

Significance of Hindustani Music Traditions in Bharatiya Culture and Global Recognition – A Brief Study

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Abstract

Hindustani Music is an integral part of Bharatiya cultural traditions. It is highly regarded in Bharatiya culture for its expressive, emotional, spiritual, philosophical, and artistic elements. As Bharatiyas, we deeply appreciate the power of music and feel melodies in all aspects of our nature, whether it is the gentle trickle of river, the pitter-patter of raindrops, the twittering of birds or the breezing wind. Hindustani Music is rooted in the ancient Vedic texts. There were two categories of ancient Bharatiya Music: Margi Music and Deshi Music. The Hindustani Music of today is an outgrowth of Margi Music. The two renowned musician-musicologists - Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar and Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, have played a vital role in promoting Hindustani Music through concerts, conferences, and institutions. Since the Independence of Bharat, several renowned artists/musicians, non-governmental organisations, and the Government of Bharat have been tirelessly promoting Hindustani Music all over the country and abroad as well. A brief study on the mentioned topic is described in this paper.

Keywords : Bharat, Bharatiya Culture, Hindustani Music, Folk Music.

INTRODUCTION

According to Hinduism (popularly known as ‘Sanatana Dharma’), the oldest religion in the world, “ॐ” (spelled as ‘Om’, also alternatively referred to as “Nada-Brahma”) is the original sound from which the whole universe came into existence. Music is one of the most significant gifts given by the Almighty to Mankind. Music influences the mind of every human being.

Hindustani Music has immense capacity to impact people besides other musical genres. Raga, the fundamental element of Bharatiya Music elucidates human emotions such as happiness, sadness, romance, and devotion. Emotions and Sentiments have a significant impact on nation's culture and maintenance of human neighbourhoods. Music is an integral part of our society and religion which is deeply ingrained in our culture.

Hindustani Music performances are rich in emotions, drawing heavily from the intellectual and spiritual traditions of Bharat. Additionally, many foreign audiences seek an alternative musical experience beyond their mainstream of Western Music. Bharatiya Music attracts them due to its distinctive auditory attributes, profundity of thought, spiritual connection, and cultural mystique.

1. Evolution and Development of Hindustani Music:

Bharatiya culture has a long and continuous musical tradition. It is believed that the art of music was introduced by Brahma, the creator of the Vedas. However, the Samaveda, commonly referred to as the “Veda of Music”, is credited for laying the groundwork of Bharatiya Music. The Vedic scriptures contain hymns, system of musical notes, and rhythmic cycles. Rigvedic hymns set to tunes make up the Samaveda.

‘Sangeet’ is a concept that encompasses vocal and instrumental art-forms. Hindustani Music has undergone a long and intricate evolution over centuries, reflecting Bharat’s varied cultural, social, philosophical, and historical influences.

The music of Bharat during the ancient period may be categorised under two heads: Vedic Music and Laukik Music. Laukik Music was of two types: Gandharva Laukik and Deshi Laukik. Gandharva Laukik tradition of music was further divided into Margi Music (music that shows the path to salvation) and Deshi Music (regional music). Margi Music was based on two types of melodic structures: Jaati and Raga. The Natya-Shastra of Bharata Muni is notable as an ancient treatise which has influenced dance, drama, music, and literary traditions in our country. The influence of Prabandha, an ancient genre of music, first mentioned in Matanga Muni’s Brihaddeshi, has been enduring, pervading most parts and constituents of Bharatiya Music. Many popular musical genres have developed from Prabandha.

The development of Hindustani Music reached its peak during the medieval period (12th century - 18th century). Many treatises related to Bharatiya Music were written during that period. Sangita-Ratnakara of Sharngadeva (13th century) is an extensive treatise on Bharatiya Music that covers all the aspects of Bharatiya Music along with the description of Ragas and Talas prevalent at that time. Due to the impact of Persian and Islamic influences, Bharatiya Music diverged into Hindustani Music and Carnatic Music. The most influential musician, Amir Khusrau and the legendary musician, Mian Tansen have played a vital role in the development of Hindustani Music during that time. The ancient form of Dhrupad evolved during the 15th century. The Khayal style of music evolved from Dhrupad. Tarana, Tappa, Thumri and other allied forms became popular in Hindustani Music.

The early 20th century musician-scholars - Vishnu Digambar Paluskar and Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, have dedicated their lives to the promotion of Bharatiya Music. Their contributions to music were remarkable and extensive. After Independence, the Government of Bharat put efforts to preserve and promote Bharatiya art and culture through various initiatives. Akashvani strengthened the promotion of Bharatiya Music.

2. Principal Vocal Forms of Hindustani Classical Music:

The two main vocal genres of Hindustani Classical Music are Dhrupad and Khayal.

2.1 Dhrupad:

Dhrupad is the oldest, concentrative, and majestic vocal style in Hindustani Classical Music. Dhrupad is derived from Salaga-Suda class of Prabandha. Raja Man Singh Tomar of Gwalior renovated or rather rectified the old form of Dhruva-Prabandha. He replaced traditional Sanskrit language and introduced Braja-Bhasha in Dhrupad compositions. Emperor Akbar helped much to enrich the culture of Dhrupad. Mian Tansen was a great musician and patron of traditional as well as newly moulded form and technique of Dhrupad. He devised a large number of Dhrupad compositions.

Dhrupad developed into four distinct Vanis (technical styles of exposition) - Gobarahara Vani (Founder - Tansen), Khandara Vani (Founder - Raja Samokhan Singh), Dagara Vani (Founder - Braj Chand), and Nauhara Vani (Founder - Rajput Shri Chand).

2.2 Khayal:

Khayal is unique, imaginative, and creative vocal genre of contemporary Hindustani Classical Music. It is believed that innovative derivation from the strict rules of Dhrupad was responsible for the evolution of Khayal. Compared to Dhrupad, it is a more free and flexible vocal style that provides wider scope of improvisation.

The medieval treatise, Sangita-Ratnakara of Sharngadeva mentions a genre called ‘Akshiptika’ which brings out similarity with the contemporary Khayal. It was in its undeveloped form at the time of Sultan Hussain

Sharque of Jaunpur. It was distinctly developed during the period of Sultan Muhammad Shah, under the effective guidance of Niyamat Khan (Sadarang) and Firoz Khan (Adarang).

2.2.1 Gharanas of Khayal:

The 'Gharana' system is particularly significant in Hindustani Classical Music. It is so unique that it cannot be found elsewhere in this world. Every Gharana prescribes a broad musicological ideology, certain musical style or logic of presentation within the larger context of their social culture, and varies in how they express their performances. Each Gharana have specific stylistic feature in their performances. Few Gharanas of Khayal style of singing are as below:

2.2.1.1 Gwalior Gharana:

The Gwalior Gharana is the oldest Khayal Gharana. The founder of this Gharana was Nathan Pir Baksh. It evolved during the time of Mughal Empire. This Gharana is known for 'Ashtanga-Pradhan Gayaki'.

2.2.1.2 Agra Gharana:

The Agra Gharana is the only Gharana which boldly reveal its dhrupadic origin. It descended from Nauhara Vani of Dhrupad. Ghagge Khudabaksh introduced the Khayal style of Gwalior Gharana into Agra Gharana.

2.2.1.3 Kirana Gharana:

The Kirana Gharana claims its origin from the popular Beenkar, Bande Ali Khan. It originated from Gauhara Vani of Dhrupad. Abdul Wahid Khan and Abdul Karim Khan took this Gharana to new peaks by their excellence. This Gharana is known for 'Alapa-Pradhan Gayaki'.

2.2.1.4 Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana:

The Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana is founded by Alladiya Khan. This Gharana mainly evolved from Dagara Vani, however it also absorbed finer essence of Gauhara Vani and Khandara Vani of Dhrupad.

The Khayal Gharanas continue to be a rich and vibrant part of the cultural heritage of Bharat and an important contribution to the world of music. The Khayal musicians, through their innovative approaches and deep respect for tradition continue to inspire and captivate audiences around the globe.

3. Semi-Classical Vocal Genres of Northern Bharat:

Besides Classical, Semi-Classical vocal genres of northern Bharat also play an important role in enhancing our cultural heritage and promoting the status of Bharat globally.

3.1 Thumri:

The musical effect of Thumri is mostly dependent on its literary content which has a predominance of romantic sentiments. Thumri depicts various emotions in love - unison, separation, and such ups and downs of relationships.

The evolution of Thumri can be traced to the varieties of 'Rupakalapti' mentioned in Sharngadeva's Sangita-Ratnakara. Muhammad Raza, the author of Naghmat-e-Asafi, pointedly stated that Vazir Mirza 'Kadarpiya' was the originator of Thumri.

- Nawab Wajid Ali Shah enriched the Lucknow Style (Pachahin Anga) of Thumri singing.
- Moujuddin Khan popularised the Banaras Style (Poorbi Anga) of Thumri singing.
- Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan has been credited to popularise the Punjabi Style of Thumri singing.

3.2 Dadra:

Dadra is a form of semi-classical music mostly popular in eastern Uttar Pradesh. It is similar to Thumri in tune and temperament, but has concise and compact structure of improvisations. It is sung in faster tempo than Thumri.

3.3 Hori:

Hori is a form of semi-classical music popular in Uttar Pradesh. The love-antics of Radha and Krishna during the festival of Holi are expressed in the song-text.

3.4 Chaiti:

Chaiti is a form of semi-classical music mostly popular in Uttar Pradesh and adjacent areas. It is usually sung after the festival of Holi, in the beginning of month 'Chaitra'.

3.5 Jhula:

Jhula is a form of semi-classical music popular in Uttar Pradesh. The song-text portrays the romantic mood of Radha and Krishna while swinging on a swing.

3.6 Kajri:

Kajri is a form of semi-classical music mostly popular in Uttar Pradesh and adjacent regions. It is usually sung during the monsoon. The song-text explains the pathos of a separated lover or describes a maiden's longing for her lover.

3.7 Tappa:

Tappa is a form of semi-classical vocal music, with its speciality of swift, delicate, and complex arrangements. It is believed that Tappa style of music evolved from the folk music of Punjab and Sindh regions. It was developed and refined as a genre of semi-classical music by Mian Ghulam Nabi Shori, popularly known as 'Shori Mian'. Tappa's song-text is always in Punjabi language. The typical word arrangement in Tappa depicts love and partition of any lovers.

4. Folk Music of Bharat:

"In Folk Music, the earth sings, the mountains sings, the river flows, the crops sings."

Mahatma Gandhi

Folk Music of Bharat is essentially a community-based musical genre dealing with some kind of societal issues or feelings of the singer and situation. The great diversity that prevails in Bharatiya culture and civilisation has greatly fostered the origin and development of the folk style of music.

Each state of Bharat has their folk musical traditions with distinct style of presentations, tunes, instruments, dance-forms, and literature. Folk-song names of few states are as below:

<u>State</u>	<u>Folk-song</u>
Assam	Bihu, Karama
Madhya Pradesh	Karma, Alha, Phag, Nindayi
Bihar	Sagun, Sohar, Pawara, Baisali
West Bengal	Bhatiyali, Sari, Baul, Bhawaiya
Rajasthan	Mand, Bhupal, Ghumar, Bindali
Himachal Pradesh	Ghure, Sati Gatha, Mahasu, Jhuri
Maharashtra	Lavani, Mangalagaur
Tamil Nadu	Kappal Pattu, Villu Pattu

4.1 Significance of Folk Music in Bharatiya Culture:

4.1.1 Cultural Significance:

- Folk Music preserves Bharat's rich cultural heritage, transmitting customs and values from generation to generation.
- Folk Music evokes a sense of identification and belonging, connecting people to their roots and community.
- Folk Music promotes social harmony, bridging gaps between different region, languages, and cultures.
- Folk Music provides an outlet for emotional expression, conveying happiness and sadness.

4.1.2 Social Significance:

- Folk Music promotes community involvement, bringing people together through festivals, celebrations, and gatherings.
- Folk Music educates people about their cultural patrimony, history, and values.
- Folk Music fosters national integration, highlighting Bharat's unity and diversity.

4.1.3 Economic Significance:

- Folk Music provides employment opportunities for musicians, dancers, and artisans.
- Folk Music attracts cultural tourists, contributing to the economy of Bharat.

5. Devotional Songs of Bharat:

The Bhakti Movement was a spiritual, social, and literary revolution in Bharat emerged during the medieval period. Key figures of the Bhakti Movement include renowned saints like Kabir, Tulsidas, and Mirabai. They composed poetry and devotional songs in regional languages, promoting a deep sense of community and religious inclusivity.

Bharatiyas have the culture of singing devotional songs in the praise of Gods and Goddess while worshipping.

- **Bhajan** – Bhajan refers to any song with religious or spiritual significance in a regional language. The common themes of Bhajans include concepts from sacred texts, mythical epics, teaching of saints, and devotion to deities.
- **Kirtan** – Kirtan is a type of musical story-telling or group recitation based on spiritual or religious themes. The texts typically cover religious, mythological or social topics. In the 14th-15th century, various types of Kirtan evolved.
- **Aarti** – Aarti refers to the song/s sung in the praise of deity, when the light or flame is being offered. The most popular Aarti song is 'Om Jai Jagdish Hare'.

6. Modern Songs of Bharat:

In the early 20th century, modern genre of music evolved from the admixture of various tunes, classical and folk, getting free scope in the hands of creative artists of contemporary Bharat.

Modern songs can also be referred to as the popular songs of states or regions of Bharat.

- **Bhavageet** – Bhavageet literally translates to 'a song with emotions'. It is a form of poetry and light music. This genre of music is quite popular in Maharashtra and Karnataka.
- **Rabindra Sangeet** – The songs that are composed by the Bengali scholar Rabindranath Tagore are called Rabindra Sangeet or Tagore Songs. Rabindranath Tagore was a connoisseur of compositional and melodic forms. His works are based on a variety of genres, including romantic, devotional, seasonal, and patriotic.

7. Significance of Hindustani Music in the Culture of Bharat:

The culture of Bharat is one of the oldest and richest cultures in the world. A country's core values, beliefs, symbols, achievements, and particular ways of adapting to its strategic environment are combined to form its culture.

Even if there are regional differences in our cultures, Bharat is the only nation in the world where there is an unbreakable bond of unity despite the diversity of traditions. The music of Bharat has an important contribution in maintaining this harmony. Our Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Damodardas Modi, through video-conferencing during the 5th International Convention of SPIC MACAY (Society for Promotion of Indian Classical Music, Arts and Culture Amongst Youth) at IIT Delhi on 5th June 2017 said that *Bharatiya Music, be it folk, classical or filmy, has always done the job of bonding states and societies. Our music gave the message of living together, transcending all the barriers of caste, creed, race, and religion. The various genres of music across Bharat reflect our Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb.*

The Ministry of Culture has been working tirelessly to spread awareness about Bharatiya culture and heritage among the nation's youth by organising festivals and programmes for the development of art and culture, and implementing 'Scheme of Scholarship and Fellowship for Promotion of Art and Culture', namely Award of Scholarships to Young Artists in Different Cultural Fields and Award of Senior/Junior Fellowships to Outstanding Persons in Different Cultural Fields.

Further, music is the only medium that has a mutual relation with other art-forms of Bharatiya culture:

- **Music and Dance** - Music and Dance are two intricately entwined art-forms that have enhanced and impacted one another throughout human history. Fundamentally, music offers the melodic and rhythmic frameworks that direct and motivate dance-actions.
- **Music and Drama** - In drama, the musical composition and background music are based on situations, ideas, themes or moods. Music creates a refreshing, emotional or melodic environment.
- **Music and Painting**- As painting brings out the creativity, emotion, and imagination of a painter similarly through music a musician expresses his/her emotions and sentiments through melodies. Ragamala paintings, a series of illustrative paintings from medieval Bharat depict various Ragas and Raginis.
- **Music and Literature** - In vocal music, the song-text is in poetic-form set to melody through which the vocalist expresses various emotions/moods. When each word of a composition is set to a tune, the actual expression of the word is provoked.

It can be said that a person's attachment to music, art, and literature is the true essence of humanity.

8. Preservation of Hindustani Music in the Culture of Bharat:

Various efforts contribute to the preservation of Hindustani Music:

- **Documentation** – Recording and documenting Hindustani Music, musicians, and performances creates valuable archives. This helps preserve cultural heritage and musical tradition for future generations.
- **Festivals and Concerts** – Organising festivals and concerts promotes cultural cognisance. These events bring traditions and communities together.
- **Education and Workshops** – Teaching Hindustani Music in various institutions and workshops ensures musical progression. Workshops provide hands-on training to the learners.
- **Digital Archives** – Creating digital archives of Hindustani Music makes it accessible worldwide. Digital platforms facilitate research and enable digitising various files.
- **Collaborations** – Partnering with musicians, researchers, and institutions promotes Hindustani Music preservation. Collaborations support cultural exchange both within and outside our country.

9. Significance of Bharatiya Music Festivals:

Bharatiya Music festivals highlight the remarkable diversity and cultural significance of Bharat's musical landscape. These festivals bring together classical vocal and instrumental music, folk music, and devotional music, representing different traditions and communities. They serve as platforms for renowned artists/musicians, young talents, and cross-cultural collaborations, encouraging artistic exchange and innovation. Bharatiya Music festivals not only provide an arena for musical performances but also celebrate the cultural framework, spiritual devotion, and shared heritage of the nation, making them a fundamental part of Bharat's cultural tradition.

Music festivals are organised in different parts of Bharat which are popular both domestically and globally. Some of them are as below:

<u>Name of Festival</u>	<u>Place</u>
Tansen Samaroh	Gwalior
Dover Lane Music Conference	Kolkata
Harballabh Sangeet Sammelan	Jalandhar
Sawai Gandharva Bhimsen Mahotsav	Pune
Saptak Annual Festival of Music	Ahmedabad
Tyagaraja Aradhana	Thiruvaiyaru

10. Global Recognition of Hindustani Music and Bharatiya Culture:

"Music relaxes not only the body, but also gives joy to the mind, music also connects our society."

Narendra Modi

‘वसुधैवकुटुंबकम्’ is a Sanskrit phrase found in the Maha-Upanishad, meaning “The World is a Family”, reflects Bharat's global outlook. The Government of Bharat is constantly in favour of amicable relations and understanding between nations. With this concept, our country, Bharat, has established extensive socio-cultural exchanges worldwide.

Our Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Damodardas Modi, during his address in the 95th edition of ‘Mann Ki Baat’ on 27th November 2022 said that *Our country is home to the ancient traditions in the world. He emphasised how Bharatiya Music has been bringing propinquity between people not only in Bharat but also abroad. He spoke about the singer from Greece, Konstantinos Kalaitzis, who has sung Bapu's favourite song ‘Vaishnava Jana To’ during the 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi. He further highlighted the export of musical instruments from our country. He also described how Bharatiya traditions and culture have influenced Guyana and Fiji.*

The Ministry of Culture implements “Global Engagement Scheme” to promote Bharat's rich cultural heritage and enhance our country's image in the global arena in a concerned manner. It fosters Bharatiya folk art, culture, and music abroad through Indo-Foreign Friendship Cultural Societies organising various cultural programmes and activities.

In recognition of the Government's amazing efforts to promote Hindustani Music, musicians from Bharat are invited to participate in festivals, concerts, and academic programmes both domestically and internationally.

10.1 Organisations Promoting Hindustani Music and Bharatiya Culture:

Many prestigious organisations are promoting Hindustani Music all over the world through their relentless efforts. Among them, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Society for Promotion of Indian Classical Music, Arts and Culture Amongst Youth (SPIC MACAY), Sankritilaya (California), Indian Classical Music and Arts Foundation (United States), Asian Music Circle (London), Music India Foundation (United States) and many others.

These organisations are dedicated to promote Hindustani Music and Bharatiya culture all around the globe through seminars, workshops, concerts and other related activities.

Traditional music from Bharat is becoming increasingly popular worldwide, especially in significant parts due to the initiatives of several international organisations like the International Council of Traditional Music (ICTM) and the International Music Council (IMC) of UNESCO. Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar, a renowned Sitar player of our country was awarded the UNESCO IMC Music Prize in 1975.

Some awards in other fields of Bharatiya culture from UNESCO are:

- **Varanasi and Gwalior** have been designated as the “**City of Music**” by UNESCO in the year 2015 and 2023 respectively.
- Inclusion on UNESCO’s list of the **Intangible Cultural Heritage**:
 - i) New Tradition of **Vedic Chanting** (2008)
 - ii) **Ramlila**, the traditional presentation of the Ramayana (2008)
 - iii) **Kalbelia**, the folk songs and dances of Rajasthan (2010)
 - iv) **Sankirtana**, the ritual music, drumming, and dancing in Manipur (2013)

10.2 Factors Attracting Foreign Audiences to Hindustani Music:

Several factors attract foreign audiences to Hindustani Music:

- **Richness and Intricacy:** Hindustani Music is renowned for its elaborate compositions, embellishments, and improvisational aspects. Audience seeking a more philosophical and thoughtful musical experience are attracted to its depth and complexity.
- **Religiousness Combined with Emotions:** A significant portion of Hindustani Music has its roots in spiritual and philosophical traditions. As it evokes a sense of transcendence and emotional resonance, music is frequently employed in religious ceremonies.
- **Cultural Apprehension:** Hindustani Music traditions have captivated many foreigners and therefore, globalisation increased cross-cultural exchange. The foreign audiences seem to enjoy the cultural themes of our country with enthusiasm.
- **Distinct Vocal and Instrumental Styles:** Hindustani Music employ unique vocal styles along with varieties of instruments. The foreign audiences enjoy the musical creations of maestros/musicians.
- **Therapeutic Attributes:** Hindustani Classical Music’s slow and meditative style is believed to have therapeutic and calming effects, making it popular with global audiences seeking musical comfort.

Bharatiya Culture with Reference to “Viksit Bharat @2047: Voice of Youth”

Intending to secure the “Developed Nation” tag, our Hon’ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Damodardas Modi on 11th December 2023 introduced “**Viksit Bharat @2047: Voice of Youth**” agenda for transforming Bharat into a strong and developed entity by the year 2047, marking the 100th anniversary of its Independence. The Voice of Youth initiative offers an opportunity for the young minds to come up with

innovative ideas for cultural preservation. Initiatives to celebrate art and music not only facilitate preservation of cultural heritage but also provide economic opportunities.

One of the prominent aspects for the vision **Viksit Bharat @2047** is *social progress*. Community participation seeks to transform Bharat into a global powerhouse while preserving its cultural legacy, fostering social harmony, and unity in diversity.

The main themes of “**Amrit Kaal**” in relation to Bharatiya culture are:

- **Ekta Aur Ekjutta** - As a nation with varied culture and traditions, our greatest strength lies in our unity.
- **Virasat Par Garv** - Taking pride in our legacy requires us to preserve, and honour our rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

CONCLUSION:

This study can provide a clear understanding of the evolution and development of Hindustani Music and its significance in the culture of Bharat as the contemporary Bharat and the entire world is facing rapid changes.

Bharat is home to the world’s oldest traditions of culture, where music continues to play the significant role in uniting all to build “**Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat**”.

Modern Bharat witnessed a remarkable development in music, art, and culture. Music in modern Bharat consist of a variety of genres, reflecting the country’s cultural diversity. The advent of technology and music in present-day Bharat has become more accessible and is helping Bharat to grow into “**Unnat Bharat**”.

Contemporary music of Bharat has become influential and widely known globally. It acts as a potent platform for socio-cultural cohesion. Music is a vibrant and integral part of our country’s cultural fabric that connects people and transcends borders.

It is reasonable to say that the Government of Bharat, non-governmental organisations, and various institutions of our country and abroad have made significant contributions to promote/popularise Hindustani Music and Bharatiya culture universally.

This article would not be completed without mentioning that the active involvement of dynamic youth in the field of art and culture will achieve the tag of “**Viksit Bharat**”. This will not only contribute to the progress of Bharat but also provide economic opportunities, ultimately leading to the establishment of “**Atmanirbhar Bharat**”.

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