



THE ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS & MUSIC

presents

FROM PAKISTAN

USTAD

SALAMAT ALI KHAN

FOREMOST EXPONENT OF SHAM-CHAURASI TRADITION

CONCERT OF NORTH INDIAN CLASSICAL VOCAL MUSIC



with

SHARAFAT ALI KHAN LATAFAT ALI KHAN
VOCAL VOCAL

GHULAM ABBAS
TABLA

GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC & DRAMA

FRIDAY 26th NOVEMBER 1982 at 7.30 p.m.



MANAGEMENT: THE ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS & MUSIC
46 BEAUFORT AVENUE, KENTON, MIDDLESEX, HA3 8PF

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The Academy of Performing Arts & Music



**USTAD SALAMAT ALI KHAN
SHARAFAT ALI KHAN
LATAFAT ALI KHAN
GHULAM ABBAS**

Management: The Academy of Performing Arts
& Music

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Sound: Dave Foister
G. S. M. D.

PROGRAMME

Part A Light Classical Vocal
Latafat Ali Khan
Ghulam Abbas (Tabla)

Part B Khayal Hindustani
Classical Vocal
Ustad Salamat Ali Khan
Sharafat Ali Khan
Latafat Ali Khan
Ghulam Abbas (Tabla)

INTERVAL 15 minutes

Part C Khyal

Part D Khyal

Part E Thumri

Part F Dadra

Management Office:
A.P.A.M.
C/o 46 Beaufort Avenue
Kenton
Middlesex
HA3 8PF



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The Academy of Performing Arts & Music specializes in the classical traditional folk music (including Tribal and Ritual music). Performing and Dramatic Arts from the following areas:

- (i) S. Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh etc.)
- (ii) S.E. Asia (Bali, Java, Thailand)
- (iii) Far-East (Japan, China, Korea)
- (iv) Africa (Central, West, North and East Africa)
- (v) Central and Latin America
- (vi) Middle East



The Academy of Performing Arts & Music Past Present and the Future

Over a short period of three years audiences throughout Europe have seen and enjoyed some of the most powerful colourful and very authentic musical and dance traditions. Never before art forms of other countries have generated so much excitement and interest. Leading press have acclaimed many of such presentations.

Amongst the many organisation that have played an active role in bringing these creative art forms to Europe has been the Academy of Performing Arts & Music. In 3 years 19 major series comprising of some 85 programmes have been presented including 58 of these in the U.K.

Many eminent artists and companies have performed before discerning audience amongst those included were Ali Akbar Khan, Vilayat Khan, the Dagar Brothers, Shiv-Kumar-Sharma, Hari-Prasad Chaurasia, Prof. V. G. Jog, Dr. L. Subramaniam, Amjad Ali Khan, Inrat Khan, Zakir Hussain, Swapan Chaudhury, Latif Ahmed Khan and the Kathakali Dance Company of Kerala Kalamandalam—All from India. Others included were Ghulam Ali from Pakistan, Essa Kassimi from Afghanistan, Amadu Bansang Joberteh from Gambia, Shozan Kimura and Rie Yanagisawa from Japan.

We shall continue to concentrate on S. Asia but at the same time art forms from other countries—some never ever seen before are currently being planned.

The Academy of Performing Arts and Music will not only function as a promoting organisation but will also strengthen one of its original objective: the advancement of education on various musical & cultural traditions. This objective will be achieved by diversified activities through a wide range of phonographic monographs, visual aid productions. In each series of presentations will also include seminars—lecture demonstrations by visiting musicians, musicologists, scholars. These activities will take in-residencies at various centres for art, universities.

In order to fulfill some of our aims and objectives the Academy of Performing Arts & Music effective January 1983 will have a new management structure. It is hoped by this new management a better service can be offered to all those concerned.

Promotion of classical and traditional performing arts and music without adequate subsidy and support is a very difficult nerve-racking undertaking, as it has been in our case.

During the last 3 years (1980-1982) the Academy of Performing Arts & Music have lost some £30,000. In spite of achieving high artistic standards we did not receive any form of subsidy or support though badly needed from government funding agencies and business institutions. We were however very grateful to the directors of the Threshold Foundation, Mr. James George, Mr. Harold Wicks & Dr. Mitchell Crites, and from Spink & Son, Miss Francesca Galloway and Mr. Michael Spink and finally Mr. Bashir Mohamed for their valuable support.

The high deficit incurred over the period was one of the reasons for our untimely absence from the Festival of India 1982.

Traditional, classical, folk, tribal, ritual music, performing and dramatic arts together form an integral part of life. These art

forms are very beautiful and remain so distinct that it enables one to identify a cultural tradition of each country and its people.

Nearly all British arts including opera classical music ballet/dance are heavily subsidised both by the government and business institutions. The same pattern is also being carried out elsewhere in Europe. We at the Academy cannot count on the slack attitude being taken up by normal supporting institutions, donors for other art forms. We therefore appeal to respective governments, business institutions and communities of each area we cover to come forward and help support our programmes.

The Academy of Performing Arts & Music was created to foster understanding between various cultural traditions. All cultures and artistic traditions have sought the same thing, to express the inner experiences of richness, happiness, completeness and of joy. The Academy since its inception have brought out these creative experiences, and these in turn have established creative contact with the audiences.

We will continue to bring the various art forms live before you and we hope these creative experiences form part of the mainstream cultural life in Europe.

1983 SEASON

SELECTIONS FROM PAKISTAN, INDIA, BANGLADESH, AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST ARE CURRENTLY BEING PLANNED

We look forward to your support for people most responsible for this phenomenon are you the audience. Your support in form of mailing/associate membership is vital and together we can do much work.

Jay P. Visva-Deva
Director A.P.A.M.

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- * Academy's Newsletter
- * Lecture—Demonstrations for interested groups
- * Special screening of art and music films
- * Special private performances are offered at the pleasure of donors, patrons and benefactors
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Ustad Salamat Ali Khan

Ustad Salamat Ali Khan of Pakistan (B. in 1934) is a top-class classical singer of the sub-continent and has had a widespread fame throughout Europe and Asia. He learnt the art of singing from his father, the late Ustad Vilayat Ali Khan.

Continuous practice, hard work and utmost devotion for the past 35 years elevated him to a matchless position in the sub-continent and he is now one of the most revered vocalists of the country. At the age of 9 he performed his debut with his brother Nazakat Ali Khan.

In 1945 he was invited to participate in All-India Music Conferences held at Calcutta, Allahabad and Gwalior. In 1946 Nawab Zaheer Yar Jang invited him to give some performances at Hyderabad Deccan and eventually he also attended the Delhi Music Conference. He is the first vocalist of the sub-continent who has continuously been invited to give performances in Calcutta Music Conference for 10 years—1956 to 1965. At Calcutta in 1966, he was awarded the Gold Medal for being the best vocalist of the sub-continent in the presence of many a great master of the art. In 1960, he was awarded President's Award—Pride of Performance. In 1963, he visited Russia on an official tour, leading a delegation of famous vocalists and instrumentalists of Pakistan. His performances at Tashkent, Baku, Irvaan, Stalingrad and Moscow were highly appreciated by the local newspapers and the Pravda. In 1969, he went to England and gave performances at Edinburgh Festival in Scotland and thereafter in four cities in Holland.

In 1970, he was invited to perform at Berlin Music Festival and thereafter he gave performances at Cologne. He also inaugurated a 12-day Asian Music Festival in West Germany in which many Asian countries participated. In 1971, King Mahendra of Nepal invited him to attend the Crown Prince's marriage ceremony. In 1974, Ustad Salamat alone went to perform at Berlin Music Festival and from there he was invited to attend Holland Music Festival. In 1977, Salamat Khan participated at Rome Music Festival and in 1977 he also gave performances at the Edinburgh Festival.

Ustad Salamat Ali Khan has a rich and powerful voice with a range of over 3 octaves. He sings with great depth of expression and with extraordinary virtuosity. He will be accompanied by his son, Sharafat Ali Khan. This is Salamat Ali Khan's first public recital in London and this concert is the first of its kind at The Guildhall School. It is a fitting tribute to a great artist as Indian Classical Music is currently being taught at this school—which is also an important place of learning

Academy of Performing Arts & Music Presentations

1980 Season

MARCH 21	VASANT RAI—SAROD MAHATMA GANDHI HALL	LONDON
	SHIV KUMAR SHARMA—SANTOOR	
	HARI PRASAD CHAURASIA—FLUTE	
	ZAKIR HUSSAIN—TABLA	
APRIL 28	BATH UNIVERSITY	BATH
APRIL 29	COLSTON HALL	BRISTOL
APRIL 30	UNIVERSITY CHURCH, ST. MARY	OXFORD
MAY 1	ST. JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE	LONDON
MAY 2	COLLEGIATE THEATRE	LONDON
	AMADU BANSANG JOBAREH—KORA	
	KUYA KUYATEH—VOICE	
	MANDINKA MUSIC FROM THE GAMBIA	
MAY 15	ST. JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE (Part of European Tour)	LONDON
	DAGAR BROTHERS—VOICE WITH GOPAL DAS—	
	EXPONENTS OF DHRUAPAD SINGING	
JULY 5	INSTITUTE OF INDIAN CULTURE	LONDON
JULY 11	MANDEER RAVI SHANKAR HALL	LONDON
JULY 12	LIBRARY THEATRE	MANCHESTER
JULY 13	THE GUILD	LONDON
AUG 5	DARTINGTON COLLEGE OF ARTS, SUMMER SCHOOL	DARTINGTON
AUG 9	THE GUILD	LONDON
	USTAD IMRAT KHAN—SITAR/SURBAHAR	
	NISHAT KHAN—SITAR, LATIF AHMED KHAN—TABLA	
JULY 26	ST. JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE	LONDON
	USTAD AMJAD ALI KHAN—SAROD	
	SABIR KHAN—TABLA	
OCT. 31	LOGAN HALL	LONDON
NOV. 1	MANDEER RAVI SHANKAR HALL	LONDON
NOV. 2	THE GUILD	LONDON
NOV. 3	ALL SOULS COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD	OXFORD

1980 European Tour

	USTAD ALI AKBAR KHAN—SAROD	
	ZAKIR HUSSAIN—TABLA, L. SUBRAMANIAM—VIOLIN	
	V. K. RAO—MRIDANGAM	
NOV. 18-19	STOCKHOLM, OSLO, COPENHAGEN	SCANDINAVIA
NOV. 20*	EDINBURGH	U.K.
NOV. 22	LONDON	U.K.
NOV. 23	BRISTOL	U.K.
NOV. 26	GENEVA	SWITZERLAND
NOV. 29	AMSTERDAM	HOLLAND
DEC. 1	PARIS	FRANCE
DEC. 2*	PARIS	FRANCE
DEC. 4	BRUSSELS	BELGIUM
DEC. 5	BASLE	SWITZERLAND
DEC. 6	ROME	ITALY
DEC. 9	MILAN	ITALY

*Footnote: Dr. L. Subramaniam—Violin, & V. Karna Kara Rao

1981 Season

	USTAD VILAYAT KHAN—SITAR	
	LATIF AHMED KHAN—TABLA	
MAY 31	QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL	LONDON
	PROTIMA BEIN & MUSICIANS	
	ORISSI DANCE RECITAL	
JUNE 6	COLLEGIATE THEATRE	LONDON
	USTAD VILAYAT KHAN—SITAR	
	LATIF AHMED KHAN—TABLA	
JULY 11	LOGAN HALL	LONDON
	RIE YANAGISAWA KOTO	
	SHOZAN KIMURA SHAKUHOCHI	
JULY 13	PURCELL ROOM	LONDON
	GHULAM ALI & MUSICIANS	
SEPT. 19	QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL	LONDON

Music of India Series 81

OCT. 8-11	LOGAN HALL	LONDON
	V. G. JOG, SHIVKUMAR SHARMA,	
	HARI PRASAD CHAURASIA,	
	ZAKIR HUSSAIN, ANAND BANERJEE,	
	AJAY CHAKRAVORTY, VIJAY KICHELU,	
	MALABIKA KANAN, SULTAN KHAN	

	22 MEMBER DANCE COMPANY	
	KERALA KALAMANDALAM	
NOV. 3-8	LOGAN HALL (Part of European Tour 1981)	LONDON
	USTAD ALI AKBAR KHAN	
	SWAPAN CHAUDHURY—TABLA	
NOV. 21	LOGAN HALL (Part of British Tour 1981)	LONDON
NOV. 28	BRUNEL T. COLLEGE HALL	BRISTOL
DEC. 1	PUMP ROOM	BATH
DEC. 2	GREAT HALL	DARTINGTON
DEC. 4	CONCERT HALL	CAMBRIDGE
DEC. 5	REYNOLD THEATRE	MANCHESTER

1982 Season

MARCH 24	CAMDEN FESTIVAL—ROUND HOUSE	LONDON
	SHIVKUMAR SHARMA, ZAKIR HUSSAIN	
	HARI PRASAD CHAURASIA	
JULY 23	ROUND HOUSE	LONDON
	MUSIC FROM AFGHANISTAN & INDIA	
	ESSA KASSIMI (RABAB)	
	AMJAD ALI KHAN (SAROD)	
NOV. 26	GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC & DRAMA	LONDON
	USTAD SALAMAT ALI KHAN, GHULAM ABBAS	
	SHARAFAT ALI KHAN, LATIFAT ALI KHAN	



Khyal: Professor M. R. Gautam

While the 'Dhrupada' was a purely classical form, the 'Khyal' was a classico-romantic form incorporating the classicism of the 'Dhrupada' and the romanticism of the 'Thumari'. 'Khyal' eschewed some of the redundant rigidities of the 'Dhrupada' and imbibed some of the aesthetic excellences of the 'Thumari'. For instance, the practice of singing the composition, while marking the 'tala' with one's own hand, as was done while singing the 'Dhrupada', was given up. Instead, the 'tabla' player maintained the 'Tala' in which the 'Khyal'-vilambita or druta—was composed by using suitable 'bols' (rhythmic syllables) to give the 'Tala' a distinct and separate structure and form similar in some respects to that of the 'Raga'.

Before we discuss the impact of this form of music since the seventeenth century, it will not be out of place to go into the evolution of the 'Khyal'. 'Khyal', according to several scholars, is an invention of Amir Khusro. If we examine this claim dispassionately, we will have to determine whether 'Khyal' was an exotic plantation or an indigenous evolutive. From the evidence available in India and Iran, there does not seem to have been a form in Iran similar to the 'Khyal'. But one definitely finds clear and exhaustive descriptions in musical texts of the thirteenth century, chiefly the 'Sangitaratnakara' of Sarangdeva, of 'rupakalapti', 'sthayabhanjani', 'rupakabhanjani', etc. From the descriptions of the above terms it is evident that the 'Khyal' was a 'natural evolutive' of Indian music, because the actual rendering of the 'Khyal' is very similar to the description of 'rupakalapti' and 'rupakabhanjani' given in 'Sangitaratnakara'. Of course, Khusro was a very imaginative and artistic personality. He was undoubtedly drawn towards Indian classical music. During his time, i.e., between the middle of thirteenth century to the beginning of the fourteenth, being a renowned poet in Persian and a Sufi, he composed several types of poems like 'Qasids', 'Rubayi' etc. and set some of these poems in easy simple rhythms. It appears that 'Qawwali' form was born in this manner and was a contribution of Amir Khusro. As he was Sufi and a disciple of the famous Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia, he used to listen to plenty of devotional music, of which 'qawwali' was one. It is likely that he tried an experiment of composing a form based on the 'qawwali'. Later on, he improved on the above compositions and may have called them 'Khyals'. But the renowned Hindi scholar and art critic, Rai Krishna Das feels that the word 'khyal' occurs in Hindi literature as a corruption of the word 'Keli' in Sanskrit, e.g., in a poem of Beni, relative of Asani—17th century A.D., the word occurs as 'rasakhyal'. There is, of course, no outright evidence to ascribe the contribution of the word 'Khyal' to Amir Khusro, because in none of his works is there any reference to this word. There is also no reference to 'Khyal' in any of the works of the famous chroniclers who were his contemporaries. Even assuming that Amir Khusro gave this form, it seems to have died a very early natural death as the Khusro 'Khyal' modelled on the 'Qawwali' form went out of vogue along with Amir Khusro's passing away. It lacked the classical base of the 'prabandha' which was then the staple classical form and so it was frowned upon by classical musicians. They refused to take to it and hence it disappeared. In the subsequent centuries till the sixteenth, the 'Khyal' was not to be seen; the 'Dhrupada' took the place of the 'prabandha' and was the main classical form. One does find a reference to the 'Khyal' in 'Aine-e-Akbari', the magnificent chronicle of Abul Fazl. But in the early 16th century A.D., Ibrahim Shah Shirki of Jaunpur, a great patron of music, was fascinated by a particular

form of 'prabandha' which was called the 'Chutkula prabandha'. Ibrahim Shah Shirki also appears to have felt the need of a new form of classical music which would offer more scope for improvisation to the musician than was offered by the 'prabandha' and the 'Dhrupade'. Sultan Ibrahim Shirki, father of Sultan Ibrahim Shah Shirki, defeated the Raja of Kara, a place about forty miles south of Veni (the present Allahabad) in 1406. The Raja's son, who was a great patron of music, was in the middle of making elaborate arrangements for a music conference which he called 'Pandita Mandale'. He requested Sultan Ibrahim Shirki to spare him his kingdom and enable him to conduct the conference. The Sultan agreed to his request on the condition that he embrace Islam. The Raja agreed, was converted, and became known as Bahadur Mallik. He held the conference and brought out the valuable work known as 'Pandita Mardali'. Unfortunately, this is not available, but there are references to it and quotations from it in the work of later authors. It appears that Sultan Ibrahim Shah Shirki further developed the work of Bahadur Mallik and was successful, and thus the second phase of the 'Khyal' came to being.

Abul Fazl also refers to the 'Chutkula Prabandha' and explicitly states that it was being sung in Jaunpur. Even this form of the 'Khyal' was not acceptable to the classical musicians of that period as they were not prepared to countenance the liberties taken by this form over the 'Prabandha'. Therefore, Sultan Shirki's 'Khyal', although comparatively strongly based on classical foundations, did not come up to the exacting standards of the classical musicians of his time. This form of 'Khyal' may be said to be something like the modern 'Madhyalaya Khyal'. But it was in its infancy, and naturally lacked maturity of structure and improvisation. It was based on the 'Chutkula Prabandha' but deviated from it in the latitude given for free elaboration. As time advanced, however, this version got more approbation from scholars and musicians than the earlier version, the Khusravi 'Khyal' based on 'Qawwali', had received. Unfortunately, examples of these two versions are hardly available. While there are a couple of Khusravi 'Khyals' available, and even published by Bhatkhande in his 'Kramika Pustaka Malike', examples of Sultan Shirki's 'Khyal' are not available.

The third and final phase of the evolution of the 'Khyal' was in the eighteenth century, when two great 'vaggeyakaras'—Sadarangana and Adarangana—took up the task of composing 'Khyals' on the solid foundations of the 'Dhrupada'. Both these musicians were exponents of 'Dhrupada gayaki'. Sadarangana was a direct descendant of Tansen through the latter's daughter. Although Adarangana was not related to Sadarangana, being a contemporary and equally eminent as a 'vaggeyakara', he began to be linked with the latter. Sadarangana and Adarangana trained several disciples in rendering the 'Khyal', but appear to have never themselves taken to this style. They remained till the end faithful to the 'Dhrupada gayaki'. This version of the 'Khyal' by Sadarangana and Adarangana caught the fancy of their contemporaries. It offered them not only the sound classical base of the 'Dhrupada' but also freed them from the manifold fetters of structural, rhythmic and textual restrictions. This version opened up a vista of artistic improvisation unprecedented in its vastness of scope.

This was a period of Muslim domination with an unfortunate discouragement to Sanskrit and Hindu tradition. This version of the 'Khyal' was in a way a compromise between the orthodox Hindu tradition and the nascent trend of liberalism in the arts, especially in music. This liberalism can be said to be a direct result of the Muslim influence. This influence definitely had a salutary effect on Indian music, especially Hindustani music. It enriched it enormously by introducing some of the salient and beneficial features of Persian music and also by allowing

musicians much scope for artistic and aesthetic expression. The 'Khyal' slowly took firm root in the musical soil and began displacing its predecessor, the 'Dhrupada'. The 'Khyal' style also gave an opportunity to musicians who were merely competent performers without any literary background, to indulge in compositions. This tendency resulted in a sharp decline in literary excellence. In fact, there was considerable deterioration in textual values. The compositions lost all the gravity and profundity of thought which were found in the 'Dhrupada'. The texts of the 'Khyals', except for the compositions of people like Sadarangana, Adarangana, Manarangana, Krishna Das and a few others, descended to such mundane inartistic levels that they merely depicted and described the internal family squabbles between mother-in-law, sister-in-law and daughter-in-law and others. This was indeed a regrettable introduction of bathos in the portrayal of the most important of 'rasas, srngara-rasa'. However, what was lost on the literary side was made up on the expressive side.

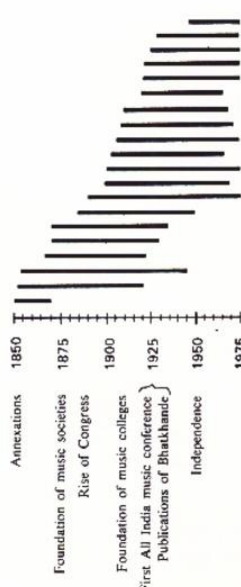
In due course, the 'Khyal' edged the 'Dhrupada' out of the field and became the principal form of classical music in North India. Of course, it kept on adding new facets to itself. For example, the earlier rigidity of structure in its strict adherence to the various words of the text to the respective 'matras' of the 'tala' as it was done in the case of the 'Dhrupada', was considerably relaxed. The rendition of the 'Khyal' assumed a more expansive and flexible character without infringing any of the essential classical injunctions.

The other improvements in the 'Khyal' were the introduction of 'tana, bolatana', additional 'gamakas' like 'gitkiri, zamzama, tripucha, khatka, tirippa (murki)' etc., and the adoption of the aesthetic expressiveness of the 'Thumari' in its 'bolupaj', or creative variations of the words of the composition with appropriate combinations of notes, to augment the content of the words. The advent of this aspect in the 'Khyal' brought about significant 'sentimental' enrichment. It also introduced more fluidity and flexibility in rendition.

Today, the 'Khyal' is rich in its inheritance, having combined in one way or another the cardinal aspects of practically all forms of Hindustani music from the 'Dhrupada' to the 'Thumari' and 'Tappa'. Some well-known musicians of today have also introduced into the 'Khyal' inflections and embellishments of the 'ghazal' and of folk music.

Chronology

Parveen Sultana (b. 1948)
Kishori Amonkar (b. 1931)
Kumar Gandharva (b. 1924)
Bhimsen Joshi (b. 1922)
Siya Ram Tiwari (b. 1921)
Moinuddin Khan Dagar (1920-1967)
Amir Khan (1912-1973)
Mallikarjun Mansur (b. 1910)
Ram Chatur Mallick (b. 1905)
Bare Gulam Ali Khan (1903-1965)
Dilip Chandra Veda (b. 1901)
Omkanth Thakur (1897-1967)
Kesar Bai Kerkar (1892-1977)
Faiyaz Khan (1886-1950)
Abdul Karim Khan (1872-1937)
Vishnu Digambar Paluskar (1872-1931)
Bhaskar Rao Bakhle (1869-1922)
Alladiya Khan (1865-1946)
Rahmet Khan (1853?-1922)
Haddu Khan (?-1870)



Thumari: Professor M. R. Gautam

After the 'Khyal', the next important form is the 'Thumari'. This form had its origin several centuries ago. In fact, in Kalidasa's 'Malavikagnimitra' there is a description of how Malavika danced beautifully before the king to the accompaniment of a song whose theme she portrayed through various aesthetic gestures (abhinaya). Thus it is reasonable to say that the form now known as 'Thumari' must have had its beginning in dance and perhaps drama. But the word 'Thumari' is of very recent origin. One does not find any reference to this word older than, say, a hundred and seventy-five years.

The word 'Thumari', according to the standard lexicon of Hindi usage, the Hindi 'Sabdasagara' of Kasi Nagari Pracarani, has been defined as a small gita, i.e., a song with two movements and one 'antara'. The other meaning given to this term is 'rumour' or 'gossip'. The dictionary does not give the etymology adequately, but the root of the word is clear. It is 'thum' or 'thumaka', and denotes the kind of dancing and prancing that is associated with children generally. It also denotes, according to the 'Sabdasagara', coquetry—an air of pride or conceit with all its delicate emotive nuances 'thasaka'. The suffix 'ri' is used in the possessive sense of 'pertaining to', like 'Kisan Rukmani ri beli' and 'hama-ri' in the Vraja dialect. This is how Shri Chandra Shekhar Pant has derived the word 'Thumari', and I feel that it is the most satisfying derivation. The word 'Thumari', meaning 'of small stature', has also some bearing. Looking at all these definitions and the general etymology, 'Thumari' is suggestive of a song which is small in size and is associated with dance and all its delicate movements. 'Thumari', in one of its aspects, is also a reorientation and descendant of the 'Dhamara', which too has this threefold meaning: dance steps, the rhythm, and the song associated with it. The 'Thumari', like the 'Dhamara', is also associated with 'Holi' and the 'Rase-Lila' of Radha and Krsna of Vraja. The beats of the 'Tala' of 'Thumari'—Dipcandi—are almost in the same pattern as the 'Dhamara'.

The 'Thumari' is now a specialised form of light classical music. It has flowered particularly in the last hundred years. Its zenith of perfection and popularity may be said to have been between 1920 and 1950. The style of rendering the 'Thumari' has been changing constantly, but the two main styles still remain 'Bol-bant' and 'Bol-banava'. The former is very akin to the 'madhyalaya Khyal'. The compositions are set to the 'Talas of Khyals', i.e. 'tritara, ekatara, jhaptara, adachautara', and even rarer ones. The textual structure of the compositions also bears very close resemblance to that of the 'madhyalaya Khyal'. In fact, it can be said that over six decades ago, our music was at the crossroads, as it were, and it was difficult to distinguish between a 'madhyalaya Khyal' and a 'Bol-bant Thumari'. The latter form gradually faded out for the same reasons as the 'Prabandha' and 'Dhrupada' did: the lack of scope for improvisation and the inviolable rigidity of rules of development with strict adherence to the basic structure of the composition. Just as the 'Khyal' displaced the 'Dhrupada', the 'Bol-banava Thumari' eased out her elder sister, the 'Bol-bant' variety.

One note of caution seems necessary here. There is a general and widespread misconception that the 'Thumari' was invented by Nawab Wajid Ali Shah or by Saad Ali Khan of Lucknow. This is totally wrong. For one thing, as early as 1834, Captain Willard mentions the 'Thumari' in his book 'Music of India', as being an established form of music in an impure dialect of the Brajabhase. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah of Lucknow was born in 1822 and installed on the Gaddi in 1847. He was

forced to abdicate and sent to Matia Burz, Calcutta, in 1856, where he died in 1877. Shri K. M. Munshi, in one of his illuminating Kulapati's letters, writes:

Wajid Ali Shah had a fine command on the Persian language and was a master of Urdu. He wrote over a 100 works in these languages and his poems run into several big volumes. Himself an adept in music, he was the greatest patron of music and dance in his days; music and dance were the breath of Parikana and its master was the patron of the well-known Lucknow 'Thumari'. He dramatised his romantic poems and prepared a ballet known as 'Rahas'—an Urdu corruption of the word 'rasa'. Its theme was the sport of Krsna and Radha. It must have been a delight to Wajid Ali Shah's admirers to see him in his solid corpulence playing the part of Shri Krsna with a mukuta on his head valued at one lac of rupees. Even after his deposition he continued to stage his 'Rahas' even in exile at Calcutta.

The homes of the 'Thumari' are Lucknow and Banaras. According to Prof. S. K. Chaubey, "Lucknow was its mother and Banaras its sweetheart".

There have been several eminent composers of the 'Thumari' in the last hundred years. Of them, the following are worth mentioning apart from Nawab Wajid Ali Shah (Akhtar Piya): Lallan Piya, Sanad Piya, Kadar Piya, Sughar Piya (Bhaiya Ganapat Rao), Kunvar Shyam, and Shyam Das, the first three being pre-eminent. Lallan Piya needs special mention. He was from Farrukhabad, and composed 'Thumaris' mainly in the medium and fast tempos. His sense of rhythm was extraordinary, and yet the characteristic flavour of the 'Thumari' was never lost. His compositions were in all the 'Talas of Khyals'. He was in a class by himself because of his high literary attainment and his uncanny command over 'Tala'. His 'thumaris', would remain gems of poetry for their sheer literary excellence, even if their 'bandishes' are lost. In several of his compositions the 'sam' has been placed on such a word that it is cleverly concealed. It is said that in this way he humbled many a great 'tabla' player, including the great Ustad Abid Hussain, the Khalipha of the Purab gharana.

Sanad Piya belonged to Rampur. His actual name was Tavakkul Hussain. He too has composed several beautiful 'thumaris'. One unique feature of his compositions was his attempt to incorporate in them some of the 'chandas' (metres) of instrumental music. Bahadur Hussain, the great sarod player, was also a court musician of Rampur and a contemporary of Sanad Piya. The latter transposed several of the 'gats' of Bahadur Hussain in his 'Thumari' compositions.

Another great composer of the 'Thumari' was Kadar Piya (1836-1932), whose original name was Wajid Mirza, the son of a "spurious descendant of the second emperor of Avadh". His name with all its titles was Mirza Bala Qadar Jung Nawab Wazid Mirza Bahadur. He was a poet, painter and Musician, and a scholar of Urdu and Persian. He chose the colloquial Hindi as the language for his 'Thumaris', for he felt that the dialect spoken in the households of the Hindus of Lucknow and the neighbouring villages was the best language. He wrote a book called 'Nayana-dil-samvada', in which he has discussed the mutual conflict and confrontation between the eyes and the heart, the one trying to impute to the other the responsibility for the excruciating pangs of love. His 'Thumaris' reverberate with this theme. His personal life was also in a way a reflection of his musical composition. Apart from a number of illegitimate connections with women and perhaps also men, he had seven wives. He had a refined, delicate, and acutely erotic temperament which is faithfully reflected in his 'Thumaris'. Kadar Piya's son, the late Nawab Chaulakhi Mirza Murad Dahar, taught several of his father's compositions to deserving

musicians. Among them were Prof. D. T. Joshi and Pandit S. N. Ratanjankar. Some of these 'Thumaris' are given in the 'Kramik' series of Bhatkhande.

The predominant theme of the 'Thumari' is erotic fantasy, with all its twists and turns and shifting panorama of colour. Deep-rooted sentiments and some typical situation, phase or temperament of the common folk of the rural area is usually depicted.

A literary shape in the regional dialect, which was Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, Bhojpuri or a mixture of all these, with a word or two of Urdu and Persian here and there, was given and expressed in its musical and emotional syntax. No taboos and restraints are respected. Eroticism and love released themselves in feminine sense and sensibility, in feminine delicacy and fury, with all the attendant spasmodic twists of the wrist, of the waist, jinglings of the 'ghungharu', cranking of the bangles and the jerky pulling of the garments. There are charges and counter-charges; the darts of Cupid are hurled mercilessly. Glances are veritable arrows or razor-edged daggers; the heart is wounded and bleeds; jealousies and laments and all the sallies and fitful whims and caprices of love stalk the scene.

There is no rule, regulation or law in rendering except unrestricted wooing. The 'Nayika' or attractive maiden is seldom 'svakiya' (one contented with her own lover). It is 'samanya' or 'parakiya' (the inveigling of another's lover). It appears that eligible damsels during the heyday of the 'Thumari' were perpetually in a state of dire hunger for love, so much so that they were vulnerable to any concerted pass or glance at them. Therefore, it does not seem surprising to hear the words 'Pardesi Balam kaisa jadu dara'—a stranger comes along and casts his magic spell, and lo! the maiden of Banaras is set all aflame by this casual meeting.

In this form of music, there is a deliberate avoidance of all the sophistications, mannerisms, restraints, grandeur, and certain vocal gymnastics that are the main features of the 'Khyal'. The 'Thumari' singer goes straight to the emotional kernel of the song and portrays it from the heart. But this portrayal has in it an integration not only of the heart with the song but also of the head with aesthetics. In other words, 'Thumari' singing, if done the right way, is the expression of the quintessence of the ideal integration of emotion, intellect and aesthetics. It is therefore one of the most difficult forms of Hindustani music. Walter Pater, while discussing art, states that one of its chief functions consists "in the removal of surplusage, from the last finish of the gem-engraver, a blowing away the last particle of invisible dust". In the words of Schiller, "the artist may be known rather by what he omits". In 'Thumari' singing, the voice must be extremely pliable and capable of expressing several colorations of tone ('kaku'). This 'svarochhara' is the soul of 'Thumari' singing.

Until forty years ago, 'Thumaris' were being sung in classical 'Ragas' like Bhimpalasi, Dhanasri, Thak-Kamoda, Jaunpuri, Sahana, Yaman, Bihag, Bahar, etc., but they were mostly 'bol-bant thumaris' and hence very close to the 'madhyalaya-Khyal'.

In 'Thumari' singing, a third style has come into prominence in the last twenty-five years, the Punjabi style. The Punjabi style of rendition can be mastered by a singer of any school. All that it requires is adequate facility over the notes and over the peculiar turn of phrases prevalent in the style. Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan was easily the best singer of this 'anga', but he very judiciously blended a little of the Lucknow and Banaras styles into it.

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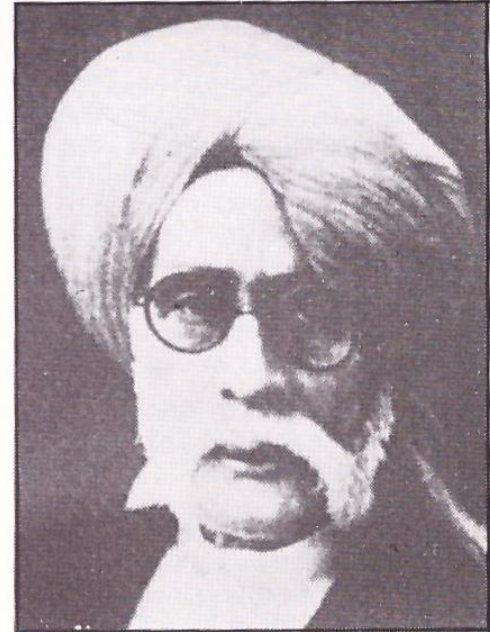
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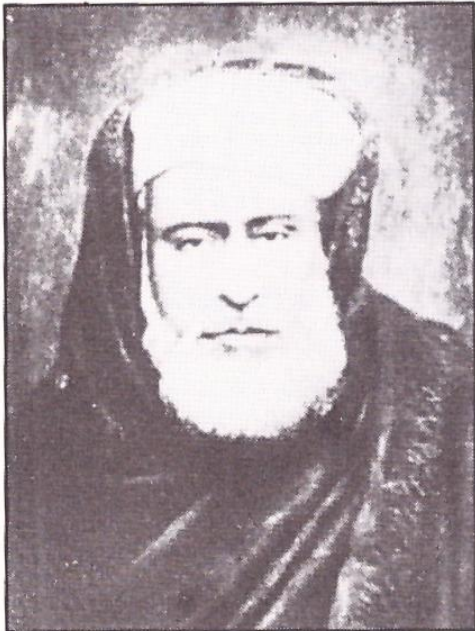
Bhaskar Rao Bakhle (1869-1922)



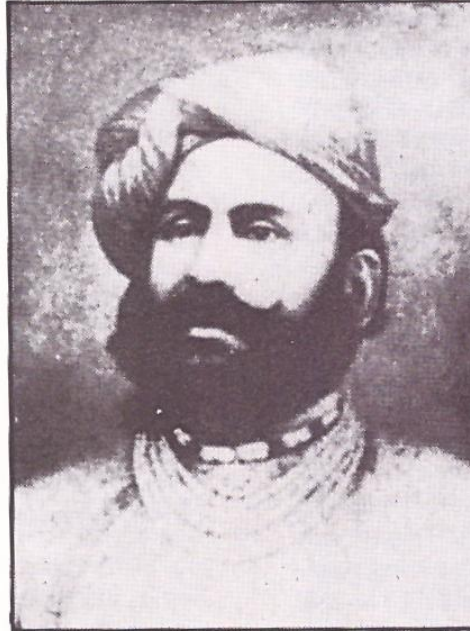
Wazir Khan



Alladiya Khan (1855-1946)



Behram Khan



Maula Baksh (died 1896)



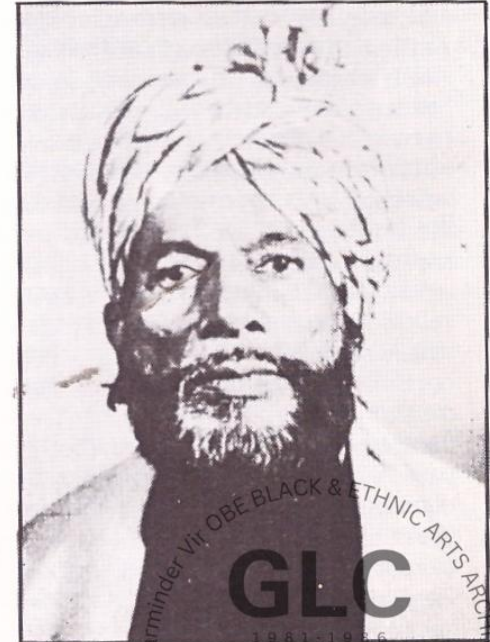
Rehmet Khan (1853-1922)



Abdulkarim Khan (1872-1937)



Faiyaz Khan (1886-1950)

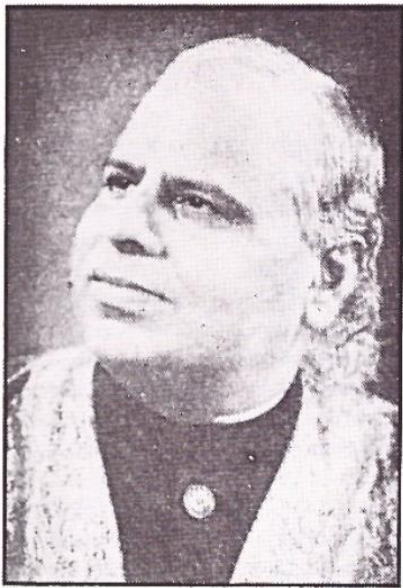


Mushtaq Hussain Khan (1880-1964)

GREAT MASTERS OF HINDUSTANI MUSIC



Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (1903-1967)



Omkarnath Thakur (1897-1967)



Amir Khan (1912-1973)



Kesarbai Kerkar (1892-1977)



Hirabai Badodekar (born 1905)



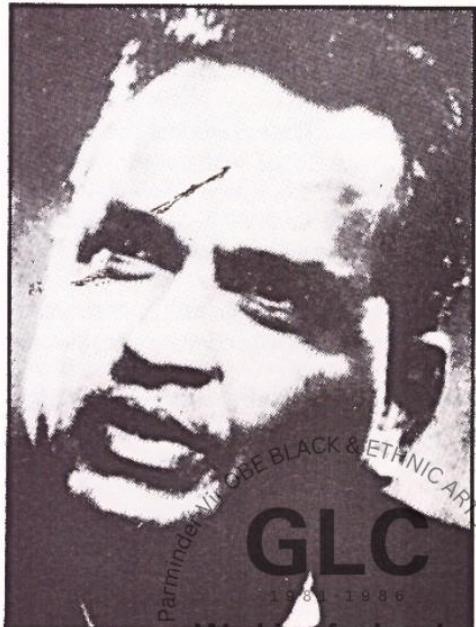
Mogubai Kurdikar (born 1904)



Mallikarjun Mansur (born 1910)



Bhimsen Joshi (born 1922)



Kumar Gandharva (born 1924)

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The Rise & Fall of Gharana System

Wim Van Der Mere

A. INTRODUCTION

The relation between teacher and pupil is similar to that of father and son. A teacher having several pupils, and these pupils again having pupils, implies that musicians form smaller and larger groups which essentially resemble an extended family. In India, where the tradition is mainly oral and where family is one of the most pervading categories of thought, such groups of musicians must always have played an important role. In the Samgita Ratnakara the term 'sampradaya' is used, in the time when dhrupada flourished the designation was 'vani' and with khayal the concept of 'gharana' emerged.

Musicians give the impression that 'gharanas' are very ancient, but in reality this concept must date from the end of the 19th century. Of course, the lineages of musical descent were inherent in the 'sampradaya' and 'vani' and though doubtful, these genealogies had in some way relations to a distant past and the great musicians who lived then.

B. THE EMERGENCE OF GHARANA

One characteristic is inevitable in 'gharanas': They represent a certain musical style, usually given form by a great artist in the 'gharana'. When Khayal developed as a style, new schools had to emerge. Yet, these schools were somehow related to their precursors, the 'vanis'. But, in 'gharana' a number of factors became inherent which distinguished it from earlier types of schools.

In the first place 'gharanas' were very closed groups, contained largely within families. Secondly, music was considered a commodity, which could be traded and which had to be guarded jealously. Thirdly, the members of a 'gharana' formed a kind of guild, i.e. an association for promoting mutual interests. Finally, as a result of the other factors, 'gharanas' were highly competitive bodies, which eventually could function as a prestige object of a local ruler. The emergence of these social units with a strong identity is limited to the beginning of India's transformation into a modern world. Mukerji (Modern India Culture) indicated that the jealous guard over trade secrets was a response to the decaying feudal society. The 'gharanas' are simply as old as khayal itself and basically an asset to the court which gave them shelter. Most probably, the latter view holds true in the sense of a musical tradition, whereas the latter view holds true in the sense of a musical tradition, whereas the former refer to 'gharana' as a specific social unit, which of course it is in the proper sense of the word.

Indeed the conclusion seems inevitable that the aspects of social coherence, a jealous and competitive spirit and the prestige of the court all derive from the last effort to keep things as they were. The princes feared the modern world and preferred to muse on past glories. The dependent musicians played along in the game. In the following I shall turn to the processes which occurred in 'gharanas', in which the above points will be further elaborated.

C. PROCESS IN GHARANA

Two kinds of forces operate in 'gharana': and fission. Apart from having the general structure of an extended family and representing a school musically, the 'gharana' also has a side of mutual interests, i.e. a guild, providing cohesion. The old and famous musicians used to have a great influence on their patrons, as we know from many biographical details. Many ruling princes were connoisseurs of classical music, often themselves good musicians, implying that they learnt music from well-known artists employed in the court. Such an artist of course moulded the taste of the patron and his decisions when appointing new musicians. Secondly, the musicians who taught music to the courtesans could exercise influence in an indirect manner. This has been particularly the case in 'gharanas' with strong link to 'sarangi' playing: Kirana, Patiala, Indore and Mamman Khan's lineage from Delhi. When a musician was lucky enough to have a favourite countess as his pupil he had a good chance of obtaining special favours himself.

In families of musicians music has been the main source of livelihood and therefore it had to be handled as a property. So, the music is not taught freely to outsiders and there is a strong sentiment about the specialities of the style of the family. This brings a degree of cohesion among members of the 'gharana', as those who are followers of a successful musician could thus profit in a tangible way from his influence. Herein lies the interest of the famous musician himself, as he considers his music a heritage which he needs to perpetuate.

In music, such a relation is necessarily far more complicated than in the case of material property. In the first place the famous musician often faces a duality of blood relation and musical relation. When he does not have sufficiently talented or interested children he may decide to teach an outsider, who may become his musical successor. This really means to disown his children in favour of an adopted son. Secondly, in spite of the personal relation that may exist between a musician and his patron, the latter may still decide to favour a musician of entirely different stock. In the case of music moreover style can be imitated and a talented imitator can surpass the real pupils. A patron with sufficient insight in music could sometimes perceive this and bypass the pupils of his court-musicians. Precisely to prevent such possibilities there has been a strong tendency towards esoterism, i.e. every 'gharana' possessed its own ragas, its own techniques etc. Thirdly, among persons of the same generation jealousy and competition tend to bring about fission. The oldest direct descendant of the founder of a 'gharana' is supposedly the head of this 'gharana', a situation hardly acceptable to many members who may be more experienced, more talented and even older, but not direct descendants, even outsiders.

There is a noticeable tension between musicians who belong to a 'khandan' and those who do not. The 'khandan' are those musicians of a 'gharana' who are also linked through blood-ties. Usually this distinction coincides with the distinction Hindu-Muslim. The root of this cleavage lies in the fact that the majority of Northern India was ruled by Muslims, who mainly employed Muslim musicians in their court, and many Hindu musicians converted to Islam. Therefore the interest in defending a musical property rested mainly with the Muslim families.

Yet, even in the case of family members within a 'gharana' we often observe fission and there are many small 'gharanas' founded by musicians who no longer wanted to belong to the 'gharana' in which they were trained, e.g. Khurja, Saheswan, Bendi Bazar, Indore. Most of these 'gharanas' are very small and often barely mentioned in studies pertaining to the subject. A second factor which promoted the working for London

'gharanas' has been the role of the rulers themselves. 'Gharanas' usually carry the name of the founder's residence and the existence of a 'gharana' in the court of a ruler was a matter of pride. Sometimes the name of a 'gharana' changed when the leading artist changed his residence, e.g. in the case of Jaipur 'gharana' which is also known as Atrauli 'gharana', later Alladiya Khan 'gharana' and Kolhapur 'gharana', where Alladiya Khan spent the latter half of his life. The tendency to name a 'gharana' after its main exponent illustrates the supersession of the ruler's importance by that of the musician. This has been possible in recent times with the disappearance of the princely states, resulting in an Abdulkarim Khan 'gharana', a Bakhle 'gharana' and the above-mentioned Alladiya Khan 'gharana'.

The dual forces of cohesion and fission make the 'gharanas' a very lively social phenomenon and not stagnant or compartmentalized groups of musicians. Particularly the oldest and largest 'gharana' has been tormented by fission (Gwalior). The first great tension was when Rehmet Khan refused to be appointed as a court musician in Gwalior after his father's death, and withdrew entirely. For many years he lived in isolation as a beggar, but was still considered a matchless musician, who influenced many younger artists. In the meantime a number of Maharashtrians had learnt music in Gwalior, amongst them Balkrishnabua Ichalkaranjikar, who trained Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. The latter followed a new path, and a cleavage arose between him and the traditional artists of Gwalior, still represented by Krishnarao Shankar Pandit. Although originally a Muslim 'gharana', now most of the musicians belonging to it are Hindus. Only in the faction of Mustaq Hussein Khan the Muslim tradition is carried on, but this is again a different branch, known as Shaeswan 'gharana'. The music of Rehmet Khan lived on in Abdulkarim Khan, and to an extent in Onkarnath Thakur and Manji Khan.

In each 'gharana' there is a nucleus of great musicians, who claim to belong to this 'gharana', and who are thought of by others to belong to it. Around them cluster a number of pupils (often relatives) and pupil's pupils. Sometimes artists claim to belong to a 'gharana' without having had lessons from any artist considered to belong to that 'gharana'. The claimant simply imitates the musical style of the 'gharana'. Then there are musicians who have learnt most of their music in one specific 'gharana' but do not consider themselves to belong to it. Sometimes they branch off and found their own 'gharana', after having introduced a few innovations. Some artists have learnt from several 'gharanas' and have mixed the styles. They often appear as individual artists who refuse to be counted among a 'gharana'. Famous artists who come from the family of a 'gharana-founder usually replenish the nucleus of the 'gharana'. Famous artists who do not belong to such a family often strike out on their own. The musicians of the 'gharana' then try to maintain that this artist also belongs to their 'gharana'.

An example may best illustrate the above: The Agra 'gharana' has always been a very important and large 'gharana'. At the end of the 18th century it was founded by Shamrang and Sarasrang, who were in fact dhrupada singers of the Nauhar 'vani'. As a 'gharana' of khayal it gradually took shape in the course of the 19th century, with the disciples, descendants, grand-disciples and grand-descendants of Shamrang: Ghaghe Khuda Baksh, Sher Khan, Ghulam Abbas Khan and Kallan Khan. Natthan Khan was Sher Khan's only son. Natthan Khan was a very important artist of Agra 'gharana' at the end of the 19th century. Faiyaz Khan was a grandson of Ghulam Abbas Khan, who learnt most of his music from Sher Khan, his cousin. Faiyaz Khan learnt from Ghulam Abbas Khan and also from Natthan Khan. Natthan Khan's son Vilayat Hussein Khan had many pupils, among whom his son Yunus Hussein Khan. Vilayat Hussein Khan learnt most of his music from his elder brother, Mohammed Khan learnt most of his music from his elder

brother, Mohammed Khan, who was Natthan Khan's pupil. Natthan Khan also taught another outstanding figure in Indian music: Bhaskar Rao Bakhle, who had learnt from several other artists before he became a pupil of Fathth Khan. Alladiya Khan, the great exponent of Jaipur 'gharana' also taught him. Bhaskar Rao Bakhle balanced the styles of Agra and Jaipur. He also introduced several aspects of music which he had acquired from his study of the 'bina'. He strongly rejected the concept of 'gharana' and maintained that every musician should learn from several 'gharanas'. Yet, many musicians from the Agra 'gharana' claim that Bhaskar Rao Bakhle really belongs to their faction. Some of the weaker followers of Bhaskar Rao say that they belong to the Bakhle 'gharana'. Like his teacher, Dilip Chandra Veda strongly rejected the 'gharana' concept. Apart from Bhaskar Rao, he learnt from Uttam Singh, Faiyaz Khan and Alladiya Khan.

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Another pupil of Bhaskar Rao is Kesar Bai Kerkar. She was however more strongly influenced by Alladiya Khan, her teacher for twenty-six years. Mogubai Kurdikar learnt from Alladiya Khan as well, but also from his sons and from Vilayat Hussein Khan, who in fact had learnt a few items from Alladiya Khan. Hereunder I present these relationships in a diagram for clarification. (Fig. 2)

From this brief description one can understand the complicated and structural relations of 'gharanas'. Not only have 'gharanas' evolved over the past hundred years, but fluctuation and variability are part of the system. Musical aspects from other 'gharanas' may be absorbed or musicians from the nucleus of a 'gharana' may change their music. Musicians who combine the music of several 'gharanas' may establish their own conception of music as a new totality.

Figure 2: Teaching relations in Agra 'gharana' with special reference to the influences from Jaipur 'gharana'.

D. THE DISAPPEARANCE OF GHARANA

Evidently 'gharanas' are not static institutions. The most recent developments, however, display more than interrelation between 'gharanas': the whole institution of 'gharana' seems to be rapidly disintegrating. Only a few artists still follow a distinct style that can be classified as a pure example of a 'gharana'.

The basic source of the disappearance of 'gharanas' lies in the foundation of musical continuity, viz. teaching. It must be realized that most musicians have their basic knowledge and technique in common. The difference, whether individual or by school, could be seen as an added value, particularly with respect to special ragas, special compositions and advanced techniques, e.g. complicated types of 'tana'. If a particular school is to have a distinct musical identity the teacher must leave a strong imprint on his pupils. This condition can only be met if the pupil learns for a long period with the same teacher with little interference from others. On both points the relation has changed. Moreover, the emotional quality of the relation is so different that a strong imprint of the teacher is rather impossible. The musical education has become broader and more influences work together to create a new musical individual. There is hardly any need to illustrate this; most artists in India do not profess to belong to any particular 'gharana' and when they do, they declare that they have also absorbed a few good aspects from other 'gharanas'. Kishori Amonkar for instance is one of the leading vocalists. She is the daughter of Mogubai Kurdikar, a famous exponent of the Jaipur 'gharana'. The general and specific traits of this 'gharana' can still be clearly recognized in Kishori's music, which is in this sense exceptionally traditional. Yet, like most other artists she claims to include all that is worthwhile from other artists. It is not only that the teachers have hardly any opportunity to leave an imprint on the pupils, the latter are also influenced by the radio, gramophone recordings and books. In brief, the configuration of musicians has changed from groups with a degree of internal similarity to individuals who present a number of common traits over the whole of North India. On the one hand this liberates the artists from esoteric techniques and knowledge, on the other hand certain general standards have emerged that reduce the variety and flexibility of the music as a whole. Thus, in former days, an artist could be highly appreciated as a master of the particular idiom of his 'gharana', while he lacked a beautiful voice. Nowadays, an artist with a good voice and virtuoso techniques will be appreciated even if he has a very limited knowledge of ragas and no distinct style at all.

The most important general aspect of this change lies in the aesthetic criterion that the music an artist presents should be an integrated totality, not a hotchpotch. The styles of the 'gharanas' as laid down by the great masters, and the durable influence of one teacher over a pupil enabled the latter to come to an understanding of the meaning of coherence in music. This is in the end what a good teacher is for. Schools with a specific concept of music have become established through a long course of cumulative reflection and experiment. That 'gharanas' are not coincidental groupings of a social rather than musical order is illustrated by the fact that efforts of musical creativity have constantly been reflected in tension and competition, at times giving rise to fission within one 'gharana', even to the extent of creating new 'gharanas'. Therefore the disintegration of 'gharanas' is dangerous for the music. Of course, the specific turn of jealous and competitive social units which the musical schools took at the end of the last century, was neither desirable in general, nor viable in the modern world. It seems that the ideal would be the 'sampradaya', a tradition in which the great musicians can disclose their insights orally, but free from narrow-minded politics.

Wim Van der Meer is an anthropologist and a musician currently based in Holland. This article appears by kind courtesy of Martinus Nijhoff Publishers 'The Hague

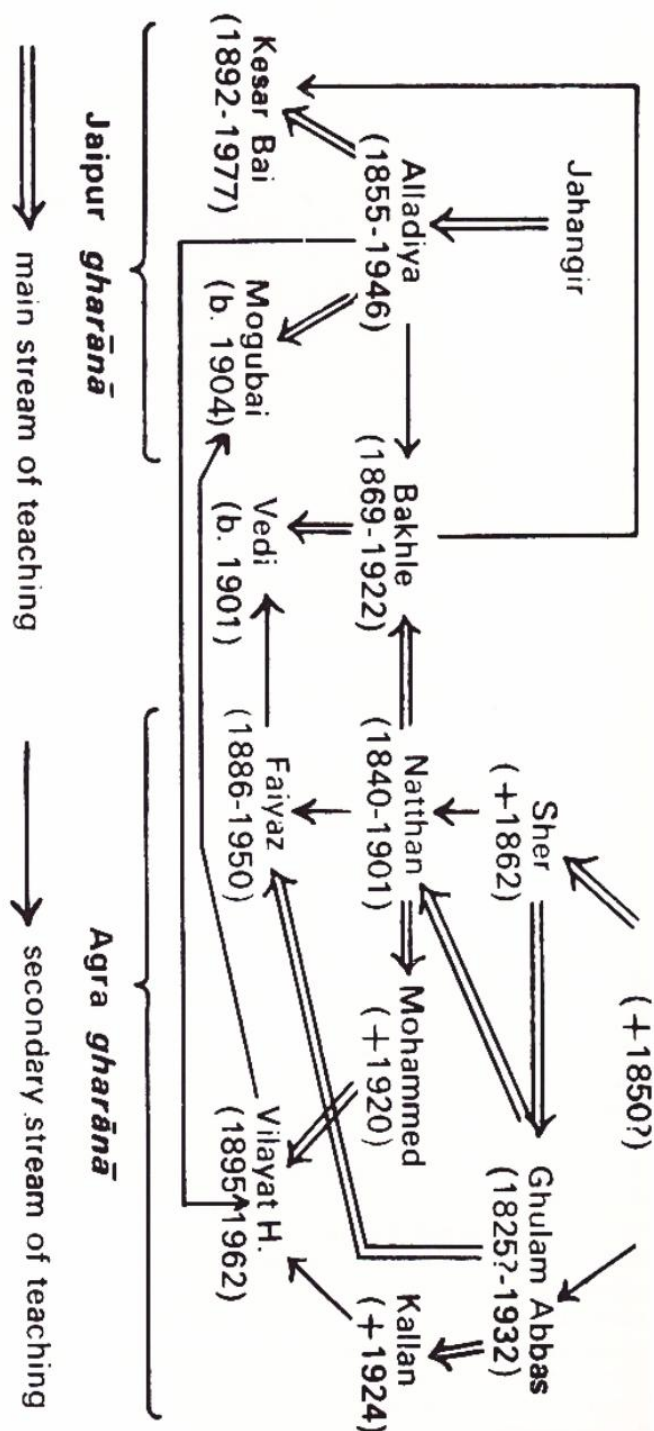


Figure 2: Teaching relations in Agra gharānā, with special reference to the influences from Jaipur gharānā



Some observations on the Urdu ghazal

Shahrukh Hussain

The ghazal as defined formally consists of a few bayts (distichs) generally between five and twelve, with a single rhyme often accompanied by a radif (rhyming word(s) or phrase(s)). In addition both hemistichs of the matlá' (the first verse) rhyme together and the maqtá' (last verse) contains the takhallus (nom-de-plume) of the author. The rhyme scheme is as follows:

A – A Matla'
B – A
C – A and so on.

The ghazal may be composed on any subject and in India was traditionally recited live to its audience. These gatherings were known as Musháirás. The love-theme appears to have been a favourite with ghazal writers throughout the ages and aspects of it are traceable to Arabic poetry where the gasidá' begins with an amatory section (Nasib or tashbib). The Nasib was developed as an independent genre around the 7th century A.D. However, it was not until it came into Persian that the ghazal became isolated from its context and developed into its present form projecting Divine-Secular love duality. Several elements of the earliest conventions of the ghazal (with certain modifications) survive to this day, having passed via Persian into Urdu. This is evident primarily in the main characters of the ghazal – the Lover and the Beloved. (Although the sex of the Beloved is often clear in the earliest Urdu ghazals he/she remains a somewhat unfocussed, hazy character whose sex, identity and motives are hard to pinpoint precisely. Her physical appearance (when clearly female) is described according to the canon traditionally established in the poetic language.

The two trends, (carnal and platonic) exist side by side – both possibly having their root in the strong religious element which in Persian poetry, between the 13th and 16th centuries, linked the earthly beloved with God. These poems sometimes develop with exuberance and insistence which embraces both kinds of satisfaction, those connected with the physical senses and those of the mind. Although the wine – tavern motifs are generally associated with mysticism the atmosphere of the ghazal or bayt dealing with these motifs and their attendant subsidiary motifs ostensibly makes the poem turn his eyes towards the tavern and young men (Sáqi, mughbache) who in these poems inflame passions which hardly appear Platonic.

Even if theoretically most bayts can with equal facility be interpreted on the two levels (Haqiqi and Majázi) it is somewhat unrealistic to impute a mystical status such as the one contained, for example in the verse misra' (Line) of Mir's verse quoted above. However there is an apparent paradox in creating a synthesis between two obviously conflicting concepts – an indulgence of all the physical desires with Islamic mysticism and its implications of material and physical swift-denial. This is of course originates in the esoteric practises

of Tasavuf and in its classical period (13th to 16thC) the Persian ghazal passed into a highly integrated and complex symbolic style. This was especially so in the work of Háfiz where the chief object of the ghazal, the Má'shúq, becomes inextricably connected not only with the Ma'búd but even with the Mamdúh (the traditional object of the qasida). Thus in the Urdu ghazal which inherited these Sufi motifs and stock phrases intact, even if the words are not intentionally or knowingly symbolical, they are related to a thematic complex with which they have no connection in the language.

The Beloved is depicted as a creature of formidable charm, coquetry and beauty, which she wields at times with manifest cruelty.

The poet-lover is somewhat clearer in character than the Beloved although his physical description is hardly ever given except where his torn clothes, blistered feet, drunkenness and grief are described. Two thematic sequences arise from the ghazal corpus. It is assumed that the poet is a man, the victim of his love and prey to the hostility of the world in which his alone with his agony and his despair. His tears flow easily and his complaints are shrill. Love and grief are simultaneous. Secondly, even in his plaintive attitude, he boasts of his discretion and courage in enduring the burden of his love. Frequently, also, bravado is exuberated in verses dealing with wine, taverns and spring and he becomes defiant and challenges everyone to suppress him. Some other standard characters encountered in the Urdu ghazal are the following:

The Zahid and Vaiz – religious censors; ascetic and preacher.

The Ghair – those who make life difficult for the Lover by jeering, or like the Raqib, – attempting to rival the lover by gaining the favours of the Beloved.

The Naseh – the adviser who tries to persuade the lover to give up his grief and his love and find other outlets for his emotions.

The Charagar – the confidante who sympathises with the lover but is frequently so moved by the story of his grief that he does not succeed in providing much succour becoming himself so disturbed.

These characters have survived to this day and have been drawn as allegorical references to the people of the world, those who attempt to prevent the devotee from reaching God. Thus they originated as Sufi symbols and the Lover and Beloved represent ultimately, the mystic attempting to reach God in spite of the obstacles around him and the symbols of wine and the Saqi are frequently used to represent the breaking away from tradition and institutionalized religion. Thus the Saqi, or wine bearer, is in fact the Divine Guide, the wine itself Divine Knowledge.

Today, however, these symbols and others, because of the changing role of the poet in society, take on a more literal meaning and often even highly technical Sufi terms are used to represent secular love.

The ghazal, therefore, is now as it was when it began, essentially the poetry of love.

Shahrukh Hussain is a Urdu scholar at SOAS currently writing her doctoral thesis on Urdu poetry.

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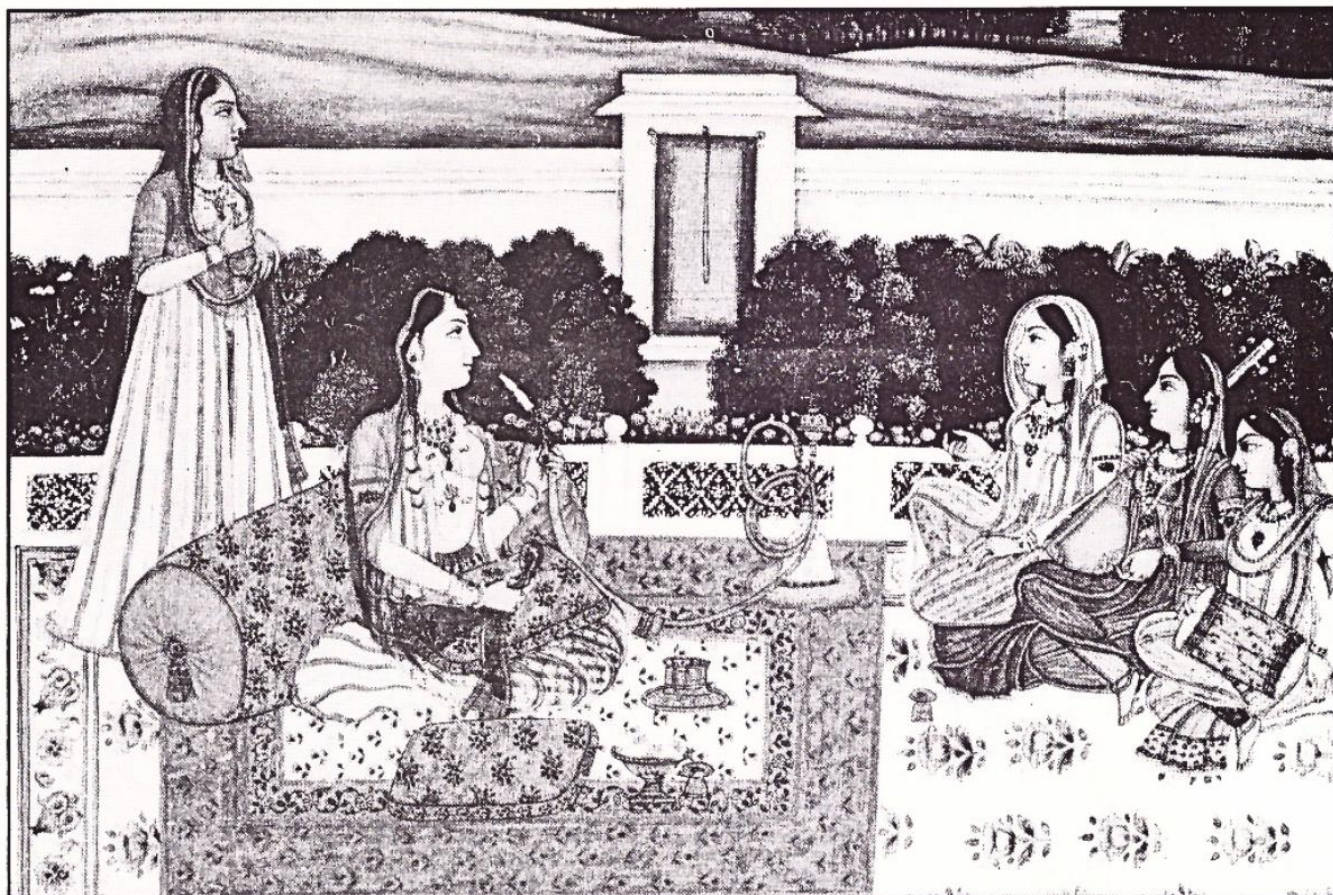
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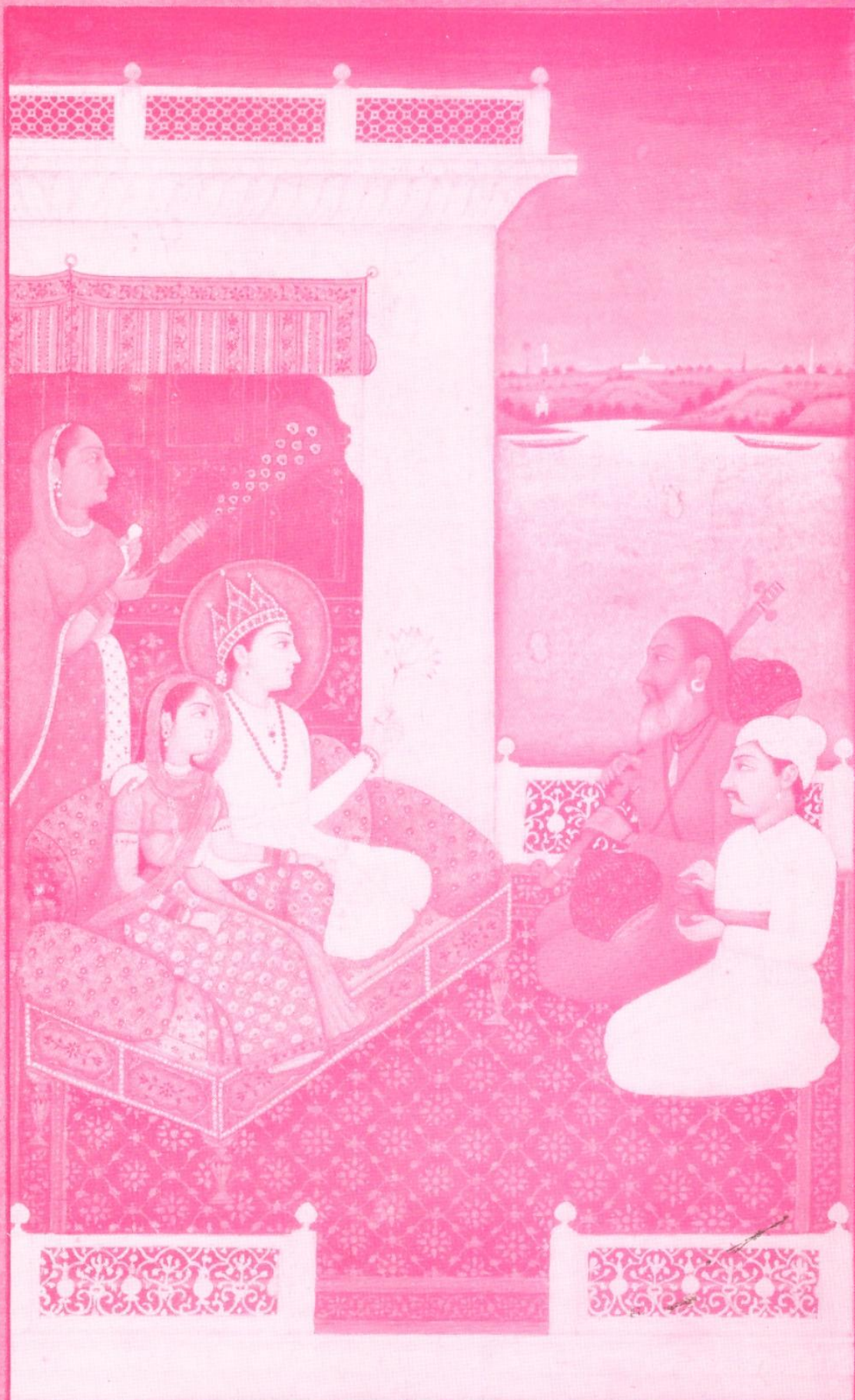
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