They eventually found themselves in Europe. The greatest integration of cultures took place during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when Mughals rampaged through Northern India on their quest to conquer the country.

The Mughals saw Islam as the most practical faith and felt that it was "superior" to the religion of the native Indians. In order to spread the religion of Islam, the Mughals put any Kafir (non-believer) who would not embrace their faith to the sword. Thousands of Hindu temples were razed to the ground, yet this did not cause a major conversion of Hindus to the religion of their conquerors. The vast majority of converts were persuaded by a group of peaceful men that followed the train of soldiers. These men were known as Sufis.(2)

The Sufis form a mystical sect of Islam, and their name comes from the word Suf which means wool. "Suf refers to the cloth worn by early ascetics that preferred its symbolic simplicity to richer materials."(3) Along with a simple style of dress, the Sufis led a very austere lifestyle.

They set store on poverty, and like the Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him), they fasted and meditated to achieve a mystical experience much like that of the Prophet.(4) Their "down to earth" life-style was not the only factor in converting many people. The deciding factor for many was the Sufis' love towards mankind.

In Hinduism the caste system created a great hierarchy of classes in which many people, such as the untouchables, were seen as sub-servient. The Sufis, on the other hand, saw them all as brothers and sisters. Where the upper-class Hindus would not even let the untouchables walk by their homes, the Sufis would invite them in and embrace them as their own. The converts were no longer seen as low class citizens, "they were given titles of honor like Sheikh, Malik, Khalifa, or Mu'min."(5)

To appeal to the natives the Sufis studied other cultures, languages, and religions. They learned the language of the natives (Medieval Hindi) while teaching them the language of Islam (Arabic) and other languages of the Middle East, such as Persian and Turkish. The Sufis then used the knowledge they gained to spread Islam. Initially, they did not form a definite sect of Islam nor did they have a uniform doctrine. Eventually, however, sects within Sufism developed and each

sect adopted its own leaders and Pirs (saints).(6)

The new converts adapted their faith to suit the way of thinking that they had been accustomed to. While they wanted to obey the five pillars of Islam(7), the one that was not possible for many to fulfill was the Hajj, or pilgrimage, to Mecca. Yet, the new Muslims wanted to make some sort of pilgrimage, so many saw fit to travel to the tombs or residences of near-by Sufi saints. During gatherings at these tombs and at Mosques, the devotees would listen to the poetry of their masters, sung by musicians known as Qawwals.

END NOTES

(1)

Please note that Northern India or North India refers to the present-day northern states of India and to their bordering states in present-day Pakistan.

(2)

Singh, Khushwant. A History of the Sikhs. Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1991. Pg. 25.

(3)

Glasse', Cyril. "Sufism" Concise Encyclopedia of Islam. 1989 ed.

(4)

Singh, Pg. 26.

(5)

Ibid., Pg. 27.

(6)

Ibid., Pg. 26.

(7)

The five Pillars of Islam are (1) Profession of the fact there is only one God and his name is Allah, and his Prophet is Mohammed (P.B.U.H.), (2) prayer five times a day, (3) almsgiving, (4) fasting, and (5) pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime by all that are able to make the journey.

RMIM Archive Article "391".

Qawaali part 2

Posted by: Satish Subramanian

Source: Teginder Singh Dhanoa's paper in UC Davis

Author: Teginder Singh Dhanoa ez054777@ucdavis.edu

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Qawwali - Devotional Songs of the Sufi Mystics

(Origins)

by

Teginder Singh Dhanoa

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The Qawwals' form of singing was known as Qawwali. Qawwali means "utterance" in Persian and comes from the word qaul which means "to tell". Put very simply Qawwali is a form of devotional music. Music has not had a very orthodox role in Islam; orthodox Islam has a negative attitude towards music and dancing.(8)

The adoption of music and dance in Sufism is unclear and the origin of Qawwali is also very confusing. There have been many contradictory theories as to the origin of this mystic worship. Many believe that "Qawwali originated with the foundation of the Chisti order of Sufis in Khorosan [Eastern Persia] in the early tenth century and was brought to the Indian Sub-Continent in the twelfth century".(9) Others believe Qawwali's original creator to be specifically Hazrat(10) Amir Khusrou. There is also a theory that Qawwali came from Khorosan and was given its present form or was introduced to Ancient India by Hazrat Amir Khusrou.(11) Nonetheless it is generally agreed that Qawwali originated with the Chisti order of Sufism, and Hazrat Amir Khusrou(12) had an important part in its popularity in Ancient India. Qawwali has a specific goal besides just spreading the "messages" of Sufi saints. The singing or reading of the Koran is a way to make people more aware of its content. The Sufis felt that the best way to appeal to potential Indian converts was through singing the Koran rather than reading it. Singing and music had always been an integral part of Indian worship, thus Qawwali was an easy transition for them to adopt.(13)

"What makes music essential to Sufism is the sama, the central ritual of "listening to mystic songs - poems set to

music - as a means of spiritual advancement."(14) The "music" in Qawwali is vital, but more important is the effect that the music has on the listener.(15) Qawwali is seen as a medium through which a performer and listener can be transported closer to God. "Qawwali's ultimate goal [is] to facilitate a state of grace or enlightenment, of union with God, known as Wisal".(16) The only way to reach the state of Wisal is through music.

"Music is the vehicle to reach the heart and attain a state of grace or enlightenment, a 'stateless state' or 'Ma'rifat'(17)- the inner knowledge".(18)

END NOTES

(8)

Dancing has only become an integral part of one order of Sufism, the Mevleviyya. Ibn 'Abbad of Ronda. Letters on the Sufi Path. Trans. R.W.J. Austin. New York : Paulist Press, 1980.

(9)

Khan,Nusrat Fateh Ali. Shahen-Shah. Beverly Hills : Real World, 1990. 91300-2, compact disc and accompanying pamphlet.

(10)

A title of respect given to very important men that had spiritual authority and have passed away.

(11)

Khusrou was employed as a historian and poet in the courts of many kings, but his loyalty lay with Sheikh Khwaja Nizam-ud-Din Auliya, leader of the Chisti order of Sufis. He is also considered the "Father" of North Indian classical music.

(12)

Khusrou is accredited with inventing the Sitar, Tabla, Ghazal (a poetic love-song), and Khayal (A type of classical singing that literally means "imagination"). He is also acknowledged for introducing Persian and Arabic instruments to India, as well as inventing many new Raags.

(13)

The Hindus in the North already had their "Bhajan" and the south had the "Kriti". Much later, in the fifteenth century onwards, the Sikhs would develop their "Kirtan".

(14)

Qureshi, Regula Burckhardt et al. "Sufi Music and the History of Oral Tradition". Ethnomusicology and Modern

Music History. ed. Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman, & Daniel M. Neuman. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993. Pg. 107.

(15)

Ibid., Pg. 109

(16)

Hunt, Ken. Revelation-Ilham. Sutton, Surrey : Audio Rec, 1993. Pg. 3.

(17)

In my research I have found Wisal and Ma'rifat to be used synonymously, though I am positive that this is incorrect.

(18)

Khan, Shahan-Shah.

RMIM Archive Article "392".

Qawaali part 3

Posted by: Satish Subramanian

Source: Teginder Singh Dhanoa's paper in UC Davis

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Qawwali - Devotional Songs of the Sufi Mystics
(Structure)

by

Teginder Singh Dhanoa

--

Qawwali has a very set procedure of delivery. It is set in the North Indian semi-classical(19) singing style but has a touch of folk music in it. Being semi-classical, the singing of Qawwali relies upon sophisticated Raags(20), combined with exultant spontaneity.

Each Qawwali performance begins with a Nagma (an instrumental prelude). The main objective of the Nagma is to focus the listeners' attention to the music.

The Nagma is followed by the Alaap, which is an introductory verse sung solo with only one accompanying instrument. The purpose of the Alaap is to introduce the topic of the Qawwali to the present listeners.(21) Judging from the audience's response to the Alaap, the Qawwal has two options. If the response is favorable, the Qawwal can continue with the Qawwali he(22) started. If the response to the Alaap is not favorable, the Qawwal can start singing another Alaap on a different topic to see if it fares better with the devotees.

Each Qawwali, like the North Indian singing style, is based on a Raag. Also known as Raga or Ragan, the Raag is "an immensely intricate system of scales and associated melodic patterns. There are some 200 main Raags, each of which is defined by its unique combination of scale-pattern, dominant notes, specific rules to be obeyed in ascending or descending and certain melodic phrases associated with it."(23)

The Raag is a specific melody but improvisation is also accepted as long as it falls within the "rules" of each Raag. Raags have many origins, but most are derived from folk tunes and ballads. Certain individuals, such as Hazrat

Amir Khusrou, have been acknowledged for creating specific Raags. There are thousands of Raags in existence, but vocalists often sing only a handful that they have an affinity for.

The Raag sets the melody for a Qawwali, while the rhythm is derived from specific Taals. Taals are "specific structures expressed through cycles, which can be clapped out by hand. A Taal is made up of a number of beats (Matras), and each beat is defined by a combination of rhythm pattern and timbre."(24) Just as there are thousands of Raags in existence there are also thousands of Taals, but only a few are commonly used.

END NOTES

(19)

"The degree of musical purity is assigned according to a scale which has music at one extreme and words at the other. As words become more audible and thus the meaning of the lyrics more important, so the form is considered to be less musically pure."World Music : The Rough Guide. Ed. Simon Broughton, Mark Ellingham, David Muddyman and Richard Trillo. London : Rough Guides Ltd., 1994. Pg. 210.

(20)

For a definition of Raags please see the next paragraph or the sheet entitled "Raags" in the handout section.

(21)

Alaap in the Qawwali context differs from that of Classical music in the sense that an Alaap in classical music is a slow introduction used to introduce the notes of a Raag one by one.

(22)

Note that Qawwali singers are always male.

(23)

World Music, Pg. 212.

(24)

Ibid.

RMIM Archive Article "393".

Qawaali part 4

Posted by: Satish Subramanian

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Qawwali - Devotional Songs of the Sufi Mystics

(Instruments)

by

Teginder Singh Dhanoa

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The Raag is "obeyed" by the singers and the accompanying instruments. In Qawwali the original accompanist was the Sarangi, a fret-less bowed instrument which has an unknown origin of time or place.(25) It has a double belly, a wide finger board, and the hollow is covered by a parchment, usually deer skin. The whole instrument is carved from a single block of wood, including both finger-board and body. It has three or four main strings and anywhere up to forty sympathetic ones.

The Sarangi is said to be the closest instrument to the human voice in the world. Because of its unique characteristics, it is the most common accompanying instrument in Indian music. The instrument of one-hundred colors (the Sarangi's literal meaning) is also considered the hardest to play in the world. Accessibility is not a problem, as many Sarangi players are available.(26)

The problem of using the Sarangi in Qawwali is the time needed to re-tune the Sarangi between Qawwalis. Because each Qawwali is sung in a different Raag, the Sarangi has to be re-tuned every time which can take up to half an hour. The Sarangi was eventually replaced by a new accompanist, the Harmonium.

The Harmonium is a small, portable, hand-pumped organ introduced to South India by Christians in the seventeenth century. It "is pumped by moving the bellows at the rear with the left hand while playing the keyboard with the right."(27) Being much more portable and "practical" in Qawwali than the Sarangi, the Harmonium is now the main accompanist for Qawwalis.

The Harmonium replaced the Sarangi in keeping melody due to

its "practicality", but there is no data on why the Dholak(28) was replaced by the Tabla in keeping rhythm. "The Tabla is a set of two small drums played with the palms and fingertips capable of producing an incredible variety of sounds and timbres, in a range of about one octave."(29) The little drum, called the Tabla, provides the higher pitched notes and is usually played with the right hand. The larger drum is called the Bayan (which means left in Hindi) or Dhama in the Panjabi language. It provides the lower pitched sounds and is usually played with the left hand. With the beat of the Tabla and the hand-clapping of the chorus the Qawwali performance is able to reach an electrifying crescendo.

END NOTES

(25)

There are many theories, but it is generally agreed that the Sarangi had its origin in India.

(26)

The Sarangi started out as a folk instrument but eventually found its way into classical music.

(27)

Takako, Tanaka. "Pakistan - Continued" JVC video anthology of world music and dance. Japan : Victor Company of Japan, Ltd., 1988.

(28)

A small barrel-shaped drum with goatskin on both sides that is played with the fingers and palms.

(29)

World Music, Pg. 211.

RMIM Archive Article "394".

Qawaali part 5

Posted by: Satish Subramanian

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Qawwali - Devotional Songs of the Sufi Mystics
(Performance and Language)

by

Teginder Singh Dhanoa

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The main text of the Qawwali is sung in a universal style with the main Qawwal(30) singing a melodic line that is always reinforced by the Sarangi or Harmonium, and is then repeated by a chorus. After the Alaap, the chorus, hand-clapping and Tabla join in the performance.

Each line is repeated at least twice and some lines are repeated many times. "Lines and words are repeated [numerous times] until all meaning is exhausted and only the purity of the form remains."(31)

As the Qawwali goes on, the tempo and intensity build to electrifying heights where the concept of Zikr, repeating God's name over and over again, is usually initiated. During the process of Zikr, it is common for members of the audience to start to chant along with the Qawwals, to sway, to move their heads rhythmically, to enter a trance, or even fall into physical convulsions. "This is 'the state of mind' or 'hal' reached at the climax of the music and the point where money is showered on to the stage by the ecstatic audience."(32)

In ancient times there were often no physical stages. The Qawwals sat on the floor alongside the devotees. Nowadays it is not uncommon to see Qawwalis being performed on the biggest stages in the world and in the largest of arenas. Much has changed in Qawwali since its rise in popularity among non-Sufis. Whereas, traditionally, Qawwali was sung in Persian or Turkish, with an occasional word of Hindi(33), it is now sung in many languages. Urdu and Panjabi are the primary languages of Qawwali today, while others include Arabic(34), Hindi, and Pasho, along with the traditional Persian and Turkish.

No matter what language Qawwali is sung in, it has always had one common trait; the extensive use of idioms. The novice listener can be confused by the seemingly unorthodox lyrics about wine and love. What the layman does not understand is that wine is the "knowledge and love of God which intoxicates the initiate."(35) The reference of worldly love such as a woman longing to meet her beloved is a reference of man waiting to be reunited with the Almighty(36). The Sufis use their rustic life style and common ways to express their ideas to the masses. In their seemingly simple language, a spinning wheel can represent the cycle of births and deaths.(37)

While language is an important part of the Sama experience, it is not the most critical. A good Qawwal can transport an entire audience of foreigners to a state of Hal, even when they do not understand a single word of the Qawwali.(38) The foreign world was first introduced to Qawwali some hundred years ago when sound recording came to India.

END NOTES

(30)

Known as the Mohri.

(31)

Khan, Shahen-Shah.

(32)

Ibid.

(33)

Khan, Nusrat Fateh Ali. Allah Hoo. England : Oriental Star Agencies, 1993. CDSR068, compact disc and accompanying pamphlet.

(34)

Most Arabic texts are from the religious scriptures of the Muslims such as the Holy Koran or Hadith, a guide to life based on the lifestyle of the Prophet Mohammed (P.B.U.H). Arabic was never originally a language of Qawwali.

(35)

Browning, Robert H. "Introduction" The Art of Qawwal. New York : World Music Institute, 1993. Pg. 2.

(36)

The practice of using a woman's point of view to express mankind's love towards God is not new to the Indian Sub-continent. Many poems had been, and still continue to be written in that style. The Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of the Sikhs, is written in the same fashion.

(37)

The poem "Mera Yeh Charkha Nau Lakha" composed in the 16th - 17th century by the Panjabi poet Hazrat Baba Bulleh Shah is a perfect example of this style. The poem has the line:-

Har charkhey de garday main tenu yaad kardi

(With every turn of my spinning wheel I remember You.)

What seems a common phrase sung by women in remembrance of their husbands, is really a play on words. It deals with Man remembering God in each cycle of birth and death.

(38)

This is based on the account of Jaques Du Pont who said that Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was able to stir a three day audience of eighty thousand people into ecstasy, even when many did not understand a single word of what was being said.

Khan, Nusrat Fateh Ali. Interview with Jaques Du Pont. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan en Concert a Paris. Vol. 3,4,5. Paris : Ocora, 1989.

RMIM Archive Article "395".

Qawaali part 6

Posted by: Satish Subramanian

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Qawwali - Devotional Songs of the Sufi Mystics
(Recording and Concerts)

by

Teginder Singh Dhanoa

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In the early part of this century, sound recordings of Qawwalis were done in Bombay by the Gramophone Company of India.(39) Many foreign based companies also captured this art on record, such as the Berlin based Bumb & Kong who supposedly recorded over 300 cuts of Qawwali. America was first introduced to Qawwali in 1975 when The Asia Society organized the tour of The Sabri Brother Qawwals of Pakistan. They gave a second tour in 1978 to a sold out Carnegie Hall. The United States was once again reunited with Qawwali in 1989 during the Academy of Music's next Wave Festival.(40) In 1989 the United States was graced by, undoubtedly the greatest Qawwal alive, Qawwal Ustad(41) Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Khan-Sahib(42) hails from the illustrious Khan lineage of Sufi Qawwals that dates back to the twelfth century. He was born on 13 October, 1948 in Faisalabad, Pakistan. His grandfather was the illustrious Ustad Maula Baksh Ali Khan and his father was Ustad Fateh Ali Khan. Khan Sahib's rise to fame in such a short time (approx. 1970 to the present)(43) is due to his intense devotion to the music, his sophisticated style, and his unbelievable speed in reciting Raags. He has worked with famous western artists such as Peter Gabrielle and John Gabarack. He has also performed a song on the Soundtrack for "The Last Temptation of Christ", and has also worked with many artists in England.(44) Khan-Sahib has given concerts all over the world, including Japan, France, England and America (even as close as U.C. Berkeley). Although he has made many modern Qawwali tracks with the use of synthesizers and drums, Khan-Sahib still follows the centuries-old performance traditions when in concert.

It has been a custom for any Mehfil-e-Sama (concert of listening) to begin with a Hamd, a song in the praise of God, Allah. The next Qawwali is always a Naat-e-Kalaam, a song in the praise of Mohammed (P.B.U.H). The third Qawwali is always a Manqbat Ali, a song in the Praise of Hazrat Ali Sahib(45), which is usually the Qawwali, "Mun Kunto Maula."(46) After these first three obligatory Qawwalis have been sung(47), the Qawwal is free to chose any Qawwali he sees fit or is demanded by the audience(48). The program usually proceeds with a Manqbat dedicated to a saint, where Zikr of the saints name is repeated instead of "Allah".(49) During many modern Qawwali concerts, Qawwals also sing romantic songs, Ghazals, in the Qawwali style. The last Qawwali in a Mehfil is always "Raang" (literally translates as "Color"). It is a Qawwali in medieval Hindi, written and composed by Hazrat Amir Khusrou that celebrates Sheikh Khwaja Nizam-ud-Din Auliya accepting Hazrat Amir Khusrou as his disciple.

From the times of Hazrat Amir Khusrou, the singing of the first Qawwali in India to the present, Qawwali has not changed much in either its performance or its effect. Devotees still go to hear the texts of their Sufi saints sung by Qawwals, and many throughout the world are transported to the state of Wisal by the music of the Qawwals. Whether a Qawwali is sung on the marble floors of a mausoleum by a group of three Qawwals, by a group of ten in the famous "Theater de la Vile" in Paris, or even on the stage of "Zellerbach Auditorium" on the U.C. Berkeley campus, Qawwals are truly, as Ken Hunt put it, "Jellaluddin Rumi's(50) 'ecstatic singers in sacred taverns'."

END NOTES

(39)

Hunt, Pg. 5.

(40)

Browning, Pg. 1.

(41)

Ustad is a term of respect given to Muslim artists of the highest caliber, literally means "Teacher". The Hindu equivalent would be "Pandit", i.e. Pandit Ravi Shankar.

(42)

Also a title of respect.

(43)

Twenty-five years is a very short time when it comes to

achieving recognition as a good Qawwal.

(44)

Indo-British Disc Jockey and Remixer Bally Sagoo had the following to say about Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan after recording an album with him

"Nusrat's worldwide reputation as a professional was something I had been aware of before meeting him but one thing that is not generally known about him, was the ability to lay each track in one take, sheer brilliance".

Sagoo, Bally. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan - Magic Touch (Mixes). England : Oriental Star Agencies, 1993. CDSR030, compact disc and accompanying pamphlet.

(45)

Hazrat Ali was the son-in-law of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and his cousin. He is considered to be the first Sufi.

(46)

The first two lines of the Qawwali translate as

"Whoever accepts me as Master
Ali too is his Master".

These lines are from the religious text The Hadith, the sayings of the Prophet himself (P.B.U.H) and a guide to life based on his. The remainder of the Qawwali is written and composed by Hazrat Amir Khusrou.

Qureshi, Regula Burckhardt. Sufi Music of India and Pakistan : Sound, Context and Meaning in Qawwali. New York : Cambridge University Press, 1986. Pg. 21.

(47)

This is the general procedure for most Qawwali Mehfiles. In some shrines, such as that of Sheikh Khwaja Nizam-ud-Din Auliya, it is required that "Mun Kunto Maula" be the first Qawwali sung. Ibid.

(48)

Mehfiles at shrines have a slightly varying format, but I will only cover the more mainstream concerts.

(49)

This practice stems from the importance of Sufi saints in the origin of Islam in India, which is reflected by the pilgrimages made to their shrines. The names of many saints have been integrated in Qawwalis.

"Through the repetitive, hypnotic chanting of these names the believer follows the saints along the ecstatic path to heaven".

Khan, Shahan-Shah.

(50)

Hazrat Jellaluddin Rumi-Sahib (1207-1273) was a great mystic poet born in Balkh, Afghanistan. His family was exiled from Balkh by the approach of Genghis Khan's armies. They settled in Konya, Turkey where his father, Hazrat Bahauddin Veled became head of a Medrese (Dervish learning community). Rumi-Sahib eventually succeeded his father. Rumi-Sahib is accredited as being the founder of the wherling Dervishes. Rumi-Sahib's life completely changed when he met a mystic by the name of Hazrat Shams of Tabriz. Hazrat Shams of Tabriz was a wandering mystic who claimed to have had deep communication with God. Rumi-Sahib collected Hazrat Shams' works into many volumes. Rumi-Sahib's works are also available in numerous volumes.

RMIM Archive Article "396".

Qawaali part 7

Posted by: Satish Subramanian

Source: Teginder Singh Dhanoa's paper in UC Davis

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Qawwali - Devotional Songs of the Sufi Mystics
(Raag and Taal)

by
Teginder Singh Dhanoa

--

Raags

-

Raag: also known as Raga or Ragan.

A Raag is "a unique combination of scale-pattern, dominant notes, specific rules to be obeyed in ascending or descending order, and certain melodic phrases associated with it". Raags are associated with specific times of day, seasons, feelings, and can be either masculine or feminine. There are thousands of Raags in existence but only a few hundred are commonly used. A Raag uses the Indo-Pak musical scale which corresponds to the western scale as follows:

Indo-Pak Note Western Meaning

Sa	C	Do	The cry of the peacock
Ri	D	Re	The sound made by a cow calling her calf
Ga	E	Mee	The bleat of a goat
Ma	F	Fa	The cry of the heron, and the tonic note of nature
Pa	G	So	The note of the cuckoo or Kokila, the Indian nightingale
Dha	A	La	The neighing of a horse
Ni	B	See	The trumpeting of an elephant

An example of a Raag

Sa Ri Sa

Ni Sa Pa Ni Ma Pa

Ma Pa Ni Ga Re Ga Re

Sa Sa Sa Ri Ri Ri

Ga Ga Ga Ri Ri Ri

Sa Sa Sa Ri Ri Ri

Ga Ga Ga Ri Ri Ri

Sa Ri Sa Ga

Ri Ga Ri Ma

Pa Ma Ga Ma Ga Ri Sa

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Taals

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"Just as the Raag organizes melody, so the rhythm is organized by highly sophisticated structures expressed through cycles known as Taals, which can be clapped out by hand. A Taal is made up of a number of beats (matras), and each beat is defined by a combination of rhythm pattern and timbre".(1)

An example of a Taal

Drum Beats:	DADEE	NAKA	NAKA	DINA
	1	2	3	4
	DADEE	NAKA	NAKA	DINA2
	5	6	7	8

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(2)

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RMIM Archive Article "397".

Qawaali part 8

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Qawwali - Devotional Songs of the Sufi Mystics

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by

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Oriental Star Agencies, 1993. CDSR030, Compact Disc and accompanying pamphlet.

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Teginder Singh Dhanoa

"The Malwa Jatt"

RMIM Archive Article "23".

Instruments: "ABC of Keyboards"

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

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

WARNING: No attempt has been made at clarity in exposition nor is the treatment exhaustive. Comments/criticism most welcome. Flames will be amplified and returned. Anyone considering a serious study in Indian classical music would do well to never go near a keyboard during the first 6/8 years of your training.

Rajan

The Musical Scale:

Start with an arbitrary note on your keyboard of frequency, say f_1 .

Now progressively increase the frequency (effectively, moving towards the right on the keyboard) until you hit the note that is of a frequency $f_2 = 2 * f_1$. In doing so, you are said to have traversed one octave (saptak).

The octave is sub-divided into 12 notes (swaras) out of which 7 are called "shuddha" swaras, 4 are "komal" and 1 is "tivra."

The shuddha swaras (the "sa re ga ma" we are so familiar with) may be viewed as being the "integers" of the musical scale.

(The Western notation is provided merely for comparison and may be ignored). I am providing the terminology used in Hindustani system; be informed that the Carnatic system calls the swaras by slightly different names.

The Saptak

Hindustani Symbol	Symbol	Solfeggio
Swara Names		
Shadja (Sa)	-> S	-> Do -> C
Komal Rishab	-> r	-> C or Df
Shuddha Rishab (Re)	-> R	-> Re -> D
Komal Gandhaar	-> g	-> D or Ef
Shuddha Gandhaar (Ga)	-> G	-> Mi -> E
Shuddha Madhyam (Ma)	-> M	-> Fa -> F
Tivra Madhyam	-> m	-> F or Pf
Pancham (Pa)	-> P	-> So -> G
Komal Dhaivat	-> d	-> G or Af
Shuddha Dhaivat (Dha)	-> D	-> La -> A
Komal Nishad	-> n	-> A or Bf

Shuddha Nishad (Ni) -> N -> Ti -> B
 --

>From the table above, you will see that there are 4 komal swaras, viz., komal re, komal ga, komal dha and komal ni, and, one tivra swara, namely the tivra madhyam. The shuddha swaras are denoted by caps and the remaining 5 notes are denoted by lower case. (The "" and "f" under the Western notation denote the "sharp" and "flat" notes, respectively. For example, A is "A-sharp"; it is the same note as Bf (B-flat).)

To summarize: if you select any arbitrary key to be your Sa then the progression of notes in an octave will be:

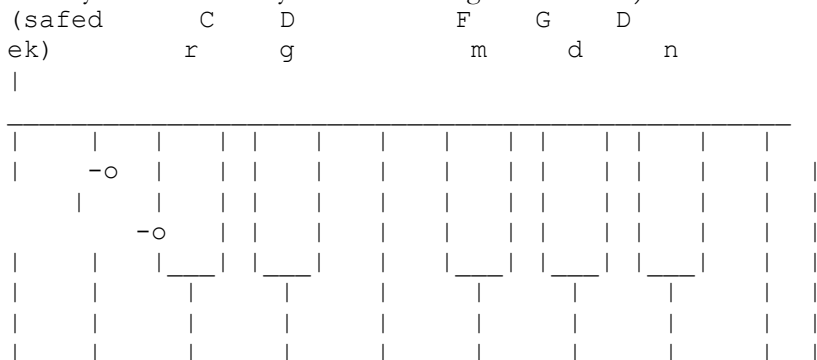
S r R g G M m P d D n N S"

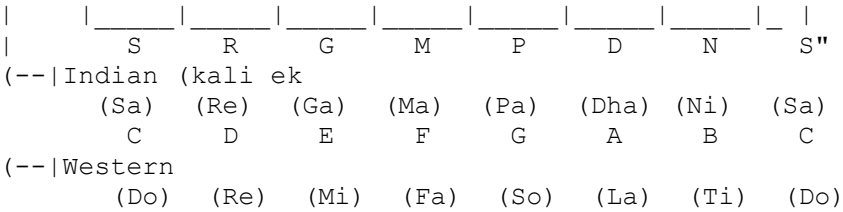
(The "" tagged to S indicates the Sa of the higher octave; that is, the frequency of S" is twice that of S). Now let's have a look at the keyboard itself.

The Keyboard:

The figure below shows a mapping of the octave on a keyboard along with the corresponding Indian and Western notation. All the twelve notes are indicated in the figure.

The "Safed Ek" (the first white key) is selected to be the Sa (also called the "tonic.") The corresponding swaras of the octave, then, are as shown. All the white keys will correspond to the shuddha swaras while the black keys will be the komal and the tivra swaras. (Western notation has been provided merely for comparison and may be ignored). There is nothing sacred about selecting Safed Ek as your tonic Sa. In other words, the Sa is not absolute. But once you establish your Sa, all the other notes assume recognition _with respect to the chosen Sa_ and fall into place accordingly. You could well have chosen Kali Ek key to be your Sa. As Homework Assignment 1, figure out what the corresponding shuddha swaras are with Kali Ek as the tonic. Do the same with Kali Chaar. (BTW, the Western nomenclature is fixed; that is, C always remains the key shown in the figure and so on).





Important: Note that the above configuration has been arrived at by fixing Safed Ek as the Sa. You could well select any other Sa and arrive at a different configuration. In HW 1, you are asked to make the r above (Kali Ek) as your new Sa and map out the resulting scale.

The Equally Tempered Scale:

--

At this point, a curious mind will ask: Why is the octave divided into 12 divisions? Why not more (or less)? After all, more the number of divisions, better the resolution. While these are perfectly legitimate questions the answers are not so straightforward. In the interest of keeping this discussion short I shall not go into the details of the origins and development of the musical scale. It is an interesting topic but will have to wait for another day. However, I shall briefly tell you how your keyboard scale is configured. As indicated earlier, from S to S'', the frequency ratio is 1:2. Our task is to divide the octave into 12 equal parts such that the interval from, say S to r and say, P to d, are equal. Let us denote this interval by x. Now, if you assign a value of 1 to S, the relative frequency of note r is x, R is x^{**2} , g is x^{**3} and so on. By the time you have hit S'', you end up with the equation $x^{**12} = 2$. The twelfth root of 2 is 1.0594 and therefore $x = 1.0594$. When the octave is divided in this manner (there are other ways too), the scale so obtained is known as the "equally tempered" or "tempered" scale. Most commercially available pianos and electronic keyboards employ this division scheme. (I should slip in the fact that to classical Indian music, this kind of division is anathema but we're not talking classical Indian music here and so...).

Once again, refer to the keyboard map above. What is typically done in your Casiotones or Yamahas is, the key A of the "central octave" is assigned a frequency of 440 Hz. With the ratio of 1.0594 obtained above and a pocket calculator, you can easily calculate the frequencies of all the notes in your "central octave." They turn out to be (approx):

C 261.6 Hz	F 349.3 Hz	B 493.8
D 293.3 Hz	G 392.0 Hz	C'' 523.2(2*261.6)
E 329.6 Hz	A 440 Hz	

The Grand Finale:

Now that you are done with all the foreplay it is time to prepare for the climax. That is, actually start playing a song on the damn keyboard. Before you do so, you need to recognize that Indian music is "melodic" in nature and that you will have to first extract the Sa out of any composition. Anybody with an ear for music can do this with a bit of practice. Once the base Sa has been identified you can then get into the act of notating the song. _This_ requires helluva lot of practice and years of musical training. One of the great things about Indian classical music is that it imbues in the musician the acuity to strip any piece of musical melody into its constituent sargam (notes) almost instantaneously. But this skill is by no means trivial to attain and is acquired only after several years of thinking and training in the art. Since you have confessed to being a puppy in sangeet-kshetra your best bet is to try getting a song right by simple trial-and-error if no notational information is available. Besides playing simple tunes, you can do a lot more with an electronic keyboard, like learn to play chord sequences etc. Maybe I'll tell you about it after you have gotten through the basics.

I am appending the notated version of "Madhuban Me Radhika" that I had posted some weeks back. As for your farmaiesh, I shall get you started on the opening syllables and leave it at that. At this point in time, I don't have the stomach (literally!) to notate the entire songs. Finally, I have not bothered to re-read my meanderings above so forgive me for any lapses. You will have to do some extrapolating to get the timings right.

1) Ek do teen char paanch..

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 1...1 1...2 1...3
 S R G... R G R G R S S R g R g R S
 (Which luminary wrote these lyrics?)

2) Maine tere liye hi saath rang ke..

D P R G R G M P

3) Zindagi ek safar hai suhaanaa..

g R S g R S S R g M

4) Madhuban me Radhika..

Asthaaie:

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

P m
P G M

ma dhu ba na me ra - aa
dhi ka - aa

(N)D . N . S" . Pm P G M R . G
MD P .

na - che - re - gi ri dha ra ki mu ra
li ya -

G M R . S .

ba aa je - re -

Antaraa:

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

P P P N
D N .

pa ga me
ghun ga ru -

S" . S" S" N D N D N
S" R" .

ba an dha ke - - - - ghung ta - mu
kha pa ra

N S" D P . . (G)MR P P (D)N D N
D N S"

da aa ra ke - - nai - na na me - ka
ja ra la

N D P . DN (R") S"

ga aa ke - re -

Rajan Parrikar

Some more additions to the Keyboard concepts by Rajan (from another post of his):

- > Now here's my question : is the keyboard typically made to follow
- > human voice? Normally, (being a natural system), one would expect
- > human voice to be capable of a continuous variation of frequency and
- > not the discrete steps that a keyboard provides. If so, is it true
- > that the keyboard plays an approximation of human voice when used to
- > accompany a singer (or is it that the singer is expected to tune
- > herself to the instrument)?

Let me try and keep this brief:

Yes, the octave is a continuum of frequencies and the keyboard essentially discretises this continuum. In principle, we would require an infinite number of points (and hence, keys) to accurately model the octave. Fortunately, the response of the human ear makes this 'hair-splitting' unnecessary. The following passage from an article I had posted eons ago expands on this point very nicely:

~From: The MUSIC OF INDIA: A SCIENTIFIC STUDY by B. CHAITANYA DEVA

(Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.) first published in 1981, Chapter 8.

".....Also, by modern experiments with pure tones, it has been found that a normal ear can discern a difference of nearly three cps to five cps in pitch. That is, if there is a tone of 240 cps and another of 243 cps or 237 cps, the latter will be heard as different in pitch. But if the other tone is, say, 241 cps or 239 cps, the ear cannot distinguish between this and 240 cps. Of course, this is under experimental conditions with very accurate instruments in the laboratory with pure tones! But under ordinary conditions with complex tones the differentiation will be definitely less. Again, even if the number of different pitches within an octave which the ear can make out may be more than 22, they may not be 'musically' different or significant.

In this connection we may refer to an experiment by Ellis

(England, 19th Cent.)(6). He took a stretched string with moveable bridges under it. By moving the bridges, the length of the vibrating string could be altered, thus changing the pitch of its sound. He found that to produce a just noticeable difference in the pitch of the string he had to shorten the length of the string by $1/32$ of its *previous* length. For instance, let the wire be 1024 mm. long. Let this be Sa. To get the next just noticeable pitch reduce the length by $1/32$ of this, that is by $1024/32$. The new length is 996 mm. The next length to produce a just noticeable difference in pitch will be $31/32$ of this new length, i.e., $996 \times 31/32$ 964 mm. The next note will have a length $31/32$ of this, i.e., $964 \times 31/32$ 928 mm. and so on, till we get Sa' with length 512 mm.

We know that string length is inversely proportional to frequency. So, every time we decrease the length by $31/32$ of the previous value, we are increasing the frequency by $32/31$ of its previous value. If we actually calculate the number of such steps possible from Sa to Sa' we will find that there are nearly 22! (For those who want to calculate these, here is the method. Let Sa be l. The next audible 'note' will be $l \times 32/31$. The third audible note will be $(l \times 32/31) \times 32/31$. The fourth audible note will be $(l \times 32/31 \times 32/31) \times 32/31$, and so on. Now, Sa'. How many steps of $32/31$ will it require to get Sa'? Let this number be n. Then $l \times (31/32)^n = l/2$ and $n \approx 22$ or very nearly 22.)....."

There have been harmoniums designed that incorporate 22 keys but were so clumsy to be practicable that they are now extinct. Most of the modern keyboards employ the division scheme you have cited (based on the 12th root of 2) and this is known as the equally-tempered scale. There are other possible ways of division (the so-called justly-intoned scale, for example, which uses the frequency ratios of smallest integers). The motivation for the equally-tempered scale was the ease with which you could handle harmony (chords) on the keyboard (Why? Think about it).

The genius of Indian music lies in its recognition AND implementation of the fine microtonal intervals between two pure tones. These issues were well-understood and developed by the ancient Hindus and form the bedrock of our Raga-based music. This can be justifiably claimed as one of the greatest contributions of Bharat to the global civilization.

Since the keyboard is an approximation of the frequency continuum, it is ill-equipped to handle the intricacies and nuances of melodic Indian music and although the harmonium finds currency today as an accompanying instrument in Hindustani classical music, its limitations

and deficiencies are known to the musicians. A good harmonium accompanist will, therefore, maintain a volume low enough so as to not intrude the main melodic vocal line, and will stick his neck out only when the vocalist pauses (Contrary to popular belief, the harmonium is not an Indian instrument though it primarily survives in India today; it was brought into India by the Christian missionaries around the 18th century).

As an aside, we take pot-shots at Lata Mangeshkar today, but it was this divine gift of high-shruti resolution and precision that distinguished her from the rest of the flock. So great was her ability in her prime that even formidable classical people were known to be awed. Kumar Gandharva, for example, once remarked with a flourish: "I have been blessed with just the Sa and Pa in my voice, but Lata! she has them all!" To paraphrase Vamanrao Deshpande, author of 'Indian Musical Traditions', "it is as if Lata holds all the secrets of nada in her throat." What they were talking about was the ability at the precision in intonation. Try duplicating some of her earlier classical-based songs on a keyboard and marvel at your impotence:-) So to summarise: No, the harmonium or a keyboard cannot accurately follow or simulate all that the human voice is capable of. A good player, however, can, with dexterity of his fingers, do a good-enough job at reproducing the human voice output.

If one is serious about Indian vocal music, it is best to never go near a harmonium in the formative years of one's training. Why, it should be apparent from the above discussion.

> Also, are there any instruments capable of a continuous frequency > variation?

Oh yes, most of the stringed instruments - sitar, sarod, violin (NOT santoor, however!). Wind instruments like the flute have the ability too.

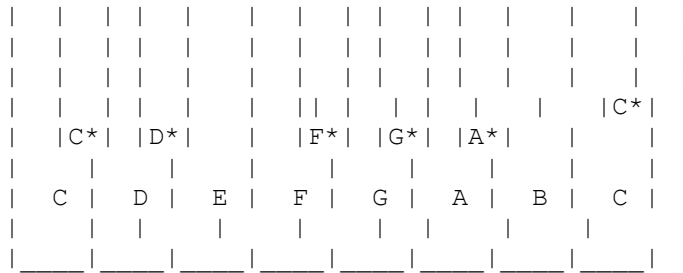
Rajan Parrikar



What we do is we "diminish" the 2nd and 3rd intervals by one semitone!! So, instead of E you play D* and instead of G, you play F*!! That A is optional!! This diminished chords were once very famous in the Stage Drama circles... Try pressing these notes one by one.. you get that "Suspense" effect!!!

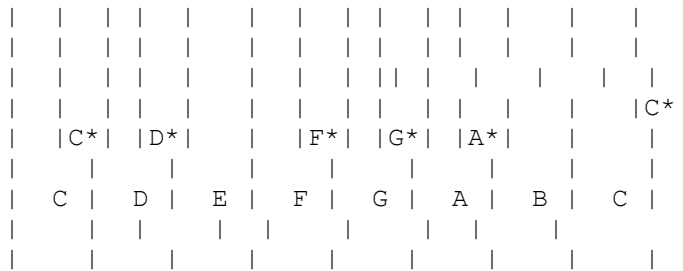
Lets see how D dim goes!!

D MAJOR



D dim:

D MAJOR



Pretty cool eh! Yeah.. thats it!

OK.. The next part will have 4th and some other notes on miscellaneous chords!!

Enjsoooooyyyyyyyyyy.....

With Smiles

Anand

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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