Music and Modernity

North Indian Classical Music in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction

Edited by Amlan Das Gupta

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Birendrakishore Roychaudhuri Hindusthāni Sangeet-ey Tānsen-er Sthân [in Bengali]

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Making Modernity Audible: Sarodiyas and the early recording industry

Adrian McNeil

Recorded music has become so much part of our daily lives that it is now difficult to imagine the impact gramophone records first had on the lives of musicians over a century ago. This technology, for the first time in history, made it possible for music to be heard outside of the physical presence of musicians. The act of disembodying music from its physical source was to carry with it a whole new range of cultural, social and economic implications for the practice and patronage of music. Coinciding as it did with a profound rupture in the patronage, social organization and performance practice of Hindustani music, sound recording technology itself further extended the direction and substance of this transformation, and in the process it seemed to accrue a greater potency for itself as an agent of change. Addressed here is the challenge that this technology posed for the professional activities of sarodiyas at the time; how this related to the broader transformation in Hindustani music, and the subsequent responses that sarodiyas, in particular, devised for dealing with it.

Gramophone recordings arrived in India not long after they first appeared in Europe.¹ Calcutta witnessed the arrival of the Edison phonogram in 1900. At the time it cost a princely sum of two hundred rupees, putting it well beyond the reach of all except the wealthier classes. The first recordings of Hindustani music occurred in 1902, and the first record factory was established in Calcutta in 1908. In the early years, recording equipment was portable and engineers put together a series of expeditions across the country to record hundreds of musicians under a variety of makeshift conditions. Decisions concerning who should be recorded, in most cases, proceeded on an ad hoc manner based on either circumstance or the weight of recommendation.²

It was also during this time that Hindustani musicians experienced the increasing marginalization of late-feudal nawabi and zamindari networks and structures of patronage grounded in the aristocratic courts and estates spread through North India. The cultural climate formed under the paramountcy of the British raj, the growth of metropolises such as Calcutta, the creation of a new stratum of indigenous wealth under colonialism, the activities of new patron groups from amongst mercantile and other wealthy classes, challenged pre-existing ways of patronizing Hindustani music. At the same time these conditions also came to provide a range of new opportunities for musicians. By the end of the nineteenth century, many musicians had started to seriously engage with the lucrative opportunities that this patronage offered in, and around, the expanding colonial metropolis. This significant geographical and cultural shift from regional centres to the metropolis generated a series of equally profound consequences in Hindustani music, and in the lives of its musicians.

Changes in the social and economic codes of patronage introduced a new set of criteria against which the professional identity and status of a musician was determined. This development was met by a reconfiguration of the social organization of musicians and the proliferation of new ways of thinking about performance practice, methods of training, aesthetic conventions, cultural ownership and instrument design. These conditions appeared to have created new scope for innovation as well as the potential for social and geographic mobility; a dynamic that ended up favouring some communities of musicians over others. Sarodiyas were one such group that seemed to have benefited under these conditions at the beginning of the twentieth century. From this time a dozen or so sarodiyas also found their professional lives, their music and their instrument, recast from the position of marginality they had occupied within the feudal networks of North India, to the more professional roles they would come to occupy in the colonial centre of Calcutta.³

The modes of patronage of Hindustani music in Calcutta were themselves not divorced from the wider social and cultural goals and sensibilities of the time. These notably included the development of civic institutions, education and schools, and other social, cultural and moral agendas active amongst the Western-educated Bengali elite of the time.⁴ For musicians, these developments specifically translated into the introduction of ticketed public performances, the establishment of 'respectable' institutionalized music schools for the middle classes, the publication of widely circulated music textbooks, and a general increase in access to Hindustani music. In other words, the practice and patronage of Hindustani music in Calcutta was exposed to the sensibilities, processes and outcomes of modernity.⁵

Modernity appeared as a serious catalyst for change in Hindustani music when the activities of the colonial metropolis started to dominate pre-existing regional networks and structures of patronage. This displacement was by no means a sudden occurrence, nor did it lead to the immediate demise of previous forms, as feudal practices continued to offer substantial forms of patronage to musicians until at least Independence. Nevertheless, from the beginning of the twentieth century, feudal and regional sources of patronage exercised an increasingly marginalized influence in the development of Hindustani music. The introduction of gramophone recording of Hindustani music coincided with the most active period of transition between these networks of patronage. Approaches formulated by sarodiyas for dealing with the issues raised by sound recording appeared to be somehow linked to, and mediated by, their concern with the broader and more pervasive changes in Hindustani music.

THE FIRST RECORDINGS BY SARODIYAS

There were twelve gramophone recordings of sarodiyas released in the first two or three decades of the twentieth century. These included an assortment of single and double-sided discs. Altogether, nineteen rågas were recorded by sarodiyas.⁶ This list itself can be roughly divided into two categories, namely, according to those recordings made by sarodiyas of Pathan Muslim ancestry who had settled in North India, and those made by urban, upper middle class Hindus from Bengal. Until the late nineteenth century, the sarod tradition had been exclusively associated with musicians who were hereditary, occupational specialists belonging to immigrant Muslim Rohilla and Bangash Pathan communities of North India.⁷ From the late nineteenth century, Hindu Brahman Bengalis also began learning Hindustani music from the few Pathan ustads from North India who had begun to tour and would eventually relocate themselves in and around the colonial metropolis of Calcutta.

Chunnu Khan (C.1857-1912)

The first sarodiya recorded was Ustad Chunnu Khan. Little is known of his professional life other than that he was, like many sarodiyas of the time, of Pathan heritage and that he belonged to the hereditary lineage of occupational music specialists in the service of the Rampur court. However, it is not clear whether his family were part of the larger Rohilla or Bangash communities of immigrant Pathans. His father, Ustad Abid Ali Khan, and uncle, Ustad Mudru Khan, have often been mentioned in the oral history of the tradition as being amongst the leading sarodiyas of the time. Together they belonged to, or even can be said to have constituted, the Rampur sarod gharana.⁸ Although Chunnu Khan was based in Rampur he was supposed to have come to Calcutta from time to time to give performances. As these recordings took place in Calcutta, it was probably during one of these trips that these recordings were made.

The recordings of Chunnu Khan were released in 1906 and featured the ragas Pilu (matrix no. 16251/4300e) and Tilak Kamod (16255/4302e). Both were then re-released in 1916 (HMV P59) and copies of them are still in private circulation.⁹ There was no standardized performance structure uniformly followed by sarodiyas at the beginning of the twentieth century. Anecdotes and oral accounts suggest that it was not unusual for a sarod performance of this time to consist of a short alap, followed either by madhya (medium) or drut (fast) laya (tempo) gats (fixed compositions accompanied by tabla), tans (fast melodic passages) and toda (bol-based exposition), composed on rhythmic patterns based on tabla or pakhawaj parans (rhythmic grooves and sequences).¹⁰ Both recordings feature Chunnu Khan playing drut gats, closely following the style and content of the vocal genre known as tarana. They differ from the more common Reza Khani class of drut gats developed by Reza Khan in Lucknow during the first half of the nineteenth century that were based on the style of the vocal genre, bandish ki thumri.¹¹ Tarānā was a genre that was popular in Rampur, and a number of top ranking dhrupadiya musicians connected with the court, such as the senivas Bahadur Hussain, Amir Khan and Wazir Khan, were prolific composers in this genre. Perhaps for this reason, the instrumental music associated with the Rampur court appears to have been significantly influenced by the structure and style of tarānā in its development.12

The two and half minute duration of each recording allows only a glimpse of the performance capabilities of this artist. Although no ālāp is played, the recordings nevertheless demonstrate a number of interesting things about the sarod repertoire at the beginning of the twentieth century. Apart from a consistent accuracy in intonation, the music demonstrates a virtuosic playing in which the technique of right hand stroking patterns (bols) is strongly developed. While the composed gats themselves are reasonably straightforward there is a great measure of clarity in the tāns and todas used to elaborate the rāga. These devices in particular have contributed to the faithful demonstration of the rhythmic intricacies and stylistic qualities of the tarānā form.

Asadullah 'Kaukab' Khan (1858–1915)

In 1912, Ustad Asadullah 'Kaukab' Khan recorded the rågas Manj Khamaj, Zila, Bhairav, Bhopali, Brindabani Sarang and Jangla Pilu.¹³ Asadullah Khan belonged to a hereditary lineage of Pathan Bangash sarodiyas who had settled in the Bulandshahr district of Rohilkhand. Due to his forefathers' previous service with, and strong links to, the Lucknow court, his family lineage became known as the Bulandshahr/Lucknow sarod gharāna. His elder stepbrother was the well-known sarodiya Keramatullah Khan (1851–1933). Their father Niamatullah Khan (1827–1903) had been in the service of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah in Lucknow and also during the latter's exile in Calcutta, before joining the court in Nepal where he remained until 1903. 'Kaukab' Khan apparently had gone to western India for around four years upon leaving Nepal with his father, after which he had gone to Benaras before finally settling in Calcutta in 1907.

In Calcutta, he established a music school called Sangit Sangha. Besides this venture he also received patronage and support mainly from the Guha family of Masjid Bari Street, in addition to which he was known to be in the occasional service of the extremely wealthy zamindars Jotindra Mohan Tagore and Shourindra Mohan Tagore. 'Kaukab' Khan apparently, with the help of some students, wrote a book in Bengali called *Sangit Parichay* (Mukhopadhyay 1977 : 53). Besides this, Sharar's account of the musical life of pre-rebellion Lucknow is much indebted to 'Professor' Kaukab's writings (1975 : 135). Apart from the training he received from his father, Asadullah Khan had also learnt sitar and surbahar from Ustad Sajjad Mohammad, the son of Ghulam Mohammad, who was also resident in Metiyaburj. Asadullah Khan was also known to play surbahar and is said to have taught this instrument along with sitar to many students, out of whom Harindra Krishna Sheel was the most noted (Mukhopadhyay 1977 : 51). He also taught the first Hindu Bengali to become a recognized performer of the sarod, Dhirendranath Bose. This was an important development in the history of the tradition, as he was apparently the first non-Pathan and non-hereditary musician to have systematically learnt sarod. Not much is known about Bose other than the fact that he did receive solid training and in turn taught a number of students himself, out of whom Shyam Ganguly was later to become the most noted.

In 1908, Motilal Nehru organized performances for Asadullah and his brother Keramatullah Khan in France and England. Family members recall that Asadullah Khan's sarod was broken before he arrived in Europe and as an emergency measure he got hold of and modified a banjo, by shaving off its frets and adding a metal fingerboard, so that he could fulfil his playing obligations (Illyas Khan 1982; Miner 1993:154). Later on he apparently became quite fond of this instrument and ended up playing this instrument in some recordings of the 78-rpm discs, labelled 'Indian banjo'. One such recording is the raga Chammach Manjh [Manj Khamaj] by A K Kaukab in which his instrument is identified on the label of the disc as the Indian banjo, recorded by the Gramophone Company in 1912 (record no. 8-15037, matrix no.113280). It was in the same year that 'Kaukab' Khan also recorded Bhupali, Brindabani Sarang, Zila, Bhairav and Jangla Pilu. On the labels of these discs, his sarod was invariably described as the 'banjo' or 'Indian guitar'; however, it is not entirely clear whether or not it is this instrument that he plays on all these recordings. The sound quality of the available discs are not of sufficient clarity to be totally sure of this point. The 'Indian banjo' label may have stuck for the recordings in order to identify the sarod for the 'westernized' consumers of the gramophone in India.

Mukhopadhyay writes that, besides this expertise, Asadullah Kaukab was renowned for his systematic development of ālāp and the intricate and varied gat compositions he performed (1977: 55). Although he apparently had a highly detailed training in ālāp, he did

not record this. Accordingly, the primary musical speciality of the performer did not make it to any of these discs. Further, the music that was recorded may not have even been played on sarod. Nevertheless, the recordings do demonstrate something of the technical facility for which he was renowned. This is particularly evident in the clarity and speed with which he executes tans, toda bol patterns and jhalā and in the proficiency in layakāri (rhythmic manipulations over a steady pulse).

Sakhawat Hussain Khan (1875–1958)

Ustad Sakhawat Hussain Khan belonged to the Shahjahanpur gharana of sarodivas. His Bangash Pathan forefathers had originally migrated from Afghanistan and joined the military service of the Mughal court at the beginning of the eighteenth century. His ancestors had settled in one of the fifty-five mohullas established by the Pathans in the Shahjahanpur district, located east of Delhi in the eighteenth century.14 Members of this gharana, such as Ustad Enavat Ali Khan (1790-1883) began to establish themselves in Bengal in the latter part of the nineteenth century. He began his musical training with his father Ustad Shafayet Khan (1848-1920). It was after Sakhawat Hussain married Asadullah Khan's daughter that he also became a formal disciple of the Lucknow-Bulandshahr sarod gharana. It was also from this time that these two gharanas effectively merged. In the early part of his career Sakhawat Hussain was based in Calcutta. but in 1926, became one of the first musicians enlisted by Bhatkhande to teach amateur musicians in his music college in Lucknow, a position he retained until his death in 1955 (Mishra 1985 : 31). He became a well-known performer in the course of his professional career.

Sometime in the 1920s he recorded rāgas Tilak Kamod and Pahadi-Jhinjhoti. Both recordings feature drut gats in teentāla. The gat in Tilak Kamod is set to one āvartan cycle of the sixteen-beat tāla cycle, while the gat in Pahadi-Jhinjhoti is set to three āvartans. As with the above recordings, both gats demonstrate the strong influence of tarānā in their structure and style. In particular, the gat in Pahadi-Jhinjhoti is rhythmically complex and relies on the clever placement of böls (stroking patterns) to define its phrasing. The unusual phrases which make up the composition, and the fragmentary way in which they are played, are also features that distinguish it from the style and structure of the Reza Khani gats, and is highly suggestive of the tarānā style. The connection is further emphasized by the use of the pakhawaj which unlike the way that tabla continues to play the thekā of a tāla as the main artiste improvises, the pakhawaj player anticipates and follows the todas and other rhythmic expositions in Sakhawat Hussain's improvisation. It is difficult to immediately discern the structure of the drut gat of this recording. This is so because the sarodiya does not play the entire composition right through at any one time. Instead, at the beginning of the recording he seems to take fragments of the gat, which are joined together in quite a fluid style in relation to the tāla. Sakhawat Hussain's style of playing in this recording demonstrates the emphasis placed on right hand technique by members of this gharāna, a technique expressive of, and derived from, systematic training in the seniya rabab.

Mohammad Amir Khan (1876-1934)

Mohammad Amir Khan (or Amir Khan as he was more commonly known) represents another hereditary branch of Bangash Pathans who had migrated to India from Afghanistan in the eighteenth century. Members of this family had also settled in one of the Pathan mohullas in the Shahjahanpur district during this time, and for this reason their musical lineage is also referred to as the Shahjahanpur sarod gharāna. This particular gharāna traces its recent musical ancestry to Ustad Murad Ali Khan (d. 1910) whose father, Ustad Nanhe Khan (d. 1901), was in the service of the Rampur court. Mohammad Amir Khan's father, Abdullah Khan (1843–1926), spent most of his life in the Darbhanga court.

Mohammad Amir Khan also grew up there and it was in this court that he received his musical training from both his father Abdullah Khan and his grandfather, Murad Ali Khan. Both Abdullah Khan and Mohammad Amir Khan were well known for their expertise in playing Feroz Khani gats. This type of gat, and its many variations, also shared many stylistic and structural similarities to tarānā.¹⁵ Together, these two sarodiyas are often credited with being responsible for introducing the playing style of Rampur sarodiyas into Bengal. This style was at the time considered to be distinct from the Lucknow style of sarod performance represented above by 'Kaukab' Khan and Sakhawat Hussain Khan.¹⁶

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Amir Khan moved permanently to Bengal where he was initially employed by Lalit Mohan Moitra, a zamindar of a large estate in the district of Rajshahi, which is now located in Bangladesh. Some time later, Amir Khan shifted to Gauripur, a nearby town, where another family of zamindars, the Roychaudhuris, employed him. This latter family was well known in Bengal for their patronage, and to some extent performance of Hindustani music.¹⁷ Finally, in the latter part of his life, he moved to Calcutta and stayed at the Moitra house. He died in 1934, at the age of fifty-eight. Little is known about Amir Khan's own offspring, except that none became recognized sarodiyas. Nevertheless, Amir Khan taught sarod to a number of Bengali disciples during his stay in Calcutta. Following his death, the musical style on sarod that had been developed within the Murad Ali Khan lineage was continued through various Bengali musicians, who, generally speaking, all came from well to do families-Birendra Kishore Roychaudhuri, Asutosh Kundu, Panchanon Ganguly, Bhola Nath Bhattacharya, Banikantha Mukherjee (1912-65) and Radhika Mohan Moitra (1909-80). The last three of these musicians were the most renowned musical representatives of the Amir Khan style in the middle of this century.

Amir Khan recorded the rāgas Kafi and Jhinjhoti with the Gramophone Company sometime in the 1920s (Kinnear 1992; other discographic details of this recording are, as yet, unavailable). The recording of rāga Kafi reveals the rich tone and resonance of his sarod and begins with a basic outline of the main phrases and notes of the rāga. It is followed by a Feroz Khani gat in medium tempo teentāla. In this instance, the gat has been composed to cover two cycles or āvartans of the rhythmic cycle. Amir Khan is credited with many compositions in Feroz Khani style, although it is not known if this gat is his own creation. An unidentified tabla player accompanies him.

Of interest in this example are the stylistic specialities in Amir Khan's playing style in the recordings. Out of these, an aspect that is particularly evident concerns the layakāri (rhythmic manipulation) passages played in the first ten or twelve rhythmic cycles, āvartans, of the gat section. These layakāris created an effect on at least two occasions by 'stretching' the rhythm of the last phrase of the composition through 'dragging' the basic pulse of the tempo in contrast to the ongoing metric regularity of the thekā (rhythmic configuration) played on the tabla. By returning to both the beginning of the composition and its original 'feel' the tension created in these phrases is effectively resolved.

P N Roy and Rajendra Nath Chatterjee

The first recording by a non-Pathan sarodiya was made by Rajendra Nath Chatterjee, a Bengali Hindu Brahman. It was released by the Gramophone Company on a single sided 78 rpm disc in 1912 (Record No. 8-16521; matrix No. 11705v). This was followed by two recordings by P N Roy, also a Bengali Hindu Brahman in February 1915 (8-16252/4377y; 816523/4378; Kinnear 1992).¹⁸ Biographical information on these two sarodiyas is so far not forthcoming, so we do not exactly know from whom they had learnt, where they lived and if they were regarded as amateur or professional musicians. In fact, outside of the Bengali Alauddin Khan, non-Pathans do not figure strongly in the oral narratives or written descriptions of the tradition from this time. Nonetheless, it can be said that these otherwise anonymous and enigmatic figures in the tradition were somewhat indicative of the nature of the broad engagement that Hindustani music was experiencing in Bengal at the time.

Banikantha Mukherjee (1912-65)

Banikantha Mukherjee, along with Radhika Mohan Moitra, were the two most renowned Hindu Bengali disciples of the sarodiya Amir Khan, who was known to have himself taught sarod to a number of Bengali students. Both of these musicians were well-known public performers from a later period than Roy and Chatterjee, and so biographical information on them is more readily available. Banikantha Mukherjee released recordings of råga Pilu and råga Kafi, probably with HMV sometime in the 1930s. It is during his career that we really start to hear of the activities of professional Bengali sarodiyas. Even so, the highest cultural authority on matters connected with the sarod and its tradition remained with the gharanedar ustads from North India. Nevertheless, the exclusive association between Pathans and the sarod tradition that had existed up until that point, no longer held true.

The recording of Kafi also features a Feroz Khani type gat, that in structure and style is more straightforward rhythmically and melodically than that recorded by Amir Khan, but all the same Banikantha Mukherjee's playing does display something of the inflections and nuances of his ustad. However, on the basis of its stroke pattern or bol structure, the gat heard in this recording can not, strictly speaking, be classified as either a Feroz Khani or a Reza Khani type. At the same time, this recording does exhibit stylistic aspects of the tarānā genre. In fact, taken together, all of the above recordings have demonstrated a significant connection between this genre and the repertoire of sarodiyas at the beginning of the twentieth century. They perhaps could also provide a point from which a rethink of the common assumption that the Reza Khani gat type was the standard form for drut teentāla at this time could proceed.

RESPONSES

Like other Hindustani musicians who recorded at the time, sarodiyas had to contend with a number of immediate as well as indirect consequences posed by the technology. Apart from the artistic challenge of truncating a performance to fit into two and half or three minutes duration, these recordings were sometimes regarded by musicians as problematic because of concerns over how the gramophone would affect long established practices regulating the ownership and transmission of specialized musical knowledge.

There are accounts often retold, which demonstrate the level to which concerns over such things could be taken. For instance, although Sakhawat Hussain Khan's father, Ustad Shafayet Khan of the Shahjahanpur gharāna, married the daughter of Niamatullah Khan, this family connection however was not regarded as sufficient enough for Shafayet Khan or, the product of this union, Sakhawat Hussain, to receive tālim (formal training) from their in-laws. It was not until after Sakhawat Hussain Khan had married the daughter of Asadullah Khan (the son of Niamatullah Khan) that finally members of the Bulandshahr/Lucknow gharāna formally permitted Sakhawat Hussain Khan to learn from them.

Another such account concerns the sarodiya, Ustad Asghar Ali Khan, who, at a latter stage in his life, left Rampur and took up service in the Darbhanga court in Bihar, where he died in 1912.¹⁹ As Asghar Ali Khan did not have a son, this branch of the family faded with the death of this sarodiya. Even though his son-in-law, Aziz Baksh, played the sarod, Asghar Ali Khan would not teach him at all. Mukhopadhyay relates how Aziz Baksh's father-in-law

... was so conscious about his position and so miserly with his knowledge that he did not want to teach Aziz. What Asghar Ali used to do was to close the doors and windows when he practised. He used to teach his daughter who would then pass it on to Aziz. (Mukhopadhyay 1977 : 134).

Despite such concerns sarodiyas nevertheless did teach music to disciples from outside of their immediate family. Asadullah Khan taught many non-family disciples, ran a music institution, and wrote a book, which apparently also served as a text in the institution. His father Niamatullah Khan also wrote a book dealing with historical and practical matters in music. The involvement of sarodiyas in this manner with the public dissemination of musical knowledge does not necessarily mean that the above stories are false. It does however suggest something of the marked discrepancy between the type and quality of musical knowledge that was circulated inside and outside of the family. The distinction between these two levels of knowledge are recognized in the distinction between talim (training) given by ustads to their general students and the khas talim (specialized training) that is apparently reserved for their own family members. Added to these was the further issue of the ownership of the music recorded. It does not seem to have been uncommon for musicians to voice the concern that once the music was recorded 'how could an artist be assured that someone else would not try and claim ownership of that music?' Even if this was not the case, then how could it be known for sure that the record company, who had no knowledge at all about the music that they were dealing with, would not mistakenly attribute their recording to another musician? It was precisely this concern that led to a number of well-known musicians shouting out their name at the very end of early gramophone recordings, so as to assure that this would not occur.20

For those sarodiyas who did record, the challenge of deciding exactly what they should present in the space of three minutes also needed to be negotiated. As there was no standardized presentation of a performance by sarodiyas during the early part of the twentieth century, each gharāna had apparently devised and developed its own range of performance styles and structures. Further, it seems that the performance of one raga was not rigidly fixed in the manner of its treatment, either in its musical interpretation or the duration of its performance. While a large degree of discretion existed in the length and depth of a live performance of a raga, some intelligent artistic compromises needed to be formulated in order to keep the integrity of their music intact when dealing with the finality of a three minute time limit.

These early recordings suggest that there have been some interesting direct responses by sarodiyas to the whole endeavour. One such response appears to have been the preference for recording light classical rāgas such as Bhairavi, Pilu, Gara, Kafi, Pahari, Jhinjhoti, Parez, Sohni and Khamaj. These particular rāgas were, and still are, conventionally deemed most suitable for the performance of a 'light' classical style of music. Out of the nineteen rāgas recorded many more than half were of this category. Lighter rāgas more readily lent themselves to manipulation in order to accommodate the time restraints of the technology. They were also thought to be more appealing to an unseen audience perhaps assumed to be not particularly knowledgeable about music. Hence these rāgas could be thought of as more resonant with a public domain that did not assume a familiarity with a specialized knowledge of music.

TABLE	1:	LIST	OF	ТИЕ	EARLY	RECORDINGS	OF	SARODIYAS	
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Year	Sarodiya	Ethnicity	Gharana	Rága
1906	Chunnu Khan	Pathan Rohilla ?	Rampur	Pilu Tilak Kamod
1912	Asadullah 'Kaukab'Khan	Pathan Bangash	Lucknow	Manj Khamaj Bhupali Brindabani Sarang Zila Bhairav Jangla Pilu
1912	P N Roy	Bengali	No details	No details
1915	Rajendranath Chatterjee	Bengali Brahman	No details	No details
1920s	Sakhawat Hussain Khan	Pathan Bangash	Bulandshahr	Tilak Kamod Pahadi Jhinjhoti

1920s	Md. Amir Khan	Pathan Bangash	Shahjahanpur	Kafi Jhinjhoti
1930s	Banikantha Mukherjee	Bengali Brahman	Shahjahanpur	Pilu Bihag Khamaj Lalit

At the same time, there was an understandable reluctance to record khās material-the real specialities of a musical heritage that included certain special compositions (bandishes), specialized modes and techniques of exposition (tan-toda), and perhaps even particular stylistic details of alap. This was because the gramophone made it possible for these things to be copied through repeated hearing. On some of the recordings, especially the Pahadi-Jhinjhoti played by Sakhawat Hussain Khan, gats were not played in complete form or were slightly changed at various points of their performance. Presented in this way, it would be difficult to discern the full form of the gat and hence also to copy it. In other cases, such as with Chunnu Khan, it would not be difficult for any sarodiya to copy the gats after hearing the recording a few times; however one would have to be a competent sarod player to pick up any of the more specialized toda passages. For singers of khayal, an equivalent practice may have been to omit some of the words of a bandish, or to slightly change a special melodic component of the bandish. The case of Asadullah Khan was particularly interesting given that in at least some of the recordings he made were not performed on the sarod but on a modified western banjo. It can never be known for sure if such responses were entirely intentional or planned, or if they just happened to occur during the course of the recording. Whatever took place, at least for some sarodiyas it seems that their ultimate response to this technology was not to record.

THOSE WHO DID NOT RECORD

The list of sarod recordings represents only a very small proportion of the total catalogue of recordings of Hindustani music made before the 1930s, which was overwhelmingly dominated by vocalists.²¹ The proportion of recorded sarodiyas *vis-à-vis* other Hindustani musicians recorded is a fair representation of the ratio between the two groups in actual practice. Although it is not possible to place an exact figure on the number of sarodiyas performing professionally during this period, nevertheless, a combination of oral histories, informal recollections and records of court activities suggest that the number could have likely been in the hundreds.²² Interestingly enough, out of the five gharānas of sarodiyas active at the time, the above recordings are representative of four of them. The one gharāna that was not recorded was the Gwalior gharāna.²³

The most famous representative of the Gwalior sarod gharana at that time was Ustad Hafiz Ali Khan. When at the end of his life Hafiz Ali Khan was asked why he never made a commercial recording, Hafiz Ali Khan responded:

You know very well what my attitude to Music is, ... I have looked on it as prayer-as my humble way of glorifying my Maker. I could not endure the thought that a disc of mine could be bought by some unworthy people and played casually anywhere---in pan [paan] shops, and wedding parties with people jesting and making merry the while. This is an insult to the Art of Music which had been given to us by God to worship Him with. Once I was nearly caught by the record company people. Yes, several of them came together to Gwalior and persuaded the Maharaja to make me record for them. I was in a terrible quandary. I could not refuse my gracious patron. Very tactfully I explained my feelings to him adding that when my records would be played in pan shops etc. and jeered at by people to whom my classical music is something to laugh at, those records would bear the name of 'Hafiz Ali Khan of Gwalior'and the name of his Darbar [court] would be subjected to the same indignities as my name and music. This last aspect appealed to the Maharaja and he stopped importuning me and I was able to get rid of the record company people (Khanna 1975 : n.p.).

Despite his personal reluctance to record, Hafiz Ali Khan did make many radio broadcasts over a few decades and some of these recordings are held in the archives of All India Radio in Delhi. Eventually, HMV commercially released some recordings that had originally been made for radio broadcast.²⁴ The comments by Ustad Hafiz Ali Khan raise three important issues: (*i*) there is the concern about his lack of control over the end use of a recording, both in terms of where it should be played and who should listen to it; (*ii*) there is the concern of how his professional identity and prestige would fare in such an endeavour; (*iii*) there is the feeling of an unwanted intrusion of technology into an otherwise private space. These concerns may now appear minor compared to the current practices of musicians and the commercial strategies of the recording industry. However, they were of enough concern at the time to convince Hafiz Ali Khan, and possibly others like him, not to record.

Sarodiyas of Pathan descent who recorded were well known and influential figures in the sarod tradition at that time. Besides these, there were a greater number of other equally important sarodiyas who never made gramophone recordings. Among them were Ustad Fida Hussain Khan, Ustad Asghar Ali Khan and Ustad Ahmed Ali Khan (all of Rampur), Ustad Keramatullah Khan (of the Lucknow gharana), Ustad Abdullah Khan of the Shahjahanpur gharana (Mohammad Amir Khan's father), Nanhe Khan of the Gwalior sarod gharāna and so on. One can only speculate as to why they were not recorded. Perhaps they may also have shared similar concerns as those expressed by Hafiz Ali Khan, or maybe it was the case that these musicians were not even approached. We do know that the selection of artists by the engineers despatched by the gramophone companies took place on a fairly ad hoc basis, so there appears to have been an element of chance or circumstance in determining which artists were secured.²⁵ Further, it is not known how many of the sarodiyas approached by the gramophone companies may have declined such an offer.

While early recordings of sarodiyas do manage to provide something of a glimpse of the music practice of sarodiyas during this time, the question arises as to what sort of impression does it leave about the musical practices of sarodiyas at the beginning of the twentieth century. In contemporary times it is not uncommon for this period to be characterized as one in which the musical understanding and practices of sarodiyas was much simpler and more straightforward in conception and practice. In certain instances some of the recordings perhaps validate this view, but in other places they reveal a completely different picture. They reveal a diversity of styles and approaches, especially between Rampur and non-Rampur sarodiyas, a great and delicate command over right-hand technique and a strong connection between sarod repertoire and the tarānā genre. Nevertheless, the recordings remain only a glimpse of the performance practice of the time, and are by no means a comprehensive documentation of the range of sarodiyas and the eclecticism of their practices.

MAKING MODERNITY AUDIBLE

Of the many consequences of modernity the one of most relevance to this discussion is that of mass production. The mass production of sound is one component of the repetitive economy, and repetition itself is one of the primary conditions of the political economy of modernity. In essentializing the condition of a repetitive economy, Attali writes:

The repetitive economy is characterised first of all by a mutation in the mode of production of supply, due to the sudden appearance of a new factor in production, the mould, which allows the mass reproduction of the original (Attali 1985 : 128).

The commodification of recorded sound meant that music had entered into a new form of economic transaction. This mutation would profoundly transform every individual's relation to music. Technology had now introduced a means for commodifying sound. The separation of sound from musician and the subsequent mass production of that sound carried with it a raft of profound implications. It could now be stockpiled, like any other commodity. The musical commodity was exposed to the same economic codes and practices governing the commercial activity surrounding other mass-produced commodities. These commercial imperatives were significant agents of change, in the sense that they provided an indication of a direction along which modernity could proceed. They were also not inconsequential in generating the conditions that introduced the broader changes in Hindustani music during its transition from premodern to modern networks of patronage. Through sound recordings, technology was to further extend the collision of Hindustani music with such imperatives. The following discussion attempts to explore something of the coalescence of the consequences generated by transitional change in Hindustani music and that introduced by the gramophone.

A SPATIAL RECONFIGURATION

The introduction of gramophone recordings came around the same time that the re-location of Hindustani music from the cloistered exclusivity of the chambers of the elite to an array of public spaces was in the process of becoming normalized. The retinue of Hindustani musicians in the service of a court would often outnumber their aristocratic patrons. By comparison, the public performance was attended by greater numbers of listeners who had purchased their admission to an 'event' and who mostly remained anonymous to the performer. In this latter setting, the equation between musician and patron became radically re-configured. This was true not only in terms of the inversion of the numerical ratio that existed between the two groups, but also in the ways that such a change in the physical space of performance somehow significantly altered the relationship between patron and performer. Despite any difficulty in articulating the details of such things, nevertheless, the difference in the experience of both performance spaces perhaps still circulates through the general preference of informed listeners for the aesthetic experience and intimacy of a private mehfil (sitting), over that of the concert hall.

The gramophone extended this process of reconfiguring the performance space of music. It did this by opening up another 'virtual' domain that effectively meant that music could be heard in places that the musicians had never been to. This meant that the drawing room, the market place, or any other public space where there was a gramophone player also became a potential performance space. Music could also be heard by people that musicians had never seen or vice versa. Through the purchase of a gramophone recording an individual now also indirectly became an anonymous patron of music. In this way technology provided a further dimension to the reconfiguration of the relationship between music and physical space that was already under way before the arrival of the gramophone.

A TEMPORAL RECONFIGURATION

Accompanying the consequences of relocating Hindustani music from the private to public performance space was a subtle but distinct reconfiguration of the relation of music with time. In the pre-modern context, a musician in the direct service of a patron might be called at whatever time nominated by the patron. In the public concert it became necessary to address the practicalities of coordinating the attendance of a large group of patrons. In doing so some set limits became imposed on when a performance may begin or end, and even on the time of the day that a performance may take place. The dramatic shift in the numerical ratio between patron and performer led to the sense of time in music being harnessed to a different sensibility.

Recording technology made a further temporal impact on music by preserving it in time. Music could now be heard on demand at any time, even after the career of a musician may have long concluded. Further the same performance could be heard over and over again and the possibility was created for music to be recast as a text, which could be heard and studied repeatedly. Both of these developments opened up the possibilities for stockpiling time and hence, for altering the temporal coordinates of the musical event. Whereas the physical presence of a musician continued in the concert hall, it was no longer required in the new one. The gramophone recording therefore further extended the new range of conditions for listening to music introduced by public performance. Public performance provided a greater access to music than was previously possible and also created the potential for musicians to become known to a wider audience. Through preserving music in time the gramophone recording extended the possibilities of this engagement. At the same time, the rather harsh time restrictions imposed by the storage limitations of the disc itself introduced a different aesthetic experience of the music. Both contributed to a temporal shift in the experience of listening to music that had been earlier announced by the relocation of the performance space. These developments also held significant implications for the transmission of musical knowledge.

REGULATING THE TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE

In pre-modern times, the inheritance of specialized musical knowledge was confined to the hereditary lines of occupational specialists. The transmission of this knowledge from one generation to the next proceeded through a system of oral instruction. This mode of teaching was itself bound by highly stylized moral and social conventions, such as might be noted in the code of adab.²⁶ While specialized knowledge was inherited by successive generations of a khāndān of musicians within such a regulated environment, access to it by non-family associates was possible, but it was not a free access, because some areas of specialization continued to be reserved only for direct descendants of the family lineage.²⁷ One of the tacit outcomes of such restrictions was the avoidance of an oversupply of musical specialists—a situation that could compromise the prosperity of succeeding generations of the family. Nevertheless, it perhaps can be expected that this mode of transmission would lend itself to a system capable of nurturing a high quality of musicianship, a situation that, in turn, would further reinforce the need to restrict access to this knowledge.

Gharanas emerged as the social interface between the new structures of patronage, the khandans, and their new associates, the non-family disciples.²⁸ The gharana system also provided a means to regulate access to the specialized musical knowledge inherited within a khandan. This could also be seen as a direct response to the need of protecting the ownership of khās material held within the immediate family and at the same time addressing the need for disseminating musical knowledge outside of that milieu. As a social institution, the gharana therefore provided a means to protect access to, and ownership of, the khās hereditary capital of a musical lineage. The subsequent institutionalization of music pedagogy in the colonial metropolis stood at odds with this rationale of this practice. The institutionalization of music education created a need for teaching material, a demand that was met with the publication of a plethora of musical instruction books. Bhatkhande, Shourindra Mohan Tagore and Vishnu Digambar Paluskar were some of the most celebrated figures in the collection and compilation of such written material.29 Of course, this is not to imply that written texts were a new phenomenon in Hindustani music. Many significant treatises and commentaries on music have existed in India for centuries. Further, it was not uncommon for the principal figure of a hereditary lineage (Khalifa) to possess and maintain a notebook containing such things as the genealogical history of the lineage, musical specialities collected over generations, descriptions of ragas, musical compositions and the like. However, these were generally single copies retained within the lineage and generally not displayed. By way of contrast instruction books for institutions essentially fulfilled a different function. They were mass-produced and addressed a wider audience consisting of non-specialists.

The institutionalization of musical activity meant that musical knowledge was no longer exclusively restricted to a family lineage. Access to this knowledge was available to those of the appropriate social milieu who could pay tuition fees; in contrast to the pre-modern practices where this specialized knowledge was regarded as an inheritance, and was not subject to be bought or sold. By introducing a fee institutionalization therefore led to a horizontal transmission of this knowledge. It also created another mode of transmission that sat alongside the 'closed shop' practices of the past. The distribution of knowledge to non-family members of a gharana, and through music institutions, allowed degrees of regulated access to the specialized musical knowledge of a khandan, for which a fee would be charged. Therefore, there emerged a distinction between khās talim (the specialist knowledge that remained restricted within the lineage), the professional talim (training) provided to a gharana's non-family associates, and the institutionalized talim provided through music schools.

Within this setting, the mass-produced gramophone record also emerged as a new musical text, which could now sit alongside instruction books. The discs themselves became texts that could be studied repeatedly, and whose music could be copied. One of the early roles of the gramophone, therefore, was to act as a source of knowledge and a means of its transmission. In this sense, the advent of the gramophone became an extension of, and a resource for, the institutionalization of music education, a process that was already being pursued in the colonial metropolis for some time.

OWNERSHIP

The gramophone recording introduced a whole new set of considerations into the issue of ownership in music. Once recorded, music could now be recast into a mould enabling its mass production.³⁰ As a manufactured commodity, it became the merchandise of record companies. For consumers who had purchased the product, it also became 'their' disc. By receiving a recording fee or royalties, musicians were compensated for having their direct physical connection with *their* music broken. Nevertheless to a musician, even after manufacture the content of the disc still remained 'their' music. It was precisely this intersection

of such very different concerns in the commodity that has generated an ambiguity over ownership. Recorded sound meant that ownership over music was no longer clear cut.

Before the gramophone, concerns of ownership in music were restricted to the realm of specialized knowledge and the regulation of access to it. Whilst these issues even today continue to be of some relevance, this intersection of different interests in the commodity presented an entirely new predicament. The disembodiment of music led to its commodification. It introduced new and different levels of engagement with the ownership of music. For the musician, concerns of ownership centred on the artistic content of the disc. For the recording companies their interests in ownership principally gravitated towards the manufacturing and distribution of the commodity. For the consumer, interest in ownership was connected with their purchase of the commodity itself. Each party, the musician, the record company and the consumer may have had their own particular interests in, and concerns with, the gramophone. However it was the need of a company to re-coup and capitalize on their investments that ultimately meant it was the commercial imperative that came to effectively exercise the greatest control over sound recording technology and the ownership of music. Through mass production and commodification, music entered into another political economy. As a commodity, issues of ownership of music were now addressed through the practices of patents, copyright and royalties.

RECONFIGURING THE CONDITION OF LISTENING

The shift from the chamber to the public space provided musicians with a range of new acoustic environments. Adapting performance practice to fill these larger performance spaces of the metropolis must have also influenced the way that musicians played their instrument and the sound quality that they were able to produce on it. For the new patrons in the metropolis who made up the audiences, the influence of modernity in Hindustani music was felt through changes in the conditions of listening. In the metropolis the performance of Hindustani music was more accessible to a greater number of people, and could be heard in more locations than previously had been the case in pre-modern practices.

The gramophone further changed the scope of soundscape enabling music to be heard in the drawing room. It is ironic in one way that technology put music back into the chamber. Through its mechanical reproduction and its means of amplifying sound, listeners were provided with a new mode of experience in sound. While the sound of an instrument was still instantly recognizable through the horn of the gramophone player, the effect of that sound on the listener and the experience of hearing it changed considerably. In a live performance, the sound of an instrument will change due to a number of reasons, such as the acoustics of the space, the mood of the performer, weather conditions and so on. Even though a performer may play the same raga on his/her instrument in successive performances, the pivotal role that improvisation plays in Hindustani music would determine that each performance sounds different. By way of contrast, the sound of the instrument on a gramophone disc remained the same through repeated listening, as did the musical content of that disc. Attali has noted that the long-term consequences for music posed by the gramophone was that, 'The unforeseen and the risks of performance start to disappear in the reproduction of sound. Little by little the mass production of sound led to profound changes in the very nature of music.' (1985:105)

CONCLUSION

The transition from nawabi / zamindari pre-modern networks and structures of patronage to those in the colonial metropolis exposed Hindustani music to the political economy of modernity. Modernity introduced a range of challenges for sarodiyas. These included a new set of patrons and ways of dealing with them, the significant re-configuration of their social organization and professional identity, the shift in the geographical and physical location of performance, the introduction of new concerns over ownership and the transmission of knowledge, and so on. The gramophone recording was another part of this larger oeuvre of change and transition. Compared to its central role in contemporary practice, the sound recording initially had a minor impact on the lives of musicians relative to the other changes they faced. Nevertheless, many musicians responded to its arrival and the profound shift in codes of music of which it forebode. The consequences that it introduced into the lives of musicians were continuations, elaborations and further

developments of the wider liaison between Hindustani music and modernity. The advent of the gramophone made the wider outcomes of modernity audible through the disembodied sound of the massproduced, commercially released gramophone recording:

Time has revealed how the manufacturing, distribution and marketing of recorded sound has become a major global industry. The technology still provides us with the same types of challenges with regards ownership and transmission of knowledge, that gramophone first introduced. Exponential leaps in the developments in technology over the last century have meant that these issues have actually intensified spirally in increasingly complex and confusing forms. These developments have been met with new ways of dealing with ownership, out of which copyright has become an issue of both greater relevance to the endeavour of commercial sound recordings, and of contestation over how, and to what, it is applied.

The digitization of sound has recently propelled this whole enterprise into a new and even more complex domain. The issues associated with the digitization of sound, such as sampling, storage and distribution on the Internet, copyright and other legal issues also amount to a continuation, and extension of the challenges first introduced by the gramophone. For this reason, current concerns with the same issues should not be regarded as an outcome of a post-modern society, but rather as a product of the condition of hyper-modernity. Just as the gramophone record made modernity audible, in the future it may be postulated that digitization is making hyper-modernity audible. It is everywhere these days, we just have to listen to it.

Notes

- Sound recording technology of course predates the invention of the gramophone. Wax cylinder recordings were in use some two or three decades earlier. This equipment was designed for one-off recordings and therefore did not lend itself to mass production.
- 2 A detailed early history of the recording industry in India has been previously documented by Kinnear (2001). Also see, Farrell (1999) and Ghosh (2002) for further information.
- 3 For reasons that still are not entirely clear, Calcutta became the main

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centre in India for Hindustani instrumental music from the end of the nineteenth century in the same way that the colonial metropolis of Bombay became the centre for Hindustani vocal music. The sarod has since become more strongly associated with Calcutta than any other city and remains so until today.

- 4 For a detailed account of the cultural transformation of the Bengali elite and their engagement with culture under colonialism see Banerjee (1989).
- 5 It has to be acknowledged that interpretations may differ as to what factors may be taken as indicators of modernity in the Indian context. Accordingly there may also be differences in opinion as to when it may be said that modernity really became an influential agent of change. To a large extent it seems that any such difference depends upon the line of inquiry adopted. Therefore, the criteria which may apply in economics for locating such an event can differ to those applied in history or in sociology, or in this case, music. This line of discussion would be better pursued in a separate study.
- 6 Personal communication with Kinnear (1992).
- 7 Discerning ethnicity amongst immigrant Pathan communities in India can be a complex task. In their homelands, there are many major divisions or clans (koums) of Pathans. For many centuries these were, and still are, known by their traditional names such as Yusufzai, Orakzai, Afridi and so on. In areas of settlement in India, these divisions in the eighteenth century appeared to merge into the larger divisions of Rohilla and Bangash, with each of these two larger groups comprising a heterogeneous assortment of Pathan clans as well as individuals and groups of non-Pathans. The Rohilla community was centred on Rampur, while the Bangash community was located at Farrukhabad. For further historical and ethnographic information of these two communities in India, and also for details of ethnicity in the Pathan homelands, see Gommans (1999).
- 8 In Hindustani music gharāna (lit. of the house) refers to both a hereditary lineage of musicians and a particular style of musical interpretation.
- 9 Copies of the recording of raga Tilak Kamod are still in circulation amongst private collectors, but copies of raga Pilu are, so far, not forthcoming. Some further details of the life of Chunnu Khan and other sarodiyas mentioned in this list are available in McNeil (2002).

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- 10 See Miner (1993), Sanyal (1959) and McNeil (2002).
- 11 For descriptions of the various types of instrumental gats and their defining features see Miner (1993) and Sanyal (1959).
- 12 Apart from Sanyal (1959) there is little mention in available literature about the influence of tarānā on the drut gat of instrumental music. This connection, and particularly the influence of tarānās composed by Rampur musicians, was often stressed by my teachers, Ashok Roy and his kaka (paternal uncle) Professor Sachindra Nath Roy, both of whom belong to the Maihar gharāna. They had both collected dozens of drut gats that they maintain were composed on tarānās that were composed by, or otherwise attributed to, musicians associated with Rampur. One need only to compare the 78 rpm drut tarānā recordings of Nissar Hussain Khan of the Rampur Sehaswan gharāna of vocal music with these recordings of Chunnu Khan to discern the strong similarities in their style and structure.
- 13 Michael Kinnear (1991) kindly provided information about these dates. Asadullah Khan recorded the rag Chammach Manj [Manj Khamaj] on what was described as the 'Indian banjo.' Copies of all these recordings are also still in circulation amongst private collectors.
- 14 See McNeil (2002) for further details of Pathan mohullas in the district of Shahjahanpur and the sarodiyas who had settled there.
- 15 See Sanyal (1959) and Miner (1993) for a discussion of Feroz Khani gat.
- 16 While there appears to have been a certain amount of continuity between the two styles due to the shared influence of seniya tailim, an investigation of the difference between the two would require its own detailed study.
- 17 Some of the personal observations and anecdotal material used in this chapter have been taken from the writings of Birendra and Harendra Kishore Roychaudhuri, who were both well-known members of this family earlier in this century.
- 48 Apparently, there are still copies of the recording made by Rajendra Nath Chatterjee in private circulation in West Bengal.
- 19 During that time, the eastern part of Bihar, where the district of Darbhanga was situated, was considered to be part of colonial Bengal. The town of that name had been the home of the Rajas of Darbhanga since 1762. These Hindu sovereigns trace their ancestry

to Mahesh Thakur, a Mughal governor of the sixteenth century (Hunter 1881, Vol. 3, pp. 38-39).

- 20 It appears that this was not an uncommon practice in early recordings as there are many discs in which this occurs. One needs only to refer to recordings of Rasoolanbai, Janakibai, Enayat Khan (sitariya) amongst many others, who voiced their names and sometimes their town as well.
- 21 For details of recordings of Hindustani music made during this time refer to the discography compiled by Kinnear.
- 22 See McNeil (2002).
- 23 The Maihar gharāna is not included in this list as its formation occurred later on.
- 24 The recordings of Hafiz Ali Khan held in the archive in All India Radio in New Delhi are: Raga Multani (SPM TS 20269) recorded 25/ 7/57; Raga Eman (details not available); Raga Chandrabhankar (SPM TS20268) recorded 23/7/57 and Raga Desh (SPM 20266) recorded 23/9/57. Raga Chandrabhankar was later commercially released. In 1989, HMV and AIR released another cassette of Ragas Mian ki Malhar, Sanjh Tarini and Bhairavi (STC 850154).
- 25 See Kinnear (2000) for a detailed account of the early recording expeditions.
- 26 See Metcalfe (1986).
- 27 The actions taken by Asghar Ali Khan are perhaps an indication of the degree to which such restrictions were sometimes observed.
- 28 See Neuman (1980).
- 29 'It is often said that he [Bhatkhande] was almost barred from mehfils because he would quickly note down the compositions —stealing them away, they [the Ustads] would say—and that he often carried on his work by hiding behind curtains when listening to the ustads' (Amarnath 1975 : 28).
- 30 See Attali (1985 : 128).

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