N. Ramanathan.

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NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

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Third Cover:
Glimpse of a Mudiyettu performance held at the National Centre for the Performing Arts.
(Courtesy: Easter Russell)

The contributors to this number include:

G. Venu, Executive Director, *Natanakairali,* dance notator and choreographer, actively associated with the revival of the traditional art-forms of Kerala.

Jaideva Singh, musicologist and authority on Hindustani music.

Mukund Lath, musicologist and Sanskrit scholar, author of *A Study of Dattilam.*

Vijaya Mehta, distinguished Marathi actress and director, winner of the Sangeet Natak Akademi's Award for Direction (1975).

Devangana Desai, art historian, author of *Erotic Sculpture of India: A Socio-Cultural Study* and formerly Homi Bhabha Fellow.

Madanlal Vyas, music critic, translator of music texts, formerly Assistant Editor, *Navbharat Times.*

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INDIRA GANDHI

Smt. Indira Gandhi is seen in this happy group photograph taken on her last visit to Bombay at the end of her last engagement to attend the Indo-Italian presentation of Rossini's great opera IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA in the Tata Theatre of the National Centre for the Performing Arts on the 8th of October 1984. Left of her are the conductor Daniel Nazareth and his parents with the Italian Soprano Joan de Cristoforo. Right of the Prime Minister are Giuseppe Volpi, Governor I.H. Latif, Giorgio Lormi, Carlo de Bortoli, Gennaro Sica, Betty Bhabha, Jamshed Bhabha, Mario Mattiotti, Antonietta Bragagnolo and Pascal Allen Nazareth.

Smt. Indira Gandhi worked for the people of India with single-minded devotion in the great tradition of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, and her own father, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India.

The extent to which the people of India had taken her to their hearts became fully evident after her tragic and untimely death at the hands of assassins.

Much missed as she is and will be by people in all walks of life, it is the artistes and art lovers particularly who feel deeply the void created by her death.

To mourn the death of Smt. Indira Gandhi, a Memorial Meeting of artistes and art lovers was held on Wednesday the 14th November 1984 at the National Centre for the Performing Arts which had received such heartening support from her since its inception. At this meeting, under the Chairmanship of Maharashtra's Minister for Finance and Cultural Affairs, Shri Sushilkumar Shinde, Pandit Jasraj, Smt. Shanta Gandhi and Dr. Kanak Rele spoke on behalf of organisations of artistes, and Shri Jamshed J. Bhabha, as Trustee-in-Charge of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, moved the following resolution which was passed by all standing in homage to Smt. Indira Gandhi.

Shri Jamshed Bhabha, Managing Trustee of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, moving the Resolution adopted by all present standing at the meeting of musicians, artistes and art-lovers convened in the Tata Theatre on the 14th November 1984 under the chairmanship of Maharashtra's Minister for Finance and Culture Affairs, Shri Sushilkumar Shinde to mourn the untimely and tragic death of Smt. Indira Gandhi. Others seen in the picture are, left to right, Dr. Kanak Rele and Smt. Shanta Gandhi, who spoke on behalf of organisations of artistes, Shri Sushilkumar Shinde and Shri S. A. Sabavala, Deputy Managing Trustee of the National Centre.

"The musicians, theatre people and lovers of music and the arts, assembled this day, Wednesday the 14th November 1984, at the National Centre for the Performing Arts, mourn the untimely and tragic death of Smt. Indira Gandhi on the 31st October 1984, and express their sense of shock and horror over her assassination. They share with millions of their countrymen their deeply-felt grief at the irreparable loss of an esteemed national leader, a dedicated Prime Minister, and a great champion of the arts, artistes and art lovers, who had been a steadfast supporter of the aims and ideals of the National Centre for the Performing Arts which she inaugurated in 1969.

Intensely national and patriotic, Smt. Indira Gandhi inherited from Mahatma Gandhi, and her own family, an international outlook that combined the best in the great cultural heritages of India and the West, and transcended the limitations of race, religion, caste and creed.

Her naturalness and freedom from pomposity or self-importance stemmed, as in the case of Mahatma Gandhi, and her father Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, from an inborn conviction of the sanctity of all work well done, and her approach to her task as Prime Minister as a job of work to be done like any other job.

The members of the meeting also recall her consistent support to the aims and ideals of the National Centre for the Performing Arts which she inaugurated in 1969 with the following words that heartened those who were grappling with the challenge of establishing this pioneering public trust:

> "I heartily support the aims and objects of this institution. I think it is inspired by great vision, and I hope it will be sustained by a sense of dedication."

While paying their homage to the memory of Smt. Indira Gandhi, and sharing with millions of their countrymen their feeling of gratitude to the uniquely gifted and immensely courageous lady who had fought for their interests indomitably throughout her life, the members of this meeting express their sorrowful and profound sympathy to her son, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, now Prime Minister of India."

We reproduce below the text of the address delivered by Smt. Indira Gandhi when she inaugurated the programme of activities of the National Centre for the Performing Arts on the 29th of December 1969.

—Editor

I am glad I accepted the invitation to be here. We all know how rich India has been in her classical dances and music, as well as in the folk arts.

It is said that man does not live by bread alone and this brings an old saying—I think it is Sufi—to my mind. "If I had two loaves of bread, I would sell one and buy hyacinths to feed my soul". I do think we need that sort of feeling amongst the people. Obviously, those who do not have even one loaf cannot think of hyacinths. But the rest of us have to do something so that these ancient arts do not decline, because, once they do, it will not be possible to bring them up again, except in a rather artificial and superficial way. I think that you have a difficult task before you, but I have no doubt that, with such determination, you will succeed. I whole-heartedly support the aims and objects of this institution. I think it is inspired by great vision and I sincerely hope that it will be sustained by a sense of dedication.

I should like to congratulate all those who worked to translate these visions into reality. Besides, that this whole effort has been a voluntary one is of special significance these days, when there is an almost pathetic dependence on the Government for patronage and support.

Change, as you all know, is a way of life. Our ancient society is being subjected to stresses and strains of modernisation, of industrialisation. One cannot bemoan this change and look nostalgically towards the past. We must

accept change, but at the same time we must see that the change does not wipe out that which is of value or that which is good in the old. This is much more difficult than it sounds. It is much easier to change something wholesale than to pick and choose what is to be kept and what is to be swept away. Our classical and folk music and art are some of the things which we simply must preserve in order to keep our individuality. And one thing which is realised all over the world is the importance of having one's own individuality and personality in the midst of the general trend towards not only machine-made articles but, if I may so put it, almost machine-made people.

With the democratisation of society, the arts face new challenges. In the olden days, although the folk arts were sustained by the people, classical music and dance were dependent on kings and aristocrats. Of course, that helped our musicians to some extent, but it also made them subject to the whims of a particular individual or a group. Today, if we can help them, their field is a much wider one. If they are good enough, they can command audiences, not only in our country, but far and wide across the seas, and they have far greater opportunities to try and find new paths and to make new creations.

We have not really seen much by the way of new creations, but I hope that your Centre will encourage this as much as it encourages the preserving of the purely classical. It is only if we can create the demand among the people that we can really succeed. I know this from my own experience. I was in England during the war years. Before that, the British were supposed to be a singularly unmusical people. But during the war they had what are known as Lunch Hour Concerts—free concerts during lunch. There were all kinds of music, modern and classical, and we found that a large number of office workers, factory workers and others, whoever could get off, went to the concerts, and, after the War, England emerged as one of the most musical-minded countries from the point of view of music appreciation among the people.

This is what we should try to do. We do have audiences even today for classical music, but it is something that has to be worked for and expanded.

There is nothing more for me to do but thank you for giving me this opportunity of being with you and to wish you the best of luck.

Mudiyettu

Ritual Dance-Drama of Kerala

G. Venu

Mudiyettu is one of the ancient forms of dance-drama of Kerala. Mudiyettu presents a dramatized version of the Puranic story of *Darika-Vadha*. If we scrutinize the presentation and style of this ritual dance-drama, we discover the origins of certain elements of the style, presentation, costumes and choreography of the later classical art forms of Kerala such as Krishnanattom and Kathakali. Mudiyettu is usually performed in the Bhadrakali temples of Central Kerala as an oblation to the goddess. Since we have no records or evidence to indicate accurately the date of origin of this ritual dance-drama, all that we can surmise is that it is very ancient.

Bhadrakali worship has always occupied a very important place in the religious life of the people of Kerala. There are numerous Kali temples in Kerala. The story of Kali, especially the one detailing how she killed the *asura* Darika, is the theme of many folk-songs and is presented in several visual art forms in these temples.

An Outline of the Story

Long, long ago there broke out a fierce war between the *deva*-s (gods) and *asura*-s (demons). The *asura*-s were on the brink of defeat, and their women sought refuge in *patala* (the nether-world). Two of them, Danavati and Darumati, who pined for sons who would wreak vengeance on the gods, propitiated Lord Brahma by strict penance and received boons from him. In due course, Danavati gave birth to a son named Danavendra and Darumati to a son named Darika. Darika performed rigorous austerities to propitiate Lord Brahma and secured from him boons which made him invincible to men, *asura*-s and gods. By virtue of these boons, he became the supreme lord of all the fourteen worlds and gained the strength of ten thousand elephants. Moreover, one of the boons from Brahma assured him that if a drop of blood of his body was shed and fell on the ground, a thousand mighty warriors, each as strong as himself, would immediately emerge from that drop of blood. But Darika made one mistake: he did not ask for a boon that made him unassailable to women.

In securing these boons, Darika, assisted by Danavendra and their *rakshasa* hosts, attacked and took possession of *Svarga-loka* (the abode of the gods). He then started persecuting the *deva*-s and *rishi*-s. When the situation became intolerable, the *deva*-s assembled to consider how they could escape from the attacks of Darika. At their request, Narada listed all the misdeeds of Darika on a palm-leaf, went with it to Kailasa and read its contents to Lord Shiva. Narada pleaded with Shiva that the menace from Darika should somehow be ended. Shiva, enraged by the atrocities of Darika, opened the third eye on his forehead, and almost immediately Bhadrakali rose, shaking the whole world. With the blessings of Shiva, Bhadrakali set out to fight Darika. On the way she met Vetali in the forest of Mahakala. Vetali had an insatiable thirst for blood. She agreed to carry

Bhadrakali on her back and also undertook to drink every drop of blood shed from Darika's body before it could touch the ground. Soon Bhadrakali and Vetali, accompanied by Kooli, one of Shiva's *bhuta*-s (attendant spirits), and Nandikeshvara (in the guise of a soldier called Koimbidar), reached Darika's capital. In a thunderous voice, which seemed to rend the sky, Bhadrakali challenged Darika to a fight.

Darika accepted the challenge and came out in his chariot, accompanied by Danavendra. When he realised that he was going to be defeated, he fled for life. In order to escape from Bhadrakali, Darika sought refuge in one world after another but the Devi followed him wherever he went. As a last resort, he fled to *patala* (the lower world) and hid himself in a cave. Kali followed him there. Finally, she cut off the heads of both Darika and Danavendra and presented them to Shiva. This is the bare outline of the Mudiyettu dance-drama.

The story of Bhadrakali and Darika is a representation of the good and evil tendencies in man and a picture of the eternal fight between *dharma* and *adharma* in the world around us.

Costume and Makeup

There are seven characters in Mudiyettu: Shiva, Narada, Darika, Danavendra, Bhadrakali, Kooli and Koimbidar (Nandikeshvara). *Chayiliyam* (red pigment), *Manayola* (yellow pigment), *Mashi* (a black eye-paste), *Manjal* (turmeric), rice-paste, caustic lime, indigo and other ingredients are used for the makeup on the face. The head-gears (*mudi*-s) and ornaments are made of wood; they are carved, gilded and jewelled, with artistic positioning of glass pieces, peacock feathers and even the shell of beetles.

The third eye is clearly marked on Shiva's forehead and *tilak*-s are drawn with rice-paste on Narada's forehead. Both Shiva and Narada wear *mudi* (head-gear). Darika and Danavendra use the same kind of makeup. Their faces are smeared with red, green and black paint. Above this colouring are projecting moles made of a thick rice and caustic lime mixture. They wear beautiful crowns on their head and thick white skirts, with lots of tucks (*mattu*). Bhadrakali's face is completely smeared with black paint and marked with white dots made of rice-paste. A thin veneer of red powder made out of a mixture of turmeric and caustic lime is smeared between the dots. The red petals of the *Chethi* flower are firmly pasted on the forehead, the tip of the nose and on the chin and both the cheeks. Two long, pointed metal teeth are fixed in the mouth. Bhadrakali's head-gear is called *Valiyamudi*. Kooli is a comic character and there are no conventional stipulations regarding her makeup. The face is painted in different colours depending on the fancy of the actors. Koimbidar is usually presented with the makeup of a typical Nair warrior of ancient times and he carries a sword and shield.

Musical Instruments and Singing

The musical instruments used in Mudiyettu are *Uruttuchenda, Veekkuchenda* (drums), *Ilathalam* (cymbals) and *Shankh* (conch). The literary composition which forms the text for the performance of Mudiyettu is a blend of prose and verse. The language is a mixture of archaic Malayalam, Sanskrit and Tamil. Formerly, the

text was not written but used to be orally handed down from teacher to disciples. Naturally, it underwent changes with each generation. The songs were sung in the typical Sopana style of Kerala. There is also an element of stylisation in the dialogues. Koimbidar acts as the link between Mudiyettu and contemporary life. There is a pleasing blend of words and rhythmic syllables in his speech and a kind of veiled social criticism through a clever use of symbolic words. At times, we discover in his words profound philosophical ideas.

The Performance

The performances of this dance-drama usually begin in the Malayalam month of Vrischikam (November-December) in the Bhadrakali temples of Kerala. Every year, the first performance is held in the Kalambukavu temple in the Ernakulam district. This is followed by performances, one after the other, in the temples of Padathukavu, Keezhkavu, Maradu, Vyttila, Tammanam, Cheppanam etc. This religious dance-drama is performed in these temples, adhering strictly to the style and conventions laid down by tradition. The performances continue till the end of May. The rites and conventions relating to the performance vary slightly from temple to temple.

Before the actual performance begins, and as its essential preliminary part, a large image (*Kalam*) of Bhadrakali is drawn on the floor. This *Kalam* is usually drawn on the floor of the *Valiyambalam* of the temple. The *Valiyambalam* is usually situated a little beyond the *Sreekovil* (the sanctum sanctorum) and the *Mandapa* (roofed platform) in front of it. The image of Kali is drawn very beautifully by an expert who employs different materials mainly powdered rice, paddy chapp-charcoal, turmeric, leaves of the Vaka tree, slaked lime etc. Rice powder is used when white colour is required; turmeric powder, where yellow colour is wanted; for black colour, paddy chapp-charcoal powder is used and red colour is obtained through a mixture of turmeric and slaked lime. The *Kalam* is usually drawn by members of the Kurup community who are experts in this work because it is their hereditary and traditional profession.

First of all, the place where the *Kalam* is to be drawn must be purified by smearing it with cow-dung paste. If it is a cement floor, it is washed with water. Then a *padmam* (a ritual picture) is drawn on the floor and *pooja* is performed before it. A coir net is now placed above the area where the *Kalam* is going to be drawn and right in the centre of that covering of coir net, a decorated silk cloth is spread so that it forms a canopy above the figure of Bhadrakali. The silk canopy is further adorned with flowers and surrounded by hangings of *Kuruttola* (long strips of coconut leaves). In some temples, this work of drawing the *Kalam* is finished in two or three hours. In others, the work is done in the afternoon from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Bhadrakali's figure, as drawn in the *Kalam*, is terrifying and awe-inspiring. Her body is gigantic and jet-black in colour; her head seems to touch the sky; she has three red eyes that burn like fire; her mouth is like a large cave, with the red tongue stretched out fully; in the mouth can be seen two long sabre-like teeth; her thick wavy hair is like the rolling waves of the river Kalindi. She has several long strong arms which hold weapons: the sword, *vel* (spear), club, bow and arrows, and the trident. In one hand she holds the severed bleeding head of Darika. This is the picture of Bhadrakali that is usually

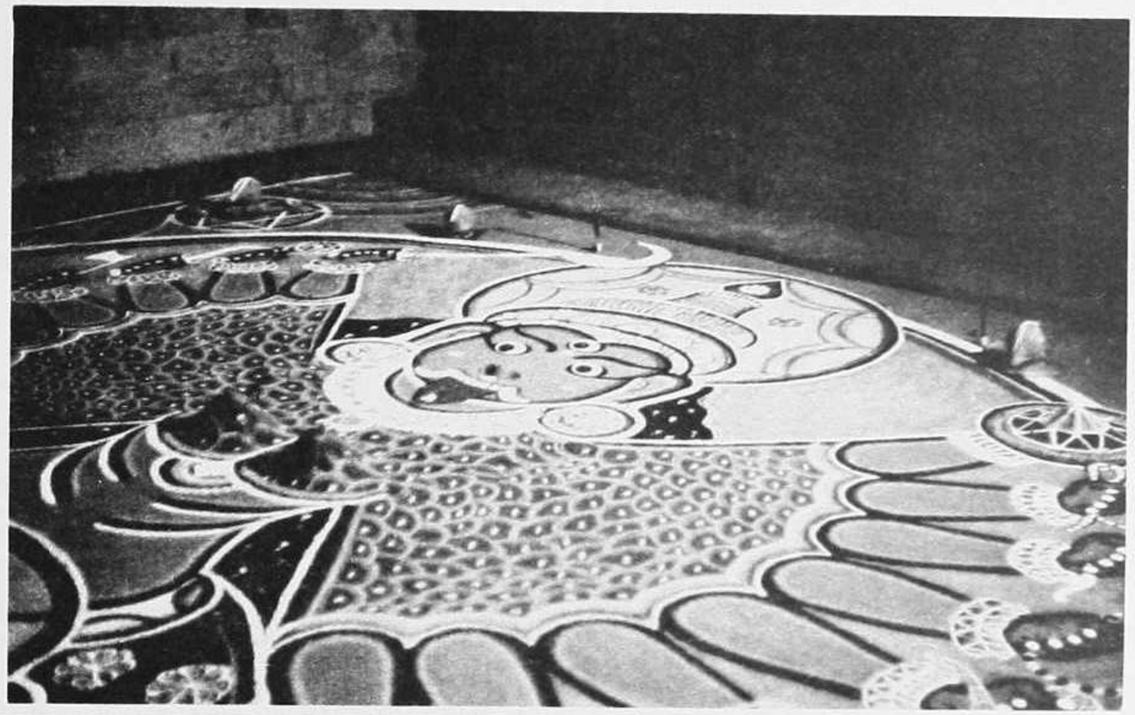
drawn in the *Kalam*. In the picture of Kali, a minimum of four hands are shown but eight, sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four hands can also be drawn. Sometimes, Kali is shown as sitting on the back of Vetali. After drawing the *Kalam,* lighted *nilavilakku*-s (oil lamps) are placed on all the four sides of the *Kalam;* grain, paddy and coconuts are also placed around it.

When the drawing of the *Kalam* is over, a place for the performance of the Mudiyettu is chosen in the spacious compound within the outer walls of the temple. Instrumental music is played to announce to the public that Mudiyettu is going to be performed there. This method of announcing the ritual by beating drums and other musical instruments is called *Kotti-ariyippu* (*Kottu*=drum-beating and *ariyippu*=announcement).

After the last *Pooja* in the temple is over and the *Sreekovil* is closed, *Pooja*-s at the *Kalam* begin. In some temples, the Chief *Poojari* of the temple, who is usually a Namboothiri, performs the *Pooja*-s at the *Kalam*. In some temples, the Kurup, who has drawn the *Kalam,* performs the *Pooja*-s. When the *Pooja*-s are over, the *Kalam-pattu* (song) begins. The *Kalam-pattu* is a hymn in praise of Bhadrakali in which there is a detailed description of the features of Bhadrakali from head to foot. The *Kalam-pattu* is followed by a ceremony called *Etirelppu.* It is believed that Kali's soul is resting at the foot of the sacred tree in the temple. She has to be brought from the base of the tree by a suitable escort in a ceremonial way. This ritual is called *Etirelppu. Pooja*-s are performed at the foot of the sacred tree and a lamp is lit. This lamp is conceived as Kali. When this lamp is brought to the *Kalam,* a number of women holding *Talam*-s in their hands stand in a row on both sides of the path as an escort for the lamp. The lamp, escorted in this way and accompanied by instrumental music, is taken in *pradakshinam* (circumambulation) and placed in front of the *Kalam.* Songs praising the glory of Bhadrakali are sung and then, with the permission of those present, the Kurup or the *Poojari* wipes off the *Kalam.* After erasing the *Kalam,* the mixture of coloured powders used for drawing the *Kalam* is distributed among the devotees present as *prasadam.* Hundreds of devotees come from very distant places to receive a little of this *prasadam.* In some temples, this *Kalam-pooja* and the connected ceremonies are performed consecutively for forty-one days and Mudiyettu is performed on the last day.

As soon as the *Kalam* is erased and the *prasadam* distributed, the proceedings for the presentation of Mudiyettu begin. Mudiyettu is performed in a large open space in the temple compound. No special stage or platform is necessary for the performance. The only stage requirements are a *Nilavilakku* (lamp) about four feet in height, a wooden stool and a *Tiraseela* (curtain). The main acting area is round the *Nilavilakku.* The audience may stand or sit some distance away from this acting area. A cotton wick, lit either from the lamp at the *Kalam* or from the lamp in the green room, where the actors are engaged in their makeup, is brought to the stage and with it the *Nilavilakku* is lit. This ceremony is usually performed by a distinguished local personality. The lighting of the lamp is followed by a function called *Arangu-Keli. Arangu-Keli* consists of a fine performance of playing the instruments *Chenda* (drum) and *Ilathalam* (cymbals). After this the curtain is held stretched by two persons, just behind the *Nilavilakku,* each holding one end of the curtain. The singers and the instrumentalists stand behind the curtain. First they

Glimpses of a Mudiyettu *performance held at the National Centre for the Performing Arts on April 28, 1983.*



sing the *Vandana-Shloka* (invocation song). When this is over, Shiva and Narada appear on the stage. Shiva stands on the stool behind the curtain in such a way that only the upper half of his body is visible to the audience, the lower half being hidden by the curtain. The head of a bull carved out of wood is seen just in front of Shiva. The suggestion is that Shiva is sitting on his bull on Mount Kailasa. Narada appears in front of the curtain with a palm-leaf in his hand. He bows respectfully to Shiva and then enumerates the misdeeds of Darika and the numerous complaints of the *deva*-s against him.

Darika appears in the next scene. Standing behind the curtain he clutches the upper edge of the curtain with both the hands and tries to pull it down. This action is accompanied by roars and jumps and other violent movements. This is his way of showing his might and valour. Then suddenly he leaves the main acting area, runs into the midst of the spectators, and moves around engaged in violent circular movements and jumps. Then he returns to the main acting area near the lamp, stands upon the stool, looks around him in all the four directions with a challenging and defiant look, expressing total confidence in himself and supreme contempt for gods and men. In the meantime, Kali enters from behind Darika, stands holding the curtain and issues a counter-challenge to Darika. A short meeting between Kali and Darika is shown after which Darika disappears. Kali repeats her challenge to Darika in the next short scene. This is followed by Kali's *rangapooja* in honour of Shiva. Regarding the *Nilavilakku* as Shiva, Kali worships it, offering oblations of *Chethi* flowers taken from her own head-gear. She then performs a devotional dance before Shiva (the *Nilavilakku*) taking three steps forward and three steps backward. Then she dances round the *Nilavilakku* with quick rhythmic movements. After this she goes round the temple, accompanied by the beating of drums and other instruments and big torches, the flames of which are frequently kindled by throwing *tellipodi* (an inflammable powder prepared from the gum of a tree) into them. A large procession of people follows her in this *pradakshina*. On such occasions, the whole body of spectators accompany Kali. Then Kali returns to the main acting area and the characters Koimbidar and Kooli also come onto the stage. When Koimbidar enters and takes his stand, the drummers ask him some questions to which he gives appropriate replies. Koimbidar sings hymns in praise of Shiva, Saraswati and Sri Narayana and then very briefly narrates through a song the story of how Ganapati was born as the son of Shiva and Parvati. Next he offers a prayer for the successful completion of that day's Mudiyettu. The comic character, Kooli, often mingles with the spectators and entertains them with her jokes and antics. These two characters are deliberately introduced to reduce the tension of the fighting scenes of Mudiyettu. In the course of the fight with Darika, the actor who plays the part of Kali often takes leave of his senses, runs round the temple again and again and frequently loses all self-control. On such occasions Koimbidar follows Kali trying to restrain her and Kooli, with her jokes and comic behaviour, tries to mitigate Kali's anger.

Next comes the fight scene. Kali encounters Darika and Danavendra. The fight continues with unabated ferocity for two hours. Music, the playing of musical instruments and huge torches—the flames of which are kindled with *tellipodi*—add to the horror of the fight. Kali and her opponents leave the stage and run round the temple in the course of the fight. When the fight reaches the

Glimpses of a Mudiyettu performance held at the National Centre for the Performing Arts on April 28, 1983.

peak of its intensity, Kali's head-gear is removed so as to remind the actor of his normal human identity. The actor who plays that part is forcibly brought to the stage and made to sit and rest. While sitting there, the head-gear is once more tied to Kali's head. This is followed by a short mock fight at the end of which Kali kills Darika and Danavendra. The head-gears of Darika and Danavendra are removed to signify that their heads are now cut off. Once, at a Mudiyettu performance, the actor who played the part of Kali, actually cut off the head of the actor who played the part of Darika. To avoid such tragedies, this convention of removing the head-gear, as a symbolic representation of cutting off the head, was introduced and that has been followed ever since.

Mudiyettu is conducted by devotees in the belief that it will ward off the epidemic of small-pox, protect the people from enemies and ensure prosperity and happiness for the villagers. From the beginning till the end of a Mudiyettu performance, burning torches are held aloft. *Tellipodi,* when burnt, sends out smoke which has germicidal properties. This may be the scientific basis for the belief that Mudiyettu will prevent an outbreak of small-pox or other such diseases.

The Artistes

Traditionally, the performance of Mudiyettu has been a monopoly of the Marar community. But the drawing of the *Kalam* was the privilege of the members of the Kurup community. But, in actual practice, Kurups also have become actors in Mudiyettu and many Marars have shown great proficiency in drawing *Kalam*-s. The Marars have been traditionally the professional drummers in temples at the time of *pooja*-s. This hereditary work of the Marars is called *Kooti-Padi-Seva.* There are at present only three or four troupes of artistes who are competent to present Mudiyettu in its pure and authentic style. Of these the most famous is the Pazhur family (of Piravom in Ernakulam District), descended from the renowned 'Kunnakal' family which had handled Mudiyettu for centuries. Well-known Mudiyettu artistes like Kunchu Marar, Ravunni Marar and Achu Marar were members of the Pazhur family. Kunjan Marar, the leader of the Pazhur troupe for forty-five years, died in 1982. The Sangeet Natak Akademi honoured him with an award in 1981. The present leader of the Pazhur troupe is his son Damodara Marar. The Department of Culture of the Government of India recently conferred upon him a Junior Fellowship which no doubt is a great encouragement to the Pazhur Mudiyettu tradition. The temples have been able to give very little remuneration and encouragement to the practitioners of this art, which is why young men today are not attracted to it any more. They are, therefore, very unwilling to follow their ancestral and traditional profession. Formerly, Mudiyettu artistes and their families were given agricultural land and other financial assistance and they could maintain themselves in comfort without depending completely on the meagre income from their art. But, today, their economic condition is quite deplorable.

A Mudiyettu artiste must have proficiency in the arts of singing, drumming, dancing and drawing *Kalam*-s. He must also have at least six years' training and experience of actually participating in performances. The *Natanakairali,* an association of more than a hundred traditional artistes, has now started working in earnest to revive this dying art and to secure for it greater recognition and popularity both inside and outside Kerala.

Abhinavagupta's Contribution to Musicology

Jaideva Singh

Abhinavabharati, Abhinavagupta's commentary on the *Natyashastra,* is not simply a gloss, supplying interpretations of important words; it is, in fact, full of discussions of important problems of musicology in which Abhinavagupta offers brilliant suggestions, thereby indicating a new orientation to certain concepts of music and contributing towards the solution of difficult problems.

Firstly, let us consider his views on *svara.* In Chapter Twenty-eight of the *Natyashastra,* he discusses the views of some of his predecessors regarding *svara* or a musical note and concludes thus:

वयं तु श्रुतिस्थानाभिघातप्रभवशब्दप्रभावितोऽनुरणनात्मा स्निग्धमधुरः शब्द एव स्वर इति वदयामः।

(*N. S.* IV, p. 11)

Herein, he makes two points. Like Matanga, he suggests that there are two kinds of *shruti*: *svarashruti* and *antarashruti.* It is only at the position of *svarashruti* that sound explodes into *svara,* not at the intervening *antarashruti* This is clearly stated in:

श्रुतिस्थानाभिघातप्रभवशब्दप्रभावितो

meaning "that which is *prabhavita,* i.e. made to become or transformed by *shabda* or sound which is produced (*prabhava*) by being struck at the position of its appropriate *shruti.*"

His second point is that when the sound is produced at its appropriate *shruti* it becomes

अनुरणनात्मा स्निग्धमधुरः शब्द

'a resonant sweet sound affecting the ear agreeably.' This is *svara* or a musical note.

Western musicologists have defined a musical note in terms of regular, definite number of vibrations per second, that is from the point of view of the physical aspect of sound. Abhinavagupta defines it from the aesthetic point of view, describing its effect upon the mind of the listener.

There are two important words in his definition of *svara,* viz., *anurananatma* and *snigdhamadhurah. Anuranana* conveys the physical aspect of the note and *snigdhamadhurah* the aesthetic aspect. *Anuranana* is not simply 'echo' but sound in conformity with a continuous tinkling echo. *Snigdhamadhurah* is the agreeable, sweet sensation in the listener. This definition of Abhinavagupta has been followed by all the later writers on music. Sharngadeva repeats these very words in his *Sangitaratnakara.* But this is not all. Abhinavagupta has made a suggestion in this regard which has never occurred to other musicologists.

The word *svara* is derived from two roots, viz. *svr* of *bhvadigana (shabdopatapayoh,* in the sense of *shabda* or sound and *upatapa* or warmth of feeling) and *svara* of *churadigana* (*akshepe,* in the sense of hinting, imposing). Abhinavagupta says that the word *svara,* as used in music, has the implication of both these senses. The reading, as it occurs in the *Natyashastra,* is corrupt. Corrected, it would read thus:

स्वशब्दोपतापयो : स्वर आक्षेप इत्यनयो : स्वरशब्द : तेन
शब्दस्वभावां चित्तवृत्तिमध्यस्थतारूपस्वास्थ्यावस्था
परित्याजनेनोपतापयन्तो ह्यतातिशयवशात्
स्वतामाक्षिपन्त : स्वविषये अभिधानं कुर्वन्त : स्वरा
इत्युक्ता : ।

(*N.S.* IV, pp. 10-11)

"The natural tendency of the mind is only towards plain sound. A musical note or *svara* has the power to obtrude itself on the mind, to set aside its natural tendency towards mere sound, and by its excess of pleasantness to make the mind susceptible to emotion, and thus, imposing itself on it, make its presence felt." This is not a literary *tour de force* on the part of Abhinavagupta. He has drawn our attention to a patent psychic state aroused by a musical note, and in this consists his originality.

The principle of nishkasa *or elimination in the scheme of the* shruti-*s*:

In the same chapter of the *Natyashastra,* he draws our attention to the principle of *nishkasam* in the scheme of the *shruti*-s. He uses the expression *nishkasam prakramena,* a gradual, systematic elimination of one note in the *shruti*-s for the delineation of *svara*-s.

Shadja is of four *shruti*-s, *rishabha* is of three *shruti*-s, *gandhara* is of two *shruti*-s. *Madhyama* occupies the central position and divides the *saptaka* or heptad into two equal parts. The other three notes, viz., *panchama, dhaivata* and *nishada* have the same number of *shruti*-s, viz., 4, 3, 2 with a gradual elimination of one *shruti* in each case.

Truly speaking, Abhinavagupta says, there are only three notes. As he puts it:

तेन परमार्थत : त्रय एव स्वरा :

(*N. S.* IV, p. 14)

The *svara*-s are really three, viz. *sa, re, ga; pa, dha, ni* are the same *svara*-s at a higher level of utterance. The difference is only due to *urdhva sparsha* and *mandra sparsha.*

Correspondence of the Vedic and Laukika svara-*s*:

Owing to a misinterpretation of the *shiksha grantha*-s, many musicologists thought that *shadja, madhyama* and *panchama* correspond to *svarita* of the

Vedic note, *gandhara* and *rishabha* to *udatta,* and *nishada* and *dhaivata* to *anudatta.* But the rationale given by Abhinavagupta sets these theories at naught. He says:

चतु:श्रुतिरुदात्त: उच्चत्वात् : द्वि:श्रुतिरनुदात्त: नीचैस्त्वात् ।
त्रिश्रुति: स्वरित: मध्यवर्तितया समाहारत्वात् ।

(*N. S.* IV, p. 14)

Udatta means the highest; therefore those *svara*-s which have four *shruti*-s i.e. *sa, ma* and *pa* are *udatta. Anudatta* means the lowest; therefore, those *svara*-s which have the lowest number of *shruti*-s i.e. those which have only two *shruti*-s, namely *ga* and *ni* are *anudatta. Svarita svara*-s are so called because of *samahara. Samahara,* in this context, means conjunction or meeting point. Therefore, *svarita svara*-s are those which lie in-between (*madhyavartina*) the *udatta* of four *shruti*-s and the *anudatta* of two *shruti*-s i.e. *svara*-s of three *shruti*-s, namely, *re* and *dha.*

The indispensability of Madhyama *note*:

Both Vedic and Gandharva music maintain that the note *madhyama* is *avinashi* i.e. it cannot be omitted in any scale, or in pentatonic or hexatonic forms. Neither the Vedas nor Bharata have advanced any reason for this position of *madhyama.*

Abhinavagupta clarifies this point at two places. He says,

तेन परमार्थत : त्रय एव स्वरा : -सरिगा :, पधनय : ।
मध्यमस्तु ध्रुवकस्थानीयो मध्यमत्वादेव ।

(*N. S.* IV, p. 14)

"Because *madhyama* occupies a pivotal position, lying as it does in the very centre of the *saptaka* or heptad, it is *dhruva* or fixed, constant and immovable." It should be borne in mind that the concept of a scale in Indian music is that of *saptaka* or heptad, not of an *ashtaka* or octave. A *saptaka* consists only of seven *svara*-s. *Madhyama* occupies the central position and divides the other notes of the *saptaka* into two equal halves, as indicated above. It is the pivot. But this alone is not enough to explain the indispensability of *madhyama.* There is a far deeper reason which involves the philosophy of *madhya* or *madhyama.* Abhinavagupta hints at this in his preliminary verse in Chapter Twenty-eight of the *Natyashastra.*

मध्यमस्वरमुशन्ति यद्भावान्नादषड्जमुदितं श्रुतिक्रमात् ।
सोऽपि यद्विलसितं कलात्मक: तं नमामि शिवशिरांशुमण्डनम् ॥

(*N.S.* IV, p. 1)

"The gods are fond of the *madhyama* note, through the power of which arises the group of six notes in accordance with the arrangement of *shruti*-s. I bow to him, Shiva, who is adorned with the moon, who has *Kala* as one of his *tattva*-s and through whom even *madhyama* gleams (as the central note)".

In Shaiva philosophy, the central reality is said to be *madhya.* As *Pratyabhijnahrdayam* (pp. 80-81) puts it:

सर्वान्तरतमत्वेन वर्तमानत्वात्तदभित्तिलग्नतां
विना च कस्यचित् अपि स्वरूपानुपपत्तेःसंविदेव
भगवती 'मध्यम्' ।

"The exalted *samvit* or universal consciousness itself is the centre inasmuch as it is present as the innermost reality of all and inasmuch as the form or nature of anything whatsoever cannot be possible without its being attached to it as the ground or support."

Just as central reality or universal consciousness is the ground or support of everything, even so the note *madhyama* is the pivotal point, the ground or support of the entire heptad. Just as it is the *madhya* or central reality from which arises everything in the universe even so it is the *madhyama* note from which arise all the other notes of the heptad-

यद्ध्यानादषड्जमुदितं श्रुतिक्रमात् ।

Gandharva, which was mostly ritualistic music could not, therefore, drop *madhyama* in any case.

The exposition of Kutapa:

Bharata calls orchestral stage music *kutapa. Kutapa* ordinarily means 'noonday heat.' Bharata does not explain his use of the word *kutapa.* Abhinavagupta elaborates:

कुं चं रङ्गं तपत्युज्ज्वलयति (वा) ।

(*N. S.* IV, p. 2)

Kutapa is that which highlights the stage. It is the orchestral stage music which makes it glow and attract the attention of spectators.

The distinction between Gandharva *and* Gana *or* Deshi-raga-*s*:

Some of our best musicologists think that Gandharva music was the only classical music of our country, that the scales, *Shadja grama* and *Madhyama grama,* adopted by it according to certain fixed division of *shruti*-s, were the only standard scales of our music and that they changed suddenly under the influence of Iranian music and with the advent of the Muslims in India.

The words *Gandharva* and *Gana* have been used in two senses in our musical literature, in a *samanya* or general sense, and in a *vishesha* or technical sense. In a general sense, music as such was known as *Gandharva* or *Gandharva shastra;* in a technical sense, only that was known as *Gandharva* which has been

described by Bharata in the *Natyashastra* or by Dattila in *Dattilam.* So also, the word *Gana* was used in two senses by Bharata himself in the *Natyashastra.* In a general way, he has used the word *Gana* in the sense of any song; in the technical sense, the word *Gana* is used in connection with *dhruva*-s, in the sense of *grama raga*-s, *bhasha, vibhasha* etc. that is, in the sense of *Deshi raga*-s.

Many musicologists seem to be labouring under the misapprehension that since *Gandharva* music was the only classical music of our country, *Deshi* music did not exist during the time of Bharata, and that, when it became classicized, it adopted exactly the scale and *shruti* pattern of Bharata and later abandoned the original scale and *shruti* pattern under the influence of Iranian music with the advent of the Muslims.

Abhinavagupta's comments can demolish this delusion in clear and unambiguous terms. Throughout his commentary on the *Natyashastra,* he has shown that *Gandharva* and *Gana* or *Deshi* music flourished side by side, and that the aim of *Deshi* music was different from that of *Gandharva.* He has drawn a clear-cut and detailed distinction between *Gandharva* and *Gana* music in his commentary on Chapter Thirty-three of the *Natyashastra.*

गान्धर्वस्य किं लक्षणमुक्तमध्यायचतुष्टयेषु मुनिना । तथाप्यनुसन्धानवन्ध्यो
महाभो (भा)गं बोधयितुमनुसन्धीयते । स्वरतालपदविशेषात्मकं प्रवृत्ति
निवृत्ति प्रधान दृष्टादृष्टफलं सामवेद प्रभवमनादिकालनिवृत्तमन्योन्यो पश्रय
गुणता विहीनं गान्धर्वमिति स्वरूपफलत् कालद धर्माच्च भिद्यमाना (नम)
वश्यं गानवैलक्षण्यं भेदैक सम्पादनम ।

(*N. S.* IV, p. 394)

Bharata in the first four chapters of *Geyadhikara* has already given the characteristics of *Gandharva.* Still, it is being investigated here for the sake of those who are destitute of the spirit of investigation. There are four-fold distinctions between *Gandharva* and *Gana* (or *Deshi* music).

(1) They differ in *svarupa,* that is in formal structure; in other words, in *svara, pada* and *tala.*
(2) They differ in *phala,* that is regarding the end they serve and, therefore, in the resulting reward or *phala.*
(3) They differ in respect of *kala,* that is in respect of the occasion on which they are to be used.
(4) They differ in respect of *dharma,* that is in respect of their distinct functions.

We shall now consider these four distinctions:

(A) Difference in *svarupa* or formal structure:

Under this head come (a) *svara,* (b) *tala* and (c) *pada.* In *Gandharva,* the *svara*-s or musical notes were employed at fixed intervals or *shruti*-s e.g. *rishabha* was on the third *shruti* above *shadja, gandhara* was on the second *shruti* above

rishabha etc. in *Shadja-grama*. The *shruti* intervals were absolutely fixed. No change was permitted in these intervals. Abhinavagupta says that the rigidity of *shruti* intervals was not observed in *Gana* or *Deshi* music, and he points to actual practice current in his time. He says,

उक्तमपि च प्रतीतमनुचिन्त्य (न्ती)यते । प्रतीतानामप्यलक्षणज्ञानां बालविज्ञानवद वेधम ।

(*N. S.* IV, p. 394)

"I am only elaborating what is *pratita* i.e. what is generally recognized by musicologists. For those who do not know the *lakshana*-s, that is the science or theory of music, even facts known from direct experience can remain unrelated, just as facts are known to the child, but their scientific rationale is not known to him."

Abhinava cites practical examples:

स्वराणां मालवकैशिके चतुश्श्रुतिकाङ्गस्य दर्शनात कियद्वा रागभाषा विभाषादेशीमार्गादिगतानां स्वराणां श्रुतिवैचित्र्यं ब्रूमः ।

(*N.S.* IV, p. 394)

"In Malava-kaishika, there is a greater number of *svara*-s with four-*shruti* interval than is permitted in *Gandharva*. I say there is a great diversity in the use of *shruti*-s in the *svara*-s employed in several *raga*-s, *bhasha, vibhasha, deshi, marga* etc." He adds,

किंचान्तरालनियमोऽन्तःप्रमाणस्थानस्वरकालंशावधान्न (शाद) भारतया गान्धर्वेऽवश्यसंवेद्यः । नत्वेवं गाने ।

(*N.S.* IV, p. 394)

"The rule regarding *shruti*-intervals has to be strictly observed in *Gandharva* music, not so in *Gana.*"

Again he says,

लोपोऽपि नियतगान्धर्वे दर्शितो ग्रामद्वयभेदेन च जात्यंशभेदेन दर्शितः । गाने तु रक्त्यनुसारेण प्रवेन्ते (वृत्ते) रसावनियतः । तथापि गान्धर्वे यस्मादनादित्वमेव समर्थितं तस्यापि मध्यमस्य भिन्नषड्जकालिन्यां लोपो दृश्य ।

(*N.S.* IV, p. 394)

"Dropping of notes in the two *Grama*-s and on the basis of *amsha* notes in each *jati* was governed by definite rules in *Gandharva*. For instance, *dhaivata* was indispensable in the *jati*-s of *Shadja-grama*, and, in the *jati*-s of *Madhyama-grama*, *panchama* could never be dropped; *madhyama* could never be dropped from any *jati* of either *Grama;* but, in *Gana,* any note could be dropped in order to bring about a particular aesthetic effect. Even *madhyama* which is considered to be indispensable in *Gandharva* is dropped in Bhinnashadja in *Gana.*"

In Chapter Twenty-eight of the *Natyashastra,* Abhinavagupta quotes Vriddha, that is senior Kashyapa, as saying:

काकल्यन्तरयोगेन चतुस्त्रिद्व्येकतः श्रुतीन् ।
स्वरान्सर्वान्प्रयुञ्जीत रागभाषासु सर्वथा ॥

(*N. S.* IV, p. 34)

"In *raga*-s and *bhasha*-s, all the *kakali* and *antara* notes can be used, and all notes whether with a four-*shruti* interval, or a three-*shruti* interval or a two-*shruti* interval, or even with one-*shruti* interval can always be employed."

Even in such a distant age as that of the senior Kashyapa, the use of *kakali nishada* and *antara gandhara* was allowed freely in *raga* and *bhasha* i.e. in *Deshi* music, whereas their use was allowed only in a few *jati*-s in *Gandharva* music and similar freedom was allowed in the use of notes with different *shruti* values.

So far, we have discussed the distinction in *svara* with respect to *Gandharva* and *Deshi* music. Let us now see their distinction with regard to *tala.*

Abhinava says:

तालोऽपि गान्धर्वे नियतत्वेन संख्यापरिमाणं भ(र)ञ्जनं परिच्छेदोपायं यतिस्वरैर्वृत्तिमेव मेलनमातोद्ययोगमङ्गाङ्गिभाव व्यावरुध्यमानः साम्यमात्रफलमिति ।

(*N.S.* IV, p. 394)

In *Gandharva, tala* was also governed by rigid rules which measured time through a fixed number of demarcations. It occupied a secondary position (*angangibhava*) to *svara.* Its main aim was to establish *samya* or equipoise.

In *Gana, tala* was flexible. It could improvise patterns to bring out aesthetic pleasure. In *Gandharva,* no deviation was allowed from the set pattern.

There was a distinction between *Gandharva* and *Gana* in respect of *pada* also. In *Gana, pada* was more predominant than *svara* or *tala.* In *Gandharva,* however, *svara* and *tala* were primary and *pada* occupied a subsidiary position. Bharata himself says in Chapter Thirty-two, Verse 27.

गान्धर्वं यन्मया प्रोक्तं स्वरतालपदात्मकम् ।
पदं तस्य भवेद वस्तु स्वरतालानुभावकम् ॥

(*N.S.* IV, p. 301)

"I have already said that *Gandharva* consists of *svara, tala* and *pada.* In this, *pada* is used only as an aid to project *svara* and *tala.*" Unfortunately, this has been misinterpreted by some musicologists. Abhinava's commentary on this

clarifies what Bharata intended to convey. He says,

किन्त्वन्यथा तस्य गाने प्राधान्यमन्यथा च गान्धर्वे । तत्र हि स्वरतालौ प्रधानम । तौ चानाधारौ नशक्यौ प्रयोक्तुमित्याधारतया यदुपयोगि तदाह । स्वरतालानुभावकमिति॥

(*N.S.* IV, p. 301)

The role of *pada* is different in *Gana* and *Gandharva*. In *Gandharva,* primacy is given to *svara* and *tala*. But *svara* and *tala* cannot be used without the base of *pada*. Therefore, *pada* is useful only as a base for *svara* and *tala*.

Abhinava has clearly shown the difference between *Gandharva* and *Deshi raga*-s in respect of *svarupa* i.e. in respect of *svara, tala* and *pada*. Let us see how they differ in respect of *phala* or the end they serve.

(B) Their difference in respect of *Phala*:

Bharata himself, while defining *Gandharva,* says:

अत्यर्थमिष्टं देवानां तया प्रीतिकरं पुनः ।
गन्धर्वाणां च यस्माद्धि तस्माद्गान्धर्वमुच्यते ॥

(*N.S.* IV, p. 6)

"Because it is extremely desired by the gods and gives great pleasure to the *gandharva*-s, therefore, is it called *Gandharva.*" Commenting on this, Abhinava says,

अनादित्वादृष्टादृष्टफलत्वाच्च प्रधानं गान्धर्वं ।
गानं हि केवलं प्रीतिकार्ये वर्तते ।
तेन नादात्म्यं नावदयुक्तम् ।

(*N.S.* IV, p. 6)

"*Gandharva* has been used from time immemorial. It has both *drishta* and *adrishta phala* i.e. it is both pleasant (which is evident) and lays in store merit for the future according to which one earns liberation or is given a place in heaven which is not evident (*adrishta*). But *Gana* is used only for its pleasant or aesthetic effect. It is , therefore, unjust to identify the two."

(C) The difference between *Gandharva* and *Gana* in respect of *Kala*:

Abhinava indicates the distinction between the two in respect of *Kala* (or occasion when each is to be employed) with reference to drama. He says that *Gandharva* could be used only in the *Purvaranga* (a kind of ritual prologue to the drama). In the actual play itself, only *dhruva*-s could be sung in *Grama raga*-s and other forms of *Deshi* music.

(D) The difference between *Gandharva* and *Gana* in respect of *Dharma*:

It is not clear what exactly Abhinavagupta means by *Dharma* as he has not elaborated upon it in his commentary. Dr. Mukund Lath thinks that by *Dharma* Abhinava means 'function.' The function of *Gana* or *Deshi* music was aesthetic pleasure, to please the listeners; the function of *Gandharva* was only to please the gods.

I have dwelt somewhat at length on the distinction between *Gandharva* and *Gana,* because I feel that this is a very important contribution made by Abhinavagupta towards the solution of a very major problem of Indian music.

Musicologists have tried to describe *Deshi raga*-s in terms of Bharata's *shruti* scheme but, nevertheless, a wide gulf has been created between theory and practice in the *grantha*-s on music.

Certainly, our *Deshi raga*-s borrowed many principles from *Gandharva* music. The sources of many of the *raga*-s were *jati*-s. But *Deshi* music did not adhere strictly to all the principles of *Gandharva* music. *Gandharva* music could not countenance any change whatsoever in its principles, but *Deshi* music made many changes in the interest of aesthetic pleasure, even in *Grama raga*-s which were based on *Gandharva* music and thus formed a link between *Gandharva* and *Deshi raga*-s. Sharngadeva remarks in Part Two of *Sangitaratnakara* that "some of the famous *Grama raga*-s have come under the category of *Deshi raga*-s."

Many of our musicologists believe that Bharata's *Gandharva* music was the only standard classical music of India, that *Deshi* music did not exist in the time of Bharata, but was developed later through borrowing the *shruti* scheme and other principles of *Gandharva*. Instead of the nine *svara* scheme of Bharata (seven *shuddha* and two *vikrita*), *Deshi* music, according to them, adopted the twelve *svara* scheme of the Muslims and was changed completely.

In his article, *Bhairava Raga Abharatiya Hain* published in *Sangita* of Hathras and included in the second edition of his *Sangita Chintamani,* the late Acharya Kailasa Chandradeva Brihaspati, one of our best musicologists, argues that both Bhairava and Malavagauda *raga*-s are non-Indian. He reasons:— (1) The *svara*-s of Bhairava do not fit in with the *shruti* scheme of Bharata and (2) Bhairava as given in *Sangitaratnakara* is quite different from the one in vogue at present.

Abhinavagupta's views regarding the distinction between *Gandharva* and *Gana* will clarify the position considerably. He indicates that *Gandharva* and *Gana* existed side by side, that even Bharata advised the use of *Gana* or *Deshi raga*-s

in *dhruva*-s. Further, that though *Deshi raga*-s adopted certain principles of *Gandharva*, they did not always adhere to the *shruti* scheme of Bharata. He quotes Vriddha Kashyapa, an ancient authority, to show that changes in the *shruti* scheme of Bharata were freely made in *Deshi raga*-s. He even cites practical examples current in his time and says categorically:

कियद्वा रागभाषा विभाषादेशीमार्गादिगतानां स्वराणां
श्रुतिवैचित्र्यं ब्रूमः।

So Bhairava *raga* cannot be ruled out on the basis of *shruti vaichitrya*. If Bharata's scheme of *shruti* and *murchchhana* is to be accepted as the basis of all *Deshi raga*-s, then not only Bhairava but many other *raga*-s, such as Marwa, Purvi, Vasanta, Puriya Dhanashri etc. will have to be ruled out as non-Indian.

Nor is Acharya Brihaspati's other reason—that there is sufficient difference between the structure of Bhairava as described in *Sangitaratnakara* and the one in vogue today—a valid one for declaring Bhairava as non-Indian. *Deshi* music has never been rigid like *Gandharva*. There is sufficient difference between ancient Malava-kaishika and the modern Malkauns. That does not prove that Malkauns is non-Indian. The very premise that what is not according to Bharata is not Bharatiya is untenable. No doubt, Indian music has been influenced by Iranian music, but that influence came in much later around the thirteenth century.

Prior to that, many changes were made periodically in *Deshi* music. Abhinavagupta's discussion of this problem is a very great contribution towards the clarification of the distinction between *Gandharva* and *Deshi* music and sheds light on the internal changes taking place in *Deshi* music.

All the references are from *Natyashastra* of Bharatamuni with the commentary *Abhinavabharati*, Volume IV, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1963.

An Enquiry into the *Raga*-Time Association*

Mukund Lath

Every Indian, at least every north Indian, whether he is a lover of classical music or not, believes that the hoary forms he is heir to, namely the *raga*-s, have important esoteric aspects besides the musical. I would like to discuss one such aspect, viewing it in the perspective of history. I refer to what may be called the time-aspect of a *raga*. Each *raga*, it is commonly held, in order to be truly efficacious has to be sung or played only at a particular hour of the day or night. A more informed listener will even assert that belonging to a specific part of the day or night is as essential a property of a *raga*, as its tonal structure. He might then proceed to enumerate morning *raga*-s, noon *raga*-s, evening *raga*-s, dusk *raga*-s, late-at-night *raga*-s and just-before-morning *raga*-s.

All of us, I am sure, have come across persons, obviously not very musical, not quite capable of distinguishing one *raga* from another, who yet are deeply convinced that a *raga* sung outside of its assigned hour creates a grating effect. Clearly, the notion that a *raga* has inherent affinity with a certain part of the day is very deeply ingrained in our culture.

If you ask, 'How does one know which *raga* belongs to what hour?', the answer will be unanimous: the scheme has been fixed by a tradition reaching back to time immemorial. And, it would be added, it is not a meaningless conventional scheme but a living tradition which finds renewed sanction in the musical experience of every fresh generation.

But, if the matter is one of direct musical experience, then the tonal or other more palpable features that are felt to be associated with the 'morning' or 'evening' quality of a *raga* can surely be identified and distinguished. This seems an obvious question to ask and one would expect to find an answer to it in the older musical texts, but, curiously enough, the first person to have asked it was Pandit Bhatkhande, whose works belong to the early years of our own century. He was also the first person who attempted to provide empirical tonal cognates for the 'morning', 'noon', 'evening' and similar time-related properties of *raga*-s. The generalisations, which he arrived at, found common acceptance and still remain without any serious rival. His might almost be termed the 'official' theory in the matter, despite doubts and reservations felt in many circles—reservations which, however, do not go beyond matters of detail.

Whatever the merits of Bhatkhande's analysis, the very fact that he considered it an important enterprise in understanding and delineating Hindustani music is of great significance. He strongly felt that the notion of assigning a specific hour to every *raga* was an essential element of Hindustani music: a major distinguishing mark. And this feeling, plainly, was the guiding motive behind his search for those patterns in *raga*-s which marked them as 'morning' or 'evening' and the like. In a, now historic, speech made at the first All-India Music Conference in Baroda in 1916, he enumerated twenty significant features which, in his view, distinguished the Hindustani system, making it, in his words, 'a system perfectly

independent of the Southern or Karnatic'.[1] He set these features out in twenty separate and numbered clauses of which as many as six, that is, numbers 5-10 are concerned with the time-aspect of *raga*-s.

In clause number five he remarks: "Stated times of the night and day are assigned to particular *raga*-s, according to a design which might suggest a psycho-physiological basis."

The next five clauses set out certain specific features which 'enable a singer or listener to determine approximately the time of the *raga.*' He draws our attention to the crucial importance in this matter of the *tivra ma,* the combinations *komala re-dha, ga-ni* and so forth—features which now form part of general musical knowledge and theory.

Pandit Bhatkhande spoke of the notion of *raga*-s and their assigned hours with a specific purpose in mind: namely, to distinguish the Hindustani system from the Karnatic system of music. Thus, in his days, it was only the north Indian singers and listeners who felt that particular *raga*-s belonged to particular hours of the night or day. South Indian singers, in contrast, did not share a similar feeling about their *raga*-s. Yet, though the southerner's music might be recognisably different from that of the northerner, there is an equally recognisable affinity and kinship between the two approaches, especially in their delineation of *raga*-s. *Raga*-patterns, both in the south and the north, are based on formal principles that stem from an identical source and follow parallel streams of inspiration and development, interacting with each other to a no mean degree. Many *raga*-s of north India have such close counterparts in the south that even non-specialist listeners can recognise them as almost identical forms. This obvious feeling of consanguinity is, indeed, the inspiration behind a popular *Vividha Bharati* programme where north Indian *raga*-s are presented along with their south Indian siblings to reveal close kinship. But, if many *raga* patterns in the south and north are so conspicuously similar, then they are bound to have formal features which are also essentially alike: features such as the dominant or exclusive presence of the *tivra ma,* or the combination *komala re-dha, ga-ni* and the like, for these are tonal features as characteristic of Karnatic *raga*-s as of their Hindustani analogues. Yet Karnatic music knows of no 'morning', 'evening' or 'noon' *raga*-s.

The fact that there is, in north India, a definite design or scheme within which different *raga*-s have been assigned to different hours of the day suggests, according to Pandit Bhatkhande, a psycho-physiological basis. He never, so far as I know, spelt out what he wished to indicate by speaking of such a basis. But, if this basis is in any sense psychological or physiological then it must certainly be also a universal phenomenon common to both north Indians and south Indians and, in fact, to all mankind. Any sensitive listener, in other words, should be able to feel the 'morning' or 'evening' quality of a *raga.* But no one except a person duly initiated into the esoteric lore and conventions of Hindustani music really responds to this quality in *raga*-s.

It is thus evidently a response which has to be learned. It is the product of a specific culture. If it seems natural and spontaneous to the Hindustani

musician and listener, it is because it has been so deeply ingrained through centuries of persuasive suggestion and habitual observance as to have become almost a reflex. That it is a trained and not a natural response is often evident in the untutored reaction of listeners from alien musical cultures, who though moved by a *raga,* fail to detect its affinity with a particular time of the day or night. The perception of this affinity has to be taught to them and, of course, many of them prove very dutiful students. But, being a learned response, it can also be unlearned. In truth, as a purely musical experience gains roots and one begins to know and love a *raga* for itself, one is quite able to detach it from such external associations as its relation with a particular hour of the day. This is especially true of practising musicians, who, of all people, are closest to the *raga*-s. Fox Strangways, writing almost contemporaneously with Bhatkhande—*The Music of Hindustan* by him was published in 1914—speaks of 'advanced' musicians who found no meaning in ascribing hours or seasons to *raga*-s.[2] *Raga*-s, traditionally, belong not only to certain times of the day but also to particular seasons. The traditions behind the two ascriptions, seasonal and hourly, are equally old. The seasonal ascription, indeed, as we shall see, is perhaps the more ancient one. The seasonal aspect of *raga*-s is no longer taken seriously even in the north except in the case of the various Malhara-s, Basanta and Bahara, and these, too, are no longer kept tied down to their ascribed seasons. Yet, we still believe in confining them to boundaries of the hours within which they have been restricted by convention. There is plainly an inconsistency here: if a *raga* is just as sweet out of its assigned season, why should it not be equally sweet out of its ascribed hour? The psycho-physiological basis, if any, is certainly the same in both cases. Bhairavi was allowed to break its bounds restricting it to the early morning, without adversely affecting its ethos. Who knows, other *raga*-s may follow suit.

Musicians, in any case, cannot strictly observe the time rule, at least on the A.I.R., where 'morning', 'noon', and 'evening' *raga*-s are often sung in a single sitting. There are even signs of unrest concerning this limitation among concertgoers. People have begun to miss morning *raga*-s in concerts, for most concerts are evening affairs. The south Indians, too, once connected the *raga*-s to specific hours, as we know from the testimony of Ramamatya, who wrote his *Svaramelakalanidhi* in the 16th century and is one of the oldest and most honoured authorities in the south.[3] They have given up the notion without any sense of loss.

It would be instructive to examine the history of the *raga*-time tradition in the north, the weight of whose authority guides us in associating different *raga*-s with different hours of the day.

Most of us have quite a dim and shadowy notion of the antiquity and history of this tradition. If pressed, we might say it is as old as the *raga*-s themselves which are very, very old. Bhatkhande who was otherwise a very historically alert scholar, calls it a centuries old notion, without being interested in tracing its history in detail. He was of the opinion that though there have been changes in the time of the day assigned to different *raga*-s, yet the concept that a particular *raga* belongs to particular hours has remained unchanged over the centuries. It was, therefore, to be honoured.[4]

Surprisingly, this does not seem to have led him to ask certain disturbing questions which such a realisation ought naturally to pose: Did the different *raga*-s, assigned to the same hours of the day at different points in history, share certain tonal patterns in common? This seems unlikely, and I believe Bhatkhande would have agreed. Even if he were not to, another question arises: Were the tonal patterns which affiliated these *raga*-s to certain hours of the day, the same as those discovered by Bhatkhande? Again a difficult question to answer but again the answer probably would be, 'Presumably not'. What then are we to make of Bhatkhande's tonal affinities and their supposedly psycho-physical basis? This basis has certainly not changed over the last few hundred years, but tonal patterns corresponding to a particular time of the day appear to have done so. How is one to explain this change?

Looking up the old texts we find that the *raga*-time theory is certainly not as old as the *raga*-s themselves. The oldest *raga*-s that we know of are older than Bharata (2nd century B.C. to 2nd century A.D.) who has left behind instructions concerning the use of the *grama-raga*-s in dramas. He makes no connection between them and the hours of the day. The first major available text written mainly about *raga*-s is the *Brihaddeshi* of Matanga, belonging to the Gupta period or later and usually placed in the 7th or 8th century A.D. The *raga*-s, in Matanga's days, comprised a rich body of forms including *bhasha, vibhasha, antarabhasha,* besides *grama-raga*-s and *raga*-s proper. This was already an old, well-entrenched corpus of music. Matanga speaks of various *giti*-s or styles of *raga* singing and of regional *raga*-s—*raga*-s born in or popular in specific regions[5]—but of a time theory, as we know it today, there is no trace.

Abhinavagupta, writing towards the end of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century, quotes an earlier authority called Kashyapa, an ancient theorist (date unknown) who speaks of the seasonal aspect of *raga*-s: "(*Raga*) Prenkholita should be sung in spring, so should Malavapanchama. Takkaraga, Gaudakakubha, Bhinnashadaja, Kaishika and Bhinnapanchama are favoured in summer and the subsequent seasons."[6]

Later *sangita* texts bracket Kashyapa along with Matanga, Yashtika and others as hoary teachers. Kashyapa, perhaps, may be placed in the same period as Matanga, that is the 7th or the 8th century A.D. or perhaps, still earlier.

Nanyabhupala, a king of Mithila, writing a century after Abhinavagupta, is the first person, I find, who speaks of a connection between musical forms and an assigned hour of rendering them. In the chapter on *raga*-s (Chapter Seven) in his *Bharatabhashya,* he connects different *giti*-s to different hours (*yama*-s) of the day. The two *giti*-s, *shuddha* and *bhinna,* are assigned to the first *yama* or *prahara* (a three-hour period) of the day. The *giti, gaudi,* is placed at mid-day; *vesara* is in the first part of the day and *sadharana* is said to be *sadharana* or 'common' to all hours of the day.

These *giti*-s, as we have said earlier, were not *raga*-s or similar forms, but various styles of rendering *raga*-s, akin to the *bani*-s of *dhrupada* and the different *gayaki*-s of present-day music. Immediately after speaking of *giti*-s and their

appropriate hours of singing, Nanya proclaims: "The *bhasha*-s of different *raga*-s fall within the same time bracket (*kala*) as the *raga*-s to which they are attached."

He does not give details regarding the time of the day in which specific *raga*-s were to be rendered. He speaks only of the *giti*-s and their time. However, different groups of *raga*-s were assigned to different *giti*-s. The time of a *raga* was presumably to be known through its *giti.* What is more remarkable in this context is that Nanya assigns *giti*-s or *raga*-s to specific hours not because of aesthetic, but religious reasons. Unlike the listeners of today, he does not seem to have felt an affinity of 'mood' or 'ethos' between a specific hour and a specific *raga;* he said that it was more 'auspicious' to sing a particular *raga*—or a *raga*-like form such as the *bhasha* at a particular hour. With this, too, he adds a rider: "All these (*bhasha*-s) are equally meritorious and result in eternal merit whenever they are sung; the rule concerning special hours of singing them is meant only for added religious merit" (*shreyovisheshaya*).[7]

For two or three centuries after Nanyadeva we have texts which, for our purposes, may be divided into two categories: those that speak of a connection between *raga*-s and their hour of singing and those that do not. Someshvara III, another King and a contemporary of Nanyadeva, who ruled in the Deccan in the beginning of the 12th century, has a big section on music in his *Manasollasa.* He speaks of no connection between *raga*-s and hours of the day, perhaps because he was chiefly interested in music as a *vinoda*—a source of aesthetic pleasure: he is silent concerning the extra-musical 'auspicious' qualities of *raga*-s.[8] This is not to imply that Someshvara was an irreligious man. Indeed, his section on song contains many hymns and ends with the exhortation that the *prabandha*-s (musical compositions), which he has spoken of, should be sung before the gods with due devotion.[9] But he evidently saw no merit, religious or other, in associating *raga*-s with particular hours. His son Jagadekamalla, too, wrote on music. Jagadekamalla's *Sangita Chudamani* is also silent concerning *raga*-s and their specific hour of singing; though it does, at least on one occasion, speak of a seasonal connection, calling Deshihindola a spring-*raga.*[10]

The two important texts after Nanya and Someshvara are the *Sangita-samayasara,* of Parshvadeva (date not certain) and the *Sangitaratnakara* of Sharngadeva (early 13th century). Parshvadeva does not speak of any connection between *raga*-s and a prescribed time of singing, though he speaks of *raga*-s in detail. Sharngadeva, however, diligently notes the hour of the day against every *raga* that he describes, using phrases like *geyo'hnah prathame yame* (to be sung during the first *yama* or *prahara* of the day), *madhyame'hno geyo* (to be sung during mid-day) and the like.[11] Sharngadeva connects *raga*-s to seasons also.

Sharngadeva had avowedly based his description of *raga*-s on earlier authorities, which he copiously names. We do not know, however, his source for the ascription of hours to *raga*-s. Earlier works available to us, as we have seen, do not make such ascriptions. Nanyadeva makes a connection between *giti*-s and hours of the day, but very half-heartedly. The time factor in his view did no more than add a little more auspiciousness (*shreyovishesha*) to the rendering of a *raga.* Perhaps the ascriptions noted by Sharngadeva were also made in the same spirit. Sharngadeva speaks of no aesthetic affinity, a kinship of ethos, between

raga-s and hours of the day. And it would not be unreasonable to conjecture that he too, like Nanyadeva, thought that to sing a *raga* at a particular time made it more auspicious. He may have been guided in this by Nanya whose work he perhaps knew, since he was an erudite scholar in *sangita* texts. In any case, neither he nor the preceding tradition provides any basis for supposing that an intimate connection of 'ethos' or 'character' was felt by musicians or listeners between a *raga* and its hour. That was to come later.

A rule believed to lead to greater auspiciousness, hence religious merit, tends to become a ritual and turns easily into established convention or customary practice. It thus becomes an ingrained habit; to be followed even after religious connections are forgotten. This is what seems to have happened in the case of the *raga*-s and their connection with specific hours of the day.

Sharngadeva was greatly revered by later authors and his work was accorded an almost canonic authority. The connection he made between individual *raga*-s and specific hours of the day became a convention with later authors, even though the *raga*-s themselves and the specific hours to which they were connected, did not remain the same.

In the beginning, the *raga*-time rule seems to have been loosely observed and allowed flexibility. Pandit Bhatkhande quotes an old dictum to the effect that after ten *danda*-s of the night have passed, any *raga* can be sung.[12] Another dictum quoted in the *Sangita Darpana* is that if a king so orders, any *raga* can be sung at any time.[13]

Gradually, as the habit of singing particular *raga*-s at particular hours sunk in, it began to be thought that *raga*-s please only at their allotted hours-'*yathakale samarabdham gitam bhavati ranjakam*', as Damodara puts it. An aesthetic connection was thus made between a *raga* and the time to which it had been allotted. Listeners and musicians began to feel that a *raga* was deeply associated with an hour and so began to perceive an affinity of 'ethos' between the two. The category of the aesthetic was confused with that of the auspicious.

But it was only in modern times, with Bhatkhande, that an attempt was made to discover certain structural denominators common to *raga*-s placed in the same time-bracket. Bhatkhande succeeded in making a few generalizations which found great acceptance. Modern Hindustani musical theory as well as practice have been greatly influenced by his views and teachings in other ways too.

Yet people have found fault with his generalizations and pointed out notable exceptions. And in any case, as I said earlier, no one has ever tried to display and work out in proper empirical detail the psycho-physiological basis which he believed was the ground for the *raga*-time connection. It is one thing to find common features in *raga*-s that have been placed in a single time-bracket but quite another to show that this points at a deeper psycho-physiological basis for the occurrence. As is clear from my argument, I think that the association made between a *raga* and its allotted time is an arbitrary one: it is not embedded in any universal human response, but is culturally-conditioned as I have tried to show through the brief survey of its history. This notion remains localised in the

north—the reasons for which I will take up in another paper—and has been given up without any adverse consequences in the sister system of the south. Even a culturally-conditioned response may be valuable, but, as I have pointed out earlier, a deeper musical response tends to undermine rather than support the *raga*-time association.

References:

1. The speech has been reproduced as *A Short Historical Survey of the Music of Upper India,* Bombay, 1934. See pages 41-42.
2. A. H. Fox Strangways, *The Music of Hindustan,* p. 153. Interestingly, Fox Strangways had his own peculiar theory, regarding structural properties that mark a *raga* as 'morning' or 'evening'. He believed that morning *raga*-s had *amsha*-s ranging about G and the evening about E. *Ibid.*
3. *Svaramelakalanidhi.* See *Raga Prakarna.*
4. See *Bhatkhande Smriti Grantha,* Khairagarh, 1966, p. 439.
5. *Brihaddeshi,* p. 127 (Trivandrum edition).
6. Verses 74-75 of *Natyashastra* with the *Abhinava Bharati,* G.O.S. edition, Vol. IV, p. 78.
7. Nanya's *Bharatabhashya,* Ch. VII, verse 7.
8. His section on music, Ch. 16, *Vimshati* 4, of *Manasollasa,* is titled *Gita-Vinoda.*
9. *Ibid.,* verses 559-560, p. 81, Vol. III of the G.O.S. edition of the *Manasollasa.*
10. See Footnote on p. 75 of the G.O.S. edition of the *Sangita-Chudamani.*
11. See *Sangitaratnakara,* Chapter II, where such instructions are appended with every *raga.*
12. *Bhatkhande Smriti Grantha,* p. 439.
13. *Sangita Darpana,* 2, 26.

*Courtesy: *Jijnasa,* Journal of the History of Ideas and Culture, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

News and Notes

Nandikar's National Theatre Festival, Calcutta, June 27-July 4 and July 25-27, 1984.

At a time when the Other Theatre in West Bengal is in the doldrums, Nandikar's entry into its Silver Jubilee year stands out in glorious relief. Founded on June 29, 1960, by a group of young enthusiasts, under the stewardship of the late Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay, with little or no formal training in theatre but possessing, nonetheless, an ideological urge and a commitment to theatre and society, the troupe has during the last twenty-four years braved many a crisis: recurrent splits, periodic exodus of members, financial stringency and occasional lack of direction and perspective, not to speak of a persistently uncongenial socio-cultural climate and all its attendant problems. That Nandikar could emerge out of this pervading murkiness and establish itself firmly on the theatre map of the State speaks eloquently of its fortitude and zeal.

In the course of the last two and a half decades, Nandikar has produced as many as 45 plays—those of Tagore as well as of lesser known dramatists, classical and modern masters from all over the world, from Sophocles to Brecht. Some of them were superhits: *Tin Poyshar Pala* (*The Three Penny Opera* by Brecht) ran for 462 nights; *Bhalomanush* (*The Good Person of Setzuan* by Brecht), *Sher Afgan* (*Henry IV* by Pirandello) and *Football* (*Zigger Zagger* by Peter Terson) for more than 300 nights; and *Natyakarer Sandhane Chhati Charitra* (*Six Characters in Search of An Author* by Pirandello), *Nati Vinodini* by Chittaranjan Ghosh and *Antigone* (by Sophocles and Jean Anouilh) for more than 200 nights. Nandikar's performances—numbering about 4,000—have been staged in nearly all the urban, industrial and rural areas of West Bengal and major Indian cities like Delhi, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Bhopal, Patna, Gauhati etc. For five years (1970-1975), when the troupe regularly performed in Rangana, a public theatre-house in Calcutta, the average was about 250 shows a year.

Nandikar has fostered many playwrights, directors and artists, some of whom are now stalwarts in their spheres. In its own way, it has striven (and still continues to do so) for the rejuvenation of the Other Theatre movement in the State. Time and again it has dared, perhaps more than any other organisation, to go beyond its own periphery. In 1968, it joined Bangla Naatmancha Pratishtha Samiti Project, led by the illustrious Sombhu Mitra, to evolve a Cultural Complex and make a gift of it to the nation. It initiated the formation of the Calcutta Repertory Theatre (CRT) in 1980; Fritz Bennewitz, the renowned director from the German Democratic Republic, directed the CRT production of Brecht's *Life of Galileo* with Sombhu Mitra in the title role. Mitra also participated in the production of Vishakhadatta's *Mudra Rakshasa* under the banner of Nandikar. Nandikar has of late been trying to bring into focus the need for theatre-training. In 1982, it initiated and hosted in Calcutta a ten-week 'National School of Drama Intensive Theatre Training Workshop'. For the benefit of students and young theatre-workers, it organised in 1982 alone, five five-day theatre workshops in different parts of West Bengal, and a number of such other workshops and lecture-cum-demonstration sessions since then. In 1982, it organised a three-day Brecht Festival and Exhibition in collaboration with two other Calcutta theatre troupes.

In 1979, it offered directorial and other technical assistance to Rangakarmee, a young Hindi theatre troupe, and also lent its personnel and equipment to a number of theatre units. It sponsored the performances of Michel Meshke from Sweden, Acto Latino from Colombia, Sabine Lehman from Germany, Werner Kuhn from Switzerland, the NSD Repertory Company from Delhi and the Chorus Repertory Theatre from Manipur. Two of its directors, Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay and Rudraprasad Sengupta, won the Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards in recognition of their talents. Sengupta also represented India at the 'Brecht Dialogue' in Berlin in 1980 and delivered the inaugural address at the World Theatre Congress in Leipzig in 1981. Nandikar, in collaboration with CRESSIDA, has just completed an ICSSR research-project on "The Socio-Economic Context and Significance of the Group Theatre Movement in West Bengal."

Nandikar decided to celebrate its Silver Jubilee in a big way, keeping, at the same time, a modest profile of its own and not staging any of its own productions. It chose to organise a National Theatre Festival because it felt that "an interaction of multilingual and multicultural theatre forms on our soil would be a step towards countering the divisive and disintegrating tendencies rocking our sub-continent at the moment—tendencies that need to be countered by cultural workers as much as by politicians." In this massive task of organising the Festival, it refrained from seeking the sponsorship or other forms of help from the State or Central Government and relied solely on resources from advertisements and sale of tickets, on active support from a host of friends and well-wishers, and, of course, on the dedicated service of its own workers and associates. Sombhu Mitra welcomed the endeavour "as something unprecedented," and Satyajit Ray sent his message of good wishes from the nursing home.

In this eleven-day Festival, held in two phases—from June 27 to July 4 and, again, from July 25 to 27, 1984—six outstation troupes and one Calcutta troupe staged in all fifteen performances of ten productions.* Many cultural regions were not represented; even so, the presentations were fairly representative of national trends in contemporary theatre. Leading troupes from Maharashtra, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi were featured, while the Gujarati theatre was represented by proxy in the production of *Jasma Odan* by the Repertory of the National School of Drama. The Festival presented a varied fare: plays by Shakespeare and Brecht, direction by Fritz Bennewitz as well as Indian stalwarts like Habib Tanvir, B. V. Karanth, Jabbar Patel, K. N. Panikkar, Tripti Mitra, Shanta Gandhi and Birju Maharaj; innovative use of traditional themes and folk music and dances and their restructuring into modern theatrical expression, themes based on fables and fantasies as well as stark reality, Kathak ballets, and so on.

The Festival evoked an unprecedented response among theatre enthusiasts. People patiently queued up the night before the booking counters opened, braving the inclement weather and wading through the knee-deep water that had accumulated, following torrential rains, in front of the Academy of Fine Arts and Rabindra Sadan, the venues of the Festival. Tickets for as many as nine of the shows were sold out on the day the counters opened. Tickets for one additional show of *Charandas Chor* were sold within two hours and with only one day's notice. An additional performance of *Othello* had to be organised at

a rather late stage of the Festival. Even after three shows of *Ghashiram Kotwal*, there was a demand for more performances. The extent of the response to the theatre of the other regions was without parallel. Never before had audience enthusiasm achieved such intensity. As P. L. Deshpande recalled later, in a letter to Nandikar's director, Rudraprasad Sengupta, "Nandikar's Festival truly fulfilled the long-felt need for familiarising the Bengali audience with the majestic variety and sweep of non-Bengali theatre. This event—Bengali theatre crowds coming for days on end to see plays in languages which they hardly knew—was unprecedented."

On June 27, P. L. Deshpande inaugurated the National Festival with an invocation to the audience to watch and enjoy a feast of "the theatre of Bharat not of India". The audience at each of the shows consisted of real theatre-lovers and connoisseurs and included such celebrities as Sombhu Mitra, Tripti Mitra, Vijay Tendulkar, B. V. Karanth, Habib Tanvir, K. N. Panikkar and Shanta Gandhi, old and young theatre workers, writers, critics, painters, film artists, students, teachers and even footballers—and, occasionally, Ministers, who, too, had purchased tickets! The atmosphere was pleasant and colourful. The entrance to the Academy of Fine Arts and Rabindra Sadan, as also the foyer and the new gallery of the Academy where two exhibitions—one on *Stagecraft since 1930 in West Bengal* and the other on *Indian Folk Theatre*—were held as the part of the festival celebrations, was tastefully decorated with flowers, twigs, earthenware, and multi-coloured silk banners.

On its Foundation Day, Nandikar felicitated four outstanding personalities of the Indian Theatre: P. L. Deshpande, Vijay Tendulkar, Tripti Mitra and Mahammad Reza. Sombhu Mitra was the Guest-in-Chief, while the presentations were made by the veteran Bengali stage actress, Saraju Devi. Sombhu Mitra inaugurated the Awards Ceremony thus: "This desire to felicitate theatre personalities of India augurs well, particularly when Bengali theatre is passing through a stage of decay. Though it has been occasioned by Nandikar's Silver Jubilee, in reality, the city of Calcutta is paying its homage to the greats through Nandikar." With his usual warmth, P. L. Deshpande responded by recalling his long and loving association with Nandikar. Vijay Tendulkar said that the occasion, though formal, had touched him more than any National Awards Ceremony because of its genuine spirit. Mahammad Reza, backstage worker of Bohurupee, wondered why he was being felicitated and found the answer himself: the honour accorded recognition to all those who believed in hard work and dedication.

At the end of every show an eminent artiste would offer flowers and present the Nandikar crest, designed by Satyajit Ray, to the director of the production. The gesture expressed the audience's overwhelming appreciation of the fare presented at the Festival—the histrionic, dancing, musical and mimetic skills of troupes, their experimentations with folk and traditional art-forms and their innovative methods.

* * *

*Productions presented during the Festival:
Karimukutty by Sopanam, Trivandrum
(Drama & Direction: K. N. Panikkar).
Ghashiram Kotwal by Theatre Academy, Pune
(Drama: Vijay Tendulkar/Direction: Jabbar Patel).

Hajar Churashir Maa by Arabddha Natya Vidyalaya, Calcutta (Story: Mahasweta Devi/Drama & Direction: Tripti Mitra).
Insaaf Ka Ghera by Rangmandal, Bhopal (Drama: Brecht/Direction: Fritz Bennewitz).
Hayavadana by Rangmandal, Bhopal (Drama: Girish Karnad/Direction: B. V. Karanth).
Bahadur Kalarin & *Charandas Chor* by Naya Theatre, Raipur (Drama & Direction: Habib Tanvir).
Jasma Odan by NSD Rep., Delhi (Drama & Direction: Shanta Gandhi).
Othello by NSD Rep., Delhi (Hindi rendition: Raghuvir Sahai/Direction: Fritz Bennewitz).
Natyavichitra by Kathak Kendra, Delhi (Choreography: Birju Maharaj).

—DWIJEN BHATTACHARYA

International Seminar-cum-Workshop on Archiving & Documentation (Ethnomusicology), ARCE-AIIS, Pune, September 24-30, 1984.

In September 1984, the Archives & Research Centre for Ethnomusicology (ARCE) of the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) organised a week-long International Seminar-cum-Workshop on Archiving & Documentation (Ethnomusicology) at its premises in the Deccan College Campus, Pune. Seventy scholars and researchers participated in the Seminar. Among them were leading experts from India and abroad, representatives of various cultural and research institutes from all over the country and observers, deeply interested in the subjects under discussion.

Monday, September 24

Significantly enough, the deliberations began with *Vasudeo Geet* performed by Mahipati Kondiba Supekar, whose nimble footwork and vocal and instrumental rendering was greatly appreciated by the audience. Ashok Ranade, Associate Director (Research) of the ARCE, welcoming the participants, thanked the Ford Foundation for its generous funding (which had made the Seminar a reality) and the Smithsonian Institute, U.S.A. for sponsoring the travel expenses of three additional international experts. "While performances are the order of the day, sharing scholarship is very necessary and I hope that the Seminar, the first of its kind in India, will set the tone for a meaningful dialogue."

The Ethno Concept (Panel Discussion): Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy of the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA) chaired a panel discussion on *The Ethno Concept*. He said that there was an underlying notion that ethnomusicology was essentially a western discipline. The question, he said, was to discover whether it could be useful in the Indian context.

Ter Ellingson of the School of Music, University of Washington in Seattle, said that music ought to be analysed on various levels and not only as sound. He cited three definitions for the term 'ethno': (1) Race—seen to have direct relevance to comparative studies; (2) Ethnic groups—exploring people's conceptions

of how they see their musical traditions, cultures etc; (3) Ethos—a strong suggestion of this in the word *ethno* and relates to ideals, ideologies.

Anthony Seeger, Director, Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University (U.S.A.), admitted that he was uneasy about the use of the prefix *ethno* in ethnomusicology because these prefixes could easily disappear in time, having enriched the disciplines they were attached to. The term *ethno* always seems to be used with reference to cultures other than one's own, implying that other cultures are important.

Ranganayaki Ayyangar of the Department of Musicology, Banaras Hindu University, said that it was necessary to re-evaluate definitions in the field of ethnomusicology. The term *musicology* was more than adequate because, as a musicologist, one could define one's area and period. "Why then," she queried, "should we hold on to a term that has so many negative connotations?"

Mohan Khokar, dance scholar, wanted to know if dance (being the parent art) was recognised in this whole concept of ethnomusicology. "Does it have an independent status?" he asked.

John Blacking, Department of Social Anthropology, Queen's University of Belfast, Northern Ireland, replied that there was a discipline known as *ethnochoreology*. Ellingson added that the term *Sangeeta* embraced the concept of dance.

Jawaharlal Handoo of the Central Institute of Indian Languages said that it was not easy to discard terms like *yours* and *ours*. Indian scholars, he remarked, were very close to the concept of *ethno*. John Blacking pointed out: "Ethnomusicology is a *method* rather than an *area* of study and it is necessary to demystify it."

Here is a summary of the comments during the ensuing discussion.

Jose Maceda of the College of Music, University of the Philippines in Manila: "Ethnomusicology sees music from the point of view of reason. It is western because of the use of a particular reasoning—the Graeco-Roman."

Ranade: "We have to keep pace with changing definitions. Verbal definitions are not always clear in the performing arts where definitions emerge through performance. So, though ethnomusicology as a term may not be correctly defined, the concept itself has been with us from times immemorial."

Genevieve Oswald, Curator of the Dance Collection of the Performing Arts Research Centre, New York Public Library, New York: "The real definition of musicology should be ethnomusicology."

Jairazbhoy: "In the West, there was a complete demarcation between musicology (which concentrated on Western art music) and ethnomusicology."

Saraswati Swaminathan, ARCE Archivist: "Are there different value concepts operating in ethnomusicology and musicology?"

Vasanthalakshmi, Lecturer in Folklore, Andhra Pradesh: "Does ethnomusicology take the values of the classical or the folk arts?"

S. A. Krishnaiah of the Regional Resources Centre, Udupi: "How can we understand the cultural values of illiterate peoples by applying values stemming from classical traditions? Why can't we have a different system?"

Jairazbhoy: "The reason this classical terminology is used is because we have to communicate with people over and outside that particular tradition."

Approaches to Ethnomusicology (Discussion Theme):

Blacking: "Arts are the infrastructure of any society. The ethnomusicological method must differ from the sociological method. Ethnomusicology has opened unlimited new vistas for looking at music, with the possibility of a deeper understanding of cultural processes . . . World music transcends cultural barriers." He admitted, however, to the problem of conflicting interests—between the needs of a National Music Archives and those of a developing country. Personally, he felt that National Archives play an important role in raising the status of music-making in the country and that ethnomusicology was enriched by the analysis and revaluation of different scholars.

Ellingson: "We, as ethnomusicologists, must be aware that musicians in this part of the world are often more concerned with the institutional traditions of music."

Maceda then spoke about his experiments in ethnomusicology. "We must concern ourselves with the question of how this recorded music can be relevant to a *live* culture."

Handoo then read his paper *Approaches to Ethnomusicology—The Indian Case,* in which he outlined the contribution to ethnomusicology of the Cantometrics Project of the Columbia University (U.S.A.) directed by Alan Lomax. He felt that while the Lomaxian effort "characterised music or singing of songs as a sign and, therefore, a communication system", it did not explore this dimension explicitly and methodically. Handoo proposed that the de Saussureian structural theory be applied in the analysis of music and other equally important human communication systems. In the Indian context, he said, one could find numerous examples to prove or disprove the Cantometrics findings and so it was necessary "to find musical patterns before trying to relate them to unproved cultural traits." "Indian ethnomusicological theory", he said, "must account for the distinctive features of classical and folk/tribal forms and relate them appropriately to social behaviour wherever possible." He also stressed the urgent need for Indian ethnomusicologists "to collect, record and preserve not only the musical forms but the entire range of folk communication systems for all these are in the danger of vanishing."

Ali Ebrahim El Daw, of the Institute of African & Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, Sudan: "Should a certain social structure reflect a certain musical structure?"

Research Project Design (Discussion Theme): Y. B. Damle, of the Department of Sociology, Pune University, said that the purpose of a Research Project Design (RPD) was to transform a hypothesis into an observable phenomenon. "While formulating a RPD, one must have a hypothesis to start out with and also be careful in the choice of variables. No RPD is ever finished—it is open—and one keeps adding to it. The importance of a properly-formulated RPD in ethnomusicological or any other research cannot be underestimated."

Tuesday, September 25

The morning session was devoted to a discussion of the Research Project Designs submitted by a few of the participants. A panel consisting of Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy, Bhavani Shankar Shukla (Director, Information & Publicity, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow), Ashok Ranade and Sitakant Mahapatra (Kala Vikash Kendra, Orissa) commented on the project designs.

Ayyangar informed the participants that the Sangeet Natak Akademi in New Delhi had a provision for funding projects involving the collection of primarily musical material and it was upto the applicants to process their project applications in the right manner.

Oswald: "The idea is to present a project design in such a way that people in charge of funds just cannot refuse."

Handoo: "Ethnomusicology in this country cannot begin with this Seminar. We need experts."

Jairazbhoy: "We need an Institute to train ethnomusicologists but this will take time and musical traditions are fast dying out."

Mohan Khokar: "Researchers must be aware of the corpus of material available as a result of research done on the same subject by other scholars."

Interviewing Techniques (Discussion Theme): John Blacking chaired this session. Susan Wadley of Syracuse University, U.S.A., in her paper *Ethnomusicology and the Anthropologist in the Field,* discussed the ethnomusical issues involved or encountered in anthropological field research, particularly in the context of her own field experiences, since 1967, in Karimpur village (Mainpuri district in western Uttar Pradesh). She said: "The interview *per se* plays a minor role in the anthropologist's attempt to understand the musical traditions of India. Perhaps, interviews are more critical when other questions are asked. But I have found that an understanding of musical traditions plays a fundamental role in my attempts to understand rural life (in north India), whether it be in the context of religion or women's problems . . . . There are many recordings of folk songs but very little has been done to place them in their ethnographic context."

Y. B. Damle spoke on the role of music in society, referring mainly to the oral traditions prevalent in Maharashtra.

Ranade: "In many traditions, there are distinct gradations of musicality; in several, music is not preponderant."

Khokar suggested that correspondence be used as an interview technique. To prove his point, he cited his correspondence with the great American dancer Ted Shawn which provided him with the material he was searching for.

Seeger: "There is no single interviewing technique; rather, a combination of techniques must be used."

Collection, Preserving & Archiving of Field Material (Discussion Theme): Ter Ellingson chaired this session in which Anthony Seeger and P. K. Nair (Director, National Film Archives of India, Pune) were the main speakers.

Seeger explained the need for archiving music and also discussed the role of archives in ethnomusicology. Referring to the Archival Collection at Indiana University, he spoke about methods of collection, documentation, cataloguing, preservation and about practical matters such as copyright.

Nair: "Film preservation is a very costly affair; the amount spent on it is sometimes more than the cost of the film." He briefly explained how and on what basis films were selected for the Archives in Pune.

Ellingson requested the experts to talk about the simple preservation of tapes (audio and video) and films.

Nair: "A film must be rewound and wound periodically and cleaned. Just keeping it might cause as much damage as excessive projections. Also, films must be kept away from light and tapes from heat and dust."

Jairazbhoy: "Would transferring films on video be more feasible economically?"

Nair: "This had been attempted but is not the solution."

Satish Bahadur of the Film and Television Institute of India, spoke about the deterioration of colour film. He said that the UNESCO had launched a project in Asia of documenting film archives and feeding the data into an international computer.

Genevieve Oswald said that her centre had an arrangement with the motion picture industry whereby the unused footage (if it relates to dance) is handed over to the archives for preservation.

Wednesday, September 26

Documentation — Written Records: Anthony Seeger and Ranganayaki Ayyangar were the main speakers in this morning session chaired by Jawaharlal Handoo.

Seeger discussed the importance of recording basic information: "The day, date, year and place of recording etc. should be inscribed legibly on the tape, on the reel of the tape, on the tape container and on a separate sheet of paper. The pitch should also be noted at the beginning and one should have an announcement signifying 'end of song' or whatever the unit is. If the song is incomplete, this should be mentioned. It is important to go through the recording with the person who has been recorded and to make an index of the recordings in the collection." He also discussed Jairazbhoy's format for written documentation used since 1963.

Jairazbhoy: "I fill in the data sheet on the spot, immediately after the recording. I also maintain a diary or a log wherein I record all my personal impressions, practical information etc., which supplements the information on the data sheet. My numbering system includes the tape number, the year and date of recording."

Blacking agreed that the field diary was a very important tool and suggested the use of cards. One copy of field notes should be deposited with the local research institute and one with the sponsoring organisation in case of mishaps.

Swaminathan: "When a recordist hands over his collection, he must mention the point of view from which the documentation has been done. It can differ. For instance, what one person may list as dance, another may list under drama and so on." She wanted to know about the use of diacritical marks in documentation and the use of phonetic symbols.

Wadley said that, with so many dialects in India, it was important to have a transcription of recordings before going off the field.

Jairazbhoy: "Should one manipulate the sound? I feel that there is no such thing as an objective recording."

Ayyangar, referred to her documentation work at the Sangeet Natak Akademi, where collections were often deposited without any information whatsoever. She discussed in detail a standard format of documentation.

"The question of copyright", she said, "is very important. It is necessary to have a *written* understanding with the performer that one would be duplicating for educational and research purposes. With photographs of a particular event, the question arises of sequence, identification of performer etc. How can one get out of this?"

Blacking: "One should go through the photographs with the performers. Or, as foreign scholars usually do, one could click with a Polaroid camera where identification can be instant."

Bernard Bel of ISTAR remarked that there was a camera available which enabled one to type a line of text onto the negative.

In response to a query from Pushpa Sundar of the Ford Foundation regarding the traditional mode of payment, Ranade said that there were at least six or seven traditional modes of payment with a definite social hierarchy. Also, a receipt presupposes a contractual obligation which does not apply in the case of the traditional forms.

Chummar Choondal of the Kerala Folklore Academy wondered whether the documentation on ancient palm-leaf manuscripts could be analysed, preserved and used in ethnomusicological research.

Regula Quereshi of the Department of Music, University of Alberta, Canada: "Scholars ought to get together in order to provide information on accompanists (especially in classical music) before we forget altogether who the accompanists were."

Ellingson: "We should never change the performers' positions to suit our requirements; rather, we must change the placing of the mikes to suit the performers' requirements."

Video Documentation (Screening & Discussion): P. K. Nair was in the Chair for this Session and Satish Bahadur and Ter Ellingson the main speakers.

Satish Bahadur spoke on the early beginnings of the film medium. Later, he screened extracts from Mani Kaul's *Desert of a Thousand Lives,* Satyajit Ray's *Bala* and Terry Sanders' *Portrait of Zubin Mehta* which were then assessed as archival material.

Commenting on the films, and referring to the 700-plus films in their dance collection, Genevieve Oswald said, "We have had to train our professional film-makers to be dance-oriented rather than film-oriented."

Sundar: " Scholars do not know film techniques and the film-makers do not know much about the art forms. How does one overcome this situation in a practical manner?"

Blacking felt that all students of ethnomusicology must spend some time studying film techniques.

Mohan Khokar said that the University of Rome had initiated a project to document the theatre forms of Asia in which, besides the artistic director and the film director, they had engaged a consultant from the Indian side.

Sitakant Mahapatra's film *The Bondas of Orissa* was then screened, followed by Ellingson's video film-clips. The discussion that followed concentrated on ethnographic documentation rather than on the technical and practical aspects of video-documentation.

Thursday, September 27

Performance and its Peripherals: Chaired by Jose Maceda.

Ashok Ranade opened the session with a definition of the term 'performance' in which he distinguished between its 'core' and 'peripheral' aspects especially as relating to folk performances. He then discussed in detail some salient points raised in his paper: "What constitutes a peripheral element vis-a-vis a performance? What kind of relationship exists between the two? In what way

do the peripherals contribute to the final significance of a performance? Is it possible to hold that an unambiguous characterisation of performance features as core and peripheral is symptomatic of larger, non-art social realities? Having identified the peripherals, in what manner can their role be recognised in documentation, archival and similar procedures?"

Blacking felt that the measurement of core and peripheral needed to be emphasised as also the crucial questions: "Core to whom? Peripheral to whom?"

Jairazbhoy: "One must define for whom the performance is intended. What is musical to one person may not be so to another."

Regula Quereshi next spoke on *Performance and its Documentation.* She said that there was no such thing as objective documentation. Referring to her field research of Sufi music, she admitted that video recording was always done at a price because "the performer and even the participants never ignore the camera even though the recordist might...the camera should become a participant in the performance."

Sitakant Mahapatra then related his experiences while documenting the tribal songs of eastern India. Rita Ganguli posed a vital question: "Are we in any way harming the tribal arts when we intrude upon performances with a recorder or a camera?"

Jairazbhoy: "Ideally, the researcher should come from the same community."

Retrieval System & Indian Music: Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy, with the assistance of the ARCE archival staff, demonstrated the computer retrieval system designed by him for the Apple II Plus. He explained the objectives of the system, its advantages and also its limitations. Many in the audience felt that the system was being underutilised.

Later, Jairazbhoy explained the concept of digital recording. The session was chaired by Anthony Seeger.

Classification & Cataloguing of Indian Musical Instruments: Jairazbhoy traced the main features of his system of classification, based on the practical Hornbostel-Sachs system. His paper, distributed earlier, contained an elaborate exposition of the system. Jairazbhoy added that he was in the process of publishing a handbook detailing the classification of each instrument, primarily as an aid to archival and research staff.

G. H. Tarlekar, whose paper also had been circulated earlier, then introduced his system of classification which he claimed was suggestive rather than exhaustive. (His scheme was criticised because it did not include certain folk instruments.)

Jairazbhoy then suggested that scholars and researchers should send in details (with photographs or drawings) of rare folk instruments so that the information could be incorporated into the retrieval system.

Friday, September 28

Archival Sources for the Study of Musical Instruments—Painting: Bonnie Wade of the University of Berkeley (U.S.A.) said that she was trying to explore the possibilities of studying the musical instruments of northern India through paintings. One could trace the continuity of the use (and even design) of the musical instruments in time and also explore changes in association or people through a period of time.

She then screened some slides of miniature paintings of the Kangra Valley, Basoli and the Mughal period, allowing for a brief comment on each. She said: "Instruments which have disappeared from view may not necessarily have fallen out of use. Looking at paintings, one formulates questions for research." She has developed a cataloguing system for archiving these paintings.

Handoo felt that unless one established the authenticity of the paintings, one could not determine the authenticity of the instruments.

Computer Possibilities & Retrieval Procedures: H. V. Sahasrabuddhe, who teaches Computer Science at Pune University, read a paper entitled *Blueprint for a High-Technology Archives for Indian Music.* The objective of an archive was to gather as much authentic information as possible and to allow access to this information in many ways. Ideally, the computer should be a partner in the archival process and he explained, with the aid of diagrams, how this could be done.

A. K. Bali, Visiting Professor at Pune University, spoke on the use of *Computers as a Tool.* Computer systems, he felt, should be designed to give what the management wants rather than the other way round. His was a more general talk on computers rather than on their specific use in ethnomusicological research.

Collection, Preservation & Archiving of Material on Dance: Genevieve Oswald explained the archival and documentation procedures at the Dance Collection of which she is the Curator. Non-print material represented 97 per cent of the Collection and books a mere 3 per cent. "The objective of a dance archives is to recreate not just the history of dance, but the choreography. The subject must always determine the nature of the collection ... We don't wait for people to deposit their collections. Rather, our job is to initiate the deposit of new collections."

Mohan Khokar spoke about his evolution and development as a private dance collector, perhaps the only such collector in India.

Saturday, September 29

Field Trip: In order to give the participants an opportunity to record folk performances live, a field trip was arranged to Jejuri, some fifty kilometres away from Pune. Jejuri is a pilgrimage-town, the famous seat of Khandoba, a deity with a large following in Karnataka and Maharashtra. Here, participants were able to record *gondhal* and *vaghya-murali geet* performances.

Sunday, September 30

This was an open session beginning with a discussion on *Ethics and Fieldwork.* It was chaired by John Blacking who introduced the subject with two quotations, reflecting two entirely different approaches.

> "All this I have done for my own sake, without any idea of preserving it for posterity." — Mohan Khokar.

> "It's not that all artistes are people, it's that all people are artistes." — Eric Gill.

Blacking: "If we are personally committed, we do better research, especially if we have respect for the artiste in people ... a belief in the artistic essence of every human being... I don't believe in research for research's sake. All research must be used towards the development and evolution of people and towards the solution of problems."

Referring to his experiences while trying to record *Chikanda,* the female initiation ceremony formerly prevalent in parts of South Africa and now extinct, he said that being the objective researcher does not quite help. Whether to pay the informants or not would depend on the situation. Foreign researchers, backed by generous grants, could train local people by employing them as research assistants. Also, he suggested, a provision must be built into the grant so that tapes and other equipment (not easily available in developing countries) could be left behind for the benefit of scholars.

"Does recording harm the performance?" Blacking felt that the researcher is only *one* influence on the performance. "One cannot really preserve living, performing arts; one can only preserve museum pieces." Community research, he advocated, was the most dynamic way to preserve and enrich the cultural milieu as had been successfully proved in Africa.

Handoo said that this was a very superficial way of looking at things. "Anthropology is a white man's science even today. It is designed for scholars from developed countries who travel to third-world countries. It is a one-way traffic."

Citing his experiences in Brazil, Seeger said, "It is important to be loyal to the people you have worked with in these countries."

Ranade: "People, studying in their own country, should develop their own methodology so that the bias remains specifically Indian or national. We should correct our own attitudes and develop our own models as far as scholastic study is concerned. For instance, how many north Indian musicians study south Indian music?" He invited all those present to correspond with each other and learn from each other.

Handoo: "We cannot develop a model in a vacuum." Mohan Khokar disagreed. "Nationality or individuality is important because everything is done for the value of human beings ... We treat the objects of our study as laboratory specimens. Our approach is cold and clinical."

Blacking: "Collecting with a discipline is different from just collecting... A scholar is not tied to time and place—he is an international. What's the response *of* and *to* institutions? It's the richness and diversity of regional variations which gives ethnomusicology and anthropology its character."

Chummar Choondal: "It's not a question of *where* the material is preserved, but *how*. My only concern is that it be properly preserved. An understanding between researcher and informant is totally lacking in India."

Nair spoke of the priorities which developing countries face, "Preservation of cultural riches is a very low priority".

Blacking: "In these countries there seems to be a greater concern with the retrieval of national treasures rather than with evolving a national cultural policy."

Pushpa Sundar said that her study of the cultural budgets of different countries showed that while preservation is high on the list (in India and elsewhere), contemporary cultural activity is not included. Preservation not for the sake of preservation but for *access* is important. "For instance, how would Indians have access to collections deposited abroad? Indians have lost self-confidence in their value judgements. Because of historical circumstances, all our standards have been adopted from the west. We need not disown what has happened in the west but we must develop our indigenous standards. Critical scrutiny within the country is very necessary for the development of the artiste rather than just acclaim abroad."

Handoo: "Orality has no copyright in our country. How do we go about it?"

Swaminathan: "We should record the permission of the artiste on the audio or video tape. It is much more authentic and less complicated than getting the informants to sign documents."

Ashok Ranade informed the participants that institutes like the Sangeet Natak Akademi and the National Centre for the Performing Arts were in the process of formulating copyright policies which are necessary to protect the rights of the artiste as well as the body which has the recording.

Mohan Khokar said that copyright was given to a work performed for the first time. "What about the oral traditions? Who is to be paid? With whom lies the copyright? One particular community which performs it as against another community's rendering ...?"

Handoo: "Individual copyright is alright. But what about community performances?"

Nair: "In the film archives, if a film made by someone is deposited by another person, one cannot do anything without the permission of the depositor."

Blacking: "What is the best moment to give rewards to informants—before, during or after a performance? Paying large sums of money to rural communities may entirely disrupt the life of the community."

Wadley: "I tried in my own way to give copies of my recordings to the artiste. If he cannot read it, his sons or grandsons can. But it will be safe."

Handoo: "An informant was in one instance beaten and imprisoned because he did not want to reveal."

Daw: "In many parts of Sudan, paying money is considered an insult because any visitor is a guest and therefore no payment can be accepted."

Chummar Choondal: "Generally classical performers are better paid than folk performers. Also, performers expect higher payment from foreign researchers and for divulging information."

Blacking: "Institutions like the ARCE could keep a rein on such expenditure."

Ellingson: "Sometimes, a bit of inflation would be necessary, I feel, because in some cases, musicians or instrument-makers are underpaid. Rewards can be in kind also—maybe, restoration of a monument or initiation of a community project. These problems do not come in a neat package. Copyright and remuneration are interrelated. There is the question of limited as against unlimited rights? We should not regard our rights (given by the performer) as absolute. They are constantly subject to revision."

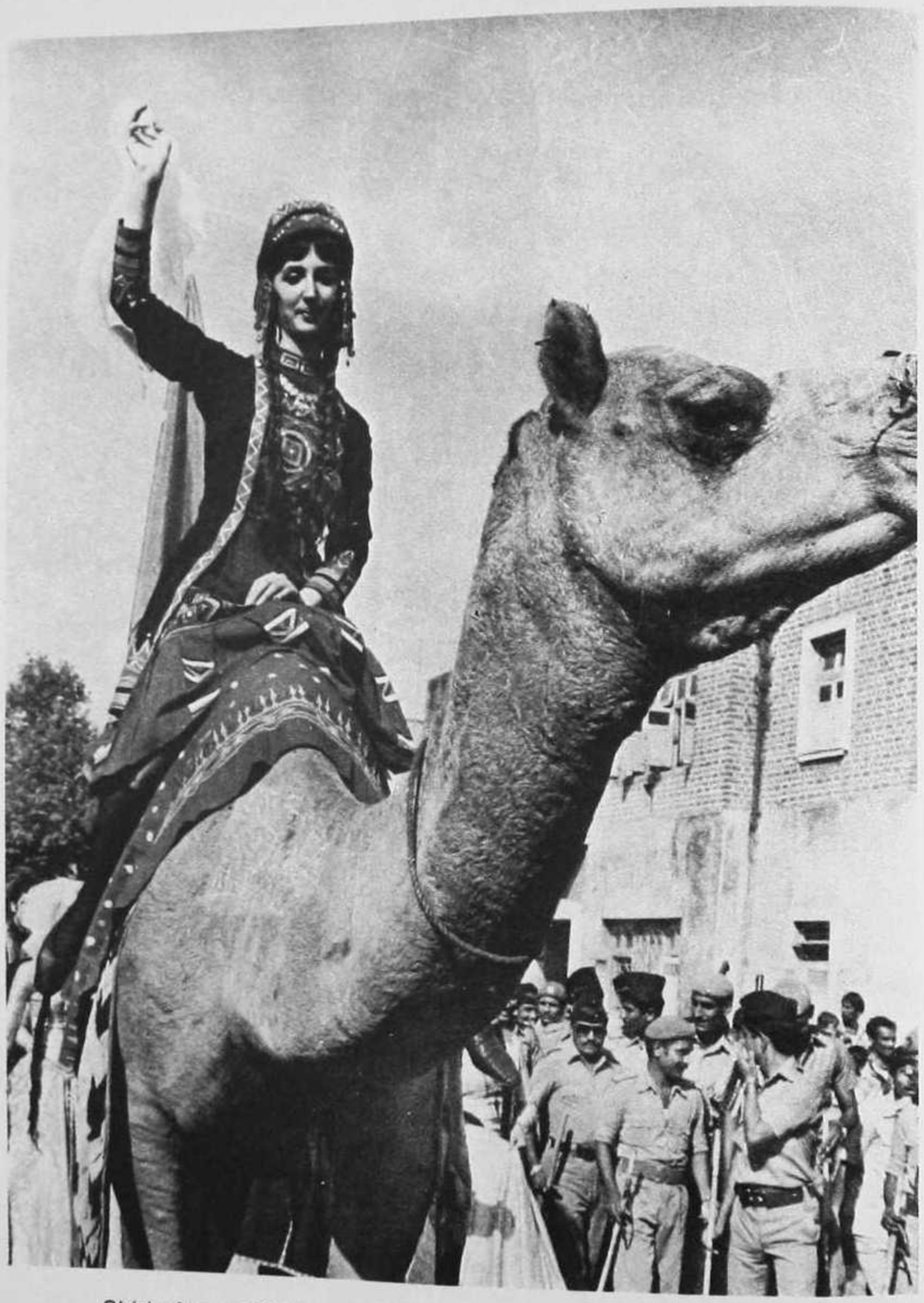
Jairazbhoy: "In a tradition, the performer is just the tip of the iceberg and he gets paid the most. He is feted here and abroad and becomes estranged from the community. All the payments/profits etc. should filter down to the very bottom of the tradition."

Choondal: "Brokers or intermediaries now operate between informants and researchers. In the distribution of payment amongst the entire group of folk performers, the main artiste gets a disproportionately large sum, then the instrumentalists and lastly, the other accompanists."

Joep Bor: "Why should foreigners dictate which particular form should be documented?"

Sundar: "How much information do we tell our informants? Do we tell them something and record much more than we reveal to them? This is quite unethical."

Blacking lucidly summed up the main issues raised in this session. The Seminar ended with Ranade thanking the experts and the participants for being present and hoping that this would be "the beginning of an international adventure in mutually-enriching scholarship."



Shirin from TBILISI, U.S.S.R., during the parade on Relief Road.
(Courtesy: Indian Express).

Mahotsav 84, Ahmedabad, October 7 – 13, 1984

Ahmedabad witnessed a colourful event as folk dancers from Europe paraded its streets with their Indian counterparts heralding the start of Mahotsav-84. Inaugurated on October 7 by Gujarat's Chief Minister, Madhavsinh Solanki, in the huge Sardar Patel Stadium, the festival presented seven foreign troupes with a total of 200 dancers and musicians.

The idea of organising such an event emerged in 1983 when India was elected to the Conseil International des Organisations de Festivals de Folklore (CIOFF), an organisation in Paris whose aim is to bring the varied cultures of the world to villagers of different lands. Mallika Sarabhai was nominated India's representative on the Council and the Festival, the first of its kind in Asia, was organised by CHITRAKATHI (the Indian Centre of CIOFF) with the active participation of JANAVAK, the folk wing of the Darpana Academy of Performing Arts, founded by her mother Mrinalini Sarabhai. Its sponsors included the Gujarat Government, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation and the ITC Ltd., Calcutta.

Thousands of people attended the colourful spectacles organised every evening. Ticket rates ranged from Rs. 3/- to Rs. 10/-, with concessions for students, textile workers, the handicapped and the destitute.

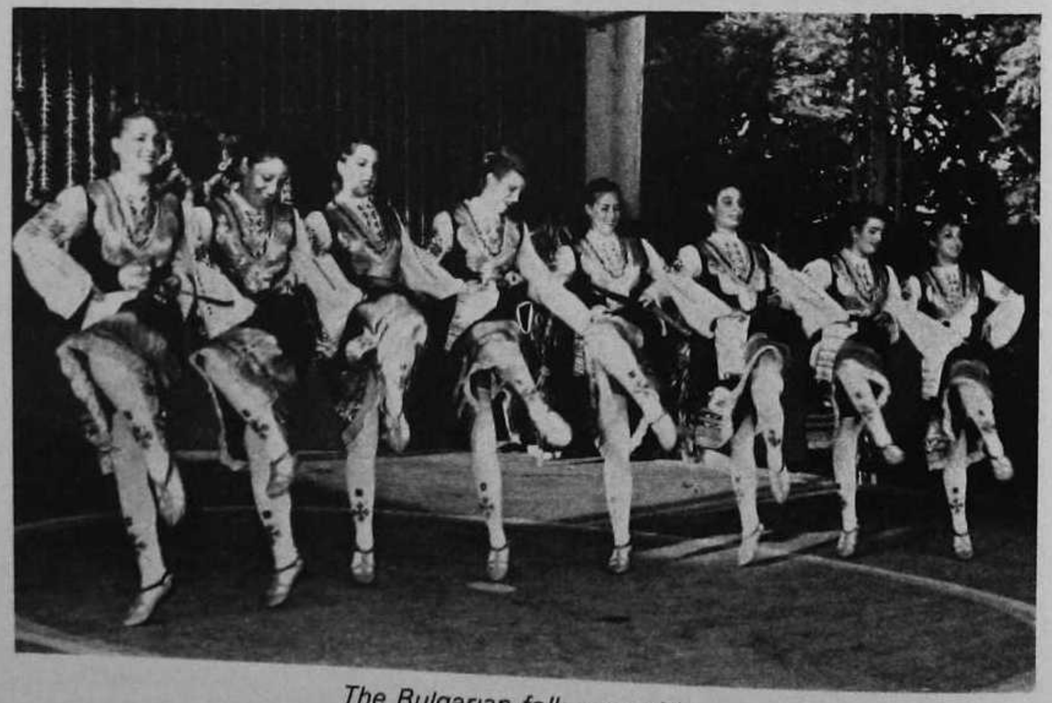
A scene from the Polish folk dance.
(Courtesy: Hemendra A. Shah).

Finland was represented by RIMPPAREMMI, a youth ensemble of twenty-two dancers and six musicians. They performed ring games, folk numbers and won the hearts of the audience with the striking orchestration of their graceful movements and subtle melodies. Bulgaria's ENSEMBLE FREDERICH ENGELS included thirty-four girls and boys who performed folk dances of different regions and presented a varied musical repertoire. The twenty-eight strong DE SCHEMER DANSERS of Holland offered an elegant and charming dimension to the Festival. The 38-member KRAKUS group from Poland was, in contrast, an explosion of colour, wit and vivacity. The dancers, with peacock feathers on their heads and richly embroidered costumes, left a wonderful impact. TBILISI, from Georgia in the USSR, with its forty members, dazzled spectators with the virility, power and speed of their dance items. Bulgaria was also represented by the ARABESQUE TROUPE, a modern ballet group.

The foreign troupes travelled to the rural areas, performing in village squares, and also presented their repertoire before factory workers, as also in jails and hospitals.

Tribal and folk groups from India added to the fascination of the entertainment presented every evening. There was the Gondia of Madhya Pradesh, the Chumar of Rajasthan, and, from Gujarat, the Adivasi dance of Dharampur and the *Ras* from Surendranagar. On the last day, the Indian and foreign dancers linked their hands and danced the circular *garbo*.

The festival was a major gain for Ahmedabad and Gujarat, as a whole, for the groups visited other cities and the goodwill generated is, of course, immeasurable.



The Bulgarian folk ensemble.
(Courtesy: Kotys).

Obituary

Jennifer

[Jennifer Kapoor, the distinguished actress, died in London on September 7, 1984. She was a member of the Drama Consultative Committee of the National Centre for the Performing Arts and deeply interested in the Centre's plans for its Experimental Theatre. We print below a personal tribute by Vijaya Mehta.

—Editor.]

We were the same age—Jennifer and I. We first met when we were both eighteen—nearly thirty years ago. Both of us were Desdemonas—she in her father's troupe and I in the Marathi version.

In fact, I saw Jennifer for the first time as Desdemona on the make-shift stage of Elphinstone College. My recollection of the moment is very vivid though it now seems ages ago. I remember Jennifer's performance—fresh, lively, almost electrifying. I was struck by her physical grace, she was like a flower in bloom. Her performance made me feel inadequate, inferior as an actress, and so much so that I badgered E. Alkazi and P. D. Shenoy to train me in body movement. Then Jennifer and her parents came to see the Marathi production. I was petrified at the thought of their watching my 'Desdemona'. Right through the performance I was only aware of my skinny figure compared to Jennifer's blooming personality on stage. They, however, found my interpretation very interesting and asked me to join their company. Jennifer's father, Geoffrey Kendal, was planning *A Midsummer-Night's Dream,* with Indians playing supernatural beings. I do not know what happened to the project. I could not join them as I was preparing for my Master's degree. Had I joined the company then, I am certain Jennifer and I would have shared our aspirations and our growth together. It was a lost opportunity.

I lost touch with Jennifer afterwards. I kept on doing my little bit in the Marathi theatre. I learnt that Jennifer had married Shashi Kapoor. Our paths never crossed till much later. We both had two sons—the same age—and we waited in the office of Bombay International School while our 3-year and 5-year old sons were being interviewed for admission. We talked about 'the old Desdemona times'. Jennifer still retained her youthful and lively spirit. I kept on wondering how she could remain so blissfully happy without working in theatre—which I knew meant such a lot to her. I had myself experienced the agony for about a year. "Don't you miss theatre?" I asked her. "Oh yes, I would have. But I am not out of it. I am busy planning the Prithvi Theatre."

It was years later, when I saw the Prithvi Theatre, that I realised what had given purpose to Jennifer's life while, to all appearances, she stayed away from the limelight. Each corner of the theatre, each plant in the garden, each cobble-stone on the pathway reflected Jennifer's concept of theatre. It was not just "yet another space for doing shows." It was an environment which defined a certain approach to theatre. It had the quality of a dream realised—Jennifer's dream.

She spoke of her plans. How she wanted to encourage the right attitude amongst young actors, to develop a sense of ensemble and, within two years, it happened. A great achievement in Bombay's chaotic theatre scene. She once again proved that she was a dreamer, with the fantastic ability to make her dreams come true.

Junoon and later on *36 Chowringhee Lane* made the younger generation aware of Jennifer as an artiste. To me it was astounding how both the portrayals showed such tremendous articulation in capturing the inner rhythms of the characters. This is normally achieved when an actress is in constant practice coping with the demands of new characterisations. The flicker in the eye, the nuance of speech and gesture need to be ceaselessly exercised. All the reflexes have

to be in tune. A short span of separation from the stage and these faculties can be dulled and one can easily lose the alertness and the precision that go into an excellent portrayal. Jennifer had performed after years of absence from the ring. Yet she was as moving as the 'Desdemona' I saw three decades ago. Only those involved in 'the art of acting' will appreciate Jennifer's achievement. It was not just a matter of two fantastic performances—it was almost an impossible feat considering the gap after which she had accomplished it.

I remember the dimensions she gave to the performance in *Junoon,* the poise, the inner strength of the woman. In *36 Chowringhee Lane,* she caught every cadence of the character. She saved it from being 'cloying and sentimental' because not a single gesture was self-indulgent. The audience may feel 'sad' but she 'accepts'. Without a tough narrative thread, or 'strong' scenes, the film is held together by the total insight that Jennifer had into the character. She was not seduced by the idea of the 'talent' she could have displayed, her knowledge of Shakespeare, correct intonation etc. Her objectivity as an artiste functions during every single moment to bring the character to life.

Jennifer and I did not see each other frequently. But every time I saw her work—either as the living spirit behind the Prithvi Theatre and through it the Hindi theatre or as a costume designer (I remember her scrubbing lamp-shades from her house in a bath-tub—so that they would look clean and white on the sets of *Kalyug*) or as an actress—I was moved by an overwhelming sense of respect and affection.

Just last year we got round to chatting with each other, while driving back and forth from the Prithvi Theatre. She was busy getting the annual festival organized and I was working with my *Hayavadana* troupe in the new space of Prithvi. I knew that she was struck by a terrible ailment. We never talked about it. What amazed me most was the way she took it. "Tomorrow we won't go to Prithvi. I have to undergo this horrid treatment and it takes me nearly 24 hours to recover. So let us plan it for the day after."

We discussed future plans for Prithvi. She felt a little sad that the initial enthusiasm of the youngsters was misfiring. "I must get Prithvi on its feet. Maybe one should go in for a resident company. How does one achieve and maintain quality control?" Hundreds of new ideas and thoughts flooded her mind. She was a brave woman, an exceptional human being, who dreamt impossible dreams and made them possible.

THE SQUARE AND THE CIRCLE OF THE INDIAN ARTS by Kapila Vatsyayan, Roli Books International, New Delhi, 1983, (Price not stated) (*In English*).

Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan explores, in this seminal book, the fundamentals of Indian arts, relating them to the Indian world-view and its distinctive speculative thought. She uncovers geometrical principles underlying the four different arts of theatre (*natya*), architecture (*vastu*), sculpture (*shilpa*) and music (*sangita*), and traces the common thread of metaphysical concern running through these arts and interrelating them. Even before she took up this inquiry, she had, as a practising dancer, become aware of the geometrical principles underlying Indian dance in the same way as Alice Boner had perceived geometry as underlying sculptural compositions. Kapila Vatsyayan realized that Indian dance was an expression of the larger and more complex phenomena of Indian culture and its world-view and that its study could not be complete without a perspective of its ideational background. Later, basing herself on an interdisciplinary study of texts, archaeological material, and the *Yajna* rituals conducted in Kerala, the author arrived at an analysis of the principles of artistic practice on the one hand and metaphysical concepts on the other.

The book begins with an inquiry into the abstract thought of the Vedas and the Upanishads which, according to the author, influenced Indian aesthetic theories and artistic expression. She examines the part played by the body and the senses, and the relationship of limited microcosm (man, *purusha*) to macrocosm (Man, *Purusha*). Refuting the popularly-held assumption that the Indian world-view is "other-worldly" and artistic creation world-denying, the author quotes primary sources to reveal that Indian speculative thought was conscious, on the one hand, of the physical reality of biological man, and his relations with animal and plant life, the physical environment and, on the other hand, with the Earth, the Sky and the Central Pillar (*stambha*) in the navel of the Earth.

Two images are pervasive in early speculative thought: the one of Man in Space with a relationship to the Earth and the Sky, and the other of the constant movement of Time as the rhythm of the wheel of a chariot. These images are discussed in detail. The author states that from the concretization of the Brahmanas, the Upanishads achieved a chiselled abstraction, but this very abstraction became the basis of the language of symbols which permeates all aspects of Indian life, thought and art. "The specificity of life is abstracted into a design which is capable of multiple meaning. A point, a line, a vertical, a spiral, a triangle, a circle and finally a square become symbols with a plurality of meaning . . . The language of metaphysics becomes the language of symbols, signs and formal design. The ultimate objective is never forgotten and, therefore, the visible is not just visible but is the very aid to the invisible." (p. 20).

Discussing the ritual of *Yajna*, Dr. Vatsyayan points out its central objective of establishing communion between the microcosm and the macrocosm. The ritual consisted of a series of correspondences between the purely mundane or the

particular and the cosmic forces or the universal. It provided a ground plan of the temple and the theatre, and its symbolism pervaded later artistic expressions. Dr. Stella Kramrisch has derived many symbolic and constructional features of the temple from the Vedic altar in her monumental work (*The Hindu Temple*, 1946) and her observations support the hypothesis developed in the book under review.

Like the temple, the theatre was another symbolic creation of the Cosmos. The author states that the *Yajna*-ritual and speculative thought was the source material from which Bharata formulated a theory of aesthetics and developed an infrastructure for *natya* (which communicates through sensual media). She draws attention to the unique place of hand-gestures in Indian dance and suggests an exploration into their relationship with the use of hands in the *Yajna*-ritual.

The concept of *Sama*, symbolizing the play of energy from a central point of stillness, is pivotal to dance, musical composition, metrical cycles (*tala*-s) and sculptural form. The author traces the validity of the concept of *Sama* in relation to speculative thought "which attributed value to the internalization and silent pause of all expression." Significantly, the presiding deity of the *Sama-sthana* is Brahma, the deity of the Centre. Different *sthana*-s (positions) such as *Vaishnava-sthana, Mandala-sthana* imply the transmutation of the human body in geometrical figures: "The body is depersonalized to the point of geometric abstraction", recalling *yantra*-s.

This brings us to the geometry of sculptural compositions discussed in the chapter on *Shilpa-panjara*. *Panjara* represents the reduction of the physical body of man to an impersonalized design. The content of sculpture constituted by myth and legend is as it were superimposed on the abstraction. The author provides an analysis of sculptural figures in terms of line and space, and the relative positions of the closing in and the expansion of energies explored through a centre. Sculpture and dance are analysed in terms of spatial *yantra*-s, while, in the field of music, the system of *tala* (metrical cycle) is analysed through the motif of the circle.

According to this traditional Indian viewpoint, there is, in art, impersonalization and depersonalization of the individual and an absence of subjective expression. The artist is considered as only "a vehicle for his communication of a larger universal self." Through meditation he evokes the Formless and creates multiple forms so as to convey a similar experience in the spectator or listener.

Thus we can learn through the perceptive observations of the author how different arts reflect an identical structure in their methods to abstract geometrical patterns and their common concern to express the Formless in their non-discursive language of *nama-rupa* (name and form). A question may perhaps be asked whether the speculative thought of the Upanishads, aspiring to symbolize the Unmanifest through abstract imagery, could also be interpreted as reflecting a parallel structure along with the arts or whether speculative thought and abstractions governed artistic pursuits? The urge to give form to the Formless, either through symbolization in language or arts, seems to find expression in the parallel structures of speculative thought, rituals and creative pursuits of India.

The book opens up a new way of looking at the arts—not just historically or iconographically, but through the inherent principles which interrelate them with parallel symbolic expressions. The overall picture presented through an inter-disciplinary approach makes this thought-provoking book invaluable for further research and explorations in various specialized disciplines.

The publishers should have devoted greater attention to the correct rendering of diacritical marks for such an important work.

—DEVANGANA DESAI

SANGEET— Abhyas Ank, Jan-Feb 1984. Published by Sangeet Karyalaya, Hathras (U.P.), Rs. 20.00 (*In Hindi*).

Indian music and its teaching in India has been gradually influenced by the modern institutionalised system of teaching. In addition to the oral teachings of his guru, a student of music, in this new system, feels the impact of technology, recorded music, public response, books etc. At the same time, music, being a creative art, also demands a great deal of patience, concentration and discipline— the hallmark of the traditional system.

The annual number of *Sangeet* presents a collection of articles on the study of music in India. The articles, written by a wide spectrum of authors, range from serious academic studies on certain aspects of music to anecdotal pieces. Comparisons between traditional and modern systems of teaching, the importance of meditation in music, the importance of a teacher in music are some of the topics discussed. Other articles offer lessons, suggestions and notes on techniques in music/dance study. Specific lessons are presented for students of vocal, sitar, harmonium, tabla and dance. Methods of practice adopted by the masters presented in the publication could be an interesting guideline to students.

—MADANLAL VYAS

The review of the two books on UDAY SHANKAR, published in the September 1984 issue (Vol. XIII, No. 3) of the Quarterly Journal, was by Rohini Bhate. The omission of her name is regretted.

Record Reviews

SHOBHA GURTU. At her Best . . .
EMI ECSD 2813 (Stereo).

RASOOLAN BAI. An All India Radio Recording.
EMI ECLP 41543.

RAVI SHANKAR & ALI AKBAR KHAN. *Raga* Mishra Piloo. Duet for sitar and sarod recorded in performance at Carnegie Hall, May 5, 1982, with Alla Rakha and Zakir Hussain on the tabla.
EMI DS-37920 (Stereo).

KHAN SAHIB IMRAT HUSSAIN KHAN (Surbahar and Sitar). Side One: *Raga* Bageshree (Surbahar) and Rageshree (Sitar). Side Two: *Raga* Gawoti (Surbahar). Accompanied by Nizamuddin Khan on the tabla.
EMI EASD 1309 (Stereo).

USTAD AMIR KHAN. Side One: *Raga* Ahir Bhairav. Side Two: *Raga* Bageshree. An All India Radio Recording.
EMI ECLP 41546.

PANKAJ UDHAS. Live at The Royal Albert Hall.
MUSIC INDIA 2 LP Set 2675 527 (Stereo).

Mc Dowell Presents Music India's KHAZANA. Live at Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Madras.

PANKAJ UDHAS
MUSIC INDIA 2393 993 (Stereo).

ANUP JALOTA
MUSIC INDIA 2393 988 (Stereo).

NINA & RAJENDRA MEHTA
MUSIC INDIA 2393 992 (Stereo).

Shobha Gurtu is an established *thumri*-singer and deservingly so. This is not because Begum Akhtar or other eminent singers of the genre are no more on the scene but because Shobha Gurtu is both temperamentally and technically equipped for the type of music she sings. Her broad and rather heavy voice, backed by her tunefulness, matches the musical abandon of her style. Shobha Gurtu's *thumri*-s, therefore, leave a durable mark. Among the pieces on the disc, the Mishra Pilu composition is highly evocative. (By contrast, the Des piece sounds routine.) The shorter items are more satisfying because no time is lost in reaching the tonal and emotional highpoints of the compositions. However, the second piece—*dadra*—is more modern and 'light' than the traditional corpus. Special mention must be made of Iqbal Ahmed's extremely tuneful and imaginative Sarangi accompaniment.

Rasoolan Bai's recordings are from the archives of the All India Radio and present a strong voice from the past. The renderings convey a sense of authority and firmness in handling musical themes. Curiously enough, the Bhairavi piece appears before the *kajri*—surely a minor breach of musical protocol! The *kajri* on Side One—*Tarsat jiara hamar*—is pleasantly expansive while the *chaiti* on Side Two proves its inherent classicism on account of the *sam* on *ma* in keeping with some variety of Bilawal. Also, the treatment is oriented towards a thematic development rather than an emotional blend. The Bhairavi item *Bisaraiyo na balam* brings out an unusual aesthetic fusion of vigour and tenderness.

Among the instrumental offerings, Pandit Ravi Shankar and Ustad Ali Akbar Khan's effort in Mishra Piloo represents a masterly structuring—especially Side One. Tuneful, innovative, even as they continue a melodic dialogue, both the masters do justice to themselves, the instruments and also to the entity that Mishra Piloo is.

Khan Sahib Imrat Hussain Khan's Surbahar and Sitar renditions include three mood-oriented *raga*-s: Bageshree, Rageshree and Gawoti. On close listening, the Surbahar emerges as an instrument which involves a greater strain than the musical results it yields! At least this appears so when the Sitar pieces are juxtaposed with the Surbahar items. Imrat Khan is at ease on the Sitar and more lyrical in Rageshree and Gawoti, which delights by the width of the tonal spectra as well as by the variety of *raga* shades it explores.

Ustad Amir Khan's sudden demise a decade ago perhaps also meant an unfinished story in his music! However, the pieces in Ahir Bhairav and Bageshree are reiterations of musical propositions characterized by poise, ponderousness and a note of perplexity in the presence of the element of rhythm—which he refuses to explore! The Sarangi idiom of his *sargam*-s, the obliterating *gamak* in the *tan*-s and the ever-present lilt in the pronunciation of words—all these are amply evident in the record.

From these offerings to the music of Pankaj Udhas, Anup Jalota and Nina and Rajendra Mehta and one enters a world of polish, deliberation and effect-oriented music. The tunes presented by Udhas are attractive, that is, they reach the musical 'cliché' swiftly! An easy-to-understand poeticizing, a fair amount of instrumental blending, recording with reverb-effects and well-inserted claps—all these elements have considerable currency in the *ghazal*-s which are now flooding the market. Nina and Rajendra Mehta have been on the scene long enough and utilise to the full the duet-aspect of their presentations—through near-dialogues and real musical duets. Anup Jalota sings, comparatively speaking, in a flatter voice but handles his material with a definite 'touch'. He also modulates his voice repeatedly—a well-tested device to ensure attention. Craftsmen all—they create and live up to expectations they have succeeded in creating!

—A.D.R.

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