LAHORE

ITS MELODIC CULTURE

SAEED MALIK



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To all creative artists
who contributed so much to
the evolution and refinement of
Lahore's melodic culture

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. CULTURAL LANDMARKS OF LAHORE
II. MELODIC DIMENSIONS OF LAHORE'S CULTURE
III. INFLUX OF MELODISTS
IV. TAKIA MEERAASIAN - A lost cultural landmark.
V. USTAD ABDUL WAHEED KHAN - a classical singer of great merit
VI. BADE GHULAM ALI KHAN-inimitable classical vocalist
VII. THE UNFORGETTABLE RAUSHAN ARA BEGUM
VIII. USTAD SALAMAT ALI KHAN OF SHAM CHAURASI GHARANA
IX. USTAD FATEH ALI KHAN OF PATIALA GHARANA
X. USTAD GHULAM HASAN SHAGGAN - a complete artist
XI. G.A. FAROOQ - a leading light of music world
XII. USTAD CHHOTEY GHULAM ALI KHAN - the last among well known Kasuri vocalists
XIII. OUTSIDE THE GHARANAS - the duo of Badaruzzaman-Qamaruzzaman
XIV. REMEMBERING ZAHIDA PARVEEN
XV. BARKAT ALI KHAN - the great master of ghazal
XVI. MEHDI HASAN'S STYLISH GHAZALS
XVII. GHULAM ALI SOUNDS EVER FRESH
XVIII. MELODIES OF SAEEN MARNA
XIX. SITAR MAESTRO SHARIF KHAN POONCHWALEY
XX. TABLA-PLAYER - USTAD SHAUKAT HUSAIN KHAN
XXI. THE COLOURFUL BRASS BANDS OF LAHORE
XXII. HAMID ALI BELA SINGS HIS HEARTS OUT
XXIII. MASTER GHULAM HAIDER - the legendary composer
XXIV. KHURSHID ANWAR - a stylist composer
XXV. FEROZE NIZAMI - a sensitive composer
XXVI. HAUNTING MELODIES OF MASTER INAYAT HUSAIN
XXVII. RASHID ATTRAY - Scoring hits of the Sixties
XXVIII. COMPOSERS SALEEM-IQBAL - Music in their genes
XXIX. BABA G.A.CHISHTI - Grand old man of film music
XXX. MIAN SHAHARYAR - a dulcet composer
XXXI. NOORJEHAN - the singer of the century
XXXII. EPILOGUE

INTRODUCTION

Lahore: Its Melodic Culture, is the second book on this historic city, the Lahore Arts Council has published in two years. In 1997, it sponsored the publication of an award-winning book on paintings, which depicted several periods from the history of provincial metropolis.

Confabulation in, and enjoyment and appreciation of music have always been among the major cultural pursuits of the Lahorites. They have extended their whole-hearted support to the promotion of quality music, which culminated in the grooming of many world-class melodists, astute connoisseurs and well-respected critics.

The post electronic revolution period has witnessed an immeasurable growth in public interest in music, spawning at the same time the need for the production of quality melodic literature. This has been due to the wealth of good music heard in films, and over radio, television and in concerts on stage.

This book reflects on the melodic traditions of this historic city, whose vivacious and culturally-enlightened citizens are now known the world over for their love of arts, especially music. Hopefully, it will prove valuable to many music buffs wishing to know more about the maestros whose music they hear so often. As the title implies, this book treats music in terms of those artists, who were either born in Lahore, or came to settle in this city and created a great wealth of immortal melodites.

The Lahore Arts Council acknowledges and appreciates, whether in memoriam or to the living persons, the wonderful melodies they have produced, which the author has interpreted with respectful critical evaluation.

Despite financial constraints, and its involvement in multifarious cultural activities, including the promotion of plastic, visual and

performing arts, the Lahore Arts Council has done its best to encourage the production of appropriately supportive literature. The publication of various books provides eloquent testimony to this averment.

Because the book is highly readable, it follows that it is, by and large, a personal account of contemporary melodic history of Lahore, which the author has rendered feelingly. It is this personal angle that makes the book so alive and glowing. At the same time, it also indicates that the author knows his subject well, has done enough research, and written this book with a touch of authority.

I would like to thank the Executive Committee members for their advice and the Director, Arts Council for his efforts in bringing out the publication.

Khawaja Muhammad Naeem
Commissioner,
Lahore Division/
Chairman,
Lahore Arts Council.

December 1, 1998.

FOREWORD

A basic social and cultural accoutrement, music is created, played, sung and enjoyed in every society, regardless of religious, social, ethnic and political differences among its members. Studies have confirmed that music has existed in one form or the other since the mists of antiquity.

As a protean art," music lends itself smoothly to a union with words, as in a song; physical movement, as in a dance".. Evidence is also available in historical records which indicates that music has remained an integral adjunct to ritual and drama. It has also been credited with the potential to truthfully convey and influence human feelings of happiness, sorrow, hopes, fears and yearnings. Culturally enlivened and scientifically developed societies have consistently employed these potentials of music, more so during 20th century, when a revolution took place in the fields of electronics and communications.

In Pakistan, although it is not yet accepted as an essential social equipment, music continues to play an important and significant role in causing emotional purgation, and in creating cathartic impact on the listeners, whether they have developed a taste for it or not. The emotive use of music has considerably enhanced the effectiveness of several modes of creative expression like radio and television plays, feature and documentary films, docudramas and other audio visual expressions, that are made to create a deep and enduring impact in mass communication.

Responding to music in an emotional way is the most natural act of the humans, whether one has developed a sense of tone perception or not. However, for perceptive listening and impactful enjoyment of music, one needs to concentrate one's attention on sound vibrations as they hit him/her eardrums and penetrate one's innermost self. With some initiation and a little practice, one can learn to imagine (and sonically feel) the patterns these musical sounds make and melismatically weave into the fabric of a composition.. One can also respond to the thought

contents (in the case of songs) and feelings (in the case of instrumental music) out of which these imaginary patterns emerge before the sonic eyes of a listener's mind. In other words, for perceptive listening, one has to develop a taste that can be acquired by frequent exposures to the masterpieces of maestros, vocal or instrumental., and through a process of instruction, imitation and initiation.

As a performing art, music deals with the organization of tones into patterns. It forms the basis of a language (of sound), which is characterized with beauty of design and coherence of form. Because of its highly aesthetic content, it tickles the sensibilities of the listeners and arouses their emotions. Related to human experiences, it has ebullient expressive content, which penetrates the minds of the listeners through their hearing faculties. It also acts as a strong motivational force for a large number of discriminating listeners.

Certain geographic regions or cities in a country are known for their rich cultural and melodic traditions. In Pakistan, Lahore is one place, which has created enduring melodic traditions. At the time of independence in August 1947, the city suffered culturally, but the influx of Muslim practitioners of the melodic arts in Lahore compensated for the loss it had suffered due to an exodus of non-Muslim melodists to India. Besides top classical vocalists, instrumentalists and percussionists, the nascent Islamic Republic of Pakistan inherited a number of world class composers, whose lilting melodies had already earned them wide recognition and appreciation from all those who mattered in the world of music.

They all came to Lahore, a city of rich traditions in music and film-making. Its culturally-conducive environment was too irresistible for them to go anywhere else. At attempt has been made in this book to recount the contributions of these maestros who, even under excruciating circumstances, made lasting contributions to the melodic culture of Lahore, in particular; and Pakistan, in general.

It was not possible to include in this reckoning all musicians groomed by Lahore and their contributions to the refinement and perpetuation of city's rich melodic culture. However, all those top ranking melodists, who created names and won kudos for themselves and accolades for their country, have been included in this book. However, if in the estimation of some readers, names of a few melodists have failed to appear in this book, an attempt will be made to include them in the second edition. The readers are requested to communicate to me their

names and creative inputs into Lahore's melodic culture

This book is essentially a compilation of my articles published in the Nation, Lahore (during the golden jubilee celebrations of Pakistan in 1997),and the Star, Karachi, (in the decade of the 80s).. With some editing and a little trimming here and there, these pieces of writing have been put together in a book form for the reading pleasure of music buffs and students of melodic arts. Hopefully, it will provide an insight to the readers into the evolution and refinement of Lahore's melodic culture, especially during the past 50 years..

I wish to avail this opportunity to expressing my thanks to Imran, my son, for the help he extended to me in the designing of the title, guiding me in the proper use of a computer and in transferring the manuscript to a hard disc. Also, I would like to place on record my appreciation and acknowledgement of the assistance extended to me by Saima and Shazia, my two daughters-in law in checking the manuscript, and for looking after me while I was working on the manuscript, and also in its proof reading. Their valuable suggestions in keeping the volume of the manuscript within reasonable limits are also acknowledged with grateful thanks.

Saeed Malik
735 Shadman Colony
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January 1, 1999.

CULTURAL LANDMARKS OF LAHORE

Pakistan has remained the seat of some best known civilizations like Harrappa, Mohenjodaro and Gandhara, which flourished in this part of the world many a millennium ago.

This country also enjoys the unique distinction of inheriting many ancient cities, which were once very prosperous. Although in chronological reckoning, some of these cities, like Multan, are older, yet Lahore has retained the enviable position of being a cultural centre, and a seat of learning during different periods in history. Acknowledged as culturally (and politically) vibrant for upward of one thousand years, this modern conurbation has now undergone a topographical metamorphosis. Its present physical features seemingly are much different from its old ambience.

The checkered political history of Lahore has played an important role in the shaping of its cultural personality, which provides this sprawling metropolis a kind of permanence, and a distinct identity. Including the simple grave of Sheikh Ayaz and the magnificent tomb of Hazrat Ali Hajveri, the first Muslim Sufi saint ever to make this city his permanent abode, some of its old landmarks have successfully braved the vicissitudes of over one thousand years.

Cities do not emerge overnight, nor their cultural traditions are created in a few decades. It takes a long time for a city to develop its cultural ambience. The ancient city of Lahore developed its distinct cultural personality after experiencing a protracted process of cross-cultural pollination, inter-communal interaction among its residents, and the consequential cross-fertilization of minds. The vitality, vigour and personality of a city are reflected in its culture, which actually are historical traditions of a people's arts, literature, and their love of beauty. These ingredients combine to spawn a distinct cultural entity, which is expressive of the very soul of a city, and by a process of slow formation, build up and furbish its unique personality.

Culture has so far defied a precise definition. Often, it has been subjected to a medley of meanings...different in varying contexts and reflecting the perceptions of the definers. Its definition still is a subject of controversy, not only in Pakistan but also in many countries. The dictionary meaning of culture varies from "an act of developing one's social experience by education and discipline" to the "training or refining of one's moral and intellectual faculties". Also, it implies the state of being cultivated, especially the enlightenment and excellence of taste acquired by intellectual and aesthetic training, and the intellectual and artistic content of civilization.

Lahore reached the apex of its resplendent glory, beauty and magnificence in the Mughal period, especially during the reign of Akbar the Great. Emperors Jehangir and Shahjehan also added to the glory of this city by building architectural monuments and by making it capital of the Moghul empire. However, like other cities, which once flourished in this part of the world, Lahore, too, suffered setbacks in history.

In recent times, Lahore has added to its landscape such modern edifices as Provincial Legislative Building, the High Court, the Lahore Arts Council, and its Open Air Cultural Complex on Ferozepur Road, WAPDA House, the new State Bank of Pakistan building and several theatre halls. The somewhat older structures, which have contributed to the chiseling of Lahore's melodic personality have been the YMCA building, the now extinct SPSK Hall, Barkat Ali Mohammedan Hall, Takia Meersiaan, and the Open Air Theatre, *Bagh e-Jinnah*. Currently, a majority of cultural events, including music concerts, are held at Lahore Arts Council and its Open Air Complex, and the Open Air Theatre, situated in a picturesque surrounding.

Love of music and poetry has been a distinct characteristic of Lahore's citizenry. *Mushairas* (poetic symposia) and music soirees were more in vogue in the past than these are organized now. To satiate their appetite for high quality music, and to enjoy intellectually-stimulating poetry, they organized *mushairas* and music concerts to which poets and melodists from all over the Sub-continent were invited.

The YMCA Hall on the Mall served as the venue of several All India Music Conferences before the partition of the Sub-continent, besides allowing All India Radio to make its debut from its premises on December 16, 1938. Also, during that period, the now extinct SPSK

Hall located on Circular Road outside Mori Gate, hosted a large number of music concerts to which maestros from all parts of undivided India used to take part. At the Barkat Ali Mohammedan Hall, outside Mochi Gate, a large number of *mushairas* were organized before and after the partition of the Sub-continent. This place served as the venue for many meetings and conferences organized by a number of Muslim cultural, literary and political organizations.

Not only did Lahore create enduring melodic traditions, but also groomed a large number of top-ranking musicians, whose contributions to the melodic culture of the Sub-continent have been widely acknowledged and hailed. The congenial cultural environment of this city, and the affable temperament of its citizens attracted the attention of musicians from neighbouring areas, who settled here to practice their art. It has either groomed, or welcomed within its fold, some of the greatest musicians South Asia has ever produced.

Composers Khurshid Anwar, Rafique Ghazanvi, Pundit Amar Nath, Shyam Sunder, G.A. Chishti, Rasheed Attray, Master Inayat Hussain, and crooner Mohammad Rafi, in addition to classical vocalists Bade Ghulam Ali Khan. Ustad Barkat Ali Khan, Amanat Ali Khan-Fateh Ali Khan and Nazakat Ali Khan-Salamat Ali Khan are some of those, who were either born, or settled in Lahore to practice their art. Included among instrumentalists, who also chose Lahore to be their permanent abode, were clarinettists Master Sohni Khan, Alamgir Khan, and Sadiq Ali Khan Mando, and sitar maestros Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and Muhammad Sharif Khan Poonchwaley, Tabla wizard Khalifa Qadir Bakhsh, Inayati Khan and Ustad Talib Husain Pakhawaji.

A single important factor that contributed much to the promotion of melodic culture of Lahore was the institution of *baithaks* , where people used to meet in the evening to confabulate in music, and enjoy presentations of some of the finest exponents of *gharana* styles of *kheyal* vocalisation. When Lahore was confined within the Walled City, and when the individual was still integrated into a more or less compact group, the institution of *baithaks* served a useful purpose inasmuch as it shaped the habits and formulated artistic tastes of the people through imitation, initiation and instruction.

MELODIC DIMENSIONS OF LAHORE'S CULTURE

The historic city of Lahore is known the world over for its multi-dimensional historical-cultural ambience. It has been, and continues to be, a hub of glorious traditions, which flowered as a consequence of a long inter-communal, multi-ethnic social interactions, spanning several centuries. The ensuing cross-cultural pollination gave its ambience the present form and dimensions, particularly its melodic personality, which has contributed to the national melodic mainstream.

There is something unique, almost indefinable, about the relationship between its landscape and the people that is abundantly demonstrated by its beauty, lifestyle of its inhabitants, and their culture which is manifest in dramatic new ways.

The creative imagination and intellectual vigour of its residents, coupled with the splendid architectural heritage of the city, has given Lahore a truly cosmopolitan character. Its inherent natural characteristics of site and terrain; its sense of place; its sense of history, its spirit and its cultural/melodic ethos, have blended in an inspiring and pleasing manner, and are being carried forward through the genetic memory of the people

In terms of history, Lahore has braved a number of huge turmoils of serious nature during the past many centuries. Lying in the pathway of conquerors from the north, and achieving the distinction of being both provincial and country capital during different periods of history, Lahore has been subjected to multifarious influences of its rulers, ethnic groups, cultural and political currents emanating from Asia Minor, Afghanistan, Iran, and during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, from England and Europe, which have contributed to the shaping of its unique character and multi-dimensional cultural personality. This reckoning should also include the abrasive contacts

which it had with ancient Hindu and European civilizations before the advent of Islam,.

The cultural personality of the city received a jolt after mass exodus of the Hindus and the Sikhs in August 1947, when little less than half of its population crossed the border into India, and an equal number of Muslims from East Punjab came to settle here. The multi-dimensional aspect of its personality was thus affected by the massive involuntary exchange of population between Pakistan and India, which was forced by the aftermath of partition. However, despite the exodus of its non-Muslim population, the cultural traditions of this city continued to be strengthened.

One of the vibrant aspects of Lahore's personality has been its melodic culture, which persisted after independence. The old Walled City of Lahore was the hub of cultural activities before and several years after the partition of the Sub-continent. It was from here that a large number of melodists of international repute emerged to make their wholesome contributions to the melodic culture of South Asia.

Not only did Lahore produce world-renowned melodists, but also welcomed within its fold vocalists and instrumentalists from other parts of the province and the Sub-continent, particularly from the historic town of Kasur. The congeniality of its social and cultural environment proved too irresistible for them to return to the places of their birth. Composers Feroze Nizami, Khurshid Anwar, Master Inayat Hussain, to mention a few, were the sons of Lahore's soil, while melodists of the calibre of Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Barkat Ali Khan and Nur Jehan, not to forget composers Master Ghulam Haider and G.A. Chishti, came to settle in this city.

Senior denizens, some of the World War I and II vintage, still fondly entertain the nostalgic memories of the past and take pride in recalling the remarkable traits of the vivacious citizens of the Walled City of Lahore. A majority of maestros of yore had their baithaks inside the old city which they used for meldoic proselytisation and demonstration of their creative prowess.

Old Lahore, with its narrow, murky lanes, dilapidated historic *havelis* (mansions), *takias* (community centres), *baithaks* (large living rooms of affluent citizens), and a large number of big and small mosques, points to a sharp contrast to modern housing colonies and complexes, supermarkets and fashionable plazas and boulevards, which sprang up

all around the Walled City during the past five decades. The breeze of modernisation, which is blowing in these posh suburbs, has also infiltrated some parts of the old city, weakening the links of its inhabitants with their cultural past.

Lahore has also been the cultural and educational centre of the country for several decades. For some people, it still retains that position. Being the cultural capital of Pakistan, it serves as a good example of a 'cultural melting pot' in which different sub-cultures have meshed with each other. It has absorbed and welcomed inputs from other regions of the country, and has evolved, refined, promoted and perpetuated the unity in national cultural diversity.

Anthropologists and social scientists rightly claim that every culture has something to offer to other cultures and, by the same token, can embellish and invigorate itself by taking some good aspects of others. Pakistani culture, which is clearly manifest in the lifestyle of the Lahoris, is an appropriate example of this exchange of creative ideas and artistic thoughts. Periodically beefed up by inputs from various sub-cultures of different geographic regions of the country, Lahore's own distinct melodic culture has been, and continues to gain strength and enchantment. The commingling of creative melodic thoughts emanating from other regions of the country, has provided secure foundations for a vibrant Pakistani melodic culture of which Lahore serves as a focal point.

The role played by professional *gharana* musicians in fostering new melodic traditions of the city cannot be minimised. Despite the non-availability of proper and adequate facilities, they carried on with their melodic pursuits in such a manner as would help the young aspirants to devote their time and energies in perfecting this performing art. In this context, a chain of *baithaks*, located within the Walled City at different places, not too long ago, played a significant role in the grooming of new artists, and also in the perpetuation of old traditions. It was only after the unchecked horizontal expansion of the city that these old traditions received a set back. The emergence of modern substitutes for the old *baithaks*, like Lahore Arts Council Complex and other auditoria in the city, filled the cultural gap to a large extent, at the same time providing the melodists some employment opportunities.

Other institutions, which have contributed significantly to the promotion of local melodic culture are Radio Pakistan, Pakistan Television, stage and the film industry. A large number of musicians

are associated with these institutions, which produce melodic programmes of different kinds.

Despite constant erosion of time, Lahore has managed to retain many of its old traditions, which have been handed down to the citizens from generations. Of late, the alien pop fads, which have invaded our melodic ethos, have put a few dents in the edifice of music, but the resilience of its traditional varieties has succeeded in braving the situation.

Several art-promoting organizations are currently engaged in presenting music programmes on a regular basis, which are attended by a large number of music buffs, young and old alike. There seems to be a competition of some kind among these organisations, a few of which are dominated by publicity-mongering rich citizens. But their contributions to local melodic culture are nonetheless appreciated by the inhabitants of this city.

Theatre is a current fad among the Lahoris. A number of cinemas have recently been converted into theatre halls where presentations are made daily, attracting large crowds.

This kind of theatre is in contrast to the old theatre that was in vogue in the city at the turn of the century in which music played a major role.

A large number of musicians were associated with those theatrical companies which used their services in providing background music to plays staged by them. In that sense, theatre, too, has contributed to the chiselling of the melodic personality of Lahore.

INFLUX OF MELODISTS

The partition of India on August 14, 1947, spawned the involuntary exchange of population between India and Pakistan. Communal riots engineered by members of Rashtariya Sevak Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha workers, (who were aided and abetted by the private armies of Sikh princely states of Patiala, Kapurthala, Bikanir and Jind), forced the Muslims of east Punjab to leave their hearths and homes to take shelter in Pakistan. In the wake of forced exodus, one million Muslims were killed by armed Hindu mobs and soldiers of Sikh states. An estimated 50,000 Muslim women were also abducted by the rioters.

Entering Pakistan after August 14, 1947 as refugees were a large number of Muslim melodists from Ferozepur, Jallandhar and Ambala Divisions of East Punjab, a majority of whom settled in Lahore. Included among them were such luminaries as Ustad Sardar Khan Delhiwaley, Ustad Ashiq Ali Khan, Ustad Akhtar Hussian Khan and his sons; the *kheyal* singers from Patiala; Ustad Bundoo Khan, the *sarangi* maestro from Delhi; Ustad Fateh Ali Khan (*sitar* player from Kapurthala); Ustad Habib Ali Khan Beenkar; Shaukat Husain Khan and Talib Hussain Khan, *tabla*-players from Jallandhar; clarinettist Alamgir Khan from Amritsar; Tufail Niazi (folk singer from Kapurthala); Nazakat Ali Khan and Salamat Ali Khan, the budding vocalists from Sham Chaurasi village in Jallandhar Division; *ghazal*-singer Mukhtar Begum and her sister Fareeda Khanum from Amritsar; *thmri-dadra-ghazal* singer Iqbal Bano from Rohtak; and the queen of classical music, Raushan Ara Begum from Bombay.

A number of non Muslim practitioners of melodic arts also left Lahore for India in the aftermath of communal riots. They included Pundit Janardhan, who was head of Gandharv Mahaviddayala on Ravi Road; popular singers Surender Kaur and her two sisters; and composers Lachhi Ram, Gobind Ram, Amar Nath and Shayyam Sunder.

Composers Rafique Ghazanvi, Master Jhandey Khan, Rashid Attray, G.A.Chishti and Feroze Nizami also returned to Pakistan close to August 14, 1947 and so did Khurshid Anwar, a few years later.

Among the many melodists who emigrated into Pakistan after partition, Tufail Niazi and the duo of Nazakat-Salamat (along with their three younger brothers) temporarily lived in Multan, but after a few years, settled in Lahore. Sarangi player Ustad Bundoo Khan made Lahore his temporary abode but shifted to Karachi a year or so later, when Karachi Station of Radio Pakistan was set up. A classical vocalist of Sub-continental fame, Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan of Kirana, left Lahore in 1947, only to renew his contacts with a few members of his family in Kirana in Muzaffarnagar district, but could not return as he was plucked away by the inexorable angel of death. Ustad Waheed Khan, who had a large number of his *shagirds* (pupils) in Lahore, had spent the better part of his life in this metropolis

The world-renowned Pakistani duos of Nazakat Ali Khan-Salamat Ali Khan and Amanat Ali Khan-Fateh Ali Khan, both of whom had made their debut from Lahore station of All India Radio about mid 40s as child singers, were groomed to their maximum potential in Lahore after partition. Their talent blossomed in the early 50s, when they held complete sway in the world of male vocal classical music. They received tremendous boost after the emigration into India of Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan and his son Munawwar Ali Khan. Another classicist, Ustad Habib Ali Khan Beenkar, who lived in Lahore for several years before settling in Hyderabad (Sindh), is still remembered by discriminating listeners for his melodic erudition and performing skill. In the domain of rhythmic art, the name of Ustad Khalifa Qadir Bakhsh Pakhwaji shall ever remain enshrined in the annals of music, especially the cultural ethos of Lahore. His contributions to grooming a large number of budding *tabla* players, not only in Pakistan, but also in India, are acknowledged by those who were or are associated with Pakistani melodic culture. To quote one example of Khalifa Qadir Bakhsh's influence on Sub-continental music, Ustad Allah Rakha, the Indian tabla wizard, is one of his progenies.

The decade of the 60s is considered the golden era of Pakistani melodic culture. It was during that period that vocalists of the calibre of Raushan Ara Begum, the duos of Amanat Ali Khan-Fateh Ali Khan and Nazakat Ali Khan-Salamat Ali Khan, and instrumentalists of the potential of Ustad Sharif Khan Poonchwaley (*sitar*), Sohni Khan (clarinet), Master Sadiq Ali (piano), Ustad Shaukat Hussain Khan, a

pupil of Khalifa Qadir Bakhsh Pakhwaji (*tabla*) dominated the scene in the classical arts. Films produced in Lahore studios from the late 50s to the end of the 60s, with a few exceptions, brimmed with the ebullient compositional skill of melodists like Khurshid Anwar. Rashid Attray, Master Inayat Hussain, and G.A. Chishti. The decade of the 60s was indeed the most productive period in the annals of Pakistani melodic culture.

Also, during that period, a large number of concerts were held in Lahore under the auspices of All Pakistan Music Conference, and to a lesser extent, by other music-promoting cultural organizations. The Lahore Arts Council also set up a Music Academy where composer/vocalist Feroze Nizami taught music to young aspirants, although the results of his endeavours were not as productive as were desired and expected.

One of the benefits of the golden era of music was that a majority of practitioners of this art, for the first time, had a taste of affluence, which was a very welcome development .They were relieved of pressures generated by their mundane needs. A distinct class of discerning listeners also appeared on the local melodic scene, who could fathom the intricacies of this esoteric art and enjoy good music..

The *Rubabi* musicians have traditionally been associated with theatre and film, although one cannot forget competent vocalists of the class of Bhai Roora and Bhai Boora, not to exclude from this reckoning the names of Ustad Bhai Lal Muhammad Amritsari and his son Ustad Ghulam Hassan Shaggan. The most to benefit from the music boom, from the standpoint of monetary compensation, were these Rubabi musicians (some of whom were very competent composers like Master Ghulam Haider and Rasheed .Attray), a majority of whom played different instruments, and were members of local film orchestras.

The contributions of *Rubabi* musicians to the further refinement of film music are ungrudgingly acknowledged by *Meerathi* professional musicians, music buffs and critics alike Even now, a majority of musicians working for radio, films and television, belong to the *Rubabi* clan, who are the descendants of Bhai Mardana, the rubab-playing companion of Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikh religion.

A number of non-*gharana* (*attayee*) practitioners of classical music also contributed to the promotion of art music in Lahore from 1947 to the mid-70s. Prominent among them were G.A. Farooq and his

progenies, Sheikh Qamaruddin (of Colour Printing Press) and Master Qamar Din, who maintained his *baithak* inside Mochi Gate in Gujjar Gali.

The melodic ethos of Lahore were much enriched by the creative activities of these men who were devoted to the preservation and promotion of Pakistan's rich melodic heritage.

TAKIA MEERAASIAN

A lost cultural landmark

One of the landmarks in melodic traditions of Lahore was Takia Meeraasian where, not too long ago, melodists of Sub-continental class used to demonstrate their creative prowess.

Located on Chamberlain Road, a short distance from the historic Mochi Gate, it served as an open university for the melodists, especially from northern India, and an important educational institution, where young aspirants and budding melodists were groomed for their careers in this esoteric performing art..

In old days, when Lahore was confined within the Walled City (which was surrounded by a beautiful, lush green garden), a chain of *takias* ringed around the old city. Takia Meeraasian was one of the many places where people, coming into the city from other parts of the province, spent the nights, especially when they arrived after dusk.

In the absence of authentic literature, it is difficult to ascertain as to when Takia Meeraasian came into existence. But, according to some senior melodists, it was built about 170 years ago, during the reign of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. However, its use as a place for melodic confabulations and concerts became the vogue during the British period. It was in the year 1942 when I visited this place for the first time and watched a number of senior melodists in action. Later, it became a habit with me to go there regularly in the afternoon to enjoy impromptu music concerts, and also to observe melodists practicing their art at its open ground.

It takes a long time, often centuries, for a city or a country, to create its distinct cultural identity and land landmarks, but it takes only a short time to destroy these, especially when these places become victims of societal neglect. Lahore has a long list of rich. variegated,vibrant and enduring cultural and melodic landmarks. Even before the division of British India into Pakistan and Bharat, Lahore was known for the

abundant hospitality, affability and cultural vivacity of its citizens, who were admired for their collective contributions to the melodic culture of South Asia.

Of its several pre-partition cultural landmarks, Takia Meeraasian was known all over the Sub-continent for its lively melodic activities. Senior denizens still recall with much nostalgic fondness the daily impromptu soirees that used to take place at Takia Meeraasian. Once the hub of melodic activities and an important cultural landmark of Lahore, it now seems to have been forgotten and ignored by the Lahoris. A majority of citizens among the new generation even do not know where it is located. Music concerts are not held there any more, not even on the death anniversaries of old masters, who once used to demonstrate their melodic prowess at that place in the presence of musically-knowledgeable citizens.

The irony of the situation is manifest in the fact that even the descendants of those melodists, who once added so much to the pristine glories of Takia Meeraasian, don't care about the importance of this place in the cultural history of Lahore. A recent visit to the place revealed that not a single musician now visits it any more.

Very few people in the city know about the history of Takia Meeraasian; who turned this community centre into an open music concert hall; and when the melodists organized first music concert there .Now it is surrounded by a cluster of shops and the structure is supposedly under the management of a committee composed of musicians hailing from Kasur and Lahore.. In addition to a large open space, it has a mosque, a well, a bathroom, a small living room and a wrestling arena, perhaps to remind music buffs that learning and attaining proficiency in classical vocal music was as arduous a task as wrestling. No wonder classicists were supposed to be in a state of complete physical fitness before embarking upon their melodic careers.

Senior citizens, who have had the good fortune of visiting Takia Meeraasian before the division of the Sub-continent, still fondly remember how vociferously seasoned melodists used to present their creative ideas and rubbed their points of view in the minds of the listeners. Often, they would go back into history to quote from the works (*asthai-antaras*) of old maestros to score points against their opponents.

In those days, there was hardly a melodist of repute (vocalist, instrumentalist or percussionist) who had not, at least on one occasion, given a demonstration of his melodic skill at Takia Meeraasian before he was accepted as a *bona fide* member of local melodic fraternity. Such was the importance of that place which was daily thronged by votaries of music of all age groups. Melodists who did succeed in establishing their credentials at Takia Meeraasian, and created favourable impression on the audiences gathered at that place, won kudos and accolades from the knowledgeable and appreciating listeners.

In its original form and structure, a *takia* was intended to provide a place of rest to a visitor to the city to spend the first night prior to his entering the Walled City, especially if he had reached Lahore at dusk, and had no place to go. It usually had a set of rooms, along with a well attached to the bathroom. Later, additional uses of a *takia* were made, and it also began to serve as a meeting place for community activities. Still later, *takia* assumed the role of a *panchayat ghar*, where disputes were presented for arbitration by senior citizens.

In the days gone by, people visited *takias* in the afternoon to gainfully spend their spare time. Recitals from Waris Shah's Heer by professional singers, readings from Punjabi mystic poetry; games of chess and occasional music concerts were their main attractions. Bouts among second string wrestlers were also arranged at some among the better known local *takias*. However, with the passage of time, Takia Meeraasian assumed an altogether different character and ambience, in addition to the functions mentioned earlier. It became a bastion of music, where the practitioners of this sophisticated art and music buffs participated in melodic confabulations and daily impromptu concerts in an environment of respectful informality.

With every tick of the clock Takia Meeraasian gained more importance and its role in city's cultural activities became profound. It was this place which provided the citizens of Lahore, especially the votaries of classical music and the practitioners of this art, many opportunities to enjoy melodies of such luminaries as vocalists Ustad Kaley Khan, Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Ustad Umeed Ali Khan, and a number of other frontline vocalists; percussionists Mian Qadir Bakhsh, Ahmad Jan Thirakva and Inayat Khan'; Beenkars Abdul Aziz Khan and his brother Habib Ali Khan, and clarinettists Sohni Khan and Alamgir Khan (to name a few) before August 1947 and thereafter.

According to late Siraj Nizami (*Naqoosh* Lahore Number), Ustad Ashiq Ali Khan of Patiala *gharana* spent the evening of his life at Takia Meeraasian, where he was laid to rest after his demise in 1948. His tomb was built by one of his pupils, Farida Khanum, the well-known *ghazal* singer of Pakistan. Ustad Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan, for a number of years after partition, was a regular daily visitor to Takia Meeraasian, where he tried to revive the old melodic traditions of this once all-important place for the musicians.

During the decades of the 40s, especially before the division of the Sub-continent, a large number of melodists of All-India fame performed at Takia Meeraasian. Included among them were Pandit Narayan Rao Vyas, Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan and Ustad Ameer Khan of Indore. For several years after partition, the *Takia* used to be the focal point of melodic activities in the city. After the death of Ustad Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan, this place was completely deserted and no one from the fraternity of professional musicians bothered to go there, either to look after the place, or to practice music.

With increasing demographic pressure on the old city and horizontal expansion of Lahore in all directions, Takia Meeraasian has lost its appeal for the present generation of Lahoris. After recent commercialization of the area, the *Takia* has been deprived of its cultural value and importance as it has been encroached upon by shopkeepers, who have obscured its façade from the sight of the people.

With the demise of Takia Meerasian, one of the oldest and vibrant cultural institution of Lahore has vanished from the melodic ethos of the city. Art-promoting associations and societies that exist in the city do not bother to pay any attention to the plight of Takia Meeraasian, where musicians from all parts of the Sub-continent came to pay their melodic homage to the culturally-vivacious, and musically-erudite citizens of Lahore.

USTAD ABDUL WAHEED KHAN

A classical singer of great merit

Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan was the first towering figure of the music world with whom I came in contact at a very young age. It was in the early 1940s when the late Khan Saheb started visiting my father, a friend of his, once in a week in our house in the old city. As, according to my father, I was not fully concentrating on my studies and was consuming my time in singing, he asked Khan Saheb to enlighten me. But the Khan Saheb first asked me to sing "something" so that he could test my vocal resources. Without any hesitation, I blurted out a popular film song, which pleased his ears. After a careful thought and glancing knowingly at my face, he advised me to first complete my education and then take a plunge in the ocean of music.

Although K.S. Abdul Waheed Khan hailed from Muzaffarnagar district of UP (India), his contributions to Lahore's melodic culture were nonetheless great. He spent a better part of his life in this city of gardens, where he had a large number of *shagirds* (pupils) whom he groomed with meticulous care and attention. Included among them were Feroze Nizami, Hirbai (later known as Waheeda Khanum), Pandit Jeevan Lal Mattoo, who later retired as Director-General of All India Radio, Delhi, and Nazar Mohyuddin, who died in Bombay as actor Amer.

In Lahore, the late Khan Saheb also participated in soirees sponsored by affluent citizens and concerts at different *takias*, especially Takia Meerasiaan and the *mazar* of Sabaz Peer in Hira Mandi. Besides, he regularly broadcast his music from Lahore station of All India Radio before the emergence of Pakistan

Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan, who was somewhat hard of hearing, and was affectionately known as Behray Khan, was the second pillar of Kirana *gharana* of *kheyal* singers. During his apprenticeship with *sarangi* player Mian Rehman Bakhsh, another vocalist, Ismail Khan was also receiving training at the same time. It is said that Ismail

Khan's voice and style of singing sounded so much like those of Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan that it was difficult for the listeners to differentiate between the two. However, Abdul Waheed Khan excelled him in melodic erudition and the slow progressive delineation of a raga.

The partial deafness of Abdul Waheed Khan could not diminish his learning capacity and his subsequent melodic prowess. He did not have as pliant a voice as Abdul Karim Khan had, but he was extremely good at *alap* singing (slow progression of a raga) and systematic delineation of a classical formulation. He had great understanding of rhythm, too. Although a pupil of the same *ustad*, his singing style radiated somewhat different nuances than those of Ustad Abdul Karim Khan, who was mellifluous to the hilt.

Except three recordings made by All India Radio before partition, not much of Abdul Waheed Khan's music is available. These are raga Darbari, Patdeep and Multani. When the Khan Saheb died in the year 1949, recording equipment was not available on a scale that it is in vogue now. Hence, radio was the only institution which recorded the melodies of classicists of yore.

BADE GHULAM ALI KHAN

Inimitable classical vocalist

Of the twelve gates of Lahore, three are better known for the melodic pursuits of their residents. These are Mochi Gate, Bhatti Gate and Taxali Gate.

The Haveli Mian Khan area, inside Mochi Gate,Lahore, was once inhabited by musicians of Sub-continental fame. Included among them were Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (who came from Kasur to settle in Lahore), Master Niaz Hussain Shami and Bashir Ali Mahi, whose contributions added a new tangent to the melodic culture of Pakistan. In their neighbourhood also lived other melodists of the calibre of Ustad Chhote Ghulam Ali Khan and Khurshid Anwar.

Some time, even apparently an innocuous and casual remark, or an insignificant incident, leads to an event of far-reaching social or cultural consequences, leaving indelible mark on the annals of a particular discipline. An unintentional jibe by singing duo aimed at another musician in the late 20s culminated in the birth of one of the brightest stars on the melodic firmament of the Sub-continent. Within a short period of time its glow spread all over pre-partition India. He commanded ungrudging respect from professional musicians and also won the hearts of millions of music buffs both in Pakistan as well as India and Bangladesh. He was Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, the classy classical vocalist, who had to leave his country of birth because of societal neglect and indifference of cultural bureaucracy of Pakistan.

The late Qazi Zahurul Haq, in his book, *Muallamul Naghmaat*, has disclosed that the famous *qawwals* Mubarak Ali Khan-Fateh Ali Khan Jallandhari were once invited to lunch by the late Bade Ghulam Ali Khan. The *qawwals*, who were known for their melodic erudition and expertise in rendering classical compositions, declined the invitation after making the insinuation that they could break bread with a classical singer but not with a *saparda* (a musician who provides instrumental accompaniment to a female singer). Young Ghulam Ali Khan was then a *sarangi* accompanist of a well-known classical

singer of Lahore, Inayatbai Dheroowali. The cutting edge of insinuating remark of the *qawwals* hurt Ghulam Ali so much that there and then he decided to give up *sarangi* playing. He also made the firm resolve to practise the art of classical vocalisation so that he could not be derided by anyone any more

That was how a great artist emerged on the musical scene of Lahore.. And what a classy singer he ultimately turned out to be. Those who have heard him singing (in person or through his many audio recordings) will agree with me that he was one of the most accomplished singers of Pakistan until he migrated to India about the mid-50s. His mellifluous renditions of classical *asthai-antaras*, and the variety of effects his unique and pliant voice created, mesmerised music buffs for about 30 years during his life, and continue to cast hypnotic spells on initiated listeners through his recorded music after his death.

Born in Kasur in the year 1902 (according to some in 1903) in a family of professional musicians, this melodist of inimitable virtuosity was initiated in instrumental music by his father, Ali Bakhsh. For about 15 years, it is said, young Ghulam Ali played *sarangi* before he turned to classical singing. During his youth he had been trained by his uncle, Ustad Kaley Khan, a disciple of the legendary Mian Taan Rus Khan. whose progenies introduced the *kheyal* style of classical singing in the Punjab. The family of Ghulam Ali Khan shifted to Lahore where they lived in Haveli Mian Khan. By 1940, Bade Ghulam Ali Khan had already made his mark on the melodic scene of the Lahore.

Several Indian writers have claimed that Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan was an Indian national at the time of partition, and went to Lahore after August 14. 1947 and that he returned to India a few years later. This is factually incorrect. Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan was a Pakistani national at the time of independence when Pakistan emerged on the political map of the world. He stayed in the country of his birth for several years after independence and migrated to India in mid-50s, when he did not find cultural environment in Pakistan congenial and conducive to the flowering of his talent.

Like other melodists, he used to tour princely states before partition, to perform in the *darbars* of the *Rajas* and *Nawabs*, but he was not formally attached with any state such as Patiala as claimed by Manjri Sinha in the book *Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan* (Lotus Collection, Roli Books). In Patiala *darbar*, Ustad Akhter Hussain Khan (the father

of Amanat Ali Khan-Fateh Ali Khan) was employed as a court musician. He along with his sons migrated to Pakistan in September 1947.

Also, it has been claimed by several writers that a distinct Kasur *gharana* existed in the Punjab to which Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan belonged. If a *gharana* is taken to mean a family tree, a *khandaan* or a clan, then the claim is justified. But *gharanas* in music are recognized only for their distinct styles of singing. Their innovative contributions to the *kheyal* genre of singing. *Gharanas* are known for their different aesthetic approaches to this genre of classical singing; their peculiar methods of voice production and taking *taans* (flights). *Gharanas* are also known and respected for heir acknowledged endeavours to preserve *kheyal's* serenity, beauty of its form with their creative fancy. The mentors of Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan were the followers of Patiala *gharana kheyal* traditions. And he himself, at one time, received training from Ustad Ashiq Ali Khan of Patiala *gharana*. It. is, therefore, not correct to assert that a Kasur *gharana* of musicians as such had existed.

Parenthetically, like many of his contemporaries Bade Ghulam Ali Khan also participated in theatrical activities. Because of his burly physical ambience and dark skin , he was once given the role of *kala deo* (black giant) in a play entitled *Inder Sabha*, which he enacted well. After the advent of motion pictures, he also composed music for a movie, which did not fare well at the box office. His younger brothers - Barkat Ali Khan and Mubarak Ali Khan - also created names for themselves - the former for his stylish rendition of *thumris*, *dadras* and *ghazals*, and the later (less) for his classical singing and (more) for acting in a couple of successful Punjabi films as a hero against Mumtaz Shanti and Bimla Kumari.

Those of us from Lahore, who have had the good fortune of listening to live music of Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, vividly remember his almost daily impromptu concerts at a place known as Jhuggiaan near the two converging walls of the Lahore Fort inside Roshnai Gate. And his weekly concerts at the tombs of Asif Jah and Nur Jehan, across the Ravi during the early 40s. Takia Meeraasian outside Mochi Gate, very close to the house where the maestro used to live in Lahore was yet another place where the late Khan Saheb used to practice his art occasionally.

The late Khan Saheb was quite at ease at singing almost all genres of music - *kheyal, thumri, dadra, kafi* and folk and thus represented a cross-section of today's many-faceted and fascinating music world. No wonder he chose Subrang as his *nom deplume* which he used in his own composition of *asthai-antaras*. But his forte was *kheyal* and *thumri*, which always sounded fresh and brimmed with his strong individual traits and talent. Unlike his contemporaries, who did not think much of it, he also had a special liking for folk songs. Those music buffs who remained close to him, remember that the late Khan Saheb knew many Punjabi, Kashmiri, Sindhi, Poorbi, Bengali and even Nepali folk songs, which he sang with much gusto.

As fate would have it, such a talented musician as Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan was forced to leave his native land . Prior to his migration to India, he shifted to Karachi, where he was annoyed by the behaviour and superciliousness of a radio boss. After about one year's stay there, he returned to Lahore from where he visited India several months in a year, ultimately to settle there.

One of the compelling reasons for his departure (for good) for India was the indifference of radio (the only mode of entertaining then) to classical music and musicians, and the taboos unnecessarily attached with this esoteric perfuming art which was refined, nurtured and practiced by Muslim musicians for over 800 years in the Sub-continent.

Predictably, Bade Ghulam Ali Khan was warmly received in India where, after some time, he was honoured with the highest civil awards given to individuals for their artistic excellence. (The late Khan Saheb told several persons in Lahore, including this scribe, that the then Indian Prime Minster, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, had personally persuaded him to settle in India permanently, instead of staying there for six or nine months in a year and going back to Pakistan to qualify for yet another Indian visa, it is a pity that as a result of the alleged high-handedness of a cultural bureaucrat, a great artist of Pakistan had to say goodbye to his motherland.

Gifted with abundant natural talent, the great vocalist could sing any form of music and keep the level of his performance at a sustained level. Paying tribute to his virtuosity, Manjri Sinha has observed:

"With his music, he illustrated what the Patiala *gaiyki* (style of singing) represented. He retained the traditional flavour of the style, but

ornamented it with his creative genius, to create a style he christened as the Kasoor *gaiyki*. Diligently studying voice culture, he emphasised the need to cultivate a natural and expressive voice, devoid of any false mannerisms. Absolute accuracy of *swara* (tone) was to be maintained painstakingly even in the fastest of *taan* passages. A beautiful, flawless *aakar* came to characterise his style, besides the above features".

V.N.Dashpande, a noted Indian musicologist, has praised Bade Ghullam Ali Khan, in the following words:

"His voice was flawless from the point of view of the modern science of voice culture.

"Compared to Kirana (*gaiyki*), Ghulam Ali Khan allowed greater scope to rhythm-play in which he had a considerable virtuosity. *Bole* element was relatively abundant in his music.

"In very slow tempo, he could produce very fast revolution and in slow tempo, extremely slow revolutions;. A voice which easily moved in any tempo was a special gift of the Creator to Ghulam Ali Khan"

All artists to varying degrees, are emotional and acutely sensitive to human sufferings, joys, yearnings and hopes. The late Khan Saheb, however, was a class by himself. His sensitivity was sharper and the scope of his emotional universe wider than that of any other among his contemporaries. Even a minor event of emotional distress left a deep impression on his mind, and changed the direction of his life. The dig, which the *qawwals* had at him, was a clear pointer to this trait of his personality.

Did Bade Ghulam Ali Khan leave Pakistan of his own volition? Did he become enamoured of money, grandeur and luxurious lifestyle? Or, was he a victim of societal neglect and callous indifference? Or, did he succumb to the over-bearing attitude and behaviour of a senior cultural bureaucrat? Perhaps, a combination of all these factors forced him to leave his homeland, which constantly bugged him in dreams, especially during the evening of his life.

THE UNFORGETTABLE RAUSHAN ARA BEGUM

Death occurred on December 6, 1982 of Pakistan's only top-ranking female classical vocalist, Malika-e-Mauseeqi Raushan Ara Begum. Pakistan became the poorer with the sudden departure of the queen of music to the ethereal world. She had been very aptly called a phenomenon as her voice, its timbre, musical intelligence and sensitivity all combined to produce a perfect accord.

Although she hailed from Calcutta, the Malika contributed to Lahore's melodic culture in a big way. Even before the partition of the Sub-continent, she used to visit Lahore to participate in musical soirees arranged at the residences of affluent citizens and Chun Peer, and also to broadcast her music from the Lahore Station of All India Radio. This scribe nostalgically remembers her presentation in Mohalla Pir Gilaanian inside Mochi Gate, Lahore, when she pleasantly surprised local musical heavyweights and connoisseurs by her tuneful rendition of raga *Emen*.

Possessing a rich, mature. mellifluous and fresh voice that could easily lend itself to the expression of a wide range of moods, Raushan Ara Begum developed and employed natural talent in the promotion of an art which requires a high degree of cultivation and training. She was the best representative of Kirana *gharana* style of classical singing. A worthy disciple of Ustad Abdul Karim Khan, she embodied in her art all the exquisite and enticing qualities of her mentor's delicate style of *kheyal*-singing. She was equally good at step-by-step progression from one note to another while delineating ragas, and also in taking breezy *taans* (flights) in the strand of her mentor

The Malika, as she was affectionately called, was an outstanding personality in the music world and remained so until her death. She had a profound knowledge of the theory of classical music and practised this esoteric art for over 40 years.

Raushan Ara Begum was bestowed with the ability of commanding instant respect and appreciation from her audiences. That she did by using long sweeps of notes, or applying *meends*, and her swinging flights, which were supplemented by her emotion-charged voice. Her manner of voice production contained fullness as well as delicacy, showing marked influences of Kirana *gharana*.

She had extraordinarily keen and subtle perception of *sur* (melodic note) so much so that the slightest lapse from the correct intonation of a note in the rendering of a raga would be seen reflected in a knowing look on her face. Her renditions were marked by richness and variety of her voice which always sounded as fresh as they were learned, and as inspiring as they were profound. The distinctly individualistic character of her presentation made every recital an interpretation and self-expression, whether it was a raga, *thumri* or a *dadra*.

Emigrating to Pakistan in 1948, the Calcutta born classical vocalist settled in Lalamusa, a small town almost mid-way between Lahore and Rawalpindi, a place to which her husband originally belonged. Although far removed from the cultural centre of Lahore, she never gave up her daily *riyaz* (practice) and shuttled back and forth to participate in melodic moots and also to broadcast her music from Radio Pakistan, Lahore.

Raushan Ara Begum will always be remembered, thanks to the audio and visual recordings, for the richness of her music which often overflowed with tonal modulations, for its sweetness and delicacy. of *gammaks* (trills), and for her slow progression of the ragas (*alap*). Her presentations, by and large, stood supreme among the melodic demonstrations of her contemporaries

It is difficult to describe in words the kind of music she created during her renditions. But it went straight to the hearts of the votaries of the art, creating a soothing effect on the listeners. Music demonstrates the human ability to transmute the substance of everyday experience into a body of sound that has coherence, direction and flow, unfolding its own life in a meaningful and natural way, both in time and space. Like life music never ends, because it can always be recreated. After so many years of her death, Raushan Ara Begum's music can be recreated by playing back her audio and visual recordings. Just a flick of the knob or a push of a button brings back her melodic personality with all its vividness and charm.

USTAD SALAMAT ALI KHAN OF SHAM CHAURASI *GHARANA*

Ustad Nazakat Ali Khan and Salamat Ali Khan of the Sham Chaurasi *gharana* contributed much to Lahore and Pakistani melodic culture until 1974 when the brothers disbanded their duo. After partition of the Sub-continent, they came to settle temporarily in Multan. A few years later, they shifted to Lahore where they practised their profession with distinction, and soon joined the ranks of celebrities of Pakistan.

The Nazakat -Salamat duo was the leading exponent of Sham Chaurasi style of *kheyal* singing which remained in the musical limelight in Pakistan until 1974. The disbanding of their duo was an unfortunate incident which damaged the cause of classical music in Pakistan. After the death of Nazakat Ali Khan a few years later, Ustad Salamat Ali Khan had his son Sharafat Ali as his junior singing partner. Since then, he also has used his youngest son Shafqat Ali as a member of the trio, which has given performences abroad, particularly in India, UK and the United States.

Born in a small village, Sham Chaurasi in 1934, Salamat Ali Khan is one of the five sons of the late Wilayat Ali Khan. Simultaneously with his formal education, which was terminated when he was in the eighth class, young Salamat received musical training from his *dhurpad*-singing father. He is also reported to have benefited from the musical wisdom of his three maternal uncles, especially Master Niaz Husain Shami.

Although Salamat Ali Khan comes of a family of *dhurpad* singers, he claims that *kheyal* style dawned on him by the blessings and spiritual powers of Mian Karim Bakhsh Majzoob, an elder in the famly. He was also inspired by Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan and other senior contemporaries. Starting his career as a partner with his older brother, he made his first public performance at the prestigious annual *mela* at Hari Vallabh in Jallandhar District at a very young age. "We were so

small", he claims "that we were bodily lifted and put on the stage" "Our father", he goes on to claim in his autobiography. "accompanied us on the *taanpura* during our rendition of *kheyal Mian ki todi.*

From 1944 to the time partition in August 1947, Nazakat Ali - Salamat Ali participated in several music conferences which were held at different cities in the Sub-continent, including Allahabad, Gorakhpur, Calcutta, Bombay and Gowaliar. They were lucky to have had opportunities to listen to the music of such great masters as Ustad Fayyaz Husain Khan, Ustad Ameer Khan, Ustad Alauddin Khan and Ustad Rajab Ali Khan. "Three inputs combined in our musical training", Salamat Khan proudly admits "which shaped our style. These were: training received from my elders, handwritten manuscripts of my elders and listening to the music of great masters".

Salamat Ali Khan is now a globe-trotter. From 1947 to 1974, he and older brother Nazakat Ali Khan toured India (on several occasions) Afghanistan (twice) the Soviet Union, United Kingdom (twice), Nepal, Netherlands, Norway and several other European countries, where they participated in several international music festivals After the death of his brother. Salamat Ali Khan performed solo for some time before having his eldest son join him in his renditions of *kheyal.* For about a decade, he has been travelling to foreign countries, at least six months in a year, to demonstrate his melodic prowess. In San Francisco, USA, he has set up a teaching institute where American music buffs receive training in Pakistani classical music. A number of LPs and CDs containing his music have been launched during the past decade in Pakistan and abroad.

For richness of raga forms overflowing with sentiment which is the basis of aesthetics; for subtlety of tonal differentiations; for sweetness and delicacy of *gammak* and for varieties of cross rhythmic patterns, Ustad Salamat Ali Khan, ranks high among contemporary classical vocalists in Pakistan as well as India. Of his many admirable qualities, the most significant perhaps is his highly developed lyricism. He has the gift of rendering sustained melodies that flow easily and have a high degree of expressiveness.

Ustad Salamat Ali Khan's talent has twice been recognized by the highest state authority in the country. He was awarded the Pride of Performance and the *Nishan -e- Imtiaz* medals.

USTAD FATEH ALI KHAN OF PATIALA *GHARANA*

The Patiala *gharana* of *kheyal* singers is considered the most vibrant because of its lively and sparkling style, the method of voice production, and the swinging and invigorating patterns of taking *taans*. Currently, the senior-most exponent of this style of classical singing in Pakistan is Ustad Fateh Ali Khan, who started his career in duo with his late brother Ustad Amanat Ali Khan.

Sons of classical vocalist Akhter Husain Khan, they migrated to Pakistan in September 1947 from the princely state of Patiala . This family of distinguished classical vocalists chose Lahore as their new city, where they carried on with their family profession.

Ustad Fateh Ali Khan is one of the distinguished grandsons of Jarnail Ali Bakhsh Khan, the founder of Patiala *gharana* of musicians which has produced a large number of musical heavyweights during the past one hundred years.

He started his training at the age of seven along with his elder brother, Amanat Ali Khan. Their father trained them with meticulous care. It was in the year 1945 when the young duo participated in their first radio programme from Lahore. The same year, they participated in music conference held at YMCA Lahore

Like other musicians, the family of Ustad Fateh Ali Khan also faced hardships in Pakistan during its formative years. But they persisted in their *riyaz* (practice) and it was that perseverance which brought them recognition at the first All Pakistan Music Conference held at Lahore. Later, they were selected by the government of Pakistan (twice in a row) as members of an official delegation to participate in the Jashne Kabul celebrations. From 1951 to 1965, the duo also regularly participated in several music conferences held in different Indian cities such as Calcutta, Bombay, Benaras, Patna and Allahabad.

Recognizing their opulent musical talent, the government of Pakistan bestowed upon them the highest award, the Pride of Performance medal in 1969. They were also selected by the government to represent Pakistan at the celebrations related to the coronation of the King of Nepal

The renditions of *kheyal* compositions by Ustad Fateh Ali Khan shine with the distinct features of Patiala style of classical vocalisation. His manner of voice production, presentation of *alap* and the method of taking flights are true specimen of the sparkling *gaiyki* of his *gharana.* A master musician, Ustad Fateh Ali Khan is primarily a *kheyal* singer, but can also sing *thumris*, *dadras* and *ghazals* with equal facility and aplomb.

One of the striking features of the Patiala *gharana* style of *kheyal* singing is that *bole-taans* figure prominently in their compositions. Compared with other *gharana* styles, the poetic texts of the musical compositions of this *gharana* are more pronounced. Listeners can comprehend the song texts without much difficulty, whereas in other *gharanas*, *asthai-antaras* are not easily discernible. The followers of this *gharana* traditions also don't allow their voices to suffer from the defects of their mentors. If the *ustad* has a defect in his voice, the *shagird* does not adopt it as a sacrosanct trait of the *gharana.*

Like other top-ranking Pakistani melodists, Ustad Fateh Ali Khan also travels abroad, introducing and popularizing Pakistani melodic culture to Western audiences. His contributions to Lahore and Pakistani meloidc culture are enduring and recognized by professional musicians, connoisseurs and critics. He has trained his two sons, who have already shown potential for the making of competent vocalists and for succeeding their father in their family profession.

USTAD GHULAM HASAN SHAGGAN

A complete artist

Among a handful of practitioners of Gowaliar *gharana* style *kheyal* singing in Pakistan, Ustad Ghulam Hassan Shaggan is still capable of enthralling votaries of art music despite his old age and failing health. His participation in the International Symposium on Music at Alhamra Arts Council and Lahore Fort during the first week of April 1997, and a number of concerts in Lahore since then, prove the point.

Ustad Shaggan represents the spirited, virtuosic side of our classical music, and embodies its more contemplative aspect. The hallmark of his art is the graceful handling of the *alap*, which is the floating meditative opening section of a raga performance, requiring no rhythmic accompaniment. At his best, as was evident in his recent performances, he draws his audiences into a subtle mood of listening, a kind of rapt concentration which is so peaceful, serene and satisfying.

Born at Amritsar in 1928, Ghulam Hassan cultivated a good taste and keen interest in art music from a very young age. "My elder brother, Nisar, a vocalist of recognized merit, wanted me to first complete my formal education before getting myself initiated in classical singing. He insisted that I first studied in a school but unfortunately he died at the young age of 23, and my formal education had to be interrupted when I was in the eighth class", he said while narrating some events of his early childhood. "Thereafter, I came under the tutelage of my father Ustad Bhai Lal Muhammad, who unfolded on me the mysteries of art music", Shaggan reminisced.

Ustad Ghulam Hassan Shaggan has given many performances at numerous music conferences in India and Pakistan from where he won encomiums for his quality music. However, he made his debut as a solo singer at the age of twelve from Amritsar. At the age of 17, he along with his parents, migrated to Pakistan in August 1947. Since then he has contributed much to the melodic culture of Lahore, in particular, and Pakistan, in general.

Ustad Shaggan has earned deserved merit for his individual and distinctive style of classical singing. He also won laurels from the Press, discriminating listeners and connoisseurs for his expert demonstrations of melodic prowess, which reflects the enduring Gowaliar traditions of *kheyal* singing.

In 1996, he was invited by Gerard Kurgijian, a French musicologist and promoter, to participate in an international music conference, which was convened at a small town 20 miles away from the Moroccan city of Fez. "My one-week stay in Morocco was coordinated between the sponsors and my French pupil Martina, who provided information about my musical background.", commented the Ustad, adding, "My son Qadir Ali along with *tabla* player Muhammad Ajmal and *sarangi* player Mubarik Ali Khan accompanied me on the tour".

The theme of the international melodic moot was pegged to the spiritual aspect of Sub-continental classical music, and Shaggan was asked to sing those compositions which were based on such lyrics as praised the glory of God, and at the same time proselytised the universal brotherhood of mankind.

"I presented ragas *Darbari* and *Pooria Dhannasari*, which were much appreciated by the delegates from other countries", Shaggan said with a glint of pride in his eyes". Ustad Shaggan was also interviewed by Moroccan state television and a video of his performance at the international music conference was made, which was later converted into a CD.. Ustad Shaggan was the only classical melodist from Pakistan who was invited to take part in the conference.

Recipient of the Pride of Performance medal, Ustad Shaggan is perhaps the senior most Pakistan follower of the vibrant Gowaliar style of *kheyal* singing, evolved and refined during the past 300 years. A musical prodigy, he inherited both his talent and performing skill from his father, a classical vocalist of outstanding merit

Ustad Shaggan belongs to an illustrious family of *Rubabi* musicians, whose contributions to the melodic culture of Pakistan are ungrudgingly acknowledged by all. Of his four sons, only Qadir Ali has been trained by him in the art of classical singing. He sings in duo with his father at public concerts, besides composing melodies for radio television and films. Another son of his, Mazhar Hassan Shaggan, plays mandolin and *rubab* and is capable of rendering

classical composition on these instruments. His third son assists his elder brother Qadir in his professional assignments.

The wealth of his knowledge of classical music and the rich family traditions warrant that all his sons should be trained in the art of classical singing. But he does not have the required physical facilities to do so. He lives in an apology of a house in Katri Bawa inside Kashmiri Gate, Lahore, which is not fit for use as a human habitat. A number of young aspirants wanted to benefit from his melodic wisdom but for want of proper facilities, he could not accede to their requests.

"I am not given enough opportunities to demonstrate my melodic prowess", complained Ustad Shaggan, who felt ignored by radio, television and cultural bureaucracy in the country. "Do you know that classical music has been pushed to a very low position in the priorities of Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television?", he said in a tone which reflected his utter disappointment with the official electronic media. "I am invited on an average of one programme in a year by PTV, and once a month by radio", he disclosed painfully.

Suggesting remedial measures, he said that classical melodists should be assured of a regular and sustained source of income so that they are not under pressure generated by their mundane needs. Secondly, they should be shown respect and given the social status that is due to them, like other artists such as painters, sculptors, actors, etc. "The practitioners of classical music should be invited to participate in radio and television programmes on a regular and frequent basis", he recommended, adding, "this will not only increase their incomes, but will also help in creating awareness among the people about the need to preserve our rich melodic heritage, besides winning appreciation for the esoteric art."

One could hardly disagree with what the septuagenarian melodist recommended.

G.A. FAROOQ

A leading light of music world

Music as a vocation has always been dominated by professional practitioners of this art. The genetic background of a musician is a significant factor in winning acceptance of his maturity and competence from fellow musicians, who measure his expertise with the yardstick of families or *gharanas* to which he belongs.

As an exception to this general rule, a number of melodists have surfaced in the past who did not inherit this art as a family occupation. These artists, in musical parlance, are called *atayees*, in contradistinction to others who are known as *meerathees* (the legatees) or Khan Sahibs. Despite the fact that the world of music has been dominated by the *meerathees*, there were a few *atayee* practitioners of this art who, at different periods of time, emerged on the musical scene and outshone their contemporary professional brethren.

Invariably, these *atayee* melodists were highly educated individuals, which proved the point that an educated person can acquire musical knowledge and performing skill quicker than his professional contemporaries who have music "in their blood" Among *atayee* melodists who contributed much to the refinement of our melodic culture, were Rafique Ghazanvi, Feroze Nizami, Khurshid Anwar and G.A.Farooq, not to forget Mian Shaharyar, Muhammad Rafi and Saleem Raza, who all hailed from Lahore...

In the death of G.A. Farooq on February 24, 1974, the world of music in general, and Pakistan in particular, lost not only a renowned melodist, but also a competent teacher and musicologist. He was both a seasoned and matured practitioner as well as an erudite theoretician. His rich and cultured voice had the quality to invoke almost instant response from discriminating listeners. His style of singing, which had an unmistakable stamp of the Kirana *gaiyki*, is enshrined in the memory of those who had had the pleasure of hearing him. He was a frontline exponent of *kheyal*, which is the most popular mode of

expression in our classical music. However, his greatest legacy is the large number of pupils whom he trained with almost fanatical devotion and exacting standards. A hard taskmaster, he demanded the same amount of dedication to music from his students.

Affectionately known as Bhai Jan among his students, he exerted much influence on the musical ethos of Lahore. Kaashana-e-Farooq in the Misri Shah area of Lahore, where he trained his many pupils remained, for over 25 years, a meeting point for musicians, musicologists and connoisseurs. (This scribe had the privilege and pleasure of visiting his house on umpteen occasions) His wholesome contributions to the cause of classical music, and the pains he took in securing for the musicians their rightful place in society endeared him among connoisseurs and practitioners of melodic arts

Born at Gujranwala on December 13, 1911, he belonged to a family that was steeped deep in orthodox religious traditions. His father, Maulana Abdullah Kasuri, was a renowned religious scholar. Farooq graduated from Islamia College, Lahore, and studied for one year at the University Law College., Lahore. So intense were his feelings for music that he started taking lessons in harmonium playing at an early age. When 15, he became a formal pupil of Babu Meraj Din, another well-known *atayee* musician of Lahore. Later, he went to Ustad Barkat Goteboaf and Mian Karim Bakhsh of Talwandi *gharana* to benefit from their melodic wisdom. In 1928, he joined the Gandharv Mahavidyala, a music training institute established in Lahore by the well-known revivalist Pandit Vishnu Degambar, after whose death it was taken over by Pandit Janardhan.

In 1936, Farooq went to Bombay to take lessons from Vinyakrao Patwardhan for six months. Later, his insatiable desire for music took him to Madras, where he spent two and a half years in his quest for musical knowledge. Returning to Lahore, Farooq befriended Pandit Jeevan Lal Mattoo (a pupil of Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan) who was widely admired for his melodic erudition. It was through him that Farooq had the good fortune of meeting Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan and getting influenced by his style of classical singing, which was known as Kirana *gaiyki*. To him, Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan was a spiritual teacher and a mentor.

There is a dignity and elegance about Kirana style of singing of which the late Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan was a highly-qualified exponent. The emphasis on correct intonation, and on the thematic thrust,

delineation and elaboration of a raga in an astonishingly slow temp are its hallmarks.

To popularize classical music, G.A. Farooq founded Pakistan Music Circle, under whose auspices he used to organize programmes at YMCA Hall, Lahore, and several other places. But the venue, which he used most for such activities, was his own spacious house, where musicians, students and connoisseurs used to meet and participate in melodic confabulations. From 1963 to 1971, he presented the popular weekly Radio Music School from Lahore.

USTAD CHHOTEY GHULAM ALI KHAN

The last among well known Kasuri vocalists

The bazaar known as Laal Khooh, inside famous Mochi Gate of Lahore, until a couple of decades ago, was known for delicious *shish kababs*, which were (and are still being) purveyed by a couple of shops located there. People from distant parts of the city visited the place to enjoy fresh hot *kababs*, the aroma of which was felts hundreds of yards away.

The bazaar was also known for another reason. In front of one of these shops lived a classical vocalist, who hailed from Kasur, but settled in Lahore during the prime of his youth. He was Ustad Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan.

Handsome, well-dressed and witty, Ghulam Ali Khan used the suffix of *Chhotey* (junior) with his name to distinguish himself from *Bade* (senior) Ghulam Ali Khan . Both of them hailed from Kasur, a city that has produced a large number of renowned melodists, but chose to practise their vocation in Lahore. Both of them made their debut as first class vocalists from Lahore.

I knew Ustad Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan since 1947, when he was a truly handsome young man. He and I were regular visitors to the (now defunct) Colour Printing Press, just outside Mochi Gate, whose proprietor, Sheikh Qamar udd Din, was a practitioner of the art of classical vocalisation. Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan, Sheikh Sahib, this scribe and a number of professional musicians used to have our daily evening practice sessions within the premises of the printing press, which invariably turned into impromptu music concerts, lasting till the wee hours of the day.

Our discussions in the daily meetings always pivoted around classical music, and the future of professional musicians, a majority of whom

were until August 1947, engaged by rich Hindu Lahoris as their music teachers. They were exposed to serious hardships after the exodus of non-Muslim population from Lahore. Although a large number of Muslim residents of Lahore could be bracketed within the category of votaries of the classical art, very few among them had the means to engage the services of professional musicians as their teachers in music or as entertainers.

Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan always remained optimistic and believed that the Lahoris would not let the rich melodic traditions of their city to dissipate from local cultural ethos. He was very proud of his achievements, but still was humble enough to demonstrate his melodic prowess almost free of charge, if he was sure that his host did not have enough means to fully compensate him. He would then quietly accept whatever was given him by the person who had invited him to sing at his residence or *baithak*.

There were a couple of incidents about which he would talk with much pride. One was his performance at All-India Radio, Bombay, when "Bukhari Sahib", (he lovingly referred to him) was the director there. The other related to his visit to Kashmir with Khawaja Khurshid Anwar, a few years before partition. He would talk with a great deal of nostalgia about his marathon performance in Bombay, when he sang a *kheyal* of raga *Darbari*, and how Bukhari Sahib allowed the radio to remain on air beyond the schedule time so that he could complete his presentation.

Known for his *tayyari* (ability to take breezy *taans*) Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan was trained in music by the elders in his family, including his uncle. But he also benefited from the expertise of several other senior melodists. He was extremely good and agile in handling *bandishs* in intricate rhythmic patterns. I don't remember to have ever seen him getting out of rhythmic cycle any time during my long association with him, although at times, his voice did not quite help him in conveying what he really wanted to express through his music.

He remained very active even during the evening of his life and continued teaching music at the Academy set up by Lahore Arts Council with which he remained associated for a number of years until his death. His contributions to the further enrichment of Lahore's melodic culture were no less than those by any of his contemporaries.



MASTER INAYAT HUSAIN



USTAD SHAUKAT HUSAIN KHAN



FEROZE NIZAMI



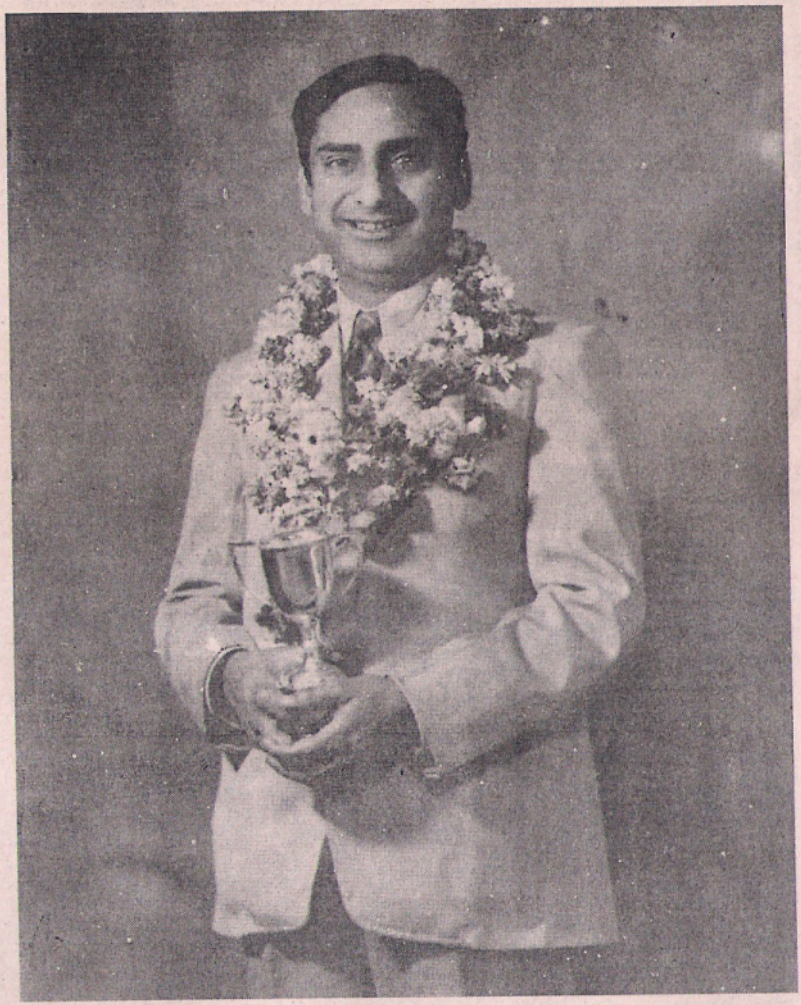
G. A. CHISTY



KHURSHID ANWAR



USTAD CHHOTEY GHULAM ALI KHAN



MASTER GHULAM HAIDER



USTAD BARKAT ALI KHAN



ZAHIDA PARVEEN



G. A. FAROOQ



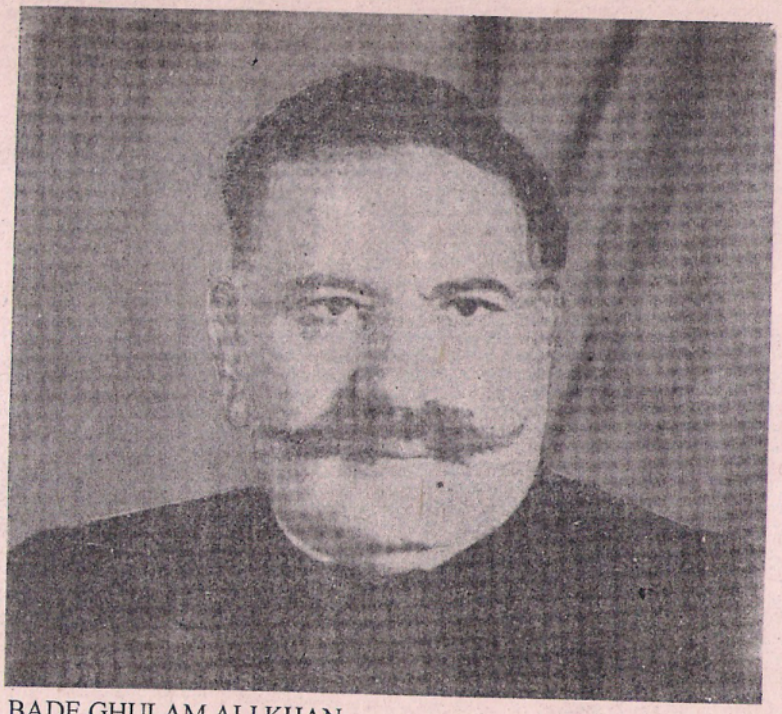
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RASHID ATTRAY



USTAD ABDUL WAHEED KHAN



BADE GHULAM ALI KHAN



USTAD SALAMAT ALI KHAN (C)



RAUSHAN ARA BEGUM (C)



USTAD FATEH ALI KHAN (C)



USTAD BADARUZAMAN QAMARUZAMAN



MEHDI HASSAN



USTAD GHULAM HASAN SHAGGAN (C).



USTAD SHARIF KHAN POONCHWALEY

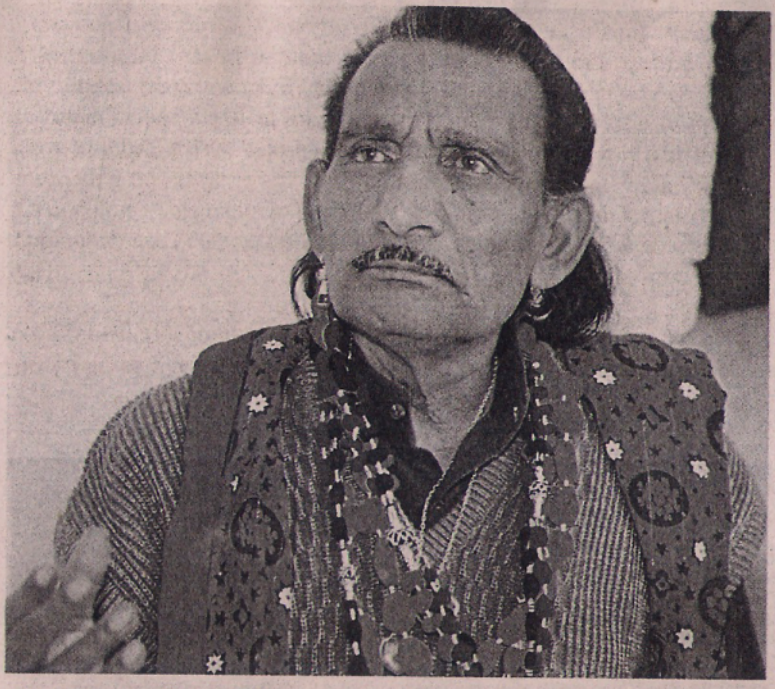


GHULAM ALI



BRASS BANDS OF LAHORE





HAMID ALI KHAN BELA



MIAN SHAHARYAR



MADAM NOOR JEHAN

Like his contemporaries, Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan also suffered much in terms of loss of income after partition. The obliteration of princely states from the political map of India, the munificence of whose rulers helped classical musicians to remain in circulation, was a big blow to those artists, who had spent their entire lives in practising and promoting this esoteric art. Despite this handicap, Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan clung to his melodic pursuits and continued with his melodic confabulations and demonstrations until his departure for the ethereal world.

He has left behind a number of *shagirds* (pupils), including Shahida Parveen, Samina Syed and the duo of Badaruzzaman-Qamaruzzaman.

OUTSIDE THE GHARANAS

The duo of Badaruzzaman-Qamaruzzaman

I have known the duo of Badaruzzaman-Qamaruzzaman for over 35 years. It will not be an exaggeration to say that I have seen them growing and coming of age in the fraternity of musicians in Pakistan. They hail from Mochi Gate, Lahore, an area of the city which has produced a large number of creative artists of Sub-continental fame. I, too, at one time belonged to the same area of the city where scores of professional classical melodists practised their art during the past 50 years and more. The contributions made by the Zaman brothers to the melodic culture of Lahore have been quite significant.

Unlike other professional vocalists, they were not born in a *gharana* of musicians, an advantage which provides the practitioners of this sophisticated art the congeniality of an environment necessary for the flowering of the talent of budding melodists.

Classical singers Badaruzzaman-Qamaruzzaman in fact hail from a family of traders from Lahore, whose members for generations have carried on with their commercial pursuits. Their family background actually proved a big handicap, creating many hardships and limiting the scope of their career, which they adotped against the wishes of their elders.

It was only after braving the harsh vicissitudes of life, which were further accentuated by their parents' opposition to music, that the Zaman brothers succeeded in carving out a niche for themselves in the hierarchy of classical singers in Pakistan. Having spent about 40 years in melodic confabulations and practice, they are now counted among the frontline classicists of the Sub-continent

For votaries of classical music, it is always a rewarding experience to listen to the renditions of *kheyal*, *thumris* and *dadras* by this duo. The lyrical intensity and expressiveness of their creative recitals easily attract attention of discerning listeners, professional musicians and

critics. Lay music buffs, too, enjoy the eloquence of their melodic idiom, that conveys a feeling of peace and tranquility which manifests itself in the tuneful renditions of *kafis* and Punjabi folk songs by this versatile duo.

Realizing the dwindling popularity of classical genres and the emerging greater demands for light forms and popular modes of melodic expression, the Zaman brothers have adopted a pragmatic approach to the 'market conditions' in the realm of music. Perhaps, their family background and business acumen have come to their rescue in that they can now deal with matters in the way that seems best under the circumstances. Their versatility and aptitude for assimilating knowledge of different genres of melodic arts have equipped them fully to meet the growing demands of the new generation of music buffs.

The practitioners of melodic arts having no genetic *gharana* connections, are called *atayees* - the ones to whom something is given in contradistinction to those who inherit an art from their parents. Professional melodists, who hail from different *gharanas* claim an exclusive right to dominate the music scene. More often than not, the parents of *atayee* melodists do not consider music "a respectable profession", a notion which creates many a hurdle for the budding artists to cross before making their mark on the melodic scene.

Why is that they draw larger crowds abroad than in their own country? Has that something to do with the fact that they are not professional *gharana* singers (in a genetic sense)? The Zaman brothers were asked.

Badaruzzaman, the senior of the two, and the holder of a master's degree in political science from the University of the Punjab, paused for a while and then said in a measured tone: "In Pakistan, we have to face stiff competition from our professional brethren in the fraternity, and also to defend ourselves against the consequences of a number of taboos and stigmas unjustifiably attached with the melodic arts. In India, and other coutnries where we go, the situation and the social environment are quite different. After having gone through innumerable hardships in our quest for learning music, we have learnt to deal with different situations in a pragmatic manner"

One of the ranking duos of classical vocalists, Badaruzzaman-Qamaruzzamn has toured several countries, including India, where their performances, which attracted large crowds, received rave review

in the print medium. It was in New Delhi that on April 13, 1992, the duo won the prestigious K.L. Saigol award, which was given them by the daughter of the legendary singer, after their performance at the well-known Kaimani auditorium.

The Lucknow City Magazine in its April 3, 1992 issue, wrote: 'The Zaman Brothers from Pakistan possess mesmerizing voices and share an explosive rapport with the audience and fans cutting across the language barriers and geographical demarcations. The duo, on a private visit to India, recently enthralled the audiences in Lucknow.

"The brothers possess voices as soft as gossamer whispering against the wind...have a fascinating repertoire of four styles"

The Sunday Times of India, New Delhi, in its May 3, 1992, issue had this to say about the melodic prowess of the Zaman brothers:

"....Music discovers new methods of survival and then, Lahoris are pretty resilient creatures. They have formed a vast network of classical music lovers and there exists a flourishing network of privately circulated recordings obtained mostly through friends abroad....

"This spring saw a number of Pakistani vocalists visiting India. Salamat Ali Khan was here with son Sharafat, as were the relatively younger brothers Badaruzzaman and Qamaruzzaman. While Salamat Ali Khansaheb is well-known, the emergence of the Zaman brothers as full professionals bears significance. They are perhaps the first pair of classical vocalists to make their mark without belonging to any particular *gharana*..."

What is the secret of their success?, I put the question to Badaruzzaman

"When I was in school, I learnt a proverb which implied that those who were slow but steady won the race. If you allow me to change it a bit, I will say that slow and steady also wins praise. Seriously, it is always hard work, which pays and we have proved it convincingly. Despite our handicaps, we have succeeded in rubbing shoulders with the foremost classicists of India and Pakistan."

There is no denying the fact that a lot of hard work, perseverance and sweat must have gone in the development of their melodic personalities. The Zaman brothers have received training from several mentors, particularly from Haji Fiaz Ali; Ustad Iftikhar Ahmed of

Delhi *gharana*; and Ustad Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan. They sing in the open "manly" voices so favoured by the Punjabi practitioners of the art of classical vocalisation, which is redolent with *sargams* (solfa-singing) and *laykari* (rhythmic manipulations). Besides *Kheyal*, they have been enormously successful in their forays into light music. The Zaman brothers are perhaps the only musicians who have scored music for an Indian television serial, Vijay Sharma's *Chaadar ka tukrra*.

Ustad Badaruzzaman is also very active in the field of producing melodic literature. During the past 15 years, he has published six books on music, four of which were authored by him. These are *Nawa-e-Mauseeqi, Taal Sagar, Sadarang* and *Tufatul Hind*.

REMEMBERING ZAHIDA PARVEEN

At the time of partition, Pakistan inherited scores of master musicians, composers, vocalists and instrumentalist, who had earlier dominated the musical ethos of the Sub-continent. A number of them were already living in Lahore and other areas which later became parts of Pakistan.

Included among female singers, who commanded respect, attention and admiration was the late Zahida Parveen (d. 1975). She had won the hearts of millions with her enthralling renditions of *kafis*. Her expertise in classical singing was equally well acclaimed, and she is still remembered by discerning senior citizens for her masterly renditions of a number of ragas, especially *Durga* and *Malkauns*.

A disciple of well-known exponent of Patiala *gharana* style of *kheyal* singing, the late Ustad Ashiq Ali Khan, she clearly had an edge over her female contemporaries in the mellifluous presentation of Punjabi and Sindhi *kafis*. Music buffs from the hinterlands of southern Punjab and Sindh adored her and used to cover long distances to listen to her presentations. She was held in high esteem because of the hypnotic spell she cast on them. They respected her as a performer with an amazing skill in presenting devotional songs, the nuances of which they could easily feel.

In the rural areas of Sindh and Punjab, *kafis* of sufi poets are very popular because of their language and the easily comprehensible diction intentionally used by the Sufi poets for the enlightenment of village folks. When *kafi* as a poetic and musical genre was evolved, urbanization in this part of the world had not taken place on such a large scale. Therefore, *kafis* were understood and enjoyed by a vast majority among the masses. They appreciated fully the greatness of those poets as supreme literary artistes who, so effectively, conveyed

through their *kafis* the all-embracing and absolutist unitarianism of monotheistic Islam.

Unassuming and affable, Zahida Parveen always kept the interest of classical music very close to her heart. This scribe vividly remembers her enthusiasm for music and the encouragement she extended to him and a few other connoisseurs, including Khwaja M. Saeed when they approached her in October 1951 to organize a music conference at Open Air Theatre, Lahore. Not only did she unhesitatingly participate in it without demanding any money, but also extended maximum possible assitance in seeking the consent of other classical vocalists and instrumentalists. It was due to her whole-hearted cooperation that the first ever two-day music conference could be held in the newly-created state of Pakistan

Until her death in 1975, Zahida Parveen continued to entertain millions through radio by her renditions of commonly understood ragas and *kafis*. She also willingly participated in privately-sponsored *mehfils* (soirees) all over the country. Through her presentations, she exhibited the correct intonation of notes with precision and exactitude. As she avoided the use of a constricted throat, her manner of voice production was refreshing and satisfying. She felt especially at ease while using *meends* (glides), which spanned several melodic notes. In the realm of *kafi*, Zahida Parveen invented new musical idioms and her style is now being emulated by several up-and-coming vocalists , including her daughter Shahida Parveen. The late vocalist could create a variety of emotionally striking effects that held the audiences spellbound.

Great artists don't die as they live in the hearts of their fans. Musicians are remembered for the tunefulness of their voices and enchanting melodies. Zahida Parveen created a special place for her in the hearts of countless number of her admirers in Pakistan.

Radio Pakistan's National Sound Library has a large number of Zahida Parveen's recorded music in good playback conditions. It will be a good idea, and also a worthy tribute to the late vocalist, if some of her recordings of *kafis* are brought out as commercial cassettes. Not only will this act of Radio beef up the financial resources of Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, but also do a great service to the cause of devotional music. Votaries of *kafis* will particularly appreciate such a gesture.

BARKAT ALI KHAN

The great master of *ghazal*

One of the *baithaks* of Lahore that always remained every busy was of Ustad Barkat Ali Khan, the great master of the *ghazal*. Both before and after partition of India, connoisseurs and friends of the maestro used to visit there to enjoy good music that flowed from the lips of Ustad Barkat Ali Khan, day in and day out.

The art of *ghazal* singing seems to have covered a lot of distance since its unobtrusive start at the turn of the 20th century. As a consequence of big strides it made during the past about 100 years, and the contributions made by several intelligent and innovative musicians, it has now won for itself well-merited recognition as a distinct genre of music. Among those melodists, who made immeasurable contributions to the melodic evolution of *ghazal*, the name of the late Barkat Ali Khan (1910-1963) starkly stands out.

Born in Kasur in 1905 (but settled in Lahore) in a family of professional musicians, Barkat Ali Khan is regarded by many as a pioneer of the *thurmi/tappa* style of *ghazal* singing, which is currently in vogue in the Sub-continent. His name commanded great respect and admiration from music lovers. He was, perhaps, the first among known vocalists who consciously formulated a syntax, outlined basic pre-requisites and laid solid foundations of *ghazal* singing. Musical traditions thus created by this great artist are the most valuable heritage to be passed from one generation of singers to another.

Barkat Ali Khan spent almost his entire life in Lahore where until his death in 1963, he practised music at his *baithak* situated opposite the *mazar* of Naugaza in Hira Mandi. He was one of the four sons of the late Ustad Kaley Khan of Kasur, all of whom created names in the annals of music. The eldest, Bade Ghulam Ali Khan held complete sway over the musical ethos of the Sub-continent for over 30 years. Barkat Ali Khan's younger brother Mubarak Ali Khan, was not only a

singer of some merit, but also playacted the roles of the heroes in a couple of films produced in the late 30s.

During the decade of the 40s, the late Barkat Ali Khan was rightly acclaimed as the uncrowned king of *ghazal* singing in South Asia. With his stylistic innovations, he gave a new direction to this art form and his renditions always had a touch of class about them. Many contemporary *ghazal* singers proudly emulate his style, foremost among them is his pupil, Ghulam Ali, who rose to the crest of popularity in recent years.

The adroitness and confidence with which Barkat Ali Khan used to render *thumris, dadras* and *ghazals*, created hypnotic spell on his audiences. Although in his presentations the verses were set to music in true *ghazal* singing style, yet they were relatively untrammeled by set procedures: the music matching the mood of the verse, every word and every syllable of which was correctly enunciated and sung by him. One of the most versatile exponents of this genre, his renditions were always interspersed with ornamentations. The flourish and ease with which he packed his compositions with short melodic phrases, intervals, pauses, swings and suspended cadences served as a clear pointer to the command which the late vocalist had over the entire ambit of music.

Barkat Ali Khan's *ghazals* appealed to the musical instinct of the listeners and provided them with many moments of extreme ectasic pleasure. His music was ambrosia for their aural senses, while their conscious minds were otherwise occupied. The emotional range of his music was very wide and served to raise his artistic stature tremendously. Another salient feature of his style was that he kept his audiences alive to the poetry by keeping them constantly expectant for the punch line found in the second stanza of every couplet, thus completing the poet's picture while bearing its point and essence.

The *ghazal*, which is one of the more recent modes of musical expression, historically speaking, means a conversation between a lover with his beloved woman. Mystic *ghazals* also have another theme which alludes to a conversation between the poet and the Supreme Being. In *ghazal*, as a literary genre, words are of primary importance. Music merely frames and embellishes the poetry. Therefore, successful *ghazal* singing is possible only if the vocalist uses correct diction and enunciation, and has a clear perception of its poetic content. Barkat Ali Khan sang his words clearly and distinctly

without putting undue stress on them. His renditions pronounced words as they were spoken. His insight into and strong grip of the *ghazal* made his renditions soul-stirring.

Barkat Ali Khan possessed a mature and cultured voice, whose piercing qualities captivated the hearts of his listeners. The style he clothed his voice with was transparent and unplanned, yet highly refined and sophisticated. His voice exhibited richness as well as delicacy, clearly indicating strong influences of the Patiala *gharana* style of singing of which he was an ardent exponent. Beginning his career as a classical vocalist. he soon switched over to light-classical genres such as *thumri*, *dadra* and *ghazal* as he found more appeal and peace in them. However, his early training in classical singing proved to be of much help in moulding his distinct style, which became the envy of many exponents of *ghazal* singing. He also had complete command over folk songs and his renditions of *pahari*, *tilang* and *khamach* were always mellifluous and satisfying.

The late Ustad Barkat Ali Khan occasionally demonstrated his melodic prowess at Takia Meerasian outside Mochi Gate, in impromptu concerts that were open to all and sundry to enjoy.

MEHDI HASAN'S STYLISH GHAZALS

I have known Mehdi Hasan for about 40 years. It was courtesy Muhammd Ibrahim Khan, son of Ustad Sardar Khan Delhiwale, when I first met this stylist *ghazal* singer in 1959, in Lahore. Thereafter, I bumped into him on different occasions at the premises of (old) Pakistan Arts Council, where he used to practise his art. I cannot forget one particular occasion when he was totally engrossed and had been completely transported while rendering a *kafi* of Baba Bulley Shah in raga *Tilang*.

Later, he visited me on a few occasions in my part-time business office in Shahalam, Lahore, where he came riding over his powerful motorcycle .We used to confabulate on music and the state of affairs in the local film industry. Then, he shifted to Karachi and our contacts remained suspended until such time when he returned to Lahore to lend his voice for the recording of film songs. Since then, off and on, our paths crossed in Lahore and abroad at various concert halls.

Being a student of music, I have keenly watched his progressive grooming, especially the evolution of his distinct style of *ghazal* singing, during the past 40 years. Unquestionably, he has contributed so much to the refinement of melodic culture of Lahore and Pakistan that his name will forever be enshrined in the annals of music of South Asia.

During the past six decades, the melodic evolution of *ghazal* in the Sub-continent, especially Pakistan, has been so profound as to put this neo-classical melodic genre in the ambit of an esoteric art form. Like folk music, which caused the spawning of classical genres, the meter-oriented *ghazals* sung much before 1947, metamorphosed into *thumri-ang*. elaborations, paving the way for melodists to compose and render *ghazals* in the neo-classical style.

Before partition, Akhteribai Faizabadi, Mukhtar Begum, Azal Husain Nageenwale and Barkat Ali Khan, to name a few vocalists, took the art of *ghazal*-singing to a new height of popularity. After August 1947, Ustad Barkat Ali Khan (till his death in 1963), Farida Khanum, Iqbal Bano, Ijaz Husain Hazarvi, Ghulam Ali and Mehdi Hasan made wholeome contributions to the further refinement of melodic ghazal, adding a new tangent to this musico--literary genre.

The art of *ghazal*-singing has now assumed the status of the most popular mode of melodic expression in the vocal variety. The role of films, radio, television and stage cannot be minimised, which took this genre to every nook and cranny of the Sub-continent, notwithstanding the wide diversity in languages and dialects spoken in its length and breadth. In spite of the fact that this mode of melodic expression is fast racing towards classicism, lay music buffs in millions have turned into its votaries A composer of film songs, who worked hard in popularising melodic *ghazals* in the Sub-continent, and who can be singled out for his colossal contributions, is the late Madan Mohan. His *ghazal* composition, sung by Lata Mangeshkar and Asha Bhosle, have abundant appeal and radiate irresistible sonic charm.

But one vocalist, who should be given much credit for the furbishing of the melodic contents of *ghazal*, is Mehdi Hasan, whose matchless voice and unique performing skill has taken it to such glorious heights as were not touched by any other mode in the past..

Since the invention of gramophone discs, the melodic rendition of *ghazals* has covered a long distance after its modest beginning in the late 20s, culminating in its current highly sophisticated form. Consequent upon the rapid progress in its melodic refinement, the modern *ghazal* singing style has earned for itself deserved acclaim and recognition, despite intrinsic difficulties and multiple complexities of its varieties and their esoteric formulation which, for many singers, are not easy to learn.

Taking off from a position of an unimportant adjunct to light classical music (*thumri*-oriented style of rendition) at the turn of the 20th century, it has now reached the apex of glory. The art of *ghazal*-singing did not enjoy a high status in the hierarchy of classical melodists in old days. Erroneously, it was believed that the metrical system was suited only for poetical expressions. Therefore, not much consideration was given to its melodic potential and the consequential incantatory impact on the listeners. Not considered suitable for

musical elaboration, it remained dormant in the melodic culture until the advent of gramophone dics and motion pictures. It was then that development of music took a sudden and sharp turn, mainly through the efforts of sensitive original composers, whose creative ingenuity added much to this new form.

Essentially a verse of lyrical and melodious charm, Urdu *ghazal* also conveys intensity of emotions and rhythmic grandeour. That it has enjoyed immense popularity among music buffs of all hues and melodic persuasions, points to the fact that it is the end-product of a synthesis of poetry and music, a blend of poetic and musical sensitivity; and a co-mingling of sound and sense.

In *ghazal*, the poet creatively and sensitively uses the language to convey the subtleties of his thoughts and emotions. Originally, it encompassed stray thoughts of a lover, pangs of separation and a longing for a reunion of lover and the beloved, or expression of sensation of pain (melancholia) and pleasure (sparkling joy). Later poets introduced fresh motifs and symbols and furbished the diction of their *ghazals* with their individual literary and poetic skill. A few among them sprinkled philosophic ideas into their verses, while others added revolutionary fire into their poetry, or hinged their creative expressions with highly communicative emotional lyricism.

Employing all these emotional and linguistic resources, an intelligent and sensitive vocalist adds to *ghazal* yet another tangent; that is, the melodic interpretation of what the poet originally meant to convey through his poetic expressions. The melodic interpretations vary from one singer to another. The more control a singer has over his vocals and melodic expressiveness, the better and enduring becomes the effect of his renditions.

It requires hard training under the supervision of a competent mentor to acquire the skill to render a *ghazal* (which lexicographically defined means a conversation with a beautiful woman) in its prevalent neo-classical style. Therefore, it is the forte of only a few vocalists, Mehdi Hasan being the most prominent among them Because of the sophistries of this melodic mode, very few vocalists feel competent to sing *ghazals*. Female *ghazal* singers in Pakistan have now become a rare breed. The aging Iqbal Bano and Farida Khanum are the only female singers in the country who can practise the traditional difficult art with confidence and ease.

In *ghazal*-singing, delivery of words are of utmost importance, while music frames and embellishes the poetry. Understandably. therefore, impactful *ghazal*-singing is possible only with correct pronunciation and a clear perception of the meaning of the poetic content which should be backed by a judicious inter-mingling of melodic inputs and poetic expressions.

Vocalist Mehdi Hasan, like Farida Khanum and Iqbal Bano, sings the words of a *ghazal* clearly and distinctly, without putting unnecessary stress on them, vocalising these as they are commonly spoken. His insight in the meaning of the *ghazal* and the perception of the poet make his rendition penetrating, thereby creating incantatory impact on his countless fans.

Mehdi Hasan is one of those competent *ghazal* singers of Pakistan, who can be counted on the fingers of just one hand. He has regaled his listeners for well over 40 years. During this period, he recorded hundreds of songs for the films and an increasing number for radio and television. His major contribution, however, has been to the refurbishing of *ghazal*-singing in which he has evolved a style, which became the envy of his contemporaries on both sides of the Wagha border. A larger number of young melodic aspirants in Pakistan and India try to emulate his style of *ghazal* singing with pride, and a great deal of respect for Mehdi Hasan.

A pride of our melodic culture, Mehdi Hasan and his talent are acknowledged the world over. He is one of those few melodists who have introduced and popularised Pakistani melodic culture in the countries of the Middle East and Europe, not to forget the United States land Canada, where he goes annually to spend sometime with the members of his family who have settled there. With his individualistic style, which represents the inherent strength and potential of our melodic culture, he has put-up an impregnable wall of defence against Western cultural onslaught. Votaries of his style of *ghazal*-singing are not worried much about the future of our music. As long as vocalists of the calibre of Mehdi Hasan are around, the future of Pakistani music is in safe hands, they believe.

Mehdi Hasan is a scion of a well-known family of professional musicians from Rajasthan, a majority of whose members migrated to Pakistan soon after partition of the Sub-continent in 1947. With hard training under the supervision of the elders in the family, and having the ability to benefit from the melodic wisdom of others, he has

succeeded in chiseling his melodic personality, which is now recognised all over the music world, especially in Pakistan and India. He has reigned supreme in the world of showbiz for about four decades. For the past few years, the debilitating impact of advancing age, and an imbecile physique are having a telling effect on his vocals.

Discerning listeners can easily detect the areas of his vocalisation, which are being adversely affected by old age and poor health. If he is still able to cast an hypnotic spell on his listeners, it is due to his long experience, creative ingenuity and performing skill, which compel the listeners to pay rapt and respectful attention to his melodies.

A large number of pupils of this winner of Pride of Performance medal musician are currently practising the art of *ghazal*-singing in Pakistan, but none, including his son Asif, has yet acquired enough expertise to claim succession to this great melodist after his retirement.

GHULAM ALI
SOUNDS EVER FRESH

I am not good at remembering dates, and yet important events stick around in my memory for a long time. After a bit of raking, I can say with confidence that it was during the second half of the decade of the 50s when the incident, I am just about to narrate, took place.

It happened at the baithak of late Mubarik Ali Khan, located opposite Chowk Naugaza, Hira Mandi, Lahore, which I used to visit frequently. It was there that I chanced to watch a kid rendering a short classical composition in *Ektala* time-measure. Reproducing it in exactly the same manner as his mentor had taught him, albeit singing with a lisp, he surprised all those present on that occasion by his sharp melodic acumen (until then) and latent potential for becoming a popular singer. The lad was Ghulam Ali, who later came under the tutelage of Ustad Barkat Ali Khan, who taught him the delicate art of *ghazal*-singing with much care.

During the past 45 years since the chance-listening of his song, this scribe has, on a large number of occasions, had the pleasure of enjoying Ghulam Ali's music at formal concerts and informal soirees held at the residences of affluent citizens . Each time, the impact of his singing was greater than from previous experiences, and confirmed his superiority and class in the art of *ghazal*-singing. His distinctly individualistic style, which exudes sparkling classical embellishments, has unmistakable impress of the vocalisation of his celebrated mentor. By winning wide popular acclaim, including the Pride of Performance medal, Ghulam Ali has convincingly established his credentials as one of the frontline *ghazal* singers of the Sub-continent.

The skill and confidence with which he performs, creates hypnotic spells on the listeners. By and large set to his own music, *ghazals* composed by well-known classical and modern poets, and sung by him, brims with Ghulam Ali's characteristic innovations.

Undoubtedly one of the versatile exponents of modern *ghazal*-singing style, Ghulam Ali renders popular *ghazals* that are interspersed with short melodic phrases difficult but enjoyable *taans* and touches of *sargam*. The flourish and ease with which he mixes his renditions with a variety of ornamentations and embellishments clearly point to the command Ghulam Ali has acquired over the entire ambit of vocalisation. With the passage of time, he has further refined his style.

Modern *ghazal*-singing has now become the most popular mode of melodic expression in the vocal variety. The media which has contributed much to the refinement of his genre are radio, film and television. Although this mode of melodic expression is rapidly moving towards classicism, lay music buffs in large numbers are now becoming enamoured of it

The style of *ghazal*-singing which Ghulam Ali practises, is not easy. It requires years of regular training under the supervision of a mentor, and a deep knowledge and understanding of the art and science of music, as well as the skill to melismatically weave melodic phrases within the intricate bonds of rhythms. Every *ghazal* recorded for the movies have now acquired the status of a separate genre in contra-distinction to other forms of opulent film music. Its shape is now different from and more intricate than the one which was in vogue about five decades ago. Then, music directors composed and set *ghazals* to melodies, which were not much different from those selected for *geets*.

Equally proficient in several other genres of semi-classical music such as *thumri, dadra, kafi*, folk and *geet*, Ghulam Ali has succeeded in winning the hearts of countless millions in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. His rich, cultured and tuneful voice, which he manipulates with adroitness, enthralls his stage, radio, film and television audiences.

It is always a satisfying experience listening to his consummate and skilful singing. By absorbing new musical current and cross-currents of our time, and blending them with the old classical modes, Ghulam Ali has broken down the confining walls of old structure, making it possible for his melodies to enjoy more freedom of expression. This is why, his music appeals to both the sophisticated and the musically-uninitiated listeners, who throng concert halls where he is scheduled to render *ghazals* from his rich repertoire.

to him. He remained musically inactive and, like his deceptively quiet personality, his melodies remained undistinguishable.

It was in March 1946 that the Lahore Station of the then All India Radio, for the first time, broadcast the vocal and instrumental music of the wandering melodist, who used a wooden *Iktara* as an accompanying instrument with his songs. After his debut, he shifted to Lahore, where he occasionally played *Iktara* and rendered self-composed songs at the shrines of sufi saints, particularly Data Ganj Bakhsh.

After August 14, 1947, he and his music won wide popularity in the province of Punjab, where village folks responded to the subtle nuances of Punjabi *kafis* better than the inhabitants of other provinces. His soulfully-rendered songs and instrumental music made him a much-sought after musician by the Radio and the devotees of sufi saints. A few years later, he gave up singing and concentrated entirely on his instrumental (*Iktara*) music which touched the hearts of many a listener.

In subsequent years, Marna's music was used extensively for enhancing the impact of crucial portions of radio dramas, which then were the most popular programmne of the electronic medium. His instrumental music could not be classified under any system of categorisation. On the surface, there seemed some disorder, even conflict, in his melodic expressions. Hence, no precise definition of his music could be offered.

Critics thought it was possible to probe the beauty of his music and to separate it from its disorderly character from his boldness. It was, however, difficult, as it is in any other art, because in Marna's music, two art forms, the composing and the performing, were ineluctably linked with each other. But, if one ventured to go deeper and did not allow the contradictions and confusions of appearances to put one off, the mystery at the centre of his music could be seen to be the central mystery of all the arts. His melodies simply reflected the deep anguish of a tormented soul, which exuded clear longings for a meeting with the Creator.

During his teens, Saeen Marna received training in the rudiments of classical music from one of his elders. But that was not much of a training as he did not study in depth the sophistry of this finest of the fine arts. However, he used his intuitive power to produce lilting

MELODIES OF SAEEN MARNA

Although Saeen Marna was born in a village of Amritsar district, and emigrated to Pakistan after partition, he nevertheless contributed so much to the melodic ethos of Lahore that his name cannot be excluded from any reckoning, when writing about the melodic personality of this city.

Throughout the decade of the 1950s, when radio was the only medium of mass entertainment, *Iktara* player Saeen Marna was widely known (more) for his instrumental music and {less) for his singing. Often in those years, his melodies were broadcast by Radio Pakistan, Lahore, which was then housed in a small bungalow on Empress Road near the northern gate of Governor House.

It is not always easy to describe, racily and well, the essential characteristics and qualities of the creative outpouring of those posy, neurotic, childlike, hard-headed geniuses, who have left for posterity a wealth of immortal melodies. Marna belonged to this category of melodists.

History of Pakistani melodic arts is replete with examples of our collective insensitivity, which has pushed the fine works of great musicians into oblivion. *Iktara* player Saeen Marna was one of those creative artists whose melodies, though used regularly for creating background effects in radio plays, were not credited to the deceased musician.

Born about 1910, in a village of Amritsar district as Taj Din, he became Saeen Marna during the prime of his youth consequential to a traumatic experience. Reportedly, he fell in love with a village girl, who did not respond positively to his romantic overtures. The hurt caused to his emotional being metamorphosed his personality, and losing interest in life, he turned into a recluse. For a number of years thereafter his mind and creative faculties experienced silent growth, so silent, in fact that it was difficult to discern as to what was happening

melodies. Fired by a strong inner compulsion for creativity, Marna brought into play his meditative frame of mind in the arrangement of music notes, which not only created a condition of self-hypnosis, but also mesmerised a large number of listeners. In complete ecstasy, he would start singing Punjabi *kafis* using *Iktara* to create the droning effects, and also in producing the melodic refrains. His less esoteric music moved the spirit, as he successfully transmitted through it, his mystical thoughts and inner emotional turbulences.

Saeen Marna's music abounded in inspired melodic ideas and had a distinct character of its own, truly amazing in new circumstances which contributed to its creation. His music was the product of a certain period of history, when as a consequence of the post partition destruction, chaos, traumas and anarchy, people in this part of the world had developed a different and an unusual morbid bent of mind.

Like his beginning, Marna's end, too, was extraordinary. He died in October 1961 in abject poverty, and was laid to rest in Jaranwala, where he had "settled" when the poor state of his health prevented him from moving "aimlessly" in the rural hinterland.

It is a pity that the suffering and mystic insight, which the late Saeen Marna immortalised through his songs and *Iktara* music, have not been properly preserved for the use of prosperity.

SITAR MAESTRO SHARIF KHAN POONCHWALEY

Among seasoned instrumentalists whose contributions to the further enrichment of Lahore's melodic culture were quite handsome, the name of *sitar* player Ustad Muhammad Sharif Khan Poonchwaley stands out starkly. For about thirty years, he held complete sway in the domain of instrumental classical music in Pakistan.

On the basis of intimacy with him, I always regarded him as a personification of an extremely gentle and a noble human being who was totally committed to music. The singleness of his devotion for music was simply awesome. It was as if wave after wave of music cast an hypnotic spell on him and swept him along its golden path.

Way back in early 1942, a youthfully exuberant musician appeared on the stage of YMCA Hall, Lahore, to give a demonstration of his *sitar* music. Among the galaxy of top-ranking musicians, who had gathered there at the music conference, were Ustad Fayyaz Husain Khan, Ustad Amir Khan and Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan who, along with a number of other prominent musicians, had been invited to take part in the two-day melodic moot. Thus a large gathering of vocalists and instrumentalists listened with rapt attention to the 45-minute rendition of raga *Puria Dhanasari* by the young debutant, Muhammad Sheriff Khan Poonchwaley.

That was, perhaps, the first major music conference in which the late maestro took part as a mature musician. His presentation of the evening raga was marked with finesse and ease and he was given a big hand by such a distinguished audience. He used correct intonation of notes in the *alap* portion of the rendition and progressive delineation of the raga. At that music conference, Sharif Khan succeeded in establishing his credentials as competent *sitar* player.

Son of Ustad Abdur Rahim Khan, a competent *sitar* player in his own right, Muhammad Sharif Khan rose to the top position in Pakistan by the beginning of the decade of the 60s. He was often compared with

Pundit Ravi Shankar, the Indian *sitar* maestro, who learnt the art from Ustad Alaudin Khan.

Indeed, there was a world of difference between the styles of the two musicians. Whereas Sharif Khan's recitals bubbled with the *beena ang* (which he had assiduously cultivated after intensive training under the watchful eyes of his illustrious father), the renditions of Pundit Ravi Shankar brimmed with *sarod ang* of his mentor, Ustad Alauddin Khan. However, both were acclaimed as accomplished *sitar* players.

Sharif Khan's ancestors came from a small village in the district of Hissar (now in Harayana). His father was employed in the *darbar* of the Raja of Poonch as his musical erudition and performing skill had caught the attention of the ruler. It was because of his father's attachment with Poonch court that the family acquired the suffix of Poonchwaley.

Sharif Khan began his musical training with his father, who first taught him the grammar of music when he was very young. He was hardly ten when his father proudly presented him before an audience at (now extinct) SPSK Hall, outside Mori Gate, Lahore. That place served as the venue for so many memorable music conferences of yore. That particular event signaled the emergence, at a later date, of a bright new star on the musical firmament of Lahore.

Consequent upon vigorous training, special care of his father, and the long hours of daily practice, Sharif Khan perfected a distinct style of his own at a relatively young age. Also, he successfully imitated the style of his father, which helped him winning quick recognition from the fraternity of musicians before 1947.

At the time of his death on May 26, 1980,Ustad Muhammad Sharif Khan had already secured a berth for himself among the three world class *sitar* players. Other two being Ustad Wilayat Husain Khan and Pandit Ravi Shankar. (More *sitar* players have since then climbed up the ladder of popularity. They include Abdul Haleem Jaffer, Imrat Hussain Khan, Raees Ahmad Khan and Shujaat Husain Khan.

Ustad Sharif Khan also played *vichter veena* with equal ease and competence. He learnt the techniques of playng this delicate instrument almost accidentally. Once he chanced to watch the performance of a senior *vichter veena* player. After the recital, as the story goes, he inquired of the musician about the techniques employed

in playing the instrument. Giving him a somewhat derisive look, the senior musician tauntingly said: "This instrument is much more difficult to play than your *sitar*". That was serious enough a challenge for a sensitive musician like Sharif Khan, who took the remark to his heart. There and then, he resolved to learn the instrument within the shortest possible time. Giving up all his leisures, he devoted wholeheartedly to the learning of *vichter veena* playing. After a few years, he was able to give a demonstration on the instrument. EMI's long-playing record, in which the late maestro has presented raga *darbari* on *vichter veena* bears eloquent testimony to the determination, grit and achievements of the late maestro.

Ustad Muhammad Sharif Khan's style of *sitar*-playing improved considerably as a consequence of his interest in *vichter veena*. As this instrument is more suited to the production of *meends, soots* and *trills*, the additional skill acquired by Sharif Khan provided extra sheen to his *sitar* recitals. In the words of a critic, his style became "imaginative in conception, romantic in appeal and was full of artistic flourishes and embellishments"

The late maestro regaled his audiences in foreign countries as well. He went to Kabul to participate in the Afghan New Year celebrations. In addition, he took part in a UNESCO-sponsored seminar on music held in Tehran in 1964. Musicians of the calibre of violinist Yehudi Menuhin, *tabla* player Ustad Allah Rakha and *sitar* player Wilayat Husain Khan who also participated in the seminar, ungrudgingly acclaimed the performing abilities and melodic prowess of the ace *sitar* player from Pakistan.

What struck the listeners most about Sharif Khan's recitals was the marvelous demonstration of his artistry. It was a superb performance not merely by a single individual, but also represented a whole musical epoch..Sharif Khan appeared on the musical scene at the peak point of a historical development, and his was the heritage of several generations of artists, handed down to him by his father. His *alap* was tampered with serenity and fatithfully depicted the mood of a raga. His *jore* and *jhala* were the reflection of his inner turmoil and passions, and his *gats*, interspersed as they were with sprightly and breezy melodic phrases, helped to easily distinguish him from his contemporaries. Also, he understood the rhythmic intricacies of *taal* because he could himself play *tabla* with the expertise of a master drummer. He was a performer par excellence, who had the knack to establish almost

immediate rapport with his audiences, whether they were sophisticated or lay listeners.

Unassuming, polite and gentle, Ustad Muhammad Sharif Khan was incapable of offending anyone. But when it came to defending his honour, he stood like a solid rock. In 1957, his name was included in an official troupe, which was to visit the Soviet Union. The haughty leader of the troupe told the maestro that he would only be required to play with the orchestra and no solo item of his *sitar* recital was planned. Sharif Khan rightly felt slighted by the omission of his solo items. Taking it as a personal affront, he declined to proceed beyond Karachi with the troupe and flew back to Lahore in protest.

The late maestro was quite pleased and satisfied with his artistic achievements. At Bombay, the music centre of India, during a trip in 1971, he gave a marathon performance that lasted four hours, which completely baffled even the frontline musicians of India. He used to talk fondly about that great fiat of his.

The late Ustad Muhammad Sharif Khan Poonchwale recorded over 100 different raga recitals for Radio Pakistan, which are now part of National Sound Library maintained at Radio Pakistan, Islamabad. If someone cares to make a few cassettes out of this marvelous treasure of music, it will not only generate additional revenue for Radio Pakistan, but will also keep the music of the great maestro in circulation.

TABLA-PLAYER, USTAD SHAUKAT HUSAIN KHAN

The art of *tabla*-playing, like all the traditional arts native to our soil, is very difficult to learn and sophisticated, demanding a quantum of dedication, which its modern votaries can no longer afford. Yet, we have the good fortune of having amongst us a number of *tabla*-players, whose rhythmic prowess is acknowledged all over the world. Before his death a few years ago, Ustad Shaukat Husain Khan won for himself and Pakistan laurels from international print media and cultural organizations from foreign countries.

The provinces of the Punjab and UP (in India) have, in the past, produced a number of famous rhythm-keepers, who have contributed to the musical culture of South Asia. Included among them were Khalifa Qadir Bakhsh, Ustad Ahmad Jan Thrrikva, Ustad Nabi Bakhsh Kalrewaley, Ustad Baba Mast Khan, Baba Malang Khan, Ustad Muneer Khan and Mian Karim Bakhsh Pairna, who are still remembered with much reverence. In the person of Ustad Shaukat Husain Khan, Pakistan had the privilege of having one of the few world-class *tabla*-players who, with their creative innovations, continually enriched the melodic culture of the Sub-Continent.

Rhythm forms an inseparable part of good music .All compositions are trapped in different *taals* (time measures). In the simplest possible terms, a *taal* may be a rhythmic pattern that combines the essential features of both meter as well as time. Its numeric symbols, consequently, are sums of fractions.

Born in 1930 at Phagwara, a village in Jallandhar district of East Punjab (India),, Ustad Shaukat Husain Khan received initial training in music, as is customary in professional *gharanas* of musicians, from his father Maula Bakhsh, who wanted to groom his son as a classical vocalist. Young Shaukat, however, could not concentrate on singing, despite his father's wishes and best efforts. He wanted to acquire the skill of a good *tabla*-player because of his fascination for the drums. Therefore, Shaukat was allowed by his understanding father to go to

Delhi when he was only 14. There, he became a pupil of the famous Delhi *gharana* of *tabla*-players founded by Ustad Gamee Khan. His initial training commenced under the supervision of Hira Lal, a drummer of recognizable merit, and one of the foremost exponents of the famous Delhi *gharana*.

Three years later, Shaukat was employed by All India Radio as a staff artiste. In November 1947, he migrated to Pakistan, where he was engaged by Radio Pakistan, Lahore. Shortly thereafter, he became a pupil of Mian Qadir Bakhsh Pakhawaji, the renowned exponent of the Punjabi school of rhythm-keepers. The Mian unfolded on young Shaukat the mysteries of the art of rhythm-keeping and solo *tabla*-playing, and explained to him the intricate art of *tabla* accompaniment along with a variety of its numerous intricate patterns.

It was ten years' training, which Shaukat Husain received from Mian Qadir Bakhsh that made him a superb rhythm-keeper. Also contributing to the refinement of his creative personality was the daily practice, which the late maestro continued for years. A few months before his death, he told this scribe that he never ever suspended his daily *riyaz* (training) which, he claimed, was a key to his very successful career. To maintain excellent form and standard of performance, such strenuous exercises were unavoidable and he stuck to self-discipline and a busy schedule for as long as he lived.

Shaukat Husain Khan had the privilege and honour of providing rhythmic accompaniment to a majority of renowned vocalists and instrumentalists during his radio career, both in India and Pakistan. He used to say with considerable pride that he provided rhythmic accompaniment to vocalists Ashiq Ali Khan, Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Indorewaley Amir Khan, Raushan Ara Begum and other frontline vocalists of that calibre and era. Among instrumentalists whom he accompanied in their renditions were such competent musicians as Hafiz Ali Khan and Ali Akbar Khan (*sarod*), Wilayat Husain Khan and Muhammad Sharif Khan Poonchwaley (*sitar*), and Habib Ali Khan (*been*).

Ustad Shaukat Husain Khan touched the apex of glory and fame during his life, but not before spending his entire life in perfecting his distinct style of rhythm-keeping which he continuously refurbished throughout his style.

Ustad Shaukat Husain Khan was a widely-traveled percussionist. He participated in Jashne-Kabul in 1964, visited Nepal with Ustad Nazakat Ali Khan-Salamat Ali Khan in1966, and toured several European countries with the same duo a couple of years later. In 1971, he visited Africa - Tanzania, Kenya and Mauritius - as a member of a cultural delegation sent there by the government. In 1977, he was again sent by the government to India as a member of another cultural troupe, which participated in the Allama Iqbal birthday celebrations at Delhi. In 1983, he visited several European countries and UK once again, where he performed before knowledgeable audiences from Pakistan, Bangladesh and India.

Ustad Shaukat Husain Khan combined in him the qualities of a superb *tabla* player and an excellent rhythm keeper. He claimed to have trained over 50 pupils, who are scattered all over the country. Some of them are accepted as accomplished artists and are known all over the music world.. Prominent among his pupils are Abdus Sattar Taari, Muhammad Iqbal , Muhammad Ajmal and Patrick Anthony. He was an excellent solo performer, whose performances at several prestigious gatherings in Pakistan and abroad won him accolades and praise from discerning listeners and critics.

Ustad Shaukat Husain Khan was honoured with the title of Mian at a representative gathering of musicians in April 1981 at Faislabad. The melodists had congregated there to observe the death anniversary of late Ustad Fateh Ali Khan Qawwal (the father of late Nusrat Khan). The unanimous verdict for the title was passed by the participants in recognition of Ustad Shaukat's competence in the art of *tabla*-playing. It confirmed the fact that in Pakistan there was hardly any other percussionist as good and competent as Shaukat Husain Khan was at that time.

Recognition of Shaukat Husain Khan's opulent creative talent by the highest authority in Pakistan came in the year 1985, when he was honoured with the medal of Pride of Performance, the coveted civil award, which is the ultimate goal of every artist in the country.

THE COLOURFUL BRASS BANDS OF LAHORE

Many old cities, in different parts of the world,, which have now metamorphosed into megalopolises , can justifiably boast of creating enduring cultural traditions. Included among these is the historic city of Lahore, whose residents take pride while enumerating different phases of the rich and variegated cultural heritage of their sprawling metropolis.

Variously called the city of beautiful gardens and splendid architectural edifices; the cultural capital of Pakistan; and a seat of education and learning, Lahore, the second largest metropolis of the country, has a history of thousand years that is replete with very fine examples of creative human pursuits and the concomitant cultural milestones.. These social customs and cultural traditions took several centuries to evolve, refine and perpetuate. These are being continuously furbished by the succeeding generations of Lahoris..

One of the vibrant socio-cultural traditions of Lahore is the use of brass bands with marriage processions, which has survived the vicissitudes of time. Although the invention of modern electrophonic musical devices, and the consequential emergence of numerous groups of pop singers, did put a little dent in the traditional use of brass bands, this social custom has tenaciously resisted the onslaught of the modern fads.

In recent years, there have been some changes in this old custom which, for people living in the newly developed posh colonies, have changed the ambience and grandeur of their marriage receptions. They believe that the use of pop music groups at wedding receptions of their offspring can add to the visual and sonic eloquence of these festivities. Some among them now prefer police or army bands over the colourful brass bands, a majority of which are located within the Walled City.

However, a majority of the inhabitants of Lahore, especially from the Walled City, still avail the services of brass bands which are engaged

to spearhead wedding processions. They are followed by elegantly attired grooms riding over horsebacks or seated in cars. For many residents of old Lahore, wedding processions *sans* brass bands look cheerless, insipid and dull.

Brass bands in their present shape were introduced in the Sub-continent by the colonial British rulers. Their customary use, evolved as a consequence of clinching contacts among Western, Hindu and Muslim civilizations, took roots in local culture during the past 200 years. Social interaction among members of different communities created in them an awareness that the varied forms of their cultures hanged together in a complex system of affinities and oppositions, which existed consciously as well as unconsciously, and in their attractions and repulsions, made an organised world of a new synthetic culture.

Even before the introduction of Western brass bands in the Sub-continent, groups of professional musicians adorned marriage processions and private parties of rich members of society. A part of this old tradition is still in vogue and is perpetuated during receptions and festivities connected with the marriages of their offspring held at their residences.

The groups, which were at the head of marriage processions in old days, consisted usually of strong percussion instruments, a number of *shehnais* and a few varieties of woodwind family of musical instruments. It was after the arrival of the British that local professional musicians introduced brass bands and several other Western musical instruments in local festivities.

In the beginning, members of the brass bands did not wear uniforms. They were usually attired in local raiments of all sorts, but gradually colourful uniforms were used which added significantly to the sheen, splendour and gaiety of the newly-established brass bands. It was due to the conscious and well-directed efforts of their founders that members of various brass bands of Lahore acquired a disciplined look, which was spawned by the use of new uniforms designed for them. The uniforms showed avidity on the part of the band leaders of new sensations, and an equally appropriate anxiety to avoid boredom at any cost.

For some odd reasons, all Lahore brass bands of any significance were owned and founded by Muslim melodists .A few half-hearted attempts, however, were made by some non-Muslim musicians, who

unsuccessfully tried to establish bands of their own. A few of those, which stayed in business for some time, never made a name

Brass bands consist of trumpets, horns, trombones and tubas. These instruments are indispensable for melody, sustaining harmony, rhythmic accent, the weight of their massed tone, and for the flame-like sonority they contribute to the climaxes. These bands are led by teams of clarinettists, who play the main melody and the rest of the band instruments repeat the lyrical stanzas, sonically projecting the refrains of particular songs which the bands play during their performances.

Instrumental components of a brass band have cup-shaped mouthpieces (except for the horn, whose mouthpiece is shaped like a funnel). The column of air within the tube is set to vibrate by the tightly- stretched lips of the player, which act as a kind of double reed. To move from one pitch to another requires not only mechanical means, like a slide or valves, but also variations in the pressure of the lips and breadth, demanding great muscular control .

According to the late Babu Muhammd Din (whom this scribe met in 1984) the then proprietor of Babu Band of Lahore, his father Malik Amir Khan set up a band in the city around 1875, "when I was hardly ten". It consisted of only five musicians, including his father, and its members did not wear uniforms of any kind.. "At first, it presented a queer spectacle", recalled the late centenarian musician, who explained that "as street urchins, even some grown-ups, would follow and laugh at a band when it passed through the narrow streets of the Walled City".

"In those days", he went on to say, "Line Subhan Khan inside Sheranwala Gate was used as the headquarters of the Police Band. Attired in special uniforms, which were fashioned in accordance with British and European specifications, the members of the police band practiced daily on their instruments, attracting the attention of people in the neighbourhood. They would gather outside and feel amused by the sound and sight of the Western brass musical instruments, which were then slowly making inroads in Sub-continental melodic ethos". "In addition to the band of my father", recalled the late Babu Mohammad Din, "there also existed in the city another brass band of a sort which was located at Langey Mandi (near Municipal Water Works) and was owned by one Karim Khan".

The way to stay young is to remain youthful inside; to continue to grow, maintain a cheerful disposition, and stay mentally alive and alert. That was the impression one got after meeting the late proprietor of the oldest brass band of Lahore, known as Babu Band, located at Chowk Rang Mahal inside Shahalmi Gate, Lahore.

After learning the rudiments of clarinet-playing from his father during the last decade of the 19th century, Mohammed Din was given in the care of Babu Khan, who played clarinet, then made of wood. As Babu Khan, eager to pass his performing skill on to someone else, was an issueless person, he readily accepted young Mohammed Din as his pupil. Subsequently, he adopted Muhammad Din as his son. It was from Babu Khan that Muhammad Din acquired the skill to play a clarinet. His musical expertise was further furbished by numerous contacts young Muhammad Din made and his interaction with other clarinettists of those days. Babu Muhammad Din, at a much later stage, also benefited from the melodic wisdom of Bhai Lal Muhammad Amritsari, a *Rubabi* classical vocalist of much repute

The Babu Band of Lahore has undergone several changes in its nomenclature during the past 100 years. When his father died, young Muhammad Din took over the management of the band and reorganised it, but retained its old name, the Special Military Band. He introduced colourful uniforms and injected fresh talent into the band by enrolling more musicians. Around 1910, he changed the name of the band to Babu da Band, which later on was again rechristened as Babu Band, the name with which it is identified now.

Babu Muhammed Din initiated three of his four sons into the business of band management, and clarinet-playing. The eldest, Muhammad Hussain, assisted him for quite a few years, and together they won more accolades for their band. Unfortunately, Mohammed Hussain died at a young age in 1943 while leading the band, which was accompanying a marriage procession. His end came when he was rendering *salami* (salute) at the *mazar* of Malik Ayaz, the legendary slave friend of emperor Mahmood Ghazanvi. The heat of the month of May proved too much for him and caused hemorrhage in his brain.

After the death of Babu Muhammad Hussain, his younger brother Malik Bashir, joined his father as his chief assistant. He, too, died at a relatively young age in 1976. Thereafter, the youngest among the Muhammad Din boys, Haji Muhammad Baloch, took over the reign of Babu Band. The centenarian Babu Mohammed Din died 13 years ago

and so did his youngest son Haji Baloch, who departed for his ethereal abode last year

Popular interest in band music first became known with the success of Babu Band during the late 20s of the 20th century. Significant changes occurred thereafter as a few more bands emerged in Lahore. These included the famous Sohni Band, which broke all records of popularity by the mid-40s.

Before the partition of the Sub-continent, the Babu Band had already won wide public acclaim. According to the late Haji Muhammad Baloch, it was invited to play at the historic session of the All India Muslim League at the then Minto Park, Lahore on March 20-23, 1940, at which the Pakistan Resolution was unanimously adopted. The domain of its influence extended up to Delhi in the east, and Peshawar in the north-west. Southwards, it played at places as far as Khanpur (in former Bahawalpur State) as also frequented other cities like Rawalplindi, Faislabad, Gujranwala and Multan.

Among the 150 odd bands of Lahore and its suburbs, three have excelled all others in gaining popularity. Of these, the Sohni Band is regarded as one of the best-dressed, best-drilled and best performing bands. Established in 1934 by the late Sohni Khan, a master clarinettist who had earlier acquired enough experience of brass band through his association with the Babu Band, it quickly gained reputation as the most tuneful and attractively-dressed group of musicians. By the early 40s, it was known all over the Punjab and NWFP, and it began to receive invitations from places as far away as Delhi and its vicinity. From 1943 to 1973, this band rode over the crescendo of popularity

Clarinettist Master Sohni Khan (1902-1973) is still remembered and revered by denizens of Lahore as the ever-smiling, charming and majestic leader of a brass band. He used to delight them with his superb performances as well as by his quality of leadership, which helped in developing the distinct personality of his band. He is also still admired for keeping the physical appearance of his band slick by providing its members with colourful uniforms and for motivating each one of them to strive for excellence.

'Lovers of classical music and professional musicians, on the other hand, rated the late Master Sohni Khan as one of the top-ranking classical musicians of his time, who was known for his musical skill and performing abilities. For them, Sohni Khan was an embodiment

of perfection and adroitness - the traits with which he mesmerised his audiences for over four decades.

Comprising usually 20 pieces each, brass bands are almost always led by a group of clarinettists (from two to four) who render the main melody of songs while other instrumentalists repeat only their refrains, in addition to providing rhythmic accompaniment.

The most noticeable feature of a brass band, in addition to its ability to faithfully render all kinds of melodic compositions, is the attractive uniforms which all its members wear during a performance. Not only do they add to the sprightliness of a band, but they also augment its visual eloquence. Most uniforms in use by brass bands are modifications of one of the basic styles of military or police bands. A short shirt and trouser combination is sometimes used. The overlay, which makes it a flashy marching band uniform, is very popular.

After the death of Master Sohni Khan, the leadership of his band was assumed by his only son, Nazeer Hussain, whom the late Master had groomed during his lifetime. Nazeer has proved a worthy successor of his illustrious father. He told this scribe recently that his father loved his hand and always wished to see it in a perfect shape. "When my father was associated with the Babu Band in the early 30s, " Nazeer disclosed, "he had a strong desire to have a band of his own, as he believed that his training as a clarinettist would provide strong foundations for such an edifice."

Master Sohni Khan translated his dream into a reality when he founded a band in 1934. Soon thereafter, he overcame all his organizational problems through hard work, brilliant insight and a great deal of experimentation over a period of several years. Under his direction, the band flourished and within a few years, it earned for itself such reputation which became the envy of his contemporaries.

"Three factors, " claimed Nazeer Hussian, "went into the making of the Sohni Band as a useful cultural and social equipment. These were:: recruitment of fresh talent, teaching his musicians and the proper care of instruments, and the creation of an atmosphere of acceptance in the community". "In addition", added Nazeer Hussain," hard training, discipline and punctuality were also taken into full account by my father".

Master Sohni Khan's long experience with gramophone recording companies and his working relationship with eminent film composers of the thirties and the forties, helped him a lot in teaching the latest film songs to his band members. "So impressed was Seth D.M. Pancholi, the pioneer film-maker of Lahore", remembered Nazeer Hussain, "that he used to give my father a complete set of records of film songs for his newly-released film along with Rs.200, requesting him to introduce those melodies to the public through his band. And mind you! Two hundred rupees in the late thirties was a lot of money".

"Around the beginning of the fourth decade of the present century, non-Muslim residents of Lahore on communal grounds imposed a ban on the use of brass bands, which were owned by Muslim musicians. But it was the performance of our band", boasted Nazeer Hussain, "which compelled the Hindu and Sikh residents of Lahore to relent. The temptation provided by the excellent performance by the Sohni Band proved too irresistible for them". According to Nazeer, the Sohni Band is the only one in Pakistan which was invited by a non-Muslim party to visit Delhi after partition. He and his father responded positively to the invitation.

Many senior denizens of Lahore still remember the rather unusual spectacles when two marriage processions (spearheaded by two brass bands)would converge at one point from opposite directions. The band leaders, in a spirit of intense competition, would not give the right of way to one another by blocking the street while playing music for hours on end.

This scribe witnessed one such incident long ago when a musical confrontation took place between the Jehangir Band and the Sohni Band in a narrow street of the Walled City. Music blared incessantly from both sides for several hours until a few elders accompanying the *baraats* intervened and separated the "warring musicians". But such spirit of competition did not create rancour among band leaders. They continued to respect each other for their virtuosity and musical competence. The same spirit pervades even now in the fraternity of local band leaders.

Babar Khan, the youngest son of Alamgir Khan (the leader of Jehangir Band) asserts that their band was founded by his grandfather, Jehangir Khan, at Amritsar around 1860, and therefore it is the senior-most in longevity of existence. Even if this claim is accepted, the position of Babu Band remains unchanged because among the Lahore-based

bands, it is still the oldest, as the Jehangir Band did not originate from Lahore, but emigrated to the city from Amritsar in August 1947.

Haji Jan Muhammad, who died at the age of 95, played *dhole* in the Jehangir Band both before and after 1947 for several decades. He disclosed in March 1984 that the Jehangir Band had already earned much goodwill all over the province when he joined it at the age of 13 around 1910. It operated from a *baithak* located in an area of Amritsar called Bumbaanwla Khooh. According to Jan Muhammad, the founder of the band, Jehangir Khan died at Amritsar in 1916, when his only son, Alamgir Khan, was just nine years old.

Jehangir Khan, came from Ludhiana to Amritsar where he set up his band with the help of a handful of retired army band personnel around 1860. "The band in those days" according to Haji Jan Muhammad," played only marching tunes, as there were no film songs to copy. Therefore, those bands were known as marching bands. It was much later, in the thirties that brass bands started playing popular film and folk songs. Jehangir Khan died in 1916, and his son was too young to take charge of the band. One of his able assistants (Khalifa) Abdul Ghani alias Khalifa Ghania, took control of the management of the band. However, he relinquished the charge eight years later, when Alamgir Khan was 17 and could look after his interests well. Alamgir Khan led the band until his death in Lahore in April 1960

The Jehangir Band used to be engaged by marriage parties from towns and cities located all over the Punjab. Even some princely states engaged it to take part in their annual festivities at which it played marching tunes, which were in vogue then. On many occasions before partition, it was engaged by parties from Lahore, including some non-Muslims.

Like the founder of the Sohni Band, Alamgir Khan, too, was a celebrated name in the musical ethos of India before 1947. Besides his connection with the Jehangir Band, he was famous for his expertise, talent and performing skill in the rendition of several genres of classical music. A pupil of celebrated vocalist, Ustad Bhai Lal Muhamamd Amritsari, he attained eminence among classical instrumentalists of the Sub-continent. Following the traditions set by his illustrious mentor, Alamgir Khan rendered classical ragas on clarinet with such ease and aplomb that frontline classical musicians of those days could not help paying him rich tributes for his virtuosity and eloquence.

His two sons- clarinettists Shahjehan Khan and Aurangzeb Khan jointly managed the Jehangir Band. They too were musicians of great calibre and were acknowledged exponents of classical formulations. After their death, the management of the band passed on to one of the great grandsons of the founder of this band, who is trying to revive the pristine glories of this band. However, deaths in quick succession of Ustad Shahjehan Khan and his brother Rangi Khan have caused irreparable damage to the reputation and efficacy of Jehnagir Band which , after August 1947, was reckoned as one of the three best brass bands of Lahore.

HAMID ALI BELA SINGS HIS HEART OUT

Lahore is the resting place of a large number of sufi saints, who made immeasureable contributions to spreading the message of universal brotherhood of mankind both before and after the Muslim armies marched in the Sub-continent. Prominent among them were Hazrat Ali Hajveri, commonly known as Data Gunj Bakhsh and Shah Husain.

Kafis written by sufi poets, especially Shah Husain, are sung both by professional vocalists as well as minstrels, which still retain their enduring appeal for even uneducated listeners. Melodic rendition of *kafis* of these sufi poets is as distinct an art form as any other fine manifestations of other creative human endeavours.

Not only does a crooner need to have a good cultured voice and sound grooming in the fundamentals of classical music, but he should also have meditative bent of mind, a vision of occult nature, total involvement and commitment in the underlying message, and an ability to comprehend the mystic nuances of sufi poetry he renders..

In Pakistan, we have a large number of practitioners of the art of *kafi*-singing - the folk-cum-devotional music - which has gained immense popularity among the masses, especially in the rural hinterlands of Sindh and Punjab, where rendition of *kafis* by bards and professional singers are accepted as part of a noble pursuit in life.

Included among the melodists who made names in *kafi*-singing is Hamid Ali Khan Bela whose melodic prowess has been acknowledged by music buffs and the State. He has devoted his entire life to spreading the message of Shah Husain by singing the *kafis* of the Faqir at village *melas, mazers* of the saints, radio, stage and television.

The unique distinction of a *kafi* is that it is written only in Punjabi (and its Sairaiki variant) and Sindhi languages, which have many common features. As a literary genre, *kafi* was used by sufi poets of bygone eras as a medium for their poetic as well as philosophic expressions. The

themes of their *kafis* were pegged to such topics as Divine Love, mortal and illusory nature of this world. They also pointed to probationary status of life on Planet Earth (stressing that the world is merely a preparatory ground for a better life to come); Pantheism, suggesting that the Universe and everything in it is permeated with a Divine Essence; self-negation and devotion to one's mentor, etc. A *kafi* is usually a short poem comprising five or six lines. However, there are some *kafis*, which contain more than five or six lines.

Among Lahore-based *kafi*-singers Hamid Ali Khan Bela has reached the acme of popularity scale in recent years. In recognition of his talent and wide popularity that he enjoys among the masses, the government of Pakistan awarded him the coveted medal of Pride of Performance on March 23, 1995.

With almost 50 years standing in vocal music, Bela is now known all over the country, for his mellifluous renditions of *kafis* of mystic poets, his commitment to and belief in sufism, humility and affable manners. He gets transported to ecstatic heights while rendering a *kafi*, especially of poet Shah Husain. "I can't explain in words the state of my mind when I am totally engrossed in singing a *kafi* of Shah Husain", he often says.

Bela felt very happy, proud and euphoric after winning recognition from the highest authority in the country. He had been longing for it for several years. "My name was recommended on a number of occasions in the past for this award by Radio Pakistan", he disclosed in a recent chat with a glint of pride in his eyes,"but it clicked only in the year 1995"

Like many artists, Bela, too, had remained a victim of societal neglect and abject poverty. A visitor to Katri Bawa inside Kashmiri Gate of the Walled City of Lahore gets stunned by the appalling living conditions, which seem to have become the fate of such talented members of our society as Hamid Ali Khan Bela and Ustad Ghulam Hasan Shaggan.

Bela sings *kafis* feelingly. The striking features of his renditions is the tunefulness of his voice, which goes straight to the hearts of his audiences, entranced by the subtleties of sufistic messages of his spiritual mentor, Shah Husain. Vocalist Bela tries to embellish every syllable of the poetry with harmony and beauty of correct pronunciation. The impact of his renditions on the audiences is

powerful and enduring. On a number of occasions, his listeners were seen rising to their feet with an almost involuntary roar of approval.

In musical parlance, *wah* (acclaim)is considered not as spontaneous as *aah*, which escapes an individual under the powerful influence of a song or *kafi*. The expression of *wah* is also sometimes construed as not truly genuine. But *aah* is the kind of praise which comes straight from the hearts of the listeners. Bela's *kafis* often make *aah* to escape from the control of his admirers. Such is the tantalizing impact his melodic *kafis* create on the audiences.

When Bela sings *Mai nee mein kinoon aakhaan*, the listeners feel as if they are being transported to celestial heights. "If a believer in Shah Husain's philosophy sings his *kafis* with total commitment', he explained, "their impact on the listeners is bound to be soul-stirring".

Of late, Bela has not been feeling too well to render *kafis* of Shah Husain with the same vigour and gusto with which he sang in the past. In 1989, he suffered an attack of paralysis from which he did recover, but very slowly. "It was a miracle that I got well again", he said while talking about the various consequences of the debilitating ailment, adding, "perhaps, my mentor, Shah Hussein, wished me to carry his message to all the nook and cranny of Pakistan for a longer period of time". He was bitter about the policy of the electronic medium visa-vis indigenous music which he suggested, should be changed to allow more air time for classical and devotional varieties of our music

Bela started his career as a folk singer from Radio Pakistan, Lahore, in 1947, by singing *Heer, Saiful Maluk, Mirza Sahibaan, Jugni* and *Boliaan*. With the passage of time, and as a result of disillusionment which poverty breeds., he turned to sufism and developed a strong liking for *kafis*. Now, he employs all his skill and spend all his energies in singing *kafis* which are not only tuneful, but also captivating.

The current bad state of his health warrants attention. He should be provided assistance by the State to foot the bill for his medical care. Without a house of his own and with no transport facilities at his disposal, Bela stands in dire need of financial assistance to carry on with his melodic pursuits.

MASTER GHULAM HAIDER,

The legendary composer

Composer Ghulam Haider was a Lahori, not by birth, but by choice and compulsion of his occupation. He spent better part of his 47-year brief life in this city, which is known for setting new cultural landmarks.

There was much in common between Khurshid Anwar and Master Ghulam Haider, the two Pakistani composers whose share in the refinement of film music was equally recognized and admired by millions in the Sub-continent They won popular acclaim and recognition from members of melodic fraternity.

Both worked for films produced at Lahore and Bombay, and their careers ended in Lahore after partition of India as a result of their demises. Both used as an ingredient Punjab folk melodies while mellsmatically weaving the fabrics of their compositions. Both scored music for 28 films each (KA in 42 years and GH in 18 years) produced in Lahore and Bombay, and in terms of creativity and craftsmanship their compositions were rated equally high. Both were stylish composers and their songs were almost immediately recognizable on first hearing. Both were original composers, who did not borrow from the styles of other inventors of tunes. Both were trendsetters, whose styles of composition became the envy of their contemporaries.

The word genius has been used in the past so indiscriminately that in many cases its true meaning and import were lost. It has become so subverted that now it lacks the emphasis and definition which is inherent in it. I have used this word sparingly. Only on rare occasions did I fall back on this word while evaluating the creative works of famous composers

Happily, I now have an opportunity to use it for Master Ghulam Haider who, in his lifetime, amply deserved this approbation. And in doing so, I am paying my long overdue tribute to the memory of a celebrated melodist whose matchless skill in composition commanded respect from high and the mighty in the filmworld. He was truly a genius and

his was a fascinating chapter in the greatest legend in the Sub-continental film music. The late composer stormed the world of showbiz in 1935. On November 13, 1953 , he died of throat cancer at the age of 47.

Few composers of film music in the Sub-continent had such an eventful career, and commanded so much respect and so vast a following, as did the late Master Ghulam Haider (1906-1953). He overwhelmed the artists in the film world and cinema buffs with his extremely enchanting melodies for *Gul Bakauli* (a Punjabi film produced in Lahore during the year 1938) which created an all-time record, both at popularity and success at the box offi ce.

With that success, and those of his subsequent movies namely *Yamla Jat, Chaudhrty, Khandaan, Khazanchi, Poonji* and *Zamindar*, all produced by Seth Dilsukh M. Pancholi from Lahore before August 14, 1947, Master Ghulam Haider rose to such unparalleled heights in fame as were not touched by any of his contemporaries, including such maestros as Anil Biswas and R.C. Boral from Calcutta; Master Jhandey Khan and Rafique Ghazanvi in Bombay, and Pundit Amar Nath from Lahore

A number of his earlier melodies, which senior Pakistanis still fondly remember are *Mera salam lay ja* (a naat recorded in the voice of Shamshad Begum, (or was it Umrozia*); Kankaan deeaan faslaan pakkian nain* (Shamshad Begum in *Yamla Jat); Bus bus way dholanaan* (Nur Jehan in *Chaudhry*); *Mairay leeay Jehan mein* and *Too kaun see badli mein marey chaand* (Nur Jehan in *Khandaan*) *Deevali phir aa gayee sajni* and *Sawan kay nazarain hain* (Shamshad Begum in *Khazanchi*) and *Duniaan mein gharibeon ko* (a chorus from *Zamindar*) and many other songs which cannot be listed in this short essay.

There were three distinct phases in the career of Master Ghulam Haider - his association with theatre as a young harmonium player; his job as a composer with gramophone recording companies; and his assignments with film companies as a composer.

During the early 30s, he worked for theatre and the gramophone recording companies. From 1935 to 1953, he worked for film industry, first in Lahore, then in Bombay and again in Lahore. In 1944, he went to Bombay and created a sensation by demanding (and getting) Rs.50,000 as his remuneration for scoring music in Mehub Khan's

Humayun (Composer Naushad Ali so states in his autobiography). He stayed at Bombay for four years. The last phase of his career also began at Lahore, where he returned in early 1949, and composed melodies for a few films, including his own productions, *Beqrar* and *Mundri*, and also for director Imtiaz Ali Taj's *Gulnaar*, whose songs reached the lips of millions in the Sub-continent. His songs *Bachpan ki yaadgaro* and *Sakhi ree naheen aiye* from *Gulnaar* recorded in the voice of Nur Jehan became uproariously popular.

Gifted artists are born and are destined to leave their indelible imprints on the annals of music Very early in his career, Master Ghulam Haider won recognition for being a bright star on the melodic firmament. From his first composition for a gramophone recording company to his last in the film *Gulnaar* (both recorded in Lahore) his scores were characterised by an inimitable style which impressed many a music buff and composer. A melodist with a rich background in folk and classical music, he had highly individualistic feelings for music. His treatment of melodies had a greater significance than the tunes themselves. The romantic feelings and poetic fire of some of his later works were tinged with modern orchestral arrangements which he learnt from Western system of orchestration after the electronic revolution. His compositions were marked by full-blooded melodies, strong rhythmic impulses, within clearly defined classical structures. Because of his strong personality, he preferred self expression to excessive innovation.

Film music keeps on growing and refining itself. From an almost unrecognisable state in the early 1930s, it has, during the past 65 years, developed into one of the most powerful forms of artistic expression and emotional communication. Full of the feeling of unrestrained expansion, it has stretched far across the geographic, ethnic and political boundaries. It has touched all those individuals who are prone to listening quality music, and who are willing and able to listen to its message, and enrich their lives with a kind of music that is both powerful and tender, happy and melancholic , relaxing and exciting.

As pertinently stated by a contemporary musicologist, style is the composer's personality coming to fruition. It is what distinguishes him from others, like a face or a way of speaking. Leading composers always had styles of their own; their songs were more often than not recognisable immediately as theirs and not of other composers Their imitators as well as their competitors could not duplicate all the hallmarks and characteristics which went into the making of their

distinct styles. For example, the striking feature of Master Ghulam Haider's compositions was their decoration with short melodic phrases and in their rhythmic drives. Moreover, his style was also subtler and far more elusive to be trapped in words.

Still a Ghulam Haider composition was almost immediately recognisable, even to the untrained ears. It had a feel, a sound that was uncommon and distinct. His melodies were enduringly fresh and that is why after 50 years of their invention, some of these sound so fresh. The small melodic phrases chained together with strong rhythmic cycles in his compositions were perhaps the strongest points, depicting a direct and simple motif developed through small variations into a long and tantalising composition.

Few composers could open new vistas of sound as did the late Master Ghulam Haider. He introduced a number of playback singers in film industry. He discovered Shahmshad Begum, whose voice he used in his film produced at Lahore before partition and also at Bombay after independence. Credit also goes to Masterji for introducing Lata Mangeshkar in Urdu films. Not only did he record several songs in her voice in *Majboor*, but also used her vocals in other films.

During the early days of film-making, actors/actresses, directors, music directors, musicians and all other persons associated with movie production were employed by the studio owners, who invariably were producers of films as well. Master Ghulam Haider was on the payroll of Pancholi Art Studios, Lahore drawing a salary of Rs.250 per month, indeed a handsome amount about mid-30s. Financially well taken care of, the late Masterji did not have to worry about his mundane needs, and therefore could devote his entire attention and energies to the art of composition.

Born, bred and raised at Hyderabad (Sindh), Master Ghulam Haider in his youth assisted his dental technologist father for a short period of time. (His father belonged to the *Rubabi* clan of musicians, but had chosen dentistry as his profession). Soon, the late Masterji felt that he was not cut out for that kind of profession, and after the death of his father, moved to the Punjab, first to Amritsar where members of his clan were concentrated) and later to Lahore, the capital of the Punjab.

Music was in the blood of Master Ghulam Haider as he was born in a family of professional musicians. However, formally he learnt the art from one Beebay Khan, and later acquired it from wherever he could

get. When he was able to play harmonium with a certain degree of perfection, he worked for several theatre groups, who used to tour the Punjabi hinterland during those days. It was there that he learnt many sub-genres of folk melodies, which he later skillfully used in his film compositions.

The late Master Ghulam Haider was an extraordinarily alert, eagerly curious and keen observer of as well as a participant in musical experiences. It was this searching, restless involvement in life around him which explains a fact that has occasionally been overlooked. It is the remarkable range of his compositions and vast canvas for his melodic expressions

The stark, almost unbearably tender *Too kaun see badli mein meray chaand* (Nur Jehan in *Khandaan*), the buoyant sophistication of *Nainaan bhar aiyee neer* (Shamshad Begum in *Humayun*) and the spare, open sadness of *Ek Tera Sahara* (Shamshad Begum in *Shamaa*) are clear pointers to the high quality compositions of the late melodist. His last film *Gulnaar* contained several songs, which served as a befitting finale to his distinguished career that began in Lahore and ended in the same city, after covering a period of 18 years.

Master Ghulam Haider died on November 13, 1953, but not before creating a high enough place for himself in the hierarchy of quality composers of the Sub-continent, leaving behind a rich treasure of music for the enjoyment of future generations.

KHURSHID ANWAR -

A stylish composer

The cultural capital of Pakistan, Lahore has contributed much to the flowering of cinematic arts, and the evolution of a vibrant melodic culture of the Sub-continent, in general; and Pakistan, in particular. This historic city has produced a large number of film makers, actors-actresses and melodists, whose invaluable contributions to cinema, before and after partition of the Sub-continent, will for ever remain enshrined in the cultural history of South Asia.

Included in the list of illustrious Lahoris is the name of composer Khurshid Anwar (died on October 30, 1984), who was respectfully known as Khawaja Saheb in the film world. Born on March 21, 1912, with the proverbial silver spoon in his mouth, he inherited congenial environment of the family that was conducive to the blossoming of his natural creative talent in music.

Since his early childhood, Khurshid Anwar was a student of uncommon brilliance who would not stop short of winning the first position in any examination. He topped the Punjab University examination in 1935 for his master's degree in philosophy. He appeared in the written part of ICS examination and again topped the list of successful candidates. However, he did not appear in the *viva voce* and preferred to join All India Radio in Delhi as a programme producer. How poor the world of music would have been, had he joined the fraternity of servile bureaucrats to serve His Majesty's colonial government in India.

Though he early showed a strong proclivity for music and was encouraged both by his father and grandfather, Khurshid Anwar received virtually no formal instruction in this performing art until he reached the age of maturity. Before he met and became a pupil of Ustad Tawwakal Hussain Khan, he was already a musician brimming with abundant natural gift. That was the consequence of his frequent

attendances in weekly soirees held at his father's residence in Lahore where melodists of all India repute participated.

Khurshid Anwar joined All India Radio in the late 30s, where he produced a number of popular music programmes. Learning about his potential, the late Mian Abdur Rashid Kardar (then based at Bombay but originally from Lahore), the doyen of Sub-continental film world , asked KA to score music for his Punjabi film, *Kurmai*. His tunes became uproariously popular, not only in the Punjab, but also in other areas in the Sub-continent.. A few years later, as a result of his lilting tunes for J.K. Nanda's movie *Ishara* and Sohrab Modi's film, *Parakh*, Khurshid Anwar emerged as one of the influential and stylist composers of undivided India.

Khurshid Anwar was one among the new clan of young and committed composers who joined the world of cinema in the early 40s when a transfusion of fresh blood was needed to be pumped into the aging veins of film industry. Also included in that group of talented composers were Rafique Ghazanvi, Feroze Nizami, Ghulam Haider, Shayam Sunder, Naushad Ali and Rashid Attray. A few among this talented lot was not only highly educated, having brilliant academic records, but also possessed such effervescently demonstrable compositional skill for creative inventiveness as excelled the abilities of their (professional) contemporaries.

To the art of composition Khurshid Anwar brought the same trenchant and restless intellect that made him so fine a poet, playwright, producer-director, and one of the most erudite interpreters of classical music of the Sub-continent, which had experienced a metamorphosis during the 800-year Muslim rule. He believed that music, in the long accepted classical or romantic tradition, had come to the end of its tether, and the contemporary composer must seek out new forms and new avenues of expression. He also felt that film was the only fruitful and effective medium of artistic self-expression left to contemporary composers.

His melodic thinking was profound (sometimes abstruse and esoteric) as perhaps only those who listened to his discourses on the history and evolution of music could best appreciate. Though he was disillusioned of and frustrated with the prevailing chaos in Pakistan film music, he did not altogether break away with it, but persisted in his indefatigable search for new musical idioms and expression.

His gift for endowing tonality, in general, and the tapping of microtonal pitches in his melodies, in particular, were the striking features of Khurshid Anwar compositions. The special characteristics of his tunes - a touch of *meend* (a glide from an upper note to a lower one), deep pathos, strong emotional reverberations and romanticism - are perhaps nowhere more evident than in his films *Intezar*, *Zahr-e-Ishq, Jhoomar, Koel* and *Heer Ranjha*. He seemed to be at the peak of his career then, and his songs touched the apex of popularity and glory.

An illustrious son of Lahore, Khurshid Anwar possessed an unusual melodic gift, an orderly mind, a restless and searching soul, congenial temperament, a planned approach to the process of inventing new melodies and years of hard-earned experience. His skill for creative inventiveness, fertility of ideas, a highly-cultivated melodic taste, feelings and technique had in combination, remained unsurpassed by any other Pakistani composer of film music. Only rarely did another melodist succeed in maintaining the consistently high level of artistry that KA displayed for so many years, for which he is considered the greatest single contributor to Pakistan film music.

Not only did he compose many hit songs, but also showed his natural gift for being an astute arranger. His smooth and effortless melodies were the result of meticulous work. He was a composer who would never stop refurbishing until he was fully satisfied that a melody composed by him had reached its destined perfect shape.

Majid Hussain, an amateur singer with good vocal resources, spent nearly twenty years with Khurshid Anwar, sometimes assisting him in reproducing the tunes he had composed, and at others, helping in conducting rehearsals with musicians. He talks feelingly about certain peculiar traits of the master composer, which distinguished him from his contemporaries.

Says Majid Hussain:"Khawaja Saheb used to rehearse his songs for so many times that even seasoned instrumentalist got scared. For days on end, he would ask the musicians to rehearse a song until he was satisfied that the results, as he had conceived them, could be achieved"

About his compositional techniques, Majid says: "Khawaja Saheb did not use any instrument while composing a song. At times, I saw a *surmandal* (a small harp) in his hands, which he fiddled without murmuring any words. His method of composition was intellectual as he would invent a new tune in his mind and, when satisfied, would

command a *sarangi* player and a percussionist to join him in refining the melody. After the *sarangi* player had committed the tune to his memory, the singer was called to rehearse the melodic lines of a song under his supervision for several days. Later, a full dress rehearsal with the orchestra was arranged. It was then (during the rehearsals) that Khawaja Saheb arranged the interludes and made fine adjustments in the song. This process continued for several days until the composer was satisfied that recording could be made.

Even during the conceptual stage of a composition, Majid says,"Khawaja Saheb (sometimes) spent several days. For example, for his popular song, *Kali Kali mandlaaye bhanwara*, he visited Bagh-e-Jinnah with me for several days to critically examine the sound produced by this insect while hovering over flowers. This effect he adroitly included in the interludes of the song. During rehearsals of this song, the musicians could not easily produce the desired effects. Therefore, he persisted with more rehearsals for several days when the desired results were achieved. No wonder that song became tumultuously popular"

Other composers might have occasionally equaled him in the technical excellence of the art, or in the touching appeal of the sentiment, but none seemed to have succeeded in excelling Khurshid Anwar in the simultaneous presentation of both these qualities in the same measure. The commingling of sense and sound attained perfection in his compositions, which were at once the acme of poetic beauty and melodic sophistication.

Few composers of film music possessed the charm and grace of Khurshid Anwar. From his first composition in *Kurmai* in 1941 to his last in *Mirza Jat* in 1983 (both in Punjabi language) his melodies glowed with a special liveliness that was characteristically his own. A Khurshid Anwar composition is almost always recognizable, even to the untrained ears. It has a feel, a sound that is distinct and unique. In his songs, each phrase grows out of the preceding one. KA knew the technique of small form compositions so well that he was able to utilize it effortlessly.

In terms of quantity, Khurshid Anwar trailed behind many of his contemporaries, but qualitatively few could match his talent. During a 40-year-long association with film industry, he scored music only for 28 movies - nine at Bombay (six before 1947 and three thereafter) and 19 at Lahore (one before independence and 18 after 1952). Of these, 15

were tumultuously successful at the box office, primarily because of their tantalising compositions, four were moderately successful, and the rest did not do well from the business point of view. However, songs from all of his films reached the lips of millions in the Sub-continent

Despite his engagements for creating new melodies for the films, which consumed most of his time and energies, Khurshid Anwar's love for classical music did not diminish. He was much concerned about its future, which seemed to him to be bleak in Pakistan. He strongly advocated the adoption of appropriate measure to preserve our rich musical heritage, which was so assiduously refined by our ancestors during the period of Muslim rule in the Sub-continent. He did not accept the claim that our classical music was a Hindu dissipation as some orthodox among us assert. Neither did he believe in the notion that classical music, which is prevalent in northern India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, had any so-called Vedic connections.

Another great achievement of Khurshid Anwar was the recording of 100 *asthai-antaras* of as many ragas in the voices of different *gharana* melodists and several longplay records, containing the *gharana* style of *kheyal* singing. These special recordings were marketed by a gramophone recording company in collaboration with Pakistan National Council of the Arts, under the titles *of Aahang-e-Khusravi* and *Gharanoan ki gayiki.* This single deed of the late composer helped in preserving the centuries's old style of classical singing, which is gradually disappearing from our musical ethos.

Shy, modest and introvert, Khurshid Anwar lived his life quietly and unceremoniously, devoting himself to compositions and at the tale end of his life, to unfolding mysteries of music on to budding musicians. Of his many admirable qualities - his fine sense of musical designs, the economy of his means, the inexorable logic of his melodic wisdom - the most significant was his highly refined lyricism. He had the gift of composting sustained melodies of expressiveness. This melodic gift became evident even with his earliest efforts at compositions.

A composer with solid grooming in classical music, Khurshid Anwar was also influenced by folk songs of Hariana (east Punjab) which he admired and learned during his stay in early childhood in Rohtak where his grandfather served as senior civil servant. Indeed, some of his earlier compositions (a la J.K. Nanda's box office hit *Ishara* (1943) and *Singhar* (1945) smacked of refined varieties of Hariana folk melodies.

Several times during his eventful career, Khurshid Anwar was acclaimed as the best composer of the year, both on Sub-continental as well as Pakistan level. In 1980, he was awarded the *Sitara-e-Imtiaz* medal by the government of Pakistan for his excellence in the melodic arts The All India Music Directors' Association, on the occasion of the golden jubilee celebrations of Indian film industry in 1982, warded a plaque to this creative genius from Pakistan in their series Mortal men, Immortal Melodies, in recognition of his abundant creative talent

After so many years of his death, on hearing of his song, one feels Khurshid Anwar's strong melodic personality pulsating through his compositions, making the listeners to wonder as if the maestro is still in their midst, acknowledging the ebullient praises his fans continue to shower on him.

FEROZE NIZAMI

A sensitive composer

Another Lahori musician who made qualitatively significant contributions to the melodic culture of the city as well as Pakistan, was Ferozeuddin Ahmad, commonly known as Feroze Nizami. Throughout his long career, Nizami remained in the forefront of *avant garde* movement in film music, especially during the early years of independence.

Not many contemporary composers invented melodies which had such a strong imprint of their creators as those of Feroze Nizami. What is particularly interesting to note is that his stylistically created music changed very little over the decades; the same qualities and mannerisms by which his later works are recognised could be found in many of his early compositions.

During a conversation with this scribe (when he was at the peak of his career and popularity), Nizami said "I try to make my music speak simply and directly about what is in my heart at the time I am composing. If there is love, sadness, or if I am in a disturbed state of mind, these moods become a part of my compositions."

In the early 1940s, a group of young and educated Muslim composers regularly met in Bombay (and sometimes in Lahore) to confabulate on music, its problems, and about their constraints as composers. These talented artists included Rafique Ghazanvi, Khawaja Khurshid Anwar and Feroze Nizami. All of them had been nurtured on classical traditions of Muslim *gharana* of musicians, which they were promoting with much zeal and verve, either through their classical singing, or via their film compositions.

In the beginning, Feroze Nizami distinguished himself by his expert rendering of Kirana style of classical vocalization. He inherited the artistic mantle of his illustrious teacher and mentor, Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan, whom he admired much.

The elder brother of cricketer Nazar Muhammad, late Feroze Nizami was a man of multi-dimensional personality. He was a classical vocalist of repute, who used to broadcast his music from Lahore, Delhi and Bombay, both before and after the partition of the Sub-continent. He composed music for a large number of movies, first from Bombay and later from Lahore and Karachi, and was acclaimed as one of the best music composers of undivided India.

Feroze Nizami was a musicologist also. He wrote a large number of articles which were published in *the Pakistan Times* for several years. His Urdu books on music and mysticism were titled *Asrar-e-Mauseeqi* (which was prescribed by the University of the Punjab for its course for graduate students in music) and *Sarchashma-e-Hayat* of which he used to talk much with pride. He also dabbled in homeopathy and practised the art of transcendental meditation.

He was one of the senior students of Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan (others being Waheeda Khanum and Nazar Mohyuddin, who died as actor Amar in Bombay) who trained him in the Kirana *gharana* traditions of *kheyal* singing. The late Nizami was also influenced by the singing styles of prominent exponents of Rampur school classical singing. The versatile musician from Lahore, Nizami came under the tutelage of Ustad Sardar Khan Delhiwaley about the middle of the decade of 50s and benefited much from the melodic wisdom of his second mentor. (Ustad Sardar Khan, the grandson of legendary Mian Tun Rus Khan, died in Lahore in the year 1963).

One of the most influential composers representing the Punjab school since the advent of sound motion pictures in the Sub-continent, Feroze Nizami remained in the forefront of progressive movement in compositional music. He used every means and genre - classical, folk, popular and even melodies derived from Hindu liturgical modes. His greatest achievement and milestone as a powerful and original creative force was reflected in his enchanting compositions for the films *Jugnu* (Bombay), *Dopatta* and *Chunnway* (Lahore).

A graduate from Islamia College, Lahore (1929), this singer-composer-theoretician found it relatively easy to acquire the skill of a classical musician. "My education helped me much in comprehending the fine points, and in discerning the nuances of this finest of the fine arts", he used to say with a great deal of pride and sense of achievement. He believed that a formally educated person could apply his mind more

creatively and study music methodically than those who were not fortunate enough to receive good education.

Feroze Nizami, Khawaja Khurshid Anwar, Saadat Hassan Manto and Krishen Chander were all contemporaries and pursued their creative careers at the same time. About the mid 30s, Nizami joined All India Radio as a progrmme producer. When he began his work in the right earnest in Delhi, he found Khurshid Anwar, another melodist from Lahore, Krishen Chander, a Poonch-born but Lahore-educated short story writer, and Saadat Hassan Manto the stylist and interpid writer from Amritsar, already working for AIR. All four of them resigned at the same time protesting against the out-of-the turn promotion of a colleague, who was incharge of the Speech Branch. How poor the world of cinema, especially music, would have been, if they had chosen to stay with AIR.

After giving up his radio job, Feroze Nizami shifted to Bombay where he became a freelance music director. Soon his talent attracted the attention of and won recognition from better known producer-directors, which resulted in the signing of several contracts. He composed melodies for such memorable movies *as Vishwaas, Bari Baat, Pia Millan, Umang, Oos Par, Amar Raaj, Nek Parveen* and *Jugnu*. For his widely popular compositions for the film *Jugnu*, he was declared the best composer of the Sub-continent for the year 1945.(The film was completed in the 1945 but its exhibition was stayed on the order of Mr. Morarji Desai for more than one year) His songs - *Aaj ki raat, yahaan badla wafa ka, Tum bhi bhula tho, Hammain to shaam-e-ghum*, and several others, including. one recorded in the voice of *Malika-e-Mauseeqi* Raushan Ara Begum still cast nostalgic spells on senior denizens, who fondly cherish the memories of good old days when these were broadcast by radio almost daily for a long time throughout the length and breadth of the Sub-continent.

Nizami's popularity during the mid-40s was well deserved. If he was not the greatest Muslim composer after Master Jhandhey Khan and Master Ghulam Haider, he certainly was one of the greatest by the end of the year 1950 There was no area of composition to which he did not contribute significantly.

After partition, Feroze Niaami returned to his native city, Lahore, where he was immediately signed by Sibtain Fazli (for *Dopatta*) and Shaukat Husain Rizvi (for *Chunway*). He composed songs for these two movies with the same verve and feeling with which he invented

melodies for *Jugnu* in Bombay. Film *Dopatta* became an instant hit, primarily because of his lilting melodies and his songs for Punjab *Chunnway* also became popular through Pakistan and India.

After that, Feroze Nizami shifted to Karachi where he scored music for several films. His well-known movies produced in Lahore and Karachi, in addition to *Dopatta* and *Chunnway*, were *Intekhab, Kismat, Raaz., Sola Aanay, Manzil, Ghulam* and *Saughat*. A number of songs from these movies also reached the lips of millions during the decade of the 60s. If my memory serves me well, his last film was *Saughat*, produced and directed by his son Arif Nizami.

Apart from his compositional talent, Feroze Nizami was also acknowledged as a classical singer of much merit. He regularly broadcast music from Radio Pakistan, Lahore, until his death on November 15, 1975. He did not allow his deteriorating health and old age to interfere with his melodic agenda.

About mid-50s, Nizami was invited by the then Chairman of Pakistan Arts Council to head its Music Academy, an assignment which afforded him opportunities to impart melodic knowledge to young aspirants. This scribe remained associated with him for several years both as a friend as well as a member of teaching faculty at Alhamra.

Earlier, in 1963. Feroze Nizami headed a delegation of Pakistani artists which participated in a music seminar held at Tehran under the sponsorship of UNESCO. The Paper on music which. he read there was appreciated by delegates from other countries

From rhythms, melodies, instrumental colours and other salient features of Punjabi folk music, and Kirana classical traditions, Feroze Nizami acquired inspirational materials for many of his popular compositions, some of which brought him early recognition and fame. Interest in folk music of his native land (Punjab) came to him early, even before his emergence as a composer. That was manifest in his compositions for All India Radio. It remained a perpetual and vital influence on him throughout his creative career.

However, other influences, particularly of several different strands of classical music, could also be discerned in his music, especially in the films *Chunnway* and *Kismet*. Close to the end of his life, Feroze Nizami lost touch with excellence and had to retire from his creative melodic pursuits.

Feroze Nizami trained a number of musicians, who also created names in the world of films. More prominent among them were the inimitable playback singer Muihammd Rafi, composer Ustad Saleem Husain (commonly known as Saleem Iqbal in the film world) and Muhammd Ali, who is currently taking music classes at Music Academy of Lahore Arts Council.

HAUNTING MELODIES OF MASTER INAYAT HUSAIN

Among illustrious sons of Lahore's culturally rich soil, the name of Master Inayat Husain stands out distinctly. His contributions to the refinement of Pakistani melodic culture have been profound.

Hailing from a family of musicians from *mauza* Mozang, Lahore, he was one of those few musicians who were inducted in the art of composition rather accidentally, and under circumstances beyond their control. Beginning his career as a film actor, he joined Imperial Film Company, Bombay with which he worked for four years. Later, he shifted to Calcutta, where he worked with well-known producer Kirnani, for one year. During his five-year stint with films, Master Inayat played leading roles in a couple of movies produced at Bombay. Actor Billimoria and actress Salochina, the bright stars on the cinematic firmament, were his contemporaries in the film world around 1935.

Those were the days when actors and actress were required to record songs in their own voices, which were later to be filmed on them. The system of playback singing had not yet been introduced. As Master Inayat showed promise as a vocalist, he secured entry in the film world without much difficulty.

Before stepping in the world of movies, Master Inayat Husain had spent a long period of apprenticeship under vocalist Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, with whom he studied the art of classical singing. Although he belonged to a family of professional musicians, Master Inayat was not initiated in the melodic arts by his father as was and still is customary among professional gharana musicians. As a classical vocalist, he did not create much of an impression. The best he could do was to sing in private soirees, and that, too, in the inspiring presence of his mentor. He also failed in making to the radio as a professional singer.

The late Master Inayat Husain was one of the frontline composers of film music in the Sub-continent, whose melodies won kudos both from cinegoers as well as classical singers and crooners of other light genres.

The late maestro did not quite remember the date when he joined Columbia Gramophone Recording Company in Lahore as a composer. All he could say was that "it was some 50 years ago" while responding to my question in a meeting at his residence in 1986. It corresponded to the year 1936 or thereabout. "I joined Columbia when Master Jhandhey Khan left that organization to proceed to Bombay to join Ranjeet Movitone," he said while raking his memory.

Compared to his career as an actor, the late Master won quick recognition as a composer, when his compositions *Rub khair karey*, rendered by Zeenat Begum and *Ravi de aan Chhalasan*, sung by Munawwar Sultana, hit the bull's eye. Another song of his, *Way pind deya numberdara*, also recorded in the voice of Zeenat Begum, became uproariously popular.

Master Inayat Husain turned to composing film songs in the early 1940s, when he composed tunes for a Punjabi film *Kamli*, produced in a Lahore studios. He chose Ustad Barkat Ali Khan as a playback singer for the recording of male songs of the film, one of which, *O akhhiaan laa kay pachhtaya*, became an instant hit. One of the films produced soon after August 1947 in Lahore had his musical scores. Titled *Hichkolay*, it celebrated silver jubilees in several cities in Pakistan and India becuase of the lilt and cadence of its songs

As a sequel to the sudden spurt in Pakistan film industry in the mid-50s, Master Inayat was swamped with requests from producers to compose music for their movies. But he did not go after mass production and instead accepted only a few so that he could do justice to each one of those films. His policy of choosing only a few films at a time paid rich dividends as it provided him enough time to devote to his creative pursuits.

Thereafter, it turned out to be a windfall for the late maestro and his immortal compositions - *Paayel mein geet hain chhum chhum kay* and *Ulfat kee nayee manzil ko chala*, both recorded in the voice of Iqbal Bano for the films *Gumnaam* and *Qatil*, touched the pinnacle of glory and popularity. So great was their impact on public sensibilities and the minds of seasoned connoisseurs that even celebrities like Lata

Mangeshkar (according to the late composer) wrote to pay their tributes to the creative ingenuity of the Pakistani composer.

About that time, the late Ustad Ameer Khan of Indore visited Lahore on his way to Afghanistan to participate in Jashne Kabul. The first thing he did on arrival in Lahore (as stated by the late composer) was to look for Master Inayat Husain. During the course of his conversation (with local melodists) he told them that Master Inayat had caused him (Ameer Khan) "tremendous financial loss" by composing a song like *Paayel mein geet*. "I consumed all my half-rupee coins for months on end by putting these in the juke box to listen to your song", he told Master Inayat Husain in a patronising tone and, at the same time, complimented the maestro for his skill to compose new tunes. The composer's own teacher, Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, also got enamoured of his composition *Hum bhi to parey hain rahoan mein*.

"There could not be a better compensation for my labour than the tributes I received from those great personalities in music", the late Masterji said with a glint of pride in his eyes, while talking to this scribe in his home in Mohalla Chaumala, inside Bhati Gate, Lahore. "I don't care much for money as a reward for my creative ventures", he said while responding to a question whether he ever felt disappointed over financial recompense he received for his creative work in the films, adding, "words of appreciation from such great masters and top-ranking vocalists are my real wealth".

Among his compositions still hummed and whistled by a large number of film and music buffs, are *Daal pay pappiha boley; Jaan-e-bahar; Aye dil kissee ki yaad mein; Baanvaria naa ro' Banaa kay maira nashmeman* and of course *Paayel mein geet* and *Ulfat kee nayee manzil ko chalaa*. His tunes have lasting appeal as he had succeeded in sustaining the level of his creative dynamism throughout his long career. The more one hears these the more one gets addicted to these.

Very early in his career as a composer, Master Inayat Husain adopted an eclectic style which ranged from folk melodies and light-classical genres to effervescently expressive lyricism. He continued to favour semi-classical structures and preferred those compositions, which were free of literary association and were only expressive in musical ideas. In general, he shunned the *avant garde* tendencies often reflected in modern fads like pop, disco and other types of electrophonic music, which avoids innovation for its own sake. However, he was not averse to adopting complex and intricate formal musical schemes and was

always prepared to pursue them to their logical conclusions. After listening to a variety of his compositions, one became aware of a lively original and uncompromising talent at work.

Late composer Khurshid Anwar , who was quite selective in showering praises on his contemporaries, regarded Master Inayat as an original composer. Talking to this scribe, he said that there were very few composers in Pakistan who were truly original in their works. In this context, he named Master Ghulam Haider and Master Inayat Husain.

Master Inayat Husain did not care much for the younger generation of Pakistani composers, who showed no respect for the old melodic traditions and senior maestros. "Those who did not have any patience and resect for the rich melodic traditions of the past", he said in an admonishing tone, "cannot achieve a place of distinction in the world of music."

He thought only those musicians, who had received formal training from their teachers, could ultimately rise to great heights in film music. In this context he referred to the rich classical backgrounds of Khurshid Anwar, Feroze Nizami, Master Jhandhay Khan and Rafique Ghazanvi. "Not that seasoned classical vocalists can teach the art of composition", he said while elaborating his point, "but young composers can use the classical art in their quest for new forms and modes of expression".

Master Inayat had lost count but he believed he had scored music for about 50 films, both before and after partition of the Sub-continent. Almost all those movies did good business at the box office, and those which failed in generating enough revenues for the exhibitors during their first runs, became popular later primarily because of the lilting melodies of the late maestro.

The second last film of his career, *Maula Jat*, was screened continuously for two years, creating an all-time record at popularity in Pakistan. "Only police could break its spell", the late composer said jokingly, while referring to the popularity of the film with which he was associated .

If Master Inayat was alive today, he would have, like other sensitive composers, disassociated from Pakistan film industry because of the creatively uncongenial environment that prevails in local studios now. "Mere listening to modern pop or disco music", he used to say, "cannot

turn an individual into a truly great film composer as a *bayustada* (one without a teacher) can never make to the top".

Master Inayat Husain was one of the illustrious sons of Lahore who, despite a lack of good formal education, contributed so much to the melodic culture of the city and Pakistan. Like all original tunes, his melodies continue to radiate enough sonic enchantment even after so many years of their invention as to create nostalgic spells on both ordinary music buffs and cultivated connoisseurs, as well as professional musicians.

RASHID ATTRAY

Scoring hits of the Sixties

Rashid Attray, who started his career as a composer around 1939 in Calcutta, was essentially a conservative musician. He was satisfied with the traditional forms and techniques, which nevertheless, he enriched with the impress of his personality. It is, therefore, not easy to identify him with any school or style, for he created music in many different veins, using several modes and forms with equal fervour and success.

He was one of those melodists of *Rubabi* clan (like Master Ghulam Haider) who spent better parts of their lives in Lahore and contributed wholesomely to the melodic culture of the city. He worked in Bombay also. Soon after partition of the Sub-continent he shifted to Lahore, where he died after composing music for a large number of films, some of which were box office hits.

Attray received training in the melodic arts from his father, Bhai Khushi Muhammad, a harmonium player of some merit, and later from the famous exponent of the Agra *gharana kheyal gaiyki*, Ustad Fayyaz Hussain Khan According to musicologist Ghulam Haider Khan, as a young melodist Attray also served as an assistant with the legendary Bengali composer, Rai Bahadhur R.C. Boral, who introduced Bengali folk melodies in films produced in Calcutta under the banner of New Theatres.

After braving the vicissitudes of film world, Rashid Attray achieved the distinction of being one of the most significant composers of Pakistan by the decade of Sixties. By then, his contributions to film music were widely recognized and appreciated. He rubbed shoulders with such legendary figures as Master Ghulam Haider and Khawaja Khurshid Anwar, who were impressed by his sharp melodic acumen.

Before independence., Attray composed melodies for only a few films which were produced in Calcutta, Pune, Bombay and Lahore, none of

which was a thumping success. However, a few songs from those films became popular. Among his popular pre-partition songs *were Do dil mohabatoan kay mazey* (Amirbai Karnataki in *Kamra Number naon*) and *Main tarey leeye hoon too agar marey leeye hai* (a duet in the voices of Shamshad Begum and G.M. Durrani in Pancholi Art Pictures *Shirin Farhad*).

After migrating to Pakistan in 1947, the Amritsar-born Attray, like many other musicians of those days, faced many hardships and privation. Consequently, he had to accept low salary as a composer at Radio Pakistan, Rawalpindi, which in those days used to cater to the needs of Azad Kashmir Radio as well. A few years later, he was transferred to the Lahore Station of Radio Pakistan. Violinist Asghar Ali, who had worked with the late composer for a number of years, claimed that the famous marching song, *Allah-o-Akbar*, which was identified with Pakistan Army as its signature tune, was composed by Rashid Attray. That tune was effectively used during the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965.

Although Attray's first film in Pakistan was *Bailee* (which was a flop), his second *Shehri Babu* put his name back on the film map. However, luck smiled at him only when his movie, *Saat Lakh* was released. It turned out to be a thunderous success. Soon thereafter, he became one of the most sought after composers in the country. Its songs. *Too chhuti ley ka aaja balma, Qarar lootney waley* and *Yaro mujhey moaf karo* became super hits. Earlier, his music for W.Z.Ahmad's *Waada* had also won wide popular acceptance

Rashid Attray was groomed in the classical tradition of our music, which manifested itself in several of his melodies composed in an archaic strand. His songs for film *Mauseeqar*, which he also produced, bore eloquent testimony to his prowess in art music. His other successful movies included *Neend, Anarkali, Zarqa, Swaal* and the one made on the lives of *Mirza* and *Sahibaan*. Other popular songs of Attray were: *Latt uljhi sulja ja re baalam; Arey oh bey morawwat; Raqs zanjeer pehun kar bhi kiya jata hai; Tumaari aarzoo main koocha-e-qatil tak aa pohnchay; Nigahain milakar; Tum jug jug jeeyo* and *Baanwari Chakori*.

Since he absorbed several musical influences, including the classical styles of vocalist Ustad Fayyaz Khan and Mushtaq Husain Khan (of Rampur *gharana*), Rashid Attray did not develop a single style, but went from one manner to another, following the dictates of the musical

problems at hand at different periods of time. A term of apprenticeship, which he served with composer R.C. Boral during his formative years, also helped him to understand the requirements and trends of the film world. Consequently, his music often smacked of an exercise in melodic intellectualism in which the form is dictated by the idea, in which emotion is curbed, and in which new musical resources are continually and closely scrutinized and explored.

Motivated by his inner quest for musical excellence, and prompted by a burning desire to express freely, Attray later on, distinguished himself as a composer of considerable merit, winning kudos and recognition for his enchanting compositions both from knowledgeable connoisseurs and the lay public. He worked indefatigably for standardizing Pakistani film music. Also, he devoted a lot of his time and energies to the cause of contemporary Sub-continental classical music, which remained close to his heart.

Rashid Attrray's most agreeable and effective music was created during the decade of the Sixties when his creative fertility was at its peak. Unlike some composers, who pride themselves on being mass manufacturers of music in a soulless machine like manner, Rashid Attray remained quite choosy in accepting offers from producers. Qualitatively, his compositions are better and more enduring than those coming from the speed merchants.

COMPOSERS SALEEM-IQBAL

Music in their genes

Perhaps, very few music buffs in Pakistan knew that the name Saleem Iqbal famed during the late 50s and early 60s, did not represent one person but two - Saleem Husain and Iqbal Husain. The two brothers stormed the Pakistan silver screen with their maiden box office hit, *Sheikh Chilli* (Punjabi) after which their fame as composers continued to rise for over a decade.

The captivating tunes of hit songs *Sayyo nee mairą dil dharkey, Lal paranda* and *Veer Maira ghori charriyą* still pleasantly reverberate in our minds if we turn back to that era. Many other melodies composed by them earned mass popularity because of their enchanting appeal and enduring impact. A fresh hearing of these songs will confirm their lasting freshness and effervescent appeal.,

Saleem Husain claimed that his elder brother Iqbal, who died in early 1984, was a good conductor and a competent arranger. "After the invention of a new composition by me", he said, "brother Iqbal would take over completely and keep the matter under his control until the song was recorded" Iqbal Husain was a poet as well as an accomplished actor. In addition to working with brother Saleem as co-composer, he also acted in a few movies and his lyrics were also used in Punjabi film *Sheikh Chilli.*

Born inside Bhati Gate, Lahore, in a family which was known for its strong proclivity for music, brothers Saleem and Iqbal came to films through a circuitous route. They had to perform in theatre as child actors and participate in radio music programmes before their talent was spotted and recognized.

"I have so far composed melodies for about 30 films, some of which crated new records at popularity and also at the box office,"claimed Saleem Husain (in a chat shortly before his death) in reply to question related to the quantum of his contributions to film music. "Why did

your compositions for Punjabi films become more popular than your tunes in Urdu movies", he was asked.

"This is not the correct assessment of my creative output", he answered spontaneously, adding, "our compositions for Urdu movies namely, *Darwaza, Baaji, Pakeeza* and *Peeya Milan ki aas*, became equally popular. In fact, some of the songs from these movies earned greater public admiration than those from our Punjabi films".

He was right in his assertion. Saleem-Iqbal compositions for Saifuddin Saif's Urdu film, *Darwaza* and S. Suleman's *Baaji* became uproariously popular in the early sixties. Heavily oriented towards classicism, some of the songs from these Urdu movies successfully competed with hit songs from the Indian movies of those days. Song *Peeya naheen aiye*, from *Darwaaza*, for example, still retains its freshness and is remembered for its classical infrastructure. It was composed in raga *Kalavati*. But Saleem's best remembered compositions are undoubtedly those which were recorded for Punjabi films *Sheikh Chilli* and *Kartar Singh*. His song *Veer mera ghori charriya* is now an integral part of our folk traditions.

Because of his sound grooming in art music, Saleem Husain composed several melodies in a classical strand. Also, he was one of the few composers who used such difficult *taals* as Jhaptal (10 beats) and *Ektala* (12 beats) for some of his compositions. Usually, *Dadra* (6 beats) and *Keharva* (8 beats) are used in film songs.

Late Saleem and Iqbal were lucky as their first compositions attracted attention and gave them a high status among the young composers of Pakistan in the late fifties.

As Saleem clearly excelled his older brother Iqbal in singing, he was given special attention by his father Master Ilam Din. Later, he served as chief assistant to composer Feroze Nizami for over five years. This enabled him to become fully conversant with compositional techniques and orchestral arrangements. Saleem Husain also benefited from the melodic wisdom of Ustad Sardar Khan Delhiwaley and his pupil Khurshid Butt. His last mentor was Abdul Qadir Peeyarang, who was not a professional musicians in the genetic sense, as he belonged to a Sayyid family from UP. Saleem remained his pupil for 15 years. "That was great experience, a kind of windfall", he explained, "as it enabled me to draw on the vast experience and knowledge of Ustad Abdul Qadir, who did not hesitate in unfolding the mysteries and wonders of

classical music on me. I bumped into that great musician in a Lahore studio accidentally when the late Ustad was busy scoring music for Ahmad Bashir's classic *Neela Parbhat*".

Refinement of melodic phrases, restrained emotion, tranquility and subtle atmosphere are some of the qualities of Saleem Iqbal compositions for which Saleem drew equally on classical modes and folk traditions. His sensitiveness to the finer shades of musical feeling gave him a unique place in film music.

After getting disenchanted with films, Saleem Husain joined the Lahore Arts Council where he taught vocal music for several years. Also, he continued broadcasting his music from Radio Pakistan, Lahore, until his death.

BABA G.A.CHISHTI

Grand old man of film music

Ghulam Ahmad Chishti, the octogenarian composer with about 250 movies to his credit is no more with us. He was a well-known celebrity of Sub-continental cinema and his name stands out with distinction among two generations of composers for his lilting melodies, and a fetching folk-orientation of his style. Although he was not born in Lahore, he spent about 60 years of his life (in two phases) in this city, contributing to the refinement of its melodic culture.

Beginning his career as a composer from Lahore, Chishti also worked in Calcutta and Bombay before returning to this city shortly after partition of the Sub-continent. The first film for which he composed music was *Sohni Mainwaal* produced in Lahore, in which famous actor Hira Lal enacted the role of Mainwaal against Almas, whose portrayal of Sohni was widely appreciated. Chishti's subsequent films included *Pardesi Dhola* (Punjabi), which was shot at Calcutta'. *Shukaria* was the name of his first Urdu movie (also produced in Calcutta), which was followed by *Manchali*. popular songs of these films (which ring a bell for senior denizens) were *Hamari gali aanaa* and *Jug hai gurriyion ka khel* recorded in the voice of Nazar Mohyuddin (actor Amer).

Some critics look upon G.A. Chishti as Pakistan's most prolific and popular composer. This may sound like excessive enthusiasm to those who admire quality and not quantity. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that very few among his contemporaries had the limelight of cinema-goers' interest and admiration flashed upon them the way Chishti had. He was one of the senior most among contemporary musicians. Only Anil Biswas and Naushad Ali came close to him in terms of longevity of association with the art of composition. Both of them are still living.

G.A. Chishti was born in a small village near the city of Jallandhar in East Punjab about the turn of the 20th century. His original plan was to pursue a career in government service, but he finally decided to opt for

music as his vocation. First, he associated himself with Columbia Gramophone Recording Company in Lahore around 1935. For a couple of years, he earned his living working for Columbia. Meanwhile, he set into motion his career as a composer with provocative innovations and experiments with folk melodies that electrified the world of film music. From apprenticeship to maturity, his career sparkled with creative inventiveness, which was much appreciated.

Since 1934, after bidding goodbye to the Punjab Irrigation Department, where he was employed in a lowly position, Chishti devoted his time and energies to the further development of music as an emotive force. Although his most significant compositions were almost always elementary in technique, style, approach and idiom, yet they stood out for their abundant sonic appeal to listeners of all hues, particularly the simple and unsophisticated rural folks. The simplicity of his compositional style had been his major asset, which went a long way in taking his name to every nook and cranny in the country.

Keeping in view the distinctive characteristics of his compositions, some connoisseurs branded him as an orthodox composer, whose indebtedness to the styles of old masters like Jhandhey Khan and others of the theatre era was starkly evident in his early tunes. In this context, one is reminded of his compositions *Hanstay hain sitarey* (Nur Jehan for Columbia Recording Company) and *Chabbee deeyaan chunniaan*, a chorus led by Umrozia Begum for the film *Sohni Mainwaal*. Later, more popular and, at times, comic elements were introduced by him for folktale extents (mostly in Punjabi films) but even there adherence to an orthodox style persisted..

In 1934, Chishti shifted to Lahore. It was here that he made his acquaintance with Agha Hashar Kashmiri, the renowned playwright of the theatre era. Their association lasted for several months during the abortive production of *Beesham Pritigia* into a film.

Baba Chishti did not quite remember the dates of certain events. He thought he joined Columbia Gramophone Company in 1935. That was the time when the famous composer Master Ghulam Haider was employed by Jain-o-Phone Gramophone Company, also located in Bakhshi Market of Anarkali, Lahore. His other contemporaries were Bhai Lal Muhammad and Pundit Amar Nath. After Master Jhandhey Khan left Columbia Company, Chishti succeeded him there.

Returning to Lahore in 1947, Chishti accepted the responsibility of providing musical scores for actor Nazir's Punjabi film *Phairey*. The movie was completed in a record time of two months and Chishti also demonstrated his creative prowess and stamina by writing lyrics, composing and recording six songs in just one day. The film was an instant success as its songs became extremely popular.

Of the 2,000 plus songs which Chishti claimed to have composed for the movies and gramophone companies, a majority of those became popular. Besides his Punjabi songs, a number of his compositions for Urdu films also won kudos. For years, people used to hum and whistle his lullabies, *Chanda ki nagri say aa ja and Raaj Dullarey, mairi akheon kay tarey*.

MIAN SHAHARYAR,

A dulcet composer

Music scene in Lahore as indeed in the Sub-continent has always been dominated by professional *gharana* musicians who discouraged amateur melodists to join their profession. Feelings of insecurity, lack of formal education and professional jealousies were the major factors which prompted professional *gharana* musicians to keep educated *atayees* (non-professional in a genetic sense) away from the melodic arts.

However, those few among non-professional musicians who crossed these hurdles in the past, did succeed in leaving indelible imprints on the pages of melodic history of Pakistan in general, and Lahore, in particular. Names of such melodists that immediately to one's mind are: composers Khurshid Anwar, Feroze Nizami, Rafique Ghazanvi, Sohail Ra'ana, Adnan Sami and Muhammad Munir Alam, better known as Mian Shaharyar. Others non-*gharana* melodists who made names in this domain of creative human endeavour were classical vocalists G.A.Farooq, Babu Meraj Din and Master Shamsuddin, among the dead, and Mirza Nasiruddin, Badaruzzaman-Qamaruzzaman, Nazir Butt, among the living, and the immortal Muhammad Rafi, whose melodies have become an ineluctable part of our melodic culture. A majority of them hail from Lahore

Born in village Harbanspura (district Lahore) in the year 1927 in a family of agriculturists, he had to brave many a vicissitude of life and unabated competition from professional musicians before he could establish his melodic credential. Now, Mian Shaharfyar is a veteran composer of 50 years' standing. His compositions continue to retrain their eclectic character, attracting attention from ordinary buffs and cultivated connoisseurs.

A large number of his film, radio and TV songs reached the lips of millions since 1954 when he first composed and recorded a Punjabi song in the voice of late Munawwar Sultana, then a popular radio and

film singer. Because of their enchantment and sonic appeal, his compositions quickly tickle the melodic sensibilities of the listeners, creating enough charm for radio and television audiences.

In a manner that radiated confidence and candidness, Mian Shaharyar talked about some of his failures and successes in life and the long struggle he had to wage to carve out a niche for himself in the hierarchy of composers in Pakistan. He also talked about various factors which went into the shaping of his melodic personality, making him a leading figure in showbiz.

Talking about the beginning of his career, he said: "Musical talent cannot be acquired. It is already there in your sub-conscience. Only, it needs to be brought out for furbishing and refinement. A competent teacher can do the needful

"I had a natural inclination for music since my early childhood. As a teenager, I used to recite *naats* and sing folk melodies which were appreciated by the people in my neighbourhood, and the fellow students in my school. As I grew up, a desire to become a radio singer gripped me. In those days, singing for the radio was high point of prestige for a budding vocalist.".

Responding to a question about his mentor(s) he said: "My first teacher in music was Sharif Ghazanvi, who was then known for his tuneful crooning of Heer Waris Shah and also for rendering Punjabi folk songs, which were broadcast from Radio Pakistan, Lahore. Later in 1951, I became a pupil of vocalist/composer Feroze Nizami. I also benefited from the melodic wisdom of Master Niaz Hussain Shami and Khurshid Butt (a pupil of Ustad Sardar Khan Delhiwaley), who was also known as Ustad Bodi.

However, I had already made my debut as a radio singer in the year 1948. My training in music and participation in radio programmes went on simultaneously. Perhaps very few people know that I have retired from the Punjab Board of Revenue as a Superintendent. In the morning, I used to attend to my official duties, and in the evening, carried on with my melodic pursuits. It was tough but I remained undaunted.".

Mian Shaharyar also talked about the reasons which prompted him to change the direction of his career from a radio singer to a composer. He drifted towards the art of composition accidentally and ironically.

He wanted to become a playback singer. In those days, Muhammad Rafi (also from Lahore) held complete sway over Indian film industry as a playback singer His songs created so much incantatory impact on movie buffs that every budding vocalist tried to emulate him and wanted to become as popular a playback singer as the late Muhammad Rafi.

Mian Shaharyar was frustrated by the response of his teacher Feroze Nizami who had promised to use his voice for the under-production film *Hamari Basti*. "He dragged his feet when it came to the recording of a male song," claimed Mian Shaharyar, adding, "the sound recordist of HMV Gramophone Company had already okayed suitability of my voice. But Nizami Saheb went back on his words".

It broke Shaharyar's heart and he became totally disillusioned of the fantasy that had clouded his imagination by the promise of his mentor. Bitterly disappointed, he made a resolve to make his debut as a composer as he had come to the inevitable conclusion that a new comer (and an *atayaee* at that) in the film industry had very little chance of achieving his objective. That was a natural psychological rebound originating from the failure of his rising expectations. "I had a good voice and an ability to learn. I could render a composition after only a few rehearsals, and yet, I was denied the opportunity", Shaharyar disclosed with a tinge of bitterness in his tone.

Giving up singing, he vowed to devote his time and energies in learning and practicing the art of composition. It was not long before he discovered his natural gift and started working in the right earnest. Soon, thereafter, he was rewarded when he recorded his first composition in the voice of Munawwar Sultana. The refrain of the song was *Kee karaanm kithey jaaanwaan*, which was feelingly rendered by the late popular crooner of her time.

Innovation of new tunes is a difficult art. It requires much grooming in music, an acute sense of perception, abandoned melodic intelligence and an innovative bent of mind.

A composer in this Space Age is expected to break down the confining walls of structure created by old masters to give music more space to allow his musical ideas the freedom to roam about in unrestricted spaces. This is essential for a sensitive composer to reflect contemporary realities. He gets much assistance to carry forward his ideas from the mind-boggling electronic communication devices

invented during the past 50 years. An innovative composer, Mian Shaharyar took advantage of these facilities to create enduring impact of his compositions.

Mian Shaharyar worked for Pakistan film industry during the decade of the 50s and composed songs for a couple of films which won wide popularity. Producer-poet Ashoor Kazmi, invited Mian Shaharyar to compose tunes for the songs of his films. It came as a big challenge for him, a new-comer in the industry, and he accepted it with a resolve to come up to the expectations of the producer. His compositions for the songs *Rooth geya maira payar* and *Kaisi raat rangeeli aayi* (*Begunnah*) and *Chhanm chnna nann baaj rahi moree payalia* and *Eh insaan bananey wale* (*Mumtaz*) won almost instant popularity. Senior denizens still remember with a touch of nostalgia those songs which were broadest from Radio Pakistan regularly every week for a long period of time.

The failure of those films at the box office, and the advent of television in Pakistan in November 1964, once again changed the direction of Shaharyar's career. After composing a number of songs for television, he succeeded in establishing his credentials as competent composer. Earlier, he had also composed a number of songs for Radio Pakistan, Lahore.

Mian Shaharyar showed his class when in May 1965, he composed a patriotic song, His song *Ey watan kay sajeelay jawwanoan*, which was recorded in the voice of melody queen Nur Jehan. The instant popularity of that national song raised his stocks as he touched the apex of popularity graph and was accepted as a perceptive and sensitive composer. Later in September the same year, he composed another *tarana Mein hoon mauseeqar watan ka*, which was recorded in the voice of Mehdi Hasan.

Temperamentally an innovator and prone to experimentation, Mian Shaharyar not only introduced a number of new voices in the melodic culture of Pakistan, but also conducted a number of new experiments with sound and rhythm. By blending a number of folk melodies with classical formulations, he produced several musicals for the television (*Jal Tarang, Kook* et al) in which he used certain *taals* (time measures) which permeate our ethos. He used such rhythms as are created by the manual carding of cotton; the ticking of a clock; the working of a village grinding mill, the weaving of different rhythmic patterns by a moving trains, the village Persian wheels, and by the movement of a

craven of camels. Skillfully, he meshed these original natural rhythms into his compositions which created fascinating sonic effects.

A Lahori by birth, septuagenarian Mian Shaharyar still composes new tunes, although he has slowed down a bit because of the advancing age. Occasionally, he records his compositions in his own voice, which has not completely lost its sparkle. His composition pegged to the theme of freedom struggle of the Kashmiris, which he recorded in his voice, provides testimony to his creative abilities and penchant for singing..

NOORJEHAN
THE SINGER OF THE CENTURY

No account of Lahore's melodic culture will be complete without a reference to Madam Noorjehan, who is affectionately known as the Melody Queen. The Kasur-born, septuagenarian nightingale has contributed so much to the shaping of Lahore's melodic personality, in particular; and to Pakistani culture, in general, that it is impossible to encompass all that in this short piece of writing. On some other occasion, I shall write in detail about her eventful career and the impact of her contributions on the melodic culture of Pakistan.

Starting her singing career at the tender age of seven from Calcutta about mid-30's, she rose to the pinnacle of glory and success within a short span of ten years. The first song she recorded in her mellifluous voice was for the film *Heer Seyal*, produced by Maiden Theatre in Calcutta, in which she also enacted the role of child Heer. When she was ten, Baby Noorjehan shifted to Lahore with her family from where she lent her voice for a song of *Gulbakauli*, which was composed by legendary Master Ghulam Haider. Senior denizens still remember with nostalgic fondness the refrain of that song — *Shaala Jawaniaan maane*, which became uproariously popular. *Yamla Jat* was her third film, tunes for which were also invented by music wizard Master Ghulam Haider. After that, it was a complete success story for an artist who started her career as a child and blossomed into a frontline artist during her youth.

Noorjehan remained a singing actress for about 30 years. Her voice was used by such prominent composers as Master Ghulam Haider, Naushad Ali, Sajjad Hussain, K. Datta, Khurshid Anwar, Rashid Attray, G.A. Chishti, and Master Inayat Hussain, who exploited her vocal resources in communicating their creative melodic ideas. Gifted with a natural voice that was suited to convey all kinds of moods and emotions, she won the hearts of millions of cinegoers in the Sub-continent. Her last film as an actress was *Koel*, which was produced in Lahore. Until then, her voice brimmed with a unique mystique.

Assiduously, she had maintained her sonic charisma, which transcended geographical, political, and regional barriers, and cut across the nook and cranny of the Sub-continent. Thereafter, as a playback singer, she over-used her vocals, which resulted in the cloying of sonic quality of her voice.

From her film *Khandaan*, produced from Lahore in the early 40s, she rose to the crescendo of popularity at Bombay with the release of *Anmol Gharrhi* for which the musical scores were provided by Naushad Ali. All the films, for which she was signed in Bombay, Noorjehan gave the best of her vocal resources and potentials. All songs of her films produced in Bombay, including *Bari Maa, Dost, Anmol Gharrhi, Lal Haveli, Zeenat* and *Jugnu*, reached the lips of millions in the Sub-continent. She was known more for her captivating songs than her histrionic talent.

Very few singers have earned such overwhelming praise from music buffs as did Noorjehan, who can be deservedly called the true spokesperson of Pakistani melodic culture. From professional musicians to connoisseurs and uninitiated music buffs, she won ebullient praise. The sonic quality of her voice and the hypnotic spell it cast on her audiences had a few parallels. The manner, in which she rendered all kinds of songs so feelingly, took her fame to unparalleled heights not only in Pakistan, but also in neighbouring India.

Pakistan's ace composer, Khurshid Anwar, who used her vocals for the recording of about 50 songs, in an interview published in December 1976, paid glowing tributes to her singing talent. He said: "Without her voice, I would not have been able to accomplish a tenth of what I have. She has been the only real voice in Pakistan..."

Raju Bharatan, the biographer of Lata Mangeshkar, has observed that the Mangeshkar sisters, particularly Lata and Asha, learnt much from Melody Queen Noorjehan. He said:

"Take *Badi Maa* itself, in which Lata and Asha, as child stars, first encountered Noorjehan in all her vim and vitality. So distinctive were K. Datta's creations for Noorjehan in *Badi Maa* that her four solos in it ring in our ears to this moment as *Diya jala kar aap bujhaya, Aa intezaar hai tera, Tum hum ko bhula baithe hoe* and *Kisi tarah se mohabbat mein chain paa na sakey*. These found Noorjehan numbers, as fashioned by Maratha Datta, are historically most important. Because it was hearing and absorbing these four nuggets of Noorjehan,

while acting with her in *Badi Maa*, that Lata Mangeshkar learnt to shaper her vocal technique..."

Noorjehan was lucky, as a majority of her popular songs were composed by the leading lights of music, both in Bombay and Lahore, when she was a singing actress. Later, as a playback singer, she recorded a large number of songs composed by frontline Pakistani melodists. But it will be no exaggeration to state that without her voice, those composers would not have been as popular as they became after using her extremely effective vocals.

EPILOGUE

The opulent melodic culture of Lahore continues to flourish, despite fast-changing social, economic and political environment, and the onslaught of such Western fads as pop, disco and ragtime. This is due to the resilience of Lahori temperament, especially of those people who live within the Walled City.

There are still certain areas in the old city, where the tradition of *baithaks* is being carried forward by music lovers. Remnants of old *baithaks* continue to serve as nurseries of music. In the past, all those melodists, who created names for them, and won accolades for Pakistan, were by and large the products of these *baithaks* which existed inside all the gates of old city. It was there that budding melodists were allowed to benefit from the melodic wisdom of seasoned performers in an atmosphere of respectful informality.

Modern substitutes of old *baithaks* (arts councils and private music-promoting organizations), that sprang up in areas outside of the Walled City during the past 50 years, have also been contributing to the furbishing of Lahore's melodic culture. However, their contributions are more in the domain of programming and projection than in the area of teaching and grooming..

Baithaks in the old city (or whatever ramanants of these now exist) or those which are situated in less posh areas at the periphery of the Walled City, are still in the business of grooming of the up-and-coming melodists. As long as this age-old institution remains a part of local ethos, and as long as the time-tested method of one-to-one teaching persists and is the vogue in Lahore, a majority of new artists will continue coming out of old Lahore, the real Lahore.

❄District Gazetteer Lahore 1883-84

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