

PT. BALWANT RAIJASWAL : HIS GHARANA, LIFE AND CONTRIBUTION TO INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Pallavi Sharma

Research Scholar, Department of Music, Himachal Pradesh University Shimla

Abstract

The current article shows a brief biography of great Khyal composer of 20th century who contributed widely in Indian classical music with his compositions as well as by mentoring student of their own class to their heights. The set of information collected on Pt. Rai biography through the sources of his music colleagues/ dynasty reveals a fundamental assessment of his personality and artistic profile, in particular, the reportorial emphases set by the traditional Gwalior gharana music. Pt. Rai made more than 500 Khyals that were composed with various current and obsolete ragas and talas. He mainly used “paras” surname in his various Khyal compositions that shape the selection of modern Indian music most frequently encountered – appear to represent not the core of his creative achievement but the periphery.

Gwalior Gharana

The Gwalior gharana is one of the oldest khyal Gharanas where most of classical Indian musicians of the Gwalior gharana started with the reign of the great mughal emperor Akbar (1542-1605). The favourite singers of this patron of the arts, such as Miyan Tansen, first amongst the vocalists at the court, came from the town of Gwalior. During that period, Ustad Nathan Pir Baksh and his maternal grandsons were the legendary Haddu, Hassu and Nathu Khan. The famous musician in the court at the time was Ustad Bade Mohammad Khan Known for his taanbazi. They belonged to the same tradition of Shahi Sadarang. On the other hand, Raja Man Singh was patron of dhrupad gharana. He incorporated new form by replacing Sanskrit with Hindi in music. Another great khyal singer, Khan, brought the taan into khyal singing. Later, Haddu Khan's son, Rehamat Ali Khan (1852-1922) liberated the Gwalior style from the Methodical form to the emotional style he preferred (Grimes, 2008).

Gwalior gharana is well known for its full music dynasty as the followers of this gharana are taught rich collections of compositions types such as Vilambit and Ashtapadi, Bhajan, Drut, Khyal,

Khyalnuma, Thumri, Tappa, Tarana, Sadra and Tapp Khyal (Wade 1984). The brief in simplicity in presentation is fundamental to the aesthetic viewpoint adopted by the Gwalior gharana and is reflected in

distinctive ways in its style. The ragas provide ample freedom for amplification because of their simple and straight forward melodic movements, leading to greater appeal/attention to the listeners.

Gwalior style is particularly noted for its straight and simple tanas. Moving over wide stretches of 3 scales/ note in fast tempo. They stresses the use of meend and gamak, in its dhrupad style khyals. The Gwalior gayaki extensively include the use of the meend that provide continuity within the words of the composition and gives a distinctive melodic shape to the singing. Infact, the gharana teaching presumed that the beauty of the sthai and antra cannot be brought out without the use of the meend. In addition, Gwalior gharana also pays great attention to the singing khyals using the traditional bandish. The bandish actually incorporate the raga and manifests its full melodic form that provide guidance for raga singing. Bandish can convey the complete idea of the raga to the listeners (Sharma, 2006, Grimes, 2008).

Khyal, Kyalnuma, Thumri, Tappa, Tarana, Sadra and Lapp Khyal (Wade 1984). The brief in simplicity in presentation is fundamental to the aesthetic viewpoint adopted by the Gwalior gharana and is reflected in distinctive ways in its style. The ragas provide ample freedom for amplification because of their simple and straight forward melodic movements, leading to greater appeal/ attention to the listeners.

Early Life

Balwant Rai Jaswal was born on May 23, 1923 in Salot Village of district Una, Himachal Pradesh, India, to a Punjabi family. His name often preceded by the title Pandit (Pt.), was an Indian Musician who was one of the best known in the second half of the 20th century as well as a khyal composer of Hindustani classical music. His early influences on music are his parents, his father Thakur Hajura Singh who was Arya Samaj preacher, and Mangat Ram, taught him the primary education of the Ragas and Talas. Influenced by fast learning skills music at his early age, his father bought him under the discipline of Sri Mangat Ram, where he grown up in a very short time with different vocal expertise of that time. During that age of his childhood, he performed in front of current king of Solan, whose support, direct and take care of Pt. Rai Desire of music learning after sudden death of his father. Later, he honed his art under the guidance of Pt. Vinayak Rao Patwardhan at Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalya, Pune. Inspired by his own belief, desire and

exercitation, mentor Pt. Patwardhan brought him to his own home and let him finish his full 8 years music education course in just 4 years. After education, Pt. Rai established his own sangeet (music) academy at Maler Kotla of his native state Punjab. There, he got associated with Arya Samaj Preacher and Hindi scholar of rhetorics Pt Vivyalankar who taught him deep and basic principles of Hindi Poetry and chand that further developed their poetic talent. Later on Pt. Rai Moved his music school form Maler Kotla to Mujaffarnagar of Uttar Pradesh.

Pt. Rai was also awarded with many awards including first prize for best performing artist at the Akhil Bhartiya Sangeet Sammelan held at Kolkata on death anniversary of Pt. Vishnu Diganbar. He was regular "A" grade artist at all India radio and regularly broadcasted music program for all India Program. During this professional period, Pt. Rai got married to daughter of famous singer Pt. Deshbandu Sethi named Usha who was also singer by profession. In 1956, he was entrusted the task of teaching at Hans Raj Mahila Mahavidyalya Jalandhar where he trained many students.

Discipline Tradition and Composition Style

During his professional period, Pt. Rai extended his knowledge and disciple tradition by Mentoring many worthy students. He extended his music dynasty by mentoring his own four daughters and the son low of his daughters Sumedha and Surdhani reached the heights in Indian classical music world whereas son Yamesh liberated his music style and chooses Sugam Sangeet (soft music) as his expertise field of music. Among many disciples of Pt. Rai, the famous disciple who reached the heights in their own singing style include playback singer Sukhwinder Singh, Pushpa Pagdhare, etc. Pt. Jaswal composed number of compositions based on variety of playing and singing styles. Pt. Rai made more than 500 khayals that were composed with various current and obsolete ragas and talas. He was like a stone statue of a God that endures the blows of a Chisel and those blows only make it more perfect. His unending efforts and an inspiration not only to students of music but to anyone trying to pursue anything that hard. His life is also a great example of someone who worked hard to achieve personal goals, and their worked hard all life to propagate what he had learned so the knowledge would survive for those who came after him. Some of his compositions are as below.

राग भूपाली

स्थाई : करू विनती नित मैं कर जोर अब तो सुनो, पईया पंरू तोर

अंतरा : पारस कहे सुन मन के भीत तुम चांद मैं हूं मस्त चकोर

द्रुत ख्याल (तीन ताल)

स्थाई

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
X				2				0				3			
										गरे		स	ध	स	रे
										कऽ		रूं	ऽ	वि	न
ग	—	स	रे	प	ग	ध	प	ग	रे	स	ग	प	ध	सं	धप
ती	ऽ	नि	त	मैं	ऽ	क	र	जो	ऽ	र	अ	ब	तो	ऽ	सु
ग	—	धध	प	ग	रे	स	ध	रे	—	स					
नो	ऽ	पई	ऽ	यां	ऽ	प	रूं	तो	ऽ	र					

अन्तरा

										ग		प	ध	सं	ध
										पा		ऽ	र	स	क
सं	—	ध	प	ग	ग	प	ध	सं	—	स	ध	ध	ध	रें	सं
रे	ऽ	सु	न	म	न	के	ऽ	मी	ऽ	त	तु	म	धां	ऽ	द
ध	—	प	—	ग	ग	ध	प	ग	रे	स					
मैं	ऽ	हूं	ऽ	म	ऽस	त	च	को	ऽ	रे					

राग कल्याण

स्थाई : मान लो मोरी विनती नाथ, झुका तोरे चरनो पर माथ

अंतरा : पारस कहे इक यही आसा, रहे मोपे सदा बरद हाथ

द्रुत ख्याल (तीन ताल)

स्थाई

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
X				2				0				3			
											प	म	रे	ग	रे
											मा	ऽ	न	लो	ऽ
स	—	नि	ध	नि	रे	गमे	प	रे	—	स	नि	रे	ग	(प)	—
मो	ऽ	री	ऽ	वि	न	तीऽ	ऽ	ना	ऽ	थ	झु	का	ऽ	तो	ऽ
म	—	सं	नि	प	मे	रे	—	गरे	स	स					
रे	ऽ	च	रे	नो	ऽ	प	ऽ	माऽ	ऽ	थ					

अन्तरा

												ग	म	ध	नि	सं
												पा	ऽ	र	स	क
नि	—	मं	ध	नि	निरे	—	धनि	रेसं	सं	—	रें	नि	ध	नि	ध	
हे	ऽ	इ	क	यं	हीऽ	ऽ	आऽ	ऽऽ	सा	ऽ	र	हे	ऽ	मो	ऽ	
म	ध	प	सं	—	ग	ग	प	रे	—	स						
पे	ऽ	स	दा	ऽ	ब	र	द	हा	ऽ	थ						

Death

During last decade of his life at old age, he distorted his voice due to excessive hardwork and physical enervation reason being he stopped his music displays but continued his contribution towards teaching and composing music. On Feb 26, 1989 Pt. Rai died unfortunately as a result of road accident. There has been classical music concert “Paras Sangeet Sammelan’ in memory of late pt. Balwant Rai Jaswal.

Conclusion

The information given in the present article are original and were collected after a hard field work visit to their native places Pt. spent his professional as well as personal life.

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Sumedha Wadhwa, Faculty music (Instrumental) Khalsa College of Women, Ludhiana Punjab.
Surdhani Arora, Faculty Music (Vocal) Gopi Chand Arya College for Women, Abohar Punjab.