



Tradition and Trends in Teaching and Learning of Hindustani Classical Music:

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There have been many changes in the entire environment in which classical music has been heard, practiced, developed, and appreciated over the years. A historical survey of this music is meant to unravel the mystery of the various traditions and trends in which *Hindustani* classical music has developed throughout the centuries.

India had a very rich tradition of music since the *Vedic* age. It ultimately led to the development of our *Hindustani* music as we find it today. In the *Vedic* society, the *Gurukul* tradition of teaching and learning was in vogue. Literally, the word *Gurukula* means the family (*kula*) of the *Guru*. Since, *kula* means a family thus, *Gurukula* does not refer to a school of the *Guru* but it refers to the family of a teacher. All branches of *Vedic* education were carried out in the *Gurukulas*. It was a system of education under which a '*Sishya*' resided with his '*Guru*' at his home to receive education. These '*Gurukulas*' were run with the financial support of kings and wealthy persons. These types of institutions were fully autonomous, and the *Gurus*, or teachers, were the ultimate ones in all kinds of decision-making within the *Gurukulas*.

The etymology of the term "*Guru*" consists of two syllables - 'gu' denotes darkness, and 'ru' signifies light, that is capable of 'dispelling the darkness'. The concept of a '*Guru*' is therefore linked to a spiritually enlightened individual who has the ability to drive out ignorance and clear the way for the perception of divine reality. As a noun, '*Guru*' refers to one who imparts wisdom. In the context of an adjective, it denotes anything heavy or substantial, as "heavy with knowledge," "heavy with spiritual wisdom," "heavy with spiritual weight," "heavy with the positive attributes of scriptures and realization," or "heavy with a wealth of knowledge."

In order to be considered for the relevant education, *Sishya*, the student, must prove his merit. A *Sishya* who is neither focused nor committed should not be taught, according to the Laws of Manu. Because of this, it is essential that *Sishyas* assure or persuade their *Guru* that they possess the motivation, tenacity, and intelligence needed to continue their education. The learner is accepted as a disciple of the *Guru* and given shelter at the *Gurukula* once the *Guru* is fully pleased with the student's desire for education.

Education during those days aimed at providing liberal, spiritual, and religious education. Music education in this regard was also not an exception. The chanting of the *Vedic* hymns may be traced as the form of music practiced during the period. The *Vedic* society was close to religion and music served an important part of worship. The four Vedas - Rik Veda, Yayur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda have a tremendous impact on the spiritual and cultural life of the people of India. The tradition of *Vedic* chanting may be broadly classified in two streams:

1. Chanting of hymns of *Rigveda*, *Yayurveda* and *Atharvaveda* and *Samaveda* in the three *Vedic* swara or accents, namely *Udatta*, *Anudatta* and *Svarita*; and also *Prachaya*, whose position is same as *Udatta*.
2. Singing of hymns of *Samaveda* in four to seven *Vedic* swaras or musical notes, namely *Krushta*, *Prathama*, *Dvitiya*, *Tritiya*, *Chaturtha*, *Mandra* and *Atisvarya*.

The *Vedic* swaras were also critically very important. As *Naradiya Siksha* contends that if a mantra is pronounced in an incorrect *swara*, it fails to express the intended meaning of the hymn.

The impact of the medieval era led to the birth of *Hindustani* music. The advent of the medieval era has given birth to various musical forms. Along with the advent of the new genres, languages were also replaced by Urdu, Persian, and other languages. Musicians were held in high esteem during the period. The performance of music entered the courts of the Mughals. Earlier, the compositions of music, which included praises of Hindu deities, also added poetry and praises of Muslim saints. The golden period of *Hindustani* music started from the regime of Emperor Akbar (16th century). During the period, *Dhrupad* was in high esteem in north India. Raja Man Singh Tomar is credited with the popularizing the genre. The various *Banis* of *Dhrupad* like the *Dagur Bani*, *Khandar Bani*, *Nauhar Bani* and *Gauhar Bani* which evolved along with the development of the genre, may be cited as the various schools of *Dhrupada* or classical music in a wider connotation. The impact of the medieval era replaced the term 'Guru' as 'Ustad' and 'Sishya' as 'Shagrid'. But, the teaching and learning of the art forms were still continued in the *Guru-Sishya* tradition. The concept of *Gharana* developed later on along with the development of *Khayal*.

The development of *Gharana* tradition in the realm of *Hindustani* music has further enhanced the development of the art form. Literally, the term '*Gharana*' refers to a 'lineage'. It describes a musical family, an institution of higher learning, or a musical lineage associated with a certain individual or place. However, it may be mentioned that a musical lineage is not accepted as a *Gharana*, unless it exists for at least three generations. It is often found that the *Gharana parampara* were restricted within family boundaries and outsiders were rarely given entry to learn the tradition. However, exceptions were there. We can trace a good number of musicians those have been groomed under the shelter of various *gharanas* without having born in a traditional musical family. But, whatever may be, the development of contemporary *Hindustani* music has been greatly influenced by the *Gharana* tradition. It is hard to describe with written explanations, the distinctive qualities of a *Gharana* since they involve an array of fine artistic elements conveyed through singing. It can be best understood by attentive listeners.

The dawn of the modern era has given rise to the development of institutional education in India. The traditional art forms, those were barred in family traditions were made accessible to all. So far, the institutionalization of *Hindustani* music is concerned; it has also its beginning in the modern era. *Pandit* Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande and *Pandit* Vishnu Digambar Paluskar had played a vital role in the revival as well as the institutionalization of *Hindustani* music.

In the year 1914, Bhatkhande started imparting music education under an organization called Sharda Sangeet Mandal. After meeting the king of Gwalior he established the Madhav Sangeet Vidyalaya in the year 1918. In this school, Krishna Rao Shankar and Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale were kept as music teachers. In 1925-26, he established the 'Marris College of Music' in Lucknow. The college was later renamed as Bhatkhande Sangit Vidyapith. He also organized many music conferences and seminars. Under Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad's sponsorship, *Pandit* Bhatkhande organized the first music conference in the year 1916. With the support of the nawab of Rampur, he organized a second musical convention at Delhi in the year 1918. Thereafter, two more consecutive conferences took place at Banaras in the year 1925 and Lucknow in the year 1926. All these conferences have played a significant role in arousing public consciousness relating to *Hindustani* music.

Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar on the other hand had also played a vital role in popularizing as well as institutionalization of this art form. After, Maulabaksh's 'Gayan Shala', Gandharva Mahavidyalaya is the music institution whose information is received. The school was founded in the year 1901 in Lahore with the goal of promotion of musical knowledge and awareness. The motto of the school was to impart quality education in music. Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar put all his efforts to bring out music of the tragic situation and thus tried to arrange for a systematic music education through this institution. The school was open to all and one of the first in India to run on public support and donations rather than royal patronage. No doubt, that there were some music institutions prior to this but those were run under royal patronage. In the year 1908, he opened a branch of Gandharva Mahavidyalaya in Mumbai. A huge number of learners were benefitted from this institution. It was his whole hearted effort to create a refined interest in the art of music among the people. After a few years, branches of this Vidyalaya were established in all the big cities of India. In this way Pt. Vishnu Digambar Paluskar has made the institution education of music accessible to the general public in an unbiased manner.

Today, in this 21st century, *Hindustani* music is placed in school curriculum, secondary curriculum as well as university curriculum. Though, the status of *Hindustani* classical music within school curriculum is yet to be explored, but its inclusion is no doubt a positive step in the propagation of this art form. In this context, it may be mentioned that there are many schools those which really offers a healthy *Hindustani* classical music education within their curriculum. So far, the status of secondary curriculum is concerned, it varied between different states. It depends on various educational boards as well as state policies. Some boards have specific provisions for *Hindustani* classical music while others have a general focus on music education i.e., without having any specific focus on Hindustani music.

The system of modern institutionalization of education in a graded, time-bound structure was ushered in by the British rulers from the mid-nineteenth century. The British East India Company established the first modern Western-style University in India. One of the oldest among them is the University of Calcutta which was established in the year 1857. Subsequently, the University of Bombay (now Mumbai) and the University of Madras were founded in 1857 and 1858 respectively. However, it did not mark the beginning of music education in universities.

The Indian Universities Act of 1904, also known as the Minto-Morley Reforms, played a vital role in shaping the structure and governance of universities in British India. It introduced the concept of affiliating universities, where individual colleges could be affiliated with a central university while retaining a degree of autonomy. After independence, the University Grants Commission (UGC) was established in 1956. It was entrusted to look after the various facets of higher education in India and also to maintain standards. It has played a pivotal role in the development and regulation of universities across the country.

India, today boasts a diverse higher education landscape with a bundle of central and state universities, deemed universities, and many other specialized institutions those which offer varied courses in *Hindustani classical* music starting from undergraduate and post-doctoral level of studies. All these institutions play a vital role in the propagation of this art form in the contemporary society.

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