

The Influence of Guru Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri and his Disciples in Indian Classical Music in the light of Kirana-Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana



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Abstract

The word 'Ghar' is Persian meaning family. A Gharana in Indian Classical Music refers to the singing customs and traditions of a particular musician's family. Gharanas were developed in music by Vocal, Dance and Instrumental. They are different from each other and essentially unique in their style. (Ghosh 23) An artist is the creator of art who forms the community to carry his creation both through 'Khaandan' (genealogy) and through the Guru-Shishya Parampara (teacher-student tradition). This is how Art and Creation survive, propagate, spread and develop artists' genres, traditions and singers. Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri (1943-2018) was a Hindustani Classical Vocalist (in the Khayal genre) of West Bengal and was the bearer of the Kirana and Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana. ("Remembering Eminent Hindustani Classical Vocalist and Guru Pandit Arun Bhaduri...") As a result of many years of exposure to Kirana and Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana, Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri researched the characteristics of these two styles in detail and subsequently was able to develop his own unique "Gayaki" (singing style) which was the product of his passion and feeling for music. This research aims to preserve the Gayaki of Guru Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri through his disciples as Guru-Shishya Parampara. To complete the entire work, I availed the guidance of two valuable sources, the first being a short interview (20/09/2016) given by my Guru Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri and the other being his self-authored four books. (Bhaduri: Katha Sur Srishti, Gan Amar Parashmani, AstaRaagini, Prasanga-Khayal). As proof of the hypothesis, his family, some of his contemporaries and prominent artist colleagues and disciples have been interviewed.

Keywords: Hindustani Classical Raga Music (Khayal), Kirana-Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana, Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri, Gayaki, Guru-Shishya Parampara

Research Paper

Hindustani Classical Raga Music (Khayal genre)

From the time of the Gwalior ruler Mansingh Tomar (1486-1516), a new genre of courtly elaborate rites and courtly ragas emerged in Northern India. A new genre of "Raga Music" or "Hindustani Classical Music" became popular throughout North India from the middle of the 16th century AD through Akbar's court attendant Tansen (Ghosh 31). Between the 14th and 18th centuries AD, many types of 'Gayaki' or singing styles were created in North India, one of which 'Khayal' became particularly

popular. However, an idea about the origin of the song 'Kawal' or 'Khayal' comes from three medieval texts, 'Ain-e-Akbari' (1551-1602 AD) by historian Abul Fazl, 'Rag-Darpan' (1665-66 AD) by Fakir-ullah and 'Tuhfat-ul-Hind' (1675AD) by Mirza Khan. 'Kaol' and 'Tarana' came from the religious poetic music of the Sufi community popularized by Amir Khusro (1253-1324) of Delhi, 'Chutkal Khayal' popularized by Sultan Hussain Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur (mid-15th century) and 'Kalavanti Khayal', a classical style created by Shah Sadarang in the Tansen tradition. Later on, many more "Khayal Gharanas" became popular (Ghosh 29).

Kirana Gharana

Along with other Khayal Gharanas like Gwalior, Agra, Jaipur-Atrauli, Patiala, Rampur-Sahaswan, the “Kirana Gharana” became prominent from the 19th century. In the 13th century, classical singer Gopal Nayak, influenced by the Muslim influence, started a new style of singing. Later on, at the end of the nineteenth century, Ustad Abdul Karim Khan enriched the singing style of this Gharana by mixing it with a Carnatic touch. (Dixit, “The immeasurable contribution of Abdul Karim Khan...”) The Gharana is named after “Kirana” or “Kairana”, a small village in ‘Samli’ district of Uttar Pradesh.

Sadiq Ali Khan and his son Bande Ali Khan in the 19th century and Abdul Karim Khan, Abdul Wahid Khan, Pandit Sawai Gandharva, Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, Pandit Basavraj Rajguru, Vidushi Gangubai Hangal, Vidushi Hirabai Barodekar, Dr. Prabha Atre, Pandit Arun Bhaduri etc. in the 20th century are notable bearers of this style. (Pundalik, “Swara And Its Purity...”)

Some characteristics of Kirana Gayaki

The individual use of each note as well as the individual expansion or amplification using the key tones of the raga, is one of the main features of the Kirana gharana.

Meaningful, harmonious use of each word/sentence.

Peaceful, thoughtful and emotional Aalap-Vistar (slow progression of a Raga).

Moderate use of Sargam (fast application of notes) and Taan (fast application of notes with ‘Aakar’).

Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana

The Rampur Gharana originated in the mid-19th century through the court musician Ustad Mehabub Khan and his son Ustad Inayet Hussain Khan of the Rampur state of Uttar Pradesh. After that, this style continued through generations and his disciples. Later, musicians were also associated with the Sahaswan place near their native Badayun and this Gharana came to be known as the Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana. Apart from Mehabub Khan and Inayet Hussain Khan in the 19th century, Ustad Haider Khan, Ustad Mustaq Hussain Khan, Ustad Wazir Khan and in the 20th century Ustad Ishtiaq Hussain Khan, Ustad Nisar Hussain Khan, Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan, Pandit Arun Bhaduri etc. popularized this Gharana. (Mukhopadhyay 88-99)

Some characteristics of Rampur-Sahaswan Gayaki

Influenced by Gwalior Gharana – One of the basic

characteristics of the Gayaki is its moderate Vilambit Khayal (not very delayed).

Employing strong and full-throated singing.

The meaning and emotional use of the Bol (words) of the Bandish (musical composition) so that the complete feeling of Raga comes out.

Super-fast Taan with ‘Aakar’, especially Chut and Sapat Taans (variations of Taan) are widely used.

Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri (7 October 1943 - 17 December 2018)

Musician Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri was born in October, 1943 (as per his passport) in Lalitakundi village of Murshidabad district of undivided Bengal. His father was Mr. Niranjan Bhaduri and mother Malatimala Devi. He developed a special interest in music after listening to the lifestyle of the rural areas of Murshidabad and the customs of playing various regional songs on the occasion of various festivals (Pala-Parban). He sang various regional songs of Murshidabad from childhood and could also play dholak, tambourine and harmonium. He was fascinated by the songs of the famous Bengali Classical singers Sri Bhishmadev Chattopadhyay and Sri Gnanendra Prasad Goswami heard on gramophone records in his adolescence and from this time his special interest in Indian Classical Raga Music grew. In college and small theatres, Sangitacharya used to conduct musical programmes, sing and act together with different types of musical instruments (orchestra) like Harmonium, Tabla, Flute, Esraj etc. But in order to analyse Guru Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri's individual and personal singing style, it is also necessary to throw light on the music education methods prescribed by his Gurus.

The Guru (s) of Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri and their blessings

His (Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri) first Guru Ustad Abu Daud (1925-1999) of Kirana Gharana had his primary education from Haider Mia, a resident of Gorabazar, Baharampur. Then from 1946 to 1949, the contemporary famous musician of Baharampur, Radhabinod Tagore (1908-1958) who was also famous as Haabul Thakur. Since 1948, Ustad Abu Daud had been the disciple of Pandit A. Kanan and continued his Taalim (training) for about 12/13 years. From 1956/57, music maestro Arun Bhaduri started taking music lessons from Ustad Abu Daud and uninterruptedly continued Taalim (lesson) under him for almost 20 years in the style of Kirana Gharana.



Training style of Ustad Abu Daud

Ustad Abu Daud taught Mandra Saptak Swara (lower octave note) practice, various Paaltas (set of notes), Sapat Taan (straight notes by ascending/descending with fast movement) etc. This musical education was entirely dependent on rote learning and memorization. There was absolutely no permission to use any ledgers. During this time Sangitacharya got the training of Raag Yaman, Bhairav, Tori, Bihag and many more Raagas with immense depth in Kirana style. The practice of slow vocalization was one of the parts of this teaching style. Later, Musician Arun Bhaduri trained his disciples in the same way. Musician Arun Bhaduri used to accompany his guru on the Tabla from the time he took lessons from Ustad Abu Daud. Along with playing Vilambit Theka (beats with slow movement) on the Tabla, he could play different rhythms in medium and fast beats. (Bhaduri)

In 1971/72 Music maestro Arun Bhaduri took discipleship under his second guru Ustad Mohammad Sagiruddin Khan (1926-1994) in Baharampur, Murshidabad. Ustad Muhammad Sagiruddin Khan Sahib who was born in Munger, Bihar. His father Ustad Mehdi Hussain Khan played the Tonda or Tumdok and Sarangi and was popularly known as Tunde Khan. He was a court singer of the Munger kingdom. Ustad Sagiruddin Khan was both a singer and a skilled Sarangi player. He used to accompany Sarangi with many traditional artists in many cities of India in various musical events. So, he was particularly aware of the singing and playing styles of those artists. A mixed influence of the singing and playing styles of all those virtuous artists had affected his accompaniment. However, he himself developed a unique singing-playing style and due to his deep curiosity and interest in that particular genre, he was approached by musician Arun Bhaduri who tied the knot under his discipleship.

Training style of Ustad Muhammad Sagiruddin Khan

One of the hallmarks of Ustad Sagiruddin Khan's Sarangi Vaadan was the use of a push on the Nyash Swara (standing note) and the use of Taan-Palta (musical ornaments) after completing a phrase of Aalap and Vistar of a Raga. Also, an influence of Sarangi can be felt in the variety of Taans and in the performance of Bandish Ki Thumri, Dadra, Chaiti, Kajri (different Semi Classical music forms) etc.

Ustad Ishtiaq Hussain Khan (1907-1980), the privileged disciple and son of Ustad Mushtaq Hussain Khan from

Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana was a true musician who joined the ITC Sangeet Research Academy, Kolkata as a guru early on when it was established. Musician Arun Bhaduri's innate merit and talent, strong love for music and above all his indomitable perseverance, earned the opportunity to join the ITC Sangeet Research Academy, Kolkata in June 1978 as his first student (scholar) and during this time he continued his Taalim (1978-1980) under Ustad Ishtiaq Hussain Khan for a few days. That time scholar Arun Bhaduri was one of his illustrious disciples.

Training style of Ustad Ishtiaq Hussain Khan

His (Ishtiaq Hussain Khan) Khayal singing combined a calm, reserved manner of Alaap-Vistar with extraordinary Raagdaari (particular movements of a Raga), while his mightiest hold on the Drut laya (fast tempo) was unsurpassed. Besides, he acquired the right to collect and own many Bandishes of many famous composers of different genres.

The unique Gayaki (singing style) of Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri

After taking a long Taalim from Ustad Abu Daud and Ustad Muhammad Sagiruddin Khan in Kirana style and from Ustad Ishtiaq Hussain Khan Saheb in Rampur-Sahaswan style, there was a remarkable change in the singing style of Musician Arun Bhaduri can be witnessed very clearly in his performances. He was appointed first as a scholar and later as a Guru of the ITC Sangeet Research Academy, Kolkata from the year 1985/86 till his end.

Under the influence of Kirana Gharana, a simple, melodious mood is created in Sangitacharya's singing at this time, on the one hand, on the other hand, a clean and harmonious consistency comes in his 'Gayaki' with Taan-Sargam-Laykari accompaniment by Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana, which later marks him as a self-sufficient composer. Also, during this time he learned "Tarana" (composition with super-fast singing style by some meaningless words), one of the singing styles of Rampur Sahaswan Gharana, which later inspired him to compose his own Tarana(s).

Apart from taking Taalims from these Gurus, he also received training from Guru Acharya Gyan Prakash Ghosh (disciple of Berhampur resident Acharya Girija Shankar Chakraborty), which ultimately helped him become a self-sufficient Music Performer, a great Guru and Composer.

According to the statements of various well-known contemporary artists of Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri, we get a detailed idea about his singing style. Such as-

In a particular Raga ('Khayal' genre), there is an appropriate Aachara or short Raag Aalap (slow movement with "Aakar") by him in which the main movement of the raga is repeatedly expressed.

Delayed (not super-delayed) tempos of closure in Vilambit Khayal with Sthayee (the first part of Bandish).

Strengthening of tempos mainly by augmenting a single note and also strumming over the melody.

Reaching the middle octave and again resting on the middle octave 'Sa' and often returning to this middle octave 'Sa' and catching the Mukhra (first line of Bandish).

Shortening the Mukhra after three/four Avartan (one rhythmic cycle of Taal).

Beginning the Antara (the second part of Bandish) on reaching the 'Sa' of its upper octave.

Bol Vistar of the Antara.

Ending the Antara and coming back to Sthayee maintaining the same Laya (tempo) in double keeping the meaning of Bandish intact.

Small Bol Baants (singing notes in fast tempo with the words of Bandish) with slight rhythmic Sargam and Taan (singing notes with only 'Aakar').

Then the Sthayee and Antara of a Drut Bandish (composition with fast tempo) on the same Raga.

Gradually increasing the rhythm with various types of Sargam and Taan.

Occasional relaxation of the raga through ascending 'Pukaar' (a musical intonation using higher notes).

Ending the musical performance with very fast 'Sapat Taan' and 'Tihaai' (finishing by a part of the first line/ Mukhra of Bandish by singing three times).

After a full 'Khayal' performance, a short performance on another pure Classical Raga or short performance on Semi-Classical genre. On the one hand, his Hindustani Classical Raga or Khayal performances were purely Classical, on the other hand, his equal skill and erudition can be seen in Semi-Classical music such as Thumri, Dadra, Hori, Kajri, Bhajan, Bengali Raagashrayi, Raagapradhan and Bengali Devotional songs.

Melodic-clean-traditional Aachar (short Aalap), presentation of regulated but characteristic Bandish (Kichlu), broad-pure-creative but emotional RaagVistar

(Khan, "Celebrating 50 years of musical journey), enhanced, subtle Intelligence, aesthetics and artistic sense but modest and refined Laykaari-Sargam (Chakraborty), Clear-Spontaneous-Fluent Taankartav, a Meditative, Spiritualist musical performance (Bose) was the signature of performer and music composer Arun Bhaduri's singing style.

Guru and Acharya

In Indian culture, especially in Musicology, the two terms - "Guru" and "Acharya" are commonly used extensively. One is 'Education' and the other is 'Vidya'. The word 'learning' literally means mastery through practice. In the case of Music, when the active subject can be mastered by practice or practice first with the help of a 'trainer' and at a later stage such a special teacher from whom a subtle subject is taken is called a "Guru". On the other hand, 'Vidya' is pure knowledge which is demonstrable and based on truth. A student's full understanding of the subject of Musicology is developed through the acquisition of knowledge from an "Acharya". So, both these terms are equally important in Musicology. 'Education' at the initial level becomes 'Vidya' at the next level through maturity. Again "Guru" earns the title "Acharya" from his educational experience and understanding. (Ghosh)

Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri as a Guru

Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri was a lifelong believer in the traditional "Gurumukhi Vidya" and "Guru Shishya Parampara" (teacher-student tradition). With him, his disciples were able to acquire both 'education' and 'knowledge' and this was the main method of his music teaching. This is the proper method of communal and traditional enlightenment in India. It is in this manner that Sangitacharya himself and his disciples who have been in his company for a long time have been able to realize this truth.

Taalim (training method) of Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri

The main points I, Mrs. Shirin Sengupta Nath have observed from my personal Taalim experience (from 1985-1996 at ITC Sangeet Research Academy) regarding his teaching are: -

He was a truly noble, cultured and musical man at heart. In his opinion, artists also have an important role to play in the social responsibility of preserving healthy culture and heritage. This was his only sincere intention, especially for those new students who stood at the entrance of the arena of Indian classical Music, to start



their journey on the right path in the right manner. No matter what, he preferred to start from the very basics or stages of pure classical music. Guru Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri never forced a student to change his own tonal quality, but always advised the student to sing using his natural voice. He tried to study not only the individuality of each student's voice but also their physical structure, voice range, character traits etc. Basically, he started teaching by focusing on two main aspects of raga music, the pursuit of tone and the other vocal practice.

'Swar Sadhana' (standing note practice) which mainly involves the Aalap-Vistar part of the Raga is required to delve into the depth of the subsequent melody.

'Kantha Sadhana' (Vocal pursuit) on the other hand mainly helps to complete the performance of the entire Raga by effortlessly mastering the Sargam, BolTaan, Taan of the Raga and this mainly depends on various simple and complex Paalta practices.

An elementary raga mainly starts with the ascending and descending of ragas like 'Yaman', 'Bihaag', 'Bhairav', 'Bhupali' etc.

Then he used to explain the Raga form or movement of the particular Raga, through 'Pakar' or 'Auchar' showing the main phrase (significant combination of notes) of the Raga and at the same time for several months with the movement of that particular Raga through various types of simple and complex musical ornaments (Alankar) like Meend, Gamak, Aandolan etc. he used to make the students practice.

He then taught 'Raag Barhat' (Vistaar) in a disciplined manner with utmost patience like Kirana Gharana.

After that he taught different Bandishes at Madhya and Drut Laya (medium and fast tempo).

After completing the Vilambit Vistaar, he used to double, triple and quadruple the Sargam and Taan according to the capacity of the student. Along with the lyrics of Vilambit Khayal, small Bol Taans and Taans at the very end.

In the next phase, he taught Drut Bandish or sometimes increased the rhythm of the previously taught Madhya laya Bandish and taught Sargam and Taan. He used to train them completely using this method of first mastering the Mukhra of the Bandish by making short Sargams and then combining them with long Sargams. Even if using Taan-Sargam of different patterns, he advised to complete it with Taan-Sargam with Sapat ang, to help give a compactness to catch the Bandish-Mukhra.

He used to listen attentively to the students' completeness in performance and encouraged them. He was always willing to help the students in any way related to music.

Conclusion

Guru Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri used to say, "One should listen to music like a student, not like a listener. Only then will it be possible to extract something from the music." Advancing on the path shown and enlightened by his Gurus, he too was able to occupy the seat of utmost respect in the minds of the listeners till the end of his life. Sangitacharya himself was a great music composer. He wrote a book called 'Katha Sur Srishti' containing 101 Bandishas (compositions in Khayal style). Many of his disciples (Shirin Sengupta Nath, Tushar Datta, Koushik Bhattacharjee, Indrani Mukherjee, Maitreyee Roy Dadarkar, Adarsh Saxena, Astha Goswami etc.) perform individually or through their organizations in India and outside India and teach the Bandishes composed by their Guru Sangitacharya Arun Bhaduri on Hindustani Classical Raga Music. This is how his creation spread all over the world through his next and next generations by Guru-Shishya Parampara.

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