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Indian Classical Music its Gharana's and Styles(Baaj)

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Abstract

This article looks deeply at the tradition of Gharanas and what constitutes a Gharana. The paper discusses the importance of Gharana in the musical scheme of things. Going forward it discusses how Hindustani music liberates an artist and blooms her/him into a fine artist. Also suggests that Gharanas as rivers of knowledge, it also looks at why it is so. Along with this, the genesis of Gharanas has been studied as well. It is an important study to assess the trajectory of the Gharana tradition from the 16th century till now.

Introduction

From ancient times to this modern time we can clearly see the mutual influences between different forms of music. Surprisingly it helped in growing of music too. This happens because from place to place, region to region and form to form there is a principle differences in every entertainment and cultural facts like music, literature, art, cloths, culture, language and what not.

Keywords: Gharana, Maihar, Dharwad, Hindustani, Imadkhani Etawa,

In early days there were only two types of music, one is classical music and another one is non-classical or folk music. Folk music is more about freedom of expression. And it concentrates on the regional culture, languages and traditions. So obviously we can see thousands of varieties and styles in folk music alone. Classical music is a traditional and systematic type. Even the kings used give special position for classical music in their court. So classical musicians used to follow some restrictions, so that they can keep their style pure. When this happened generation after generation, gradually these each styles recognized by their own styles. And this is how the 'Gharanas' came to existence.

The term 'Gharana' is derived from the Hindi word 'Ghar' which is traceable to the Sanskrit word 'Griha' meaning family or house. Not long before performing arts, as also many other crafts in India, were carried on as family-traditions, passed on from father to son for many generations. It was rare that an outsider was allowed enter unless he became a part of the family. In view of this, the term would have been restricted to sociological thinking if (at least, in performing arts) the Gharana had not been a concept of a comprehensive musical ideology, sometimes changing substantially from one Gharana to the other and directly affecting the thinking, teaching, performance, and appreciation of music. At one point of time, gharanas suggested places of origin of hereditary musicians. This goes well with the logic mentioned earlier. Therefore, even today, many of the gharana names refer to places. For example, some of the well known gharanas in khayal singing are: Agra, Gwalior, Patiala, Kirana, Indore, Mewat, Dharwad, Sahaswan, Bhendibazar, and Jaipur. Hereditary musicianship is not confined to only vocal music; one finds gharanas in instrumental music too. For instance the Delhi, Ajrada, Punjab, Benaras, and Farukhabad are mentioned in connection with the tabla. Indore, Etawa, Dharwad, Maihar are the famous sitar Gharanas.

Today, Gharanas are mentioned, discussed and proclaimed as indicators of certain musical ideas as well allegiances. In the process, familial and regional explanations are naturally sidetracked. Nowadays, persons with no musical background of any sort have begun taking to music seriously and their affiliations are at the level of ideology and ideas of music. In general, it would be true to say that mature, rich forms or instruments point to the possibility of the emergence of gharanas.

Hindustani music gives room for showcasing the talent and skills they have learnt so far for every musician following the regulations of raga and taal, an artist discovers his music in a distinct way. It might lead to his own style after few years of practicing the same .An artist accepts the rules of the raga, but modifies the learned composition into his own ideas, and presents it in a beautiful aesthetic manner. Melody and aesthetic sense are the keys an artist uses to sing a raga more beautifully. That's why an artist sings the same raga for few years and discovers another different flavor out of it. Also presentation and the mood of the raga does depend on the time and comfort zone of an artist.

Hindustani music has produced so many artists of such a caliber that , most of them have come up with their own styles and skills. Whenever a new style of singing is liked by the people and the same style is learnt by the next generation and again passed on to the next, then a style becomes a legacy. So, a new style and the legacy carried by it constitute a ‘Gharana’.

Gharana is another name for a new style of singing or playing an instrument in Hindustani music, which is carry forwarded by the next generations. The tradition of Gharana is seen in every aspect of Indian music. Every vocal and instrumentals of Indian music follows the Gharana. Gharana system is seen in both north and south Indian music it is called “sampradayam” in south Indian music.

In common words ,Gharana is a home , family, dynast we can say the one who belongs to the same family ,and who follow the same tradition and practices and the one who has got the culture of the same tradition will form the “Gharana”.Every Gharana has its own unique style of singing or playing instruments or dancing.The person from which the style has been originated will be considered as the founder of that Gharana and the Gharana is named after the founder’s birthplace or where he is located. Gharana gets its significance when it has its own characteristic features. Gharana is said to be firm when it has many noted musicians as its followers.

Gharana takes birth by its own, no one intentionally tries to build a gharana. Any unique style is the product of an artist’s creativity. The distinct patterns or phrasal expressions will help in differentiating each different styles. It is said that , when three generation of the tradition follows the same style of singing or playing an instruments, it constitutes a gharana. also it is very essential that every member of the Gharana should follow all the nuances and techniques or musical rules of the Gharana. One can add his creative aspects to the style but the main theme of their tradition shouldn’t get disturbed by it.

Gharana , the name for many traditions has begun in the End of The Mughal Era, which is not more than 250 year. That’s why there are no mentions of Gharana system in earlier music books. According to Pt. V. D.Paluskar, the ‘Gharana’ word is mentioned firstly in “Madan-ul-Mosiqui”,a music book by Mohammad Imam karam, 1857.

16th century onwards Gharana came into existence in Hindustani music .before that in medieval period there was only Dhrupad vani were present.There were four dhrupad traditions or say Gharanas of Dhrupad. Before that also there was bharat mat, shiv math, hanuman math existed .So there were traditions in Hindustani music from the beginning, but the word Gharana came into existence later. It was either vani or math or sampradaya before, which took a shape of Gharana later.

Conclusion

We can generally say that gharanas are school of thought, style in music which determines the nature, proportion, aim, and actual rendering of each technical feature in music-making. It is a formulation of the basic musical philosophy or ideology which influences conception, teaching, learning, performance, reception, and codification of music in its major aspects. So basically gharanas kept the indian classical music so colorful in each and every different styles. Gharanas are the rivers of knowledge which will finally unite in an ocean called Music.

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