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MUSIC MAKERS OF
THE BHATKHANDE
COLLEGE OF
HINDUSTANI MUSIC



SUSHEELA MISRA

A
SANGEET RESEARCH ACADEMY
PUBLICATION

Precis of the contents of this book

With the end of the Nawabi era, Lucknow ceased to be a great centre of music and dance, and these arts passed into the hands of some close-fisted (and generally illiterate) Ustads, and of a large number of professional women-singers and dancers, the 'Tawaifs'. Consequently, the very mention of these arts became taboo in respectable, and cultured families. Those who were born with talents and a deep love for Music and Dance were deprived of their very birth-right.

Pdt Bhatkhande succeeded in restoring this right to all genuine seekers of the art. By his exemplary life of utter selflessness, simplicity, and total dedication to music, he was able to inspire many others with similar zeal and to gather around him bands of dedicated musical missionaries who devoted their entire lives to serve the various Music Colleges started under Bhatkhandeji's inspiration in places like Lucknow, Gwalior, Baroda etc. Until his last illness, he used to visit Lucknow, stay in the college with his favourite disciple "Bairu" (Dr Ratanjankar) for months, guiding the teachers and solving the many problems of the new college. During his last visit, when he felt that his "span of life was nearing its end", he called his faithful band of teachers on the staff, and entrusted "this tender sapling" in their hands with the hope that they would tend it and make it a healthy tree with their dedication — whatever sacrifices they might have to make.

Such was the Chaturpandit's lasting influence on them even after his death, that these conscientious music-devotees kept their promise to him. They nursed the humbly started college into a reputed centre for musical education and training. *But few people today know that their personal lives were sagas of sacrifices, hardships, and near-starvation in many cases.*

Smt Susheela Misra's book written in a deep mood of nostalgia during the Golden Jubilee Year of the Music College, vividly brings to us a long cavalcade of those selfless and dedicated "Music makers" to whom all subsequent generations of music-students and music-lovers owe an endless debt of gratitude.

The book also paints for us a picture of the LUCKNOW of a bygone, leisurely era, and the last bright flickerings of Lucknow's famous culture. Famous performing artistes, erudite scholars of music, finely trained music-teachers, ardent music-lovers, and influential patrons and friends of this college — all these are vividly portrayed by Smt Susheela Misra in these 20 chapters which will surely turn your grateful thoughts to the Music-makers to whom this book is dedicated by the author.

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Tollygunj — Calcutta-700 040

MUSIC MAKERS OF BHATKHANDI COLLEGE OF HINDUSTANI MUSIC.

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DEDICATED TO

**My Respected Gurus
and to all those who devoted their lives to build up
this renowned Music College
at the cost of many personal sacrifices.**

FOREWORD

PADMABHUSHAN THAKUR JAIDEVA SINGH.

"Vishram Kutii",
D 61/26 F,
Siddhatribhagh,
Varanasi. 25/7/84.

Foreword

It was in the year 1926 that Harris Music College, now known as Shastriji Mahavidyalaya was founded by Pandit Vishnu Narain Shastriji, with the assistance of Rai Rajeshwar Bahi, Rai Karamnath Prasad and Raja (Shakur) Nawab Ali.

Pandit Shastriji had gathered together a band of devoted teachers who gave the best of their art in the service of the College on a mere pittance.

Maestros like Dr. S. N. Ratanjankar ^{and G. H. Maiti} were not only great music teachers but also great music makers. Their compositions published in book form give ample evidence of their great insight into the ethos and structure of Hindustani Ragas.

From the very inception of the College, I was a frequent visitor to this great institution and learned the secret ~~subtleties~~ subtleties of many difficult Ragas & talas from Pandit Shastriji and Dr. S. N. Ratanjankar.

Every brick of the College is a sermon on sacrifice. How the devoted teachers worked sometimes without salary for months together can be very well found from the striking description that Mrs. Sushila Devi Mehta has given of the Music - Makers of the Shastriji Mahavidyalaya.

I have known Mrs. Sushila Mehta for the last forty ~~five~~ years. She is not only a great writer, but also a great performer in her own right. She was one of the most brilliant alums of this great institution and has, therefore, given a very vivid pen - portrait of the great teachers of this institution, with whom she came in personal contact

Years after when I visited the rooms ~~and~~ that

used to ring with the vibrant voice of Pt. Ratanjankar and
Pt. G. N. Nattu, I found that they now stand as mute witnesses
to a departed glory.

I then felt that it would be great service if some writer
could tell the story of the great Music-makers who built this
institution at tremendous sacrifice.

I am glad that Smt. Susheela Misra has fulfilled this
long-felt need. I am sure all music-lovers will welcome this
book and pay their humble tribute to its brilliant writer.

Jaideva Singh
July 25, 1984

Formerly Chief Producer, Hindustani Music, All India Radio,
and Chairman, U.P. Sangeet Natak Akademi.

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PREFACE

During the Golden Jubilee Year (1977) of The Bhatkhande College of Hindustan Music, Lucknow, I had fallen into a very nostalgic mood recalling the past glory of this institution, once so reputed far and wide for the missionary zeal with which the great musicians and musicologists of those early years had dedicated their entire lives to nurture this prestigious college in all its glory. In 1933 during his very last visit to the college which was so close to his heart, Pdt Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande had told his loyal band of disciples :-

"I am entrusting this sapling institution in the hands of all of you. You must continue to nurture it with your selfless services. I am confident that you will constantly strive to make the college a model institution".

It was several years after our graduation that we, the students of the Nineteen-forties got to learn how some of the dedicated Staff Members had been working without salary for months at a stretch, when the financial plight of this college was on the verge of collapse many a time! The teachers were always regular, punctual, and devoted to their work.

When one talks of the past musical glory of Lucknow, and of the fine old refined culture of a bygone era, many of the personalities associated with the Bhatkhande College and mentioned in the 20 Chapters of this book come floating before one's vision. Those were perhaps not days of material affluence for musicians. The maestros of those times were content with modest emoluments. Musicians were absorbed in their art, and had no time for politicking! Those were the times when the artistes and their coteries of disciples and admirers had all the time in the world to enjoy all-night sessions and private *"mehfils"* of music and dance to their hearts' content. The great Ustads and Pandits of that era used to visit Pdt Bhatkhandeji and Dr Ratanjankar in their humble, little room in the College, enjoying the simple and warm hospitality of the hosts. They used to have lively and fruitful discussions on Music, and many of the great visiting musicians and dancers gave inspiring demonstrations for the Staff students and some distinguished music lovers of the city. Myself and my contemporaries who were students of the College in those Nineteen-forties were lucky to have got those chances to hear and see some of the celebrated artistes who had become legends in their own lifetime.

Gradually, the powerful winds of change began to blow. The materialistic age arrived. The last brief flashes of the flames of the musical genius of Lucknow began to fade out. I am only one among the thousands of students of this college who were fortunate to have been pupils of this institution during its golden era which had ended before its Golden Jubilee Year in 1977.

No doubt, the humble buildings which once housed the vocal, instrumental and dance-classes, have now grown and spread into an imposing complex of more modern buildings. The number of Staff-members has swelled; their emoluments have been multiplied several times, and have become quite tempting now; many new Chairs and sections have been added.

But, barring a few, where are the selfless, dedicated workers of the type inspired and moulded by the founder? Pandit Bhatkhande had given up everything including a brilliant legal career in order to serve the Muse with single-minded devotion.

Ustad Allauddin Khan ("Baba") who used to be a regular Examiner and frequent visitor to the College in our days, once remarked :-

"Today I am nearing my century and my memory may be failing in other matters. But I still vividly recall the beautiful moments I spent in Pandit Bhatkhandeji's inspiring company. Those were really some of the most unforgettable moments of my life".

Gayanacharya Pandit Ramakrishna Buwa-Waze once said :- "Pdt Bhatkhande has published

nearly 2000 traditional compositions with notations – Our Hindustani Music has lived on through these *bandishes*. I cannot imagine what would have happened to our music if Pdt Bhatkhande had not published these for posterity”.

Ustad Bundu Khan, the Sarangi Wizard, who used to visit the College and perform sometimes, said :-

“Pdt Bhatkhande did unprecedented service to our music. I have memorised hundreds of the *bandishes* published by him. Whenever I meet Principal Ratanjankar, I remember Pdt Bhatkhandeji. May God take this College from glory to glory, for, that was the cause for which he devoted his whole life”

Smt Anjanibai Malpekar, one of the earliest Presidential Award-Winners for Hindustani Vocal Music, looked upon Bhatkhandeji as her Guru and mentor.

Where are all these great Souls gone now?
Fled is the glory, the music.....!

I am indeed very grateful to The Sangeet Research Academy (Calcutta) in general, and to the Executive Director Sri Vijay Kichlu, and to Smt Dipali Nag (Academic & Scientific Research Co-ordinator, S.R.A) in particular, for taking up this publication. I feel proud and happy that this prestigious Academy has found these chapters worthy of publication in book-form.

I am deeply touched by the great affection and immense encouragement that the great musicologist and scholar, Thakur Jaideva Singh has always showered on me. He has been intimately associated with the College since its inception; his FOREWORD is of great importance.

My thanks are also due to Sri Brajeswar Bali (son of late Rai Saheb Umanath Bali) for kindly lending me some letters of Pdt Bhatkhande which I have used in this book.

I have selected the title of this book from the first line of O'Shaughnessy's Poem :-

*“We are the music-makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams-
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams :
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems”.*

No 1 Shahnajaf Road,
Lucknow, 226001.
Phone 42656,
July 1985.

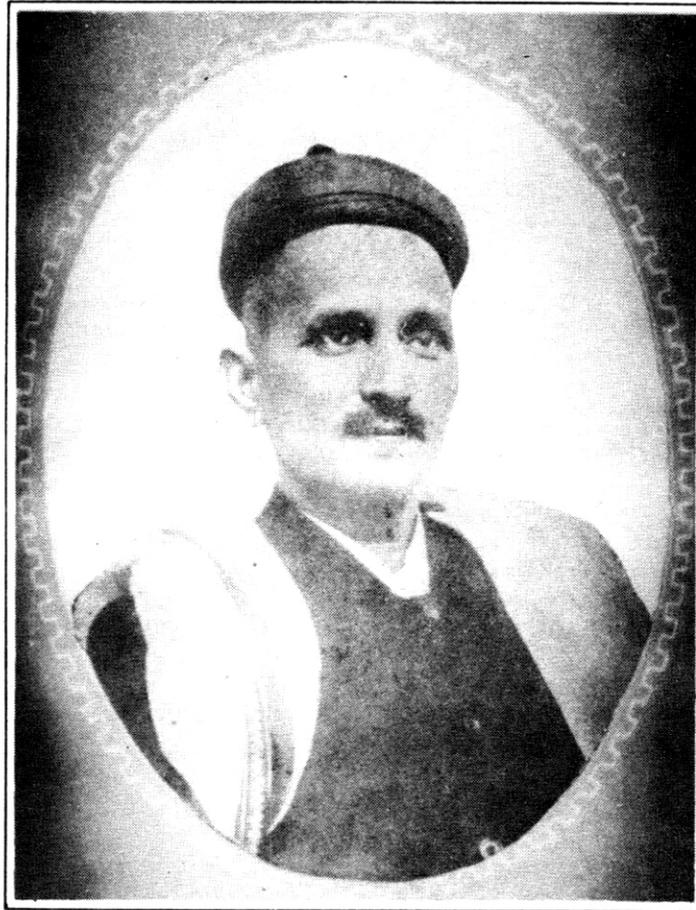
Susheela Misra

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Chaturpandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande.



A rare group-photo taken in December 1926 on the occasion of the formal Opening Ceremony of the Music College. In this photo may be seen Pdt. Bhatkhande, Sir William Morris (the then Governor of Avadh), Rai Umanath Bali, Rai Rajeshwar Bali, and many other cultured Rajahs, Nawabs, and Taluqdars. Started in July as "The Akhila Bharatiya Sangeet Mahavidyalaya", it was named The Morris Music College in December 26, and later on, it was rechristened as "The Bhatkhande Sangeet Mahavidyalaya" on 28/2/1927.

CHATURPANDIT VISHNU NARAYAN BHATKHANDE

(1860 – 1936)

From the times of Amir Khusrau in the 13th century, Delhi had remained the noted centre of Hindustani music. When the Imperial Court of Delhi was shorn of all its pomp and glory after the deportation of the last Moghul Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, to Rangoon, the numerous reputed musicians and accomplished dancers who had adorned the Court naturally had to abandon this centre and seek shelter elsewhere. They migrated into various other cultured royal darbars where they received warm welcome and lavish patronage, such as in Lucknow, Rampur, Gwalior, Baroda, Rewa, Alwar, Jaipur, Jodhpur and so on. There is a common saying here that – “when Delhi became desolate, all the glory was transferred to Lucknow”. Lucknow enjoyed a continuous line of Nawab-rulers who became famous all over the country for their magnificent Courts, refined tastes in music, dance and poetry, their fabulous hospitality, and their lavish patronage of artistes. Nawab Asaf-ud-daula’s (1775-97 A.D.) liberality attracted the musical giants from various other places to the Lucknow darbar, and thus started the glorious chapter in Lucknow’s culture, and musical arts. The glorious phase continued under the many Nawab-rulers and reached its zenith under the famed Wajid Ali Shah who was not only a great connoisseur of music, dance and poetry, but was himself an accomplished and creative artiste. But hedonism became the credo of life, at the cost of everything else. It was, therefore, during the reign of this pleasure-loving young Nawab, Wajid Ali Shah, that the “cup of luxury in Lucknow was about to overflow” and it was the “time when the lamp which was about to be extinguished, flared up for the last time” (Abdul Halim Sharar : “The Last Phase Of An Oriental Culture”). The extravagant and depraved Lucknow royal court shared the same fate as the Imperial Court of Delhi earlier. With the exile of Wajid Ali Shah to Matiyaburj in February 1854, Lucknow’s famed “Nawabi era” ended, and the city gradually fell from its glorious position as a great centre of music and dance. A few traditional families of professional musicians and dancers secretly nurtured their traditions against all odds, and a few families of music-loving Zamindars and Rajas fostered them exclusively for their own pleasure and for the entertainment of their own selected coterie of friends and connoisseurs. The masses were deprived of their birthright – the glorious traditional music of their own land. The fine arts of Music and Dance not only drew away from the people, but the very Muse fell from her high pedestal and lay in utter disrepute owing to many political and social reasons.

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The alien rulers not only revealed unconcealed contempt for these traditional arts of India, but they managed to instil into the so-called “intellectuals” a similar attitude, and these educated classes began to look down with “moral horror” on the noble art of music! Hindustani music had run into doldrums. Music had become the monopoly of a small coterie of illiterate professionals who jealously guarded their art. These narrow-minded custodians of music took care not to create rivals out of their own pupils! There were also the numerous professional women singers and dancers (“*Tawaifs*”) who brought disrepute to the art through their dissolute way of life. Their heyday was during Wajid Ali Shah’s regime because his “*Parikhana*” was the abode of hundreds of beautiful courtesans who were kept in lavish style and trained by great ustads.

The arts of music and dance, had become taboo not only in Uttar Pradesh, but even in Maharashtra where Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, an epochmaking personality in the revival and renaissance of Hindustani music, was born. As His Highness Maharana Vijayadev of Dharampur remarked aptly in a speech in Bombay in 1936 :—

“No other country in the world, not even the country from which we have borrowed our system of education, had placed music so low, so contemptuously neglected, as this country. Nowhere in the West were the young natural instincts for rhythm, for music, so completely repressed, censored and banned as they happened to be in the country Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande was called upon to serve. Music had literally become the direct Harijan child in the ‘reformed’ community of those whose learning was lop-sided, and whose puritanism ended with the repression of one of the noblest of gifts of art to mankind.”

An utterly selfless music-devotee was needed to create order out of chaos, to restore harmony into disharmony, to salvage the fallen image of the Muse and install it once again on a lofty pedestal for us to worship today. The greatness of Bhatkhande’s services to music can be fully appreciated only if one knows the state of our music prior to him. The art of music had drifted further and further away from the theory, and run into confusion and disorder. Though a few attempts had been made to evolve order out of this chaos, and several books had been published, no author had been able to reconcile the old scientific rules with the current art of Hindustani music. It was roughly six decades ago that Pandit Bhatkhande succeeded in this stupendous task where all the others had failed before. “His was a gigantic task, and it is hard to conceive how one man could ever have executed it in one life-time, and executed it so successfully!” (Prof. Ranade).

Bhatkhande (known as 'Gajanan' in his boyhood) was born on the auspicious Gokulashtami day of 1860 into a music-loving, middle-class Maharashtrian family of Bombay. His first inspiration came from his mother whose sweet renderings of lullabies and devotional songs were imbibed by him even as a small boy. His brother was interested in music and his father could play fairly well on the Swarmandal. But there was no question of Gajanan being permitted to learn music seriously under some professional musician. Gajanan began his surreptitious Sitar-lessons under Vallabhacharya Damulji, and Mahant Jeewanji Maharaj by slipping out of his house late at night after everyone had gone to sleep. These secret nocturnal music lessons continued uninterrupted and undetected for more than two years, by which time Gajanan had begun to play fairly well on the Sitar. The unexpected confrontation between father and son occurred at a private sitting where the former was invited and the latter was performing. Gajanan was playing in fine form until he suddenly noticed his father in the audience, and abruptly or guiltily, stopped! The father did not admonish him as expected, on the contrary, he asked him to continue, and after the recital, encouraged him by saying :— "You have practised hard". Back home, the parents (who must have felt proud of their son's talents) gave him only one warning :—"Never neglect your studies. Don't pursue music at the cost of your academic studies".

This happy ending of a dreaded 'domestic crisis' must have brought intense relief to Gajanan. In those days, music was regarded as much a part of a dissolute life as 'gambling, drinking or debauchery'! Music was not meant for 'respectable' men. For women, music was not even to be thought of! Such was 'the pious horror' in which this great art was held. As the Maharana of Dharampur mentioned in the condolence meeting after Pdt. Bhatkhande's death :— "When Bhatkhande began, and subsequently resolved to translate his love for Hindustani music into a continued, unwearied, day-to-day programme of service, he had to confront social, intellectual, and finally, professional prejudices. These were not merely academic or abstract prejudices. These prejudices took shape as positive obstacles, definite active resistance. Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande had to confront it early in life as a devoted student seeking no more than information and enlightenment, and he had to confront it later as a critic and exponent of Hindustani music..."

12 A lesser man, or a man inspired by a lesser passion for music, would have fled from the field, defeated and crushed by the endless obstacles in his path. But Bhatkhande's was a dedicated life inspired by a single undivided aim. Prof. D. P. Mukherji, a great admirer of Bhatkhande, and a well-known music-connoisseur of Lucknow, wrote :— "If the renaissance of classical music in the north is due to one man than to any other, it was due to Bhatkhande. He was more than a missionary of the art of music. There have been few scholars like him. The list of his books is as formidable as their quality is high."

Bhatkhande's life and work fall into four clear stages.

The first stage consisted of his own preparation period. Throughout his educational career he kept up his close touch with music and its exponents. He graduated in 1885 and passed his LL.B. in 1887, and began his career as a brilliant lawyer in Bombay, Karachi, and again in Bombay. But the life of a house-holder and a highly successful lawyer were but brief interludes in the life of this '*sangeet-bhakta*'. The tragic death of his young wife and only daughter changed the course of his life. Music became his constant companion and religion. He gave up his lucrative legal practice, and decided to dedicate his entire life to the cause of music. By 1910 he had earned just enough money to keep his body and soul together, and that was all that this noble devotee needed for the simple life of ceaseless service to music that he had chalked out for himself.

The first phase of his own preparation period consisted of his musical training, and his important association with the *Gayan Uttejak Mandali* of Bombay where he heard all the great musicians of North India, and gathered enormous musical wealth. Here began his friendship with Ustad Nazir Khan (a Sarangiya), one of the early professional musicians to become his admirer, and with the Ustad's pupil Wadilal Shivram, who introduced him to Ashiq Ali, son of the famed Ustad Mohamad Ali of the *Manrang Gharana* of Jaipur. Bhatkhande learnt over 300 Dhrupads from Raajibuwā Belbagkar, Ali Hussain and Vilayat Hussain Khans. Ashiq Ali was in dire need of money; Pdt. Bhatkhande helped him, and in return, Ashiq Ali taught him a number of the closely preserved compositions of his *gharana*. When Ustad Mohamad Ali heard about this in Jaipur, he rushed to Bombay and furiously accused Panditji of 'looting the treasures of his gharana'! But by his calm and serene temperament, and by his gentle persuasive ways, he gradually won over the Ustad who willingly taught him a large number of the lovely Khayals of the Manrang Gharana! These precious compositions taught by Mohamad Ali Khan 'Kothiwal' and his son, have been generously passed on to the entire music-loving public by Bhatkhandeji through his Kramik series. Later on, he became a '*gandabandh shagird*' of the Nawab of Rampur who happily ordered his guru Ustad Wazir Khan Beenkar of the great Seniya traditions, to teach Bhatkhande a large number of Dhrupads, Dhamars and so on. All this was at a time when the professional Ustads jealously guarded the musical inheritance of their family within the close family members. But such was Bhatkhande's personal charm, humility, sincere dedication to the art, and persuasive powers, that even those who initially scorned him, stayed to become his close associates, teachers, and friends. Equipped with many rare qualities such as indefatigable powers of industry, a remarkably shrewd brain,

winning manners, and an impressive personality, it is no wonder that he finally succeeded in the gigantic tasks of "reawakening the sense of history and pride among people who had slept over this vital aspect of Indian culture", of reconciling theory and practice in music, and of collecting and putting at the disposal of music-lovers, thousands of traditional compositions hitherto closely locked up by the professional Ustads. He devoted nearly 5 years of his life to the study of all the available ancient music-treatises in Sanskrit, Telugu, Bengali, Gujjerati, Urdu, German Greek and English with the help of scholars and interpreters.

The next stage in Bhatkhandeji's life was a period of extensive touring for the purpose of intensive musical research, study, and discussions with the Ustads and Pandits all over the country. He toured the entire length and breadth of the country from Kashmir to Rameswaram, from Surat and Broach to Calcutta and Puri, visiting all the important music-libraries, avidly going through ancient Granthas, and meeting every living authority on music then! His bulky private diary running into hundreds of pages, gives us glimpses into the pattern of frugal living and high thinking he had set for himself. He devoted every single day of his tour entirely for study in the music-libraries and for meeting musicians and scholars.

The third stage in Pandit Bhatkhande's life was a period of prolific publications in which he magnanimously spread out for generations to come, all the valuable and voluminous materials that he had laboriously collected during his exhaustive study-cum-research tour. He wrote in Sanskrit, Marathi, Hindi, and English and the list of his publications is staggering :—

"*Abhinavarāgamanjari*", "*Abhinavatālamanjari*", "*Lakshyasangeetam*", "*Hindustani Sangeeta Padhdhati*" in several volumes, *The Kramik* series in 6 volumes, the "*Swaramālīka*" and "*Geetamālīka*" series, "*Grantha Sangeetam*", "*Bhaavi Sangeetam*", "*A Short Historical Survey Of Music*", "*Philosophy of Music*", "*Swarmalika*" containing sargams in various ragas, "*Ashtottara sata tāla Lakshanam*", and 3 volumes containing about 110 out of the 250 *Lakshangeetas* that he composed! Apart from his own books, he published also many old standard works like Rāmāmātya's "*Swara Mela Kalānidhi*", Pundarika Vithala's "*Sadrāga Chandrodāya*", Appa Tulsī's works and so on. As he himself wrote :— "My sole object has been to place before my educated, music-loving brothers and sisters, the present condition of the art". The very fact that he published his works under his pen-names "Vishnu Sharma" or "Chaturpandit" shows his utter indifference to publicity and fame.

Although Bhatkhande shunned fame, it came to him unsought. The cultured rulers of various states like Gwalior, Baroda, Rampur, Dharampur, Akbarpur, and of 'riyasats' like Dariabad, became his staunch supporters and admirers. They sent students to study music at his feet. They were lucky to have as their contemporary, a great scholar and teacher and an utterly dedicated person like him, who was ever willing to give magnanimously from his musical riches and who refused to accept anything in return except service to the Muse. Under his inspiration and personal supervision, music-colleges sprang up in various places like Baroda, Gwalior, Bombay, Nagpur and/so on. Poet Rabindranath Tagore who knew him personally and admired his work, included his name in the committee of music-experts appointed by the Government of Bengal. Pdt. Madan Mohan Malavya who was another friend and admirer of his, invited him to draw up the curriculum for the Music-Department of the Banares Hindu University. Bhatkhandeji met Mahatma Gandhi who also appreciated his work.

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The "TWO VISHNUS" — Pdt. *Vishnu* Digambar Paluskar and Pdt. *Vishnu* Narayan Bhatkhande held each other in the highest respect although their styles of working were different and they might have had differences of opinion in certain aspects. Prof. Deodhar who reveres both these savants, has given many interesting episodes proving their mutual concern. Pdt. Bhatkhande once told Prof. Deodhar :— "Your Gururji does not take proper care of his own health. And why has he given up Rāgdāri sangeet and taken to Bhajan-singing, and why does he waste his time standing in the river and devoting hours for Jap, Tap, Dhyan etc ?" Prof. Deodhar also describes an interesting occasion when Mr. Clements tried to impose Western notation system on Indian music at a special Conference he had organised in Ahmedabad in 1928. The two Vishnus joined hands and opposed this successfully. All these, and similar interesting incidents are narrated about Pdt. Bhatkhande's life in the voluminous "BHATKHANDE SMRITI GRANTH" laboriously compiled by Sri P.N. Chinchore in 1966 and published by the Indira Kala Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya of Khairagarh, Madhya Pradesh. It is a most informative volume which every genuine student of music would be proud to possess.

Rightly called '*the father of Music conferences*', Bhatkhande was the life and soul of the first five spectacular and successful Music conferences held in North India, in Baroda (1916), in Delhi (1918), in Benares (1920), and twice in Lucknow in 1924 and 1925. These conferences were not merely for entertainment like the majority of today's conferences, but they were highly educative as well, since they provided a common platform for musicians and musicologists from all over the North and South to listen to one another, to discuss and come to an agreement on many disputed aspects of classical music. These Conferences achieved a lot for Hindustani music and paved the way for the fulfilment of the Chaturpandit's favourite dream; "The mighty mansion of music should become accessible to all, rich and poor, high and low, girls and boys, irrespective of

PAN. I VISHNU N BHATKHANDE
 B.A. LL.B.
 HIGH COURT LEADER BHOJ

BHATKHANDE HOUSE
 WILSON ROAD
 BOMBAY NO. 2 28th Feb 1947

My dear Rai Bahadur

I have duly received your letter dated the 21st & was able to understand your point of view & being pleased very sympathetic to your high spirited & patriotic sentiment. I am really very pleased for the cause. I was particularly impressed by the opinion of the Director of Public Instruction that the opinion in favour of the college is not to be taken into account. The Director of Public Instruction is a high authority & his opinion is of great weight. I have been very glad to hear from you & to know that you are still in the same old place. I shall try my best to do what I can for you & to help you in every way possible. I shall try my best to do what I can for you & to help you in every way possible. I shall try my best to do what I can for you & to help you in every way possible.

I am happy to hear from you like that one of the things I have been doing is to get in touch with the students & that you have before had others with the same view. Banda is really a disappointment. But she can help in individual opinion & I shall try my best to do what I can for you & to help you in every way possible. I shall try my best to do what I can for you & to help you in every way possible.

Photostat of a letter of Bhatkhandeji to Rai Umanath Balli.



Bhatkhande Sraddhanjali programme from the Lucknow Station of All India Radio presented by Principal Ratanjankar, members of the teaching staff, and students from many provinces. Among the staff may be seen Pdt. G.N. Natu, Pdt. Sakharan, Sri Jog, Sri Umar Khan, Sri Mohammad Ali, Sri S.N. Bali, Sri Sadashiv and others.

age and social status". Today, All India Music Conferences and Seminars are the order of the day.

It was in the Lucknow conferences that the proposal to establish a Music College in this cultured city was pressed forward by Rai Saheb Umanath Bali and accepted by the stalwarts of the day. Sri Bali had been nursing this idea for a long time; he specially invited Pdt. Bhatkhande to his home in Daryabad where they discussed the various problems concerning this and came to an agreement. It was a confluence of many favourable circumstances that finally led to the establishment of the Music College in Lucknow. In the Delhi Conference in 1918, in which Pdt. Bhatkhande, the Nawab of Rampur, Raja Nawab Ali and several other important music-lovers had participated, the proposal had been to start a college in Delhi, and this was a great disappointment to Rai Umanath Bali. But luckily for the music-lovers of Lucknow, the proposal fell through on account of bickerings and many problems in Delhi. It must have been an auspicious day on which Sri Bali put forward his pet idea for a music college in Lucknow because all the circumstances were favourable. His nephew Dr. (Rai) Rajeswar Bali, a great lover of all fine arts, was the influential Minister for Education, and he was able to win the full support of the Governor Sir William Morris, who, unlike other Englishmen, thought highly of Indian Arts and Literature. They were also lucky enough to get the solid support and backing of various aristocratic, music-loving patrons like Raja Nawab Ali Khan of Akbarpur, the Nawab of Rampur, the Maharaja of Patiala, the Maharana of Dharampur and many others.

In July 1926, music-classes were started in the Topewali Kothi in Neil Road near Kaisarbagh through the untiring efforts of Pdt. Bhatkhande, the Bali brothers, Raja Nawab Ali, and various other patrons and workers. Panditji's favourite disciple Srikrishna Narayan Ratanjankar had just graduated and was going to join the L.L.B. course in Bombay. But, on receiving his guru's orders, he promptly gave up further studies and came to Lucknow as the Vice Principal of the newly opened college, although it was hardly a college at that time. The classes had been started with meagre finances, one Tanpura, one Sitar, one pair of Tabla-bâyân, 7 teachers, and 13 students who had been persuaded with difficulty to join the classes. Sri Govind Narayan Natu, a favourite pupil of Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale, had just graduated with distinction from the Madho Sangeet Mahavidyalaya of Gwalior. Bhatkhande brought the young Natu to Lucknow and appointed him as Professor, Sarod-Nawaz Sakhawat Hussain Khan of Shahjahanpur, and Lucknow's Tabla-Khalifa Abid Hussain were the first instrumental teachers appointed here. Bhatkhande's personal friends, the Joshi brothers were brought from Pune. The younger brother, Madhavrao Keshav Joshi who had just retired from service as Deputy Inspector of Schools, Bombay, was the Principal in charge of administration. Later on, the well-known Khayaliya, Chote Munne Khan and Dhrupadiya Ahmad Hussain Khan were added to the Staff. Pdt. Bhatkhande personally supervised the classes daily, guided the teachers, and drew up the entire curriculum. He stayed in a room in the building for the next 6 months or so, spending from his own pocket. Although the classes were started in July, 1926, the formal opening of the College was celebrated on 26th December 1926. The inauguration was done by Sir William Morris, and therefore, it was initially named the *Morris College of Hindustani Music*. Later on, it was more appropriately rechristened as *The Bhatkhande College of Hindustani Music*. When much later, a large number of other colleges were affiliated to this important institution, the Bhatkhande Vidyapeeth also had to be added to conduct the Examinations and look after other matters.

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While Pdt. Bhatkhande was immersed in launching this College, he was also extremely busy with his own publications. His *"Hindustani Sangeet Padhdhati"* Part IV was under print in the Aryabhushan Mudranalaya, Pune, and he had to devote a lot of time to proof-corrections. There were also numerous music-lovers and admirers who visited Panditji everyday to participate in the most interesting and informative discussions with this great music-scholar. About his Guru's daily routine during these 6 months in Lucknow, Ratanjankar wrote :- "I never saw him rest during the long days filled with work. He never even relaxed in bed throughout the day!" He could spare no time for rest in the day, and he had very little sleep at night. All this work was being done after he had already been declared a patient of high blood pressure.

Although Bhatkhandeji returned to Bombay in March, it is obvious from his frequent letters to Rai Umanath Bali, and to his favourite disciple Ratanjankar whom he fondly called "Babu", that his thoughts were constantly hovering over the college he had launched in Lucknow. Each year he used to visit Lucknow twice at his own expense, and stay there for several weeks guiding the staff, teaching the students, and encouraging the organisers. He gave them courage to face all the initial problems such as meagre finances, disciplining the professional ustads to become regular and sincere teachers, clash of wills and so on. By the time Ratanjankar became the Principal in 1928, the number of students had increased considerably and so, the college had been shifted into the bigger Council Chamber Buildings of Kaisarbagh near Wajid Ali Shah's famed White Baradari. The Chandiwali Kothi also was acquired. Panditji used to share the little room with his Babu, and the latter has described these as the happiest days of his life. It was during these frequent sojourns in Lucknow and during his trips to the neighbouring Varanasi, Haridwar, Gwalior etc, that he made many lasting friendships with ardent music-lovers and admirers like Dr. B. V. Keskar, Prof D. P. Mukerji, Raja Bhaiya (whom he had already known in Gwalior), Sri Dilip Kumar Roy, Sri Samant of the Theosophical Society in Kamacha, and

several others. Dr. Keskar who was Professor in the Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Varanasi, was already a scholar who had received training in dhrupad from Sri Harinarain Mukerji of Varanasi. He translated into Hindi Pdt. Bhatkhande's "Shastrapravesha" in 3 parts, and the Marathi articles in his books. As Minister of Information & Broadcasting Dr. Keskar took a lot of interest in the college, and he mentions in the Foreward to the *Smriti Granth* that the days he spent in the company of this great personality were some of the most precious and ennobling ones in his life.

In 1928 when he was quite ill and bed-ridden in Bombay, Bhatkhandeji wrote in a letter to his friend Rai Umanath Bali:—

"My dear Rai Saheb,

...The b. pressure has now gone up to about 210, which is not good, but that does not frighten me... The noises in the head are the real trouble. They have increased my deafness considerably. I have to take Luminal every night for sleep. The doctors advise me not to undertake any journey... But, if our dearly loved College requires my presence, you can certainly count upon my running up to offer such service as I may be able to render. I shall never allow my health to come in between my duty to the College.. I would rather die in the College than in a sick bed here". This single letter is enough to reveal his deep attachment to the music college that was started in Lucknow under his inspiration and active guidance. His selfless work for the College continued until he became helplessly bed-ridden in 1933 with a tragic attack of paralysis and thigh-bone-fracture. In one of his last letters to Rai Umanath Bali, he wrote:—

"All active life with me is now ended practically... I have practically finished my work in the music line. The fourth part of "*Hindustani Sangeet Padhdhati*" will be out in a week or two... I am now too old and infirm ... I can only pray to God sincerely for the welfare of the College... Selfless work never passes unnoticed by God. You should never lose courage and patience. Please accept my best Ashirvads to you and yours....".

16 Even on his death-bed, his thoughts often sped to the College; — "To me it appears, the end is gradually approaching", he wrote, "but God has all along been kind to me. He gave me the opportunity, which I consider a great boon in itself, of witnessing a good working College... It will be a great Centre to which students from all parts of the country will flock for instruction in music... I shall not live to see that day. Alive or dead, I shall always pray for its welfare...".

It is an impressive coincidence that this great Sangeeta Bhakta who came into the world in 1860 on the auspicious day of Lord Krishna's birth, shook off his mortal coils on an equally auspicious Ganesh Chaturthi day in 1936. The wealth that he earned in his lifetime dedicated to the service of music, is the eternal gratitude of music-lovers and students.



PADMA BHUSHAN DR.SRIKRISHNA NARAYAN RATANJANKAR

(1900 – 1974)

Thanks to the "two VISHNUS" of Hindustani music,- Pdt. Vishnu Digambar Paluskar and Pdt. Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, there was an all-round revival and awakening in the world of music in North India before the 19th century had run out. The dedicated lives of these two savants had created a climate of keen and discerning concern about the preservation and propagation of India's invaluable musical heritage. In the words of Dr. Sumati Mutatkar, "Bhatkhande was gathering momentum in his multifaceted task of installing the art and science of music in their rightful place in the total perspective of the cultural, academic, and social life of the country. He was intently looking out for someone with extraordinary artistic and intellectual capacities to shoulder this gigantic burden and carry out his master-plan". In the boy Srikrishna, the Chaturpandit found the answer to his prayers. The mantle of the guru could not have fallen on worthier shoulders. Like his guru, Srikrishna lived for music, and his soul was truly wedded to the Muse. While tragedy after tragedy assailed his personal life, he sought solace for his mind by plunging deeper and deeper into the art which alone gave him a purpose in life, and strength to pursue the ideals set before him by his revered mentor. The life long master-discipleship of these two great musicologists made many epoch-making contributions to the cause of music. With his life of almost ascetic simplicity, his indifference to money and publicity, his utter dedication to, and personal sacrifices for the propagation of classical music, he was quite an extraordinary personality in this era when the majority of professionals hanker after publicity, prosperity and admirers.



Padma Bhushan
Dr. Srikrishna Narayan Ratanjankar.

Born on the first dawn of 1900 in a middle-class Maharashtrian family, Srikrishna was lucky to get music-training from fine teachers right from boyhood because his father (an officer in the C.I.D.) had a deep and discerning interest in classical music. From the age of 7 to 9 he underwent a rigorous course of scale-exercises under Pdt. Krishnambhat Honavar (a pupil of Ustad Kale Khan of the Patiala gharana). These exercises perfected his "swarajnaan". From 1908, he began to learn from Pdt. Anant Manohar Joshi, a shishya of Pdt. Balakrishnabuwa, and a reputed exponent of the Gwalior gharana. Shankarrao Karnad, a common friend of Srikrishna's father and Pdt. Bhatkhande, often used to drop in during the boy's music-lessons and listen to the promising young boy. One day he brought with him a tall, handsome, and noble-looking person. After listening to the boy's singing and testing his *swarajnaan*, the distinguished-looking visitor blessed the boy, foretold that he would become famous, and gave him a box of sweets as a little gift. Later in life, Srikrishna Narayan often regretted: "Had I known at that time (I was only 8 then) that the sweets were the *prasaad* of Bhatkhande, an epoch-making personality in music, I might have preserved them as a cherished memento, instead of polishing them off straightaway foolishly."

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By the time he was 12, Srikrishna had lost his mother, and his father had to take premature retirement as he had become a chronic heart-patient. Unable to pull on in a costly city like Bombay, the poor family had to shift to cheaper Ahmadnagar where the young musician had to give concerts and help the meagre family-resources. In 1916 he gave an excellent recital in the All India Music Conference held in Baroda. Through Bhatkhandeji's kind influence, the Baroda State began to give him a monthly scholarship of Rs.40/ only, and he also became the music tutor of the Maharani of Baroda.

Pdt. Bhatkhande presented Srikrishna's father with a copy each of his publications, "Sreemallakshya Sangeetam" and "Hindustani Sangeet Padhdhati (Part 1)". Sri Ratanjankar senior, avidly and repeatedly went through them and decided that Srikrishna should follow the path of his guru. Now the family shifted back to Bombay where Pdt. Bhatkhande generously began to teach "Babu" (his pet-name for Srikrishna Narayan) daily for 2 to 3 hours each in the *Gayan Uttejak Mandali*. Ratanjankar used to say that in all his life he had never come across another guru who was so loving, patient and magnanimous.



Dr. Ratanjankar giving a vocal recital in the College accompanied on the Sarangi by Mirza Mahmood Ali, on the Tabla by Sadashiv (son of Pdt. Sakharamji), and vocal support by S.A. Mahadkar and S.C.R.Bhat.



A group photo of 1931 with the Chaturpandit, the Principal, Staff-members, and the first batch of Sangeet Visharad Graduates from the College. Bhatkhandeji, Ratanjankar, Natu, Mrs. Wadikar, Sakhawat Hussain, Sakharam, Hamid Hussain, BadeAgha, and well-known early graduates like Pahadi Sanyal, Rabindralal Roy and several others may be identified in this valuable photo.

At that time, Ustad Faiyaz Khan was one of the colossal figures who dominated the world of Hindustani music. On Bhatkhandeji's advice, Srikrishna became a *'shagird'* of the great Ustad and learnt in the true *'guru shishya parampara'* way, under Ustad Faiyaz Khan for full 5 years—from 1917 to 1922. These years of training left the deep impact of the *Agra gayaki* on Ratanjankar's style, especially in the *'Nom Thom'* alap portion, in the play with *bols* and *taal*, and some of the *gamak taans*. Although his voice was quite different from the deep baritone voices generally associated with the Agra gharana, it had the grandeur of the masculine Rangila style. No wonder, Ratanjankar evolved a style all his own, which was a rich blend of the Jaipur, Gwalior, and Agra gharanas. Thousands of us, his admirers, and many generations of students of the college still recall with a sense of nostalgia "Anna Saheb's" (as he was known among us) impressive vocal style which was a rare combination of sweetness and dignity, aesthetic purity and unending creativity, of *swara-shuddhi* and *uchchaaran shuddhi* (purity of notes and intonation).

After 5 years of training under Ustad Faiyaz Khan, Srikrishna's training under Bhatkhande was resumed; in fact, this *'taleem'* continued until the last years of the Chaturpandit's life. The guru used to take his favourite pupil to the numerous eminent musicians of the times in order to collect rare and precious traditional compositions of different *gharanas*. This was how Srikrishna Narayan Ratanjankar was able to learn an incredible number of *bandishes*—Dhrupads, Dhamars, Sadras, Khayals, Taranas, and Lakshangeets. Blessed with a rare retentive memory, he could sing a series of different compositions in one and the same raga, or varieties of the same raga such as Bhairav, Todi, Bilawal, Sarang, Kalyan, Malhar, Kanada and so on, with their hair-breadth differences. He could also render obscure ragas like Deepak, Patmanjari, Natnarain, Hemnat, Dhanasri, Bhankar etc. with as much confidence as the popular and common ragas. What a contrast he was to some of today's highly successful performing musicians who manage their entire careers with a handful of ragas and *'cheezen'*! To those students who were eager and painstaking enough to want to learn some of the rare ragas or songs from his rich repertoire, Ratanjankar was only too happy to pass them on. Among the numerous students that he moulded, some emerged as good performing artistes, some as sincere teachers, others as successful officers in responsible positions in the field of music, and so on. Late Chandrasekhar Pant, late Chidanand Nagarkar, Sri Dinkar Kaikini, Pdt. V.G. Jog, Sri S.C.R. Bhat, Sri K.G. Ginde, late Chinmoy Lahiri, Dr. S. Mutatkar, and Sri P.N. Chinchore are some examples of his disciples who have brought credit to the guru. But, out of all these, the disciple who has maintained the guru's style in all its unalloyed purity, and whose music performances bring back to us glimpses of Anna Saheb's rich style and repertoire, is Sri K.G. Ginde who is Principal of the *Shreevallabh Sangeetalaya*, Bombay.

19

Sri Ratanjankar had begun his career as a successful performer in Music Conferences in Baroda, Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi, Shahjahanpur, Calcutta, and so on. Until some years ago there were some aged veterans who had listened to Ratanjankar in some of these conferences. After hearing his music for the first time in the All India Music Conference in Lucknow in 1924, one of them wrote:— "In that Conference where music-maestros from all the important centres like Rampur, Jaipur, Gwalior, Alwar, Dholpur, Indore, Baroda and Maihar had assembled, Srikrishna somehow stood out like a young *Abhimanyu* among the revered *Dronas* and *Bhishmas*". Besides being a graduate, and a finely trained musician, he was already a profound scholar who had deeply studied classics like *'Sama Veda'*, *'Sangeeta Ratnakar'*, *'Nātya Shāstra'*, *'Lakshyasangeet'*, *'Raga Tala Vibodh'*, and of course, the Chaturpandit's prolific volumes. The genius of this scholar-musician had fully blossomed under the inspiring influence of Bhatkhande "who not only opened up his mind to the vast treasures of Indian music, strongly supported by a historical and musicological perspective, but also instilled in him a keen awareness of the problems in relation to institutionalised teaching of music as against the prevalent method of *Gurushishya parampara* esoteric in its approach."

In 1926 Ratanjankar had graduated from the Wilson College, Bombay, and he was all set to take his L.L.B. Degree and pursue a legal career, when the Guru's summons came from Lucknow asking him to give up Law and devote himself entirely to the new Music College in Lucknow. From 1926 till 1957 Ratanjankar devoted himself heart and soul to the Bhatkhande College in Lucknow. The next 4 years he was dedicated to the Indira Kala Sangeet University (Khairagarh, M.P.) which was but a fledgling then. He spent the best years of his life (on a meagre salary) leaving his family in Bombay, and himself living a very frugal life in a small room in the college where he guided and taught generations of music students, studied shastras, wrote innumerable articles on music, composed hundreds of songs, created many new ragas such as *Saalagvaraali*, *Hemnat*, *Rajanikalyan*, *Shankaraakaran*, *Kedar-bahar*, *Marg bihag* and so on. *'Tansangraha'* in 3 parts, *'Sangeet Shiksha'* in 3 parts, *'Abhinava Geetmanjari'* in 2 parts, *Abhinava Sangeet Shiksha* in 2 parts, *'Varnamala'* and *'Tala Lakshangeet Samgraha'* are some of the books he wrote besides numerous articles published in journals, souvenirs etc. In the Preface to part II of his *'Abhinava-Geet-Manjari'*, he wrote "The reason why the talented composers among today's musicians hesitate to publish their compositions is that while the audiences are always prepared to accept what are labelled as "ancient compositions" whether they are good, bad, or indifferent, they are always highly critical of contemporary compositions and reluctant to give them a word of praise or encouragement, however good they may be from the musical and literary points of view." In part I of his *'Abhinava Geetamanjari'* dedicated to his "Guruvarya Chaturpandit" and published in 1949,

Ratanjankar has presented 120 new compositions of his in the Kalyan, Bilawal, Khamaj, Poorvi, and Bhairav *Thaats*. The second volume published in 1962 and dedicated to Raja Bhaiya Poonchhale contains 160 new compositions in the Marwa, Kafi, Asaveri, Bhairavi and Todi *Thaats*. These "*rachanaas*" cover a large variety of compositions like Dhruwad, Dhamar, Vilambit and Drut Khayals, Sadras, Varnams, Lakshangeets, Taranas, devotional songs and sargams. Besides the numerous songs in current ragas, there are also many in rare or obscure, or new ragas like "*Viyog varali*", "*Lachari Todi*", "*Devasakh*", "*Narayani*", "*Sazgiri*", "*Meghranjini*", "*Rewa*", "*Kukubh*", "*Gopivasant*", "*Suranjani*", "*Laxmi Todi*", "*Natnarain*", "*Hemnat*" and so on. Well-versed in English, Hindi, Sanskrit and Marathi, he wrote articles in all these languages. For his compositions, he has used a mixture of Poorvi dialect, Brajhasha, Sanskrit, pure Hindi etc. They are a beautiful blend of raga-essence and lovely Sahitya. His compositions under the pen-name "*SUJAN*" are so frequently and widely being sung now over the Radio, in concerts and in L.P. records, that they have already been accepted as traditional ones !

Next to Principal Ratanjankar's living-room in the college was his equally unostentatious office-cum-classroom, where he taught generations of fifth year and post-graduate students, sometimes demonstrating difficult and rare ragas for them with explanations, long after the scheduled class-hours. Throughout his life he kept up the friendships with his guru's associates and admirers.

During the 72 hours' non-stop "*Sangeet Dhara*" programmes which used to be organised in the college-hall in each September (ending on 19th) as a musical homage to Pdt. Bhatkhande, hundreds of past and present students, and nearly all the staff members used to participate with enthusiasm. Pdt. Ratanjankar and Pdt. Natuji used to spend hours on the stage with stop-watch and a little bell in order to see that no participant exceeded the time allotted to her or him, nor encroach into the succeeding artiste's time. The last programme of the entire 72 hours of "*Sangeet Dhara*" invariably used to be a Jugalbandi by Sri Ratanjankar and Natu Saheb who were competently given vocal support by two of the best pupils such as Nagarkar and Dinkar, or Ginde and Bhat. Throughout the 72 hours, the audience waxed and waned in strength, but the maximum crowd assembled for this climactic "*Jugalbandi*".

20 "*Anna Saheb*" was closely associated with All India Radio for a number of years as Chairman of the Music Audition Board, and as a broadcaster. Some of the operas entirely based on *Ragdari* music that he wrote and directed, were presented before Lucknow audiences and also broadcasted on the National network. "*Govardhanodhdhar*", "*Jhansi Ki Rani*" and "*Shivamangalam*" were 3 of the Operas that he wrote to illustrate his musical credo that 'the musician or singer should be able to pour into each Raga whatever Rasa he/she wishes to'. This is possible because 'the individual notes in Indian music are very dynamic and as such, keep moving up and down in degree of pitch according to the requirements of a particular cadence,' and it is through these cadences that expressions can be drawn out. But the listeners also must have the capacity to appreciate the music and be a fit receptacle.

With his deep respect for the Karnatic traditions of music, Sri Ratanjankar established such close rapport with the scholars of the South that he was chosen as a member of the Music Academy, Madras, and he contributed richly to promote closer mutual understanding between the two systems. Sangeeta-Kalanidhi Justice Venkatrama Iyer described Ratanjankar as "the symbol of the unity of Indian music".

After serving the college for 30 long and fruitful years, when "*Anna Saheb*" was leaving for Khairagarh to take over as the Vice-Chancellor of the, "*Indira Kala Sangeet Viswavidyalaya*" there was a huge crowd to see him off at the Railway Station, and many wept. As Anna Saheb embraced Sri Natuji, his closest and longest associate and colleague who was like a younger brother to him, there were tears in the eyes of both. Ratanjankar took up the challenging Vice-Chancellorship of the Music University during the initial years of struggle, and he did not lay down the heavy reins of this office until he had steered the institution out of troubled waters and set it sailing along calm seas. Only his closest associates know how he secretly used to donate large slices out of his own salary back to the Music College of Lucknow, and to the Khairagarh University whenever their foundations tottered for want of funds. I might not have believed it from anyone else; but I had to, as it was my guru Sri Natu who told me that the Principal's salary was but Rs.100/- only per month, and his own as the Vice-Principal, was even less! Sometimes they did not get the salary for months together! But, a word of appreciation from the similarly self-effacing guru was enough reward. In a letter to his dear "*Babu*" :-

My dear Babu,

I am really glad you carried out the arrangement about the salaries of the other teachers even at the risk of sacrificing your own. That is the right spirit in which we should always work. God will sincerely do the right to you at the proper time...".

Bhatkhandeji's affectionate letters to Babu continued till the end . In one of his last letters, he wrote:—

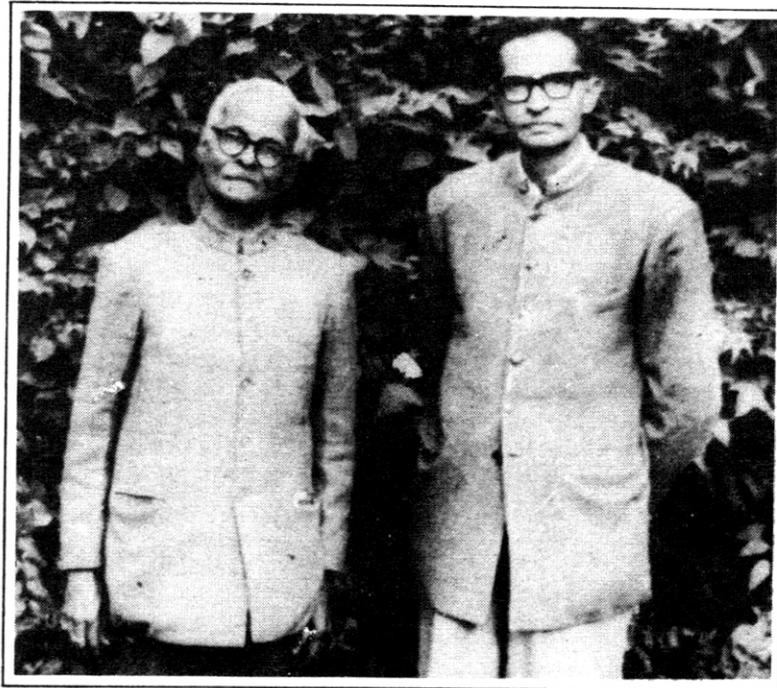
"My dear Babu,

My span of life, I believe, is nearing its end gradually, and I take these new developments as a matter of course. Thank God He has left me a brilliant pupil in you and I have little doubt you will justify all the hopes I have entertained about you..... I wish you all health and happiness, Yours affly, Anna. "Padma Bhushan" from the President of India, the Fellowship of the Sangeet Natak Academy, and Honorary Doctorate were showered on Dr. Ratanjankar, but he always remained publicity-shy and simple, and he struggled all his life with pecuniary hardships. No doubt, he must have felt satisfied that he had lived up to his guru's expectations of selfless dedication to the cause of music and the College, sacrificing all personal comforts and gains.

But when Sri Natu visited Anna Saheb (Dr.Ratanjankar) on his death bed, the latter was deeply worried about his own family as he had not saved anything for them. His two sons were yet to be fixed up; his elder daughter had died tragically after a very unhappy life with merciless in-laws; the younger one was not yet married. The musician-scholar who had devoted his entire life to Music, had tears in his eyes as he helplessly asked Sri Natu

"Who will look after them when I am no more ? On 14th February, 1974, Dr.Ratanjankar breathed his last. His younger daughter is married now; one son is settled in Jogeswari, Bombay, while the other has married and settled down in Germany. Music seems to have begun and ended with Dr. Ratanjankar, in their family!





Dr. Srikrishna Narayan Ratanjankar, and Pdt. Govind Narayan Natu.



*Seated (L to R)- S.C.R.Bhat; Ratanjankar; Natu; Mohanrao Kalyanpurkar.
Standing- K.G.Ginde; Dinkar Kaikini; and Tabla artiste of Kathak faculty.*

PDT. GOVIND NARAYAN NATU

Born on 14.5.1905

During the year (1977) of The Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the college, the only staff member left, out of the earliest batch of 2 or 3 teachers who had been trained and appointed by Pdt. Bhatkhandeji in the very year of the inception of this institution (in 1926), was Pdt. Govind Narayan Natu who had given 50 years of his life to the College. The Golden Jubilee Celebrations went on for several days in the vast Shamiana, in the Begum Hazrat Mahal Park near the college, but even in that large crowd, Sri Natu must have felt lonely, because there was no one there with whom he could share old reminiscences. Most of all, he missed Sri Ratanjankar who had been friend, elder brother, colleague, and companion for 3 long decades. Both had given the best years of their lives to the college during the era when the Principal's salary was about Rs.100/-per month, and the Vice-Principal's and Professor's even less. And that too, when they did not get it regularly! Why then did they stick to such a job, and so long too, I ask him. His answer is; "Pdt. Bhatkhande had entrusted this delicate sapling to us and told us that we must not let it wither away, but tend it and keep it alive with our devotion and hard work. How could we forsake it and let it die?"

Quiet, reserved, and self-effacing, and a most conscientious teacher, Sri Natuji had worked on the staff continuously for half a century (1926 to 1976)- first as Professor, then as Vice-Principal, Principal (1966 to 76) and finally as Emeritus Professor to teach the Postgraduate classes. The world of music needs not only impressive performing artistes, but also such painstaking gurus, erudite scholars, and gifted "*Vaagyeyakars*" (composers). One day, as Natuji was teaching in his class, Ustad Faiyaz Khan who was visiting the college, walked in informally, accompanied by two music-lovers. After watching the class for a while, one of the companions asked the Ustad: "Can class-rooms produce successful performing artistes? The Ustad replied:- "They may not; but they train up good *rasikas*. *Ham logon ke kaddaan bhi koi chahiye*". Sri Natu's first meeting with Dr. Ratanjankar was in the All India Music Conference in Lucknow in 1924, where Raja Bhaiya had brought with him two of his favourite disciples, Sri Gune and Sri Natu, at Bhatkhandeji's special request. When Natu was asked to sing with the Chaturpandit's pet disciple, the former felt quite diffident and nervous. However, the Jugalbandi turned out to be a great success, and with that began a close friendship between the two young singers. When they met again in the next All India Music Conference in Lucknow in 1925, they wished they could meet oftener, and learn from each other. Natusaheb says :-"When Pdt. Bhatkhandeji summoned Ratanjankar from Bombay, and myself from Gwalior, and appointed both of us as teachers in the new college in 1926, I felt delighted like the proverbial, lucky blind man who prayed to God for one good eye, and got both." Initially, the number of students being hardly 13 or 14 in the classes in Topewali Kothi, the class-hours did not last longer than 2 or 3 hours. All day long, they would either be learning and discussing music, or teaching in the classes, but they relaxed and chatted and cracked jokes until midnight, and then the Principal Madhav Keshav Joshi used to gently admonish them to go to sleep. Even after his marriage in 1930 when Natuji shifted to a house elsewhere, they used to meet everyday in college and share all the work such as setting question-papers, having them stencilled, taking classes. About these early classes Natusaheb told me:

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"Initially we had to persuade some respectable, elderly people to join the classes. They were mostly well-known doctors and lawyers who joined partly because of their genuine love for music, and partly because they wanted to set an example for young boys and girls from respectable families. Among the early batches of students, I still clearly remember the Sanyal brothers (Pahadi and D.N.), H.L.Roy and his brother Rabindralal Roy (father of Malavika Kanan), Dr. Hukku, Dr. Atal, Dr. T.Bahadur, Sri Brijū Mulla, Mr. Chak, Pdt. Kailash Chandra Misra, Malaviya, Ayodhya Prasad, Dr. Bhake (Prof. of Botany), Dr. Sane, Chinmoy Lahiri, Sunil Bose, S.B. Singh, and so many others. As expected, the daughters of many of these pioneer students became students of the college later."

Other teachers were added to the staff such as Chote Munne Khan, Sri Pathak, Ahmad Hussain Khan (Vocal), Abid Hussain Khan (Tabla), Sakhawat Hussain Khan (Sarod), Hamid Hussain (Sitar), Sakharam (Pakhawaj), Bade Agha (Vocal) and others. The first two lady-teachers of the college were Miss Khurshid and Mrs. Wadekar, both of whom had been trained by Bhatkhandeji in the *Gayan Uttejak Mandali*, Bombay. In 1928, the college was shifted to the present premises of the hostel-buildings.

The first group-photo of the staff and students has been carefully and lovingly kept by Pdt. Natu in his drawing room. He not only let me use it for this publication, but has been able to identify 75% of the persons in the group which includes the Chaturpandit, Sri Ratanjankar, Sri Natu, Mrs. Wadekar, the Sanyal brothers, the Roy brothers, Pdt. Sakharam, Ustad Sakhawat Hussain, Ustad Hamid Hussain, Bade Agha, Sri K.C.Misra and daughter, the Basu sisters, Devi Prasad Chaube, G.V.Paranjpay, Dr Bhake, Suraj Bux Srivastava and many others.

In order to rekindle some interest in classical music, Pdt. Bhatkhande introduced the practice of arranging weekly demonstrations of vocal and instrumental music by staff and students. These were open to the music-loving public of Lucknow. Natusaheb told me how these weekly soirees were sparsely attended in the beginning, and how they became increasingly popular and drew larger and larger audiences each week. He recalls how the late Prof. D.P. Mukherji used to be one of the most regular music-lovers to attend these. He used to be a respected music-connoisseur and a great admirer of Bhatkhandeji's selfless missionary work in the field of classical music.

Bhatkhande often used to demonstrate for "Babu" and Natu, the correct way of presenting Khayal with proper intonation (*"Uchchaar"*) and breaking of phrases. In the early years, Ratanjankar used to sing mostly *alankarik taanas*; but his guru advised him to add more *sapaat taans* of the Gwalior style to his own. Both had begun their careers as very promising performing artistes in various conferences, and as frequent broadcasters from many stations of All India Radio. Gradually, the strain of teaching music in classes and of giving tuitions (in the case of Sri Natu) to eke out a modest livelihood, ruined their voices before they reached their sixties.

As a class-teacher, Natuji's patience is unending. As a private teacher of advanced students, his readiness to teach, and his generosity are admirable. I say this from personal experience. A keen pupil only has to request him :- "Guruji! there are no good Khayals available in such and such Raga; those that are available have silly wordings." In the next few days he would bring some beautifully worded Khayals with notations in his neat and fine handwriting. Ratanjankar often used to compose new Khayals in some ragas and "challenge" Natu to compose "Jawabs", which he always fulfilled. Several of the ragas prescribed for Nipun classes have very few "cheezen" in them. All these little challenges and needs inspired Natusaheb to compose a large number of Khayals. The Chaturpandit has left for posterity, hundreds of traditional "bandishes" in numerous ragas; but many of them were probably written by musicians who had little literary talents. The "sahitya" is sometimes anachronistic or even embarrassing before today's educated and vast audiences which are made up of all and sundry. It was for these reasons that modern *"Vagyeyakars"* like Bhatkhande, Ratanjankar, Natu, Mahadkar, Kalvint and so many others devoted their attention to creating new "bandishes" with meaningful sahitya.

24 Sri Natu's first volume of *"Geet Samooh"* published in 1949 contained 70 and odd new compositions in 48 ragas or so. Dedicating these to his guru Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale, Natu wrote in his preface:- "It is for you, the discerning musicians and listeners of today, to accept or reject these efforts of mine". The ready acceptance they received from his students and colleagues inspired him to continue the work even more elaborately. The first volume contained compositions mostly in common ragas; the only rare ragas that figured in this volume were Barari, Bhatiyar, Shiv-Tilak, Hansakinkini, Gopivasant, Dhanasri, Nand, and Shankarakaran.

Volume II of *"Geet Samooh"* published and released by the U.P. Sangeet Natak Academy in 1979 with a Foreword by Thakur Jaidev Singh contains a richer collection of 67 compositions in 35 ragas. This volume covers a number of uncommon ragas in which good "bandishes" are hard to get, such as \ddagger Kukubh; Karnati, Jaitkalyan, Barwa, Bhankar, Malayamarutam, Basantmukhari, Malasri, Malgunji, Mod-malhar, Megharanjini, Sazgiri, Saurashtratank, Ramdasi and Sindhura.

For the guidance of the students he has also published three volumes of *"Taan Tarang"* published in 1938, 1964, and 1981 respectively, covering a large number of ragas. But Pdt. Natu feels unhappy and discouraged by the lack of application and interest among today's music-students. In the good old days, he says, the students came with more *"lagan"* towards the art. Present-day students are only interested in getting their degrees. They seldom do any *"riyaz"* at home. Most of them give up whatever little practice they have in the classes, as soon as they are armed with the degrees.

Regarding the present-day trends in music, these are his views :-

"No doubt, the number of listeners for classical music has grown enormously everywhere; this is heartening, and I also agree that music has to change with the times. But I find a general decline in standards, and too much blending of styles. The rich, traditional Khayal-*badhat* (elaboration) is seldom heard nowadays. It is only through systematic *"Alap"* that the full beauty of a Raga can be unfolded. But nowadays, Alap is cursorily set aside and this lovely portion is often neglected altogether. Secondly, there is this new craze for speed in *taans*; perhaps it is a reflection of the general craze for speed today. *Taans* can be varied and lively, but these should never dominate a recital. Few singers pay adequate attention to the full texts of songs. There are musicians today who just use the *Sthayi* as a mere peg to hang their decorations from! They do not even bother to learn or render the Antara of the Khayal !

Even though he is nearly eighty today, Pdt. Natu keeps himself busy with various activities concerned with

music, as an examiner of various universities like Delhi, Assam and Sri Lanka, as a member of the Local Audition Board of Akashwani, as a member of the Bhatkhande Vidyapeeth, and as a composer. His students, like Pdt. Ratanjankars' are scattered not only all over India and Sri Lanka, but even in places like Mauritius and U.S.A. Barring a few of the staff, all the others teaching in the college at present have been students of Pdt. Ratanjankar and Pdt. Natu, such as Prem Singh Kinot, Dharampal Barpagga, Krishna Kumar Kapoor, Vinayakrao Lete, Dauji Goswami, Maqsood Ali, Kamala Srivastava, Hiranmoyi Tewari and so on.

Since 1936 Sri Natu has been honoured with shawls and Addresses and cash prizes in Calcutta, Jhansi, and Lucknow. In 1973 he was awarded the Fellowship of the U.P. Sangeet Natak Academy. On 12th August, 1982, Pdt. Natu (the most well known and seniormost shishya) and Sri Bala Saheb Poonchwale (son and shishya) were specially honoured in a three-days' music festival in Hyderabad on the occasion of the 100th *Birth Anniversary of their Guru*, Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale. In January 1984, he was honoured with the *Sarangdev Fellowship Award* by the *Sur Singar Sansad* of Bombay.



THE TWO BALIS

RAI UMANATH BALI Dr. RAI RAJESWAR BALI
(1892 to 1966/1889 to 1944.

Although Rai Umanath Bali was the Vice-Chancellor of the Bhatkhande College of Music when I took my Degree, I came to learn of his vital role in the establishment of this reputed institution, only many years later. The extent of his involvement in the birth and growth of the college, and of his friendship with Bhatkhande was fully realized by me only recently when his son, Brajeswar Bali, very kindly put at my disposal his precious album containing a bunch of letters written to Rai Saheb Bali by the Chaturpandit.

The idea of starting a Music College in Lucknow was originally conceived of by Shri Umanath Bali of Dariabad who had nursed it in his mind for several years. In both the All India Music Conferences held in Delhi (1917) and in Benares (1918) he had presented his proposals for holding a Music Conference in Lucknow and for the establishment of a music college in the capital city of Awadh. Unfortunately, neither of the proposals got any support from Pdt. Bhatkhandeji and Raja Nawab Ali Khan - "the two veteran leaders of music in Northern India at that time" because both were engrossed in their efforts to establish an All India Academy of Hindustani music in Delhi. Deeply disappointed, Shri Umanath Bali started a monthly magazine in Hindi in 1919 - "*Sangeet Sudha*" - through which he hoped to popularise classical music and highlight his pet idea of starting a music college in Lucknow. But the magazine could not survive after 5 issues.

TOUR

In 1920 Rai Saheb Umanath Bali undertook a prolonged tour of numerous places like Gwalior, Rampur, Jaipur, Bharatpur, Ajmer, Alwar, Dholpur, Rewa, Hyderabad, Patna, Calcutta, and Delhi in order to enlist support for his pet scheme, from the various Rajas, Maharajas, and music-lovers. Encouraged by their support, he visited Bhatkhande in Bombay. Meanwhile, Panditji had been rather disillusioned by the petty quarrels among music-lovers which had obstructed the establishment of a Music Academy in Delhi as well as the conferences proposed to be held in Indore, Patna, and Bhagalpur. In a letter dated 26-5-1922, he wrote from Bombay :-

"My dear Umanath Bali,

.....Poor music! I really do not know what sin music has committed!

No protector comes forward to champion its cause. Nobody appreciates its great utility. People will certainly have to repent someday. The next decade will kill most of the leading artistes and scholars, and by the time the people wake up, there will be only fifth class musicians left to please them. What became of your idea of starting a music school in Lucknow? A conference at Lucknow is a good idea too - I shall try to help you as far as I can."

Bhatkhande accepted Bali Saheb's invitation and came to Dariabad where he stayed for a whole month as the latter's guest. During these weeks, Panditji drew up the entire curriculum for the college and gave his full support to the scheme in the A.I. Music Conference held in Delhi in December 1922. Rai Saheb's invitation to hold the next Music Conference in Lucknow was also accepted.

The A.I.M Conference which was held in Lucknow with great pomp and splendour in December 1924 was a memorable and most successful one from various points of view. Representatives of almost all the existing Gharanas of Hindustani music participated in this, and unanimously welcomed Bhatkhande's "*Thaat-Raag-System*" as well as the decision to establish a music college in this city of culture. The credit for the great success of this conference goes to the sincere hard work of Sri Umanath Bali who acted as the Honorary General Secretary, and the chairmanship of Thakur Nawab Ali Khan. Rai Rajeswar Bali, a taluqdar of Dariabad (nephew of Shri Umanath Bali), Minister of Education, was another person who played a very important part in the establishment of the college. Because of his deep interest in music and other fine arts, his highly influential position, and his close friendship with the Governor, Sir William Morris, his help was invaluable, as he was also able to enlist the full support of the Governor, who immediately announced a personal donation of Rs.500 besides all help from his Government. While Bhatkhande was the great inspiration behind it, Rai Umanath Bali and Thakur Nawab Ali were able to collect immediately a sum of one lakh rupees from some of the taluqdars and music-lovers. All these facts have been recorded in the "*JAYAJIPRATAP*" dated February 22, 1924.

Dr. RAJESWAR BALI

Although the credit for the inception and growth of this college goes to a large number of music-lovers and patrons, it is doubtful if this institution would have been established at all but for a lucky accident in the history

of Lucknow. During the nineteen twenties, the Minister of Education and Self-Government happened to be a most cultured man, a great connoisseur and lover of music, poetry, and painting. The late Dr. Rajeswar Bali combined in himself many qualities of head and heart. He was a rare combination of a politician with high integrity, an ardent patriot, a great lover of the fine arts, an effective and efficient Minister of Education and of the department of Medical, Religious and Public Health in the Local Self-Government, and no mean poet himself. He was the author of a large number of poems although he was too reticent and shy about himself to publish them. In the introduction to a collection of Dr. Rajeswar Bali's Poems published posthumously, Dr. Dharendra Verma (of the Hindi Department of the Allahabad University) writes how Rai Rajeswar (D. Litt) was an intensely religious-minded and gifted Brij-Bhasha poet, a true Vaishnavite – whose poems overflowed with a real Bhakta's devotion for Lord Bihariji. *"Krishnajanma"* and *"Rukminimangal"* were two of the dramas that he wrote .

Born in 1889 Dr. Rajeswar Bali graduated in 1911, was elected to the Legislative Council of U.P. in 1920, and became Minister of Education besides holding various other portfolios in 1924. Although occupying such a responsible position in the Government, his life was truly dedicated to the promotion of Culture, Arts and Education in the province. But for the prominent role he played, and but for the high esteem and regard in which the then Governor Sir William Morris held him, perhaps it would not have been possible for the band of enthusiasts to get this college founded at all.

Sir William Morris began his speech at the inauguration of the *Hindustani Academy* in Lucknow on March 29, 1927 with the following sentence :- (vide *"Fifty Years of Governorship in UP"* published by the Information Department of U.P. in 1971)

"Gentlemen,

The Institution which we formally inaugurate today is the youngest of three enterprises which owe their origin to my colleague the Education Minister's love of the Arts and Letters of his country. He had already initiated a gallery of Indian painting and a College of Indian Music... He seeks to provide people in these provinces with what in many countries is regarded as almost as natural an endowment as the air of heaven itself..."

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Mr. C. A. Nichols, the Associate Editor of *"The Biographical Encyclopaedia of the World"* ("an authentic record of notable living men and women in every city of the world") personally wrote to Dr. Rajeswar Bali on March 26, 1927 asking for his bio-data for inclusion in the Encyclopaedia. A draft of Mr. Bali's reply in his own handwriting is carefully preserved by his family. In this he mentions: "I was responsible for the creation of the *Hindustani Academy* - and for the *Morris College of Hindustani Music* which followed two big music conferences and Fine Arts Exhibitions which were held under my auspices at Lucknow in 1925 - 6"

Rai Rajeswar Bali was also one of the truly patriotic legislators who resigned in protest against the Simon Commission.

Pandit Bhatkhande held him in the highest esteem and remained most grateful to Dr. Rajeswar Bali for giving material shape to his idea (shared by many others) about a college in this city of culture.

MORRIS COLLEGE

The College was started in July 1926 under the name *"Akhil Bharatiya Sangeet Mahavidyalaya"*. Six months later, it was named *"The Morris Music College"* and still later, it was more appropriately rechristened as *The Bhatkhande College of Music* on February 28, 1927. Bhatkhande wrote to Rai Umanath Bali :-

"I am so glad the college is being treated very sympathetically and by such highly-placed and influential gentlemen. To tell you the honest truth, this is all the work of the most earnest and most praiseworthy efforts of the Honourable Minister saheb and yourself. But for your help, what chance was there for this poor neglected Art to come to the notice of the Government! The Institution is, no doubt, in its infancy, but within a few years, given the necessary help and encouragement, it will not fail to make a reputation for itself and establish its own claim to public patronage. I am looking forward to the day, when it will be a great centre to which students will flock for instruction in music."

Once the college was started, Pdt. Bhatkhande put his heart and soul into it. He visited the institution every year and spent several months here guiding its destiny, recruiting and training teachers, drawing up the syllabus, giving lectures, and encouraging weekly demonstrations by the staff members. Even when he was in Bombay, he wrote regularly to Rai Umanath Bali and Thakur Nawab Ali. These letters reveal his deep interest in, and his utterly selfless devotion to the college, as well as his great personal regard for Shri Umanath and Shri Rajeswar Bali, and for Thakur Nawab Ali. In some letters dated April 1928 and June 1928, Bhatkhande wrote:-

"My dear Umanath Bali,

I congratulate you on your success in securing for the college the Council Chamber and the hostel building.

You are always lucky in every field. God has given me such an influential and trusted friend like yourself who, I dare say, will do his utmost to save the college from being ruined. Then again, we have in the Honourable minister saheb, a great pillar of strength... He is a great lover of the Arts and may God preserve him long to look after the musical art which has been leading a poor, neglected life.

I thank God, that through your great efforts and those of your friends there, I have been spared to see a regular college of music come into existence and the same shows signs of becoming a popular and permanent institution in U.P. I have little doubt that with such pillars of strength as yourself and Nawab Ali, the college will withstand difficulties and become a success. Alive or dead, I shall always pray for its welfare"

All of us who have seen the college after its reputation has spread all over India, cannot even gauge the numerous initial problems that these pioneers had to face at each step – such as threatening anonymous letters, shaky finances, shirking teachers, narrow-minded professional Ustads on the staff, and so on. At each step, Bali sought Bhatkhande's advice. From his guidance and inspiration, Shri Bali drew courage to overcome all these initial hurdles:- "Do not get upset by such anonymous letters", assured Panditji – "Every institution has its friends and enemies. It requires a really clever mind like yours to keep both sides pleased. I have always looked upon you as my younger brother, and I take the greatest interest in the college – I only know my own subject - music. You can always command my services at any time and in any way you like—".

The correspondence between the two continued almost till the last year of Bhatkhande's life. When he became completely bed-ridden, he wrote :-

"Don't fail to visit the college frequently. I know you have so many calls upon your time, but Rai Saheb the college is one of your own creations and it needs your special care during its infancy if you want it to grow strong and healthy—"

EARLY GRADUATES

Three years after Bhatkhande's death in 1929, Rai Umanath Bali started the Bhatkhande Sangeet Vidyapeeth which holds together the various Bhatkhande Colleges in U.P. as well as in Calcutta, Bombay, Rajasthan, Delhi, Bihar etc. Its main role is that of an examining body. Rai Saheb kept up his interest in these until his death. His son, Brajeswar Bali, has carefully kept the precious Register (which is in a dilapidated condition though!) containing the entire record of the college since its inception. It was started with many handicaps and inadequate finances in 1926. In its first year of existence, *it had hardly 6 teachers, 13 students, one tambura, one sitar, and one pair of Tablas.* The first batch who graduated in 1931 consisted of two students: Narendranath (alias Pahadi) Sanyal, and (blind) Ayodhya Prasad. H. L. Roy, Rabindralal Roy (father of Malavika Kanan, and Head of the Music Faculties of Santiniketan and Delhi Universities subsequently), and Thakur Durbijay Singh were the three candidates who graduated in 1932. In 1933 there were 10, and so on, – until by the nineteen forties the strength had swollen into hundreds, and the number of graduates increased to 40 or even more! Among my contemporaries were students from nearly every province in India, and also from Manipur, Quetta, Dacca, Assam and Sri Lanka. Later on, came students from Mauritius, Nepal, and even a sprinkling from the U.K. and the U.S.A.!

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The Silver Jubilee of the Bhatkhande Music College was celebrated in November 1952, under the presidency of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the then President of India. In his welcome-speech, Rai Umanath Bali said:—

"Today is one of the most memorable days of my life, because I have the rare privilege of welcoming Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of India, to the Silver Jubilee of the Bhatkhande Music College. We were able to start the college 26 years ago with the help and cooperation of a number of people, chiefly Rai Rajeswar Bali, Thakur Nawab Ali and Pdt. Bhatkhande. Many Rajas, Nawabs, and Taluqdars gave us financial help, among whom the names of the Late Nawab Saheb of Rampur, the Nizam of Hyderabad, and the Maharaja of Patiala deserve special mention"

The group photo taken on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee includes many veterans like Pdt. Ratanjankar, Pdt. Sakharam, Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale, Ustad Hamid Hussain, Rai Saheb Bali, Pdt. G. N. Natu, Shri. Mohanrao Kallyanpurkar, Shri Jog, Shri Ginde, Shri Chidanand Nagarkar, Shri Dinkar Kaikini, Smt. Sunita Kaikini and others. Alas! the first five of this distinguished group, as well as young Shri Nagarkar are no longer with us.

"How changed is here each spot man makes or fills!".





Raja Nawab Ali Khan of Akbarpur



A group photo of some of the great maestros who participated in the memorable All India Music Conference held in Lucknow in 1925.

RAJA NAWAB ALI KHAN (of Akbarpur)

In the musical history of Lucknow, and in the story of the birth and early years of the Bhatkhande College, Lucknow, Raja Nawab Ali's name looms large. But for his intense passion for music, his great respect and affection for Bhatkhande, and his substantial support, perhaps this college might not have been founded at all, nor survived the early years of struggle. Although he was a taluqdar of Akbarpur (District Sitapur), he stayed mostly in Lucknow. He began his music-lessons early in life, and continued to learn and practice both vocal and instrumental music nearly all his life. Nawab Ali learnt vocal music from Kale Khan Lahorewale, from Nazir Khan of Moradabad, and from Mohammad Ali Khan. He underwent Sitar-training for more than eight years, but gave up in despair when he heard the impressive recitals of Ustads Inayat Khan and Barkatullah.

Thakur Saheb had acquired considerable mastery over the harmonium by becoming a pupil of most distinguished artistes like Ganpatrao Bhaiya and Moizuddin. A real lover and connoisseur of music, Nawab Ali kept in close touch with all the great musicians, and musicologists of the time. Many of them like Ustad Munne Khan, Sadiq Ali Khan, Bakar Hussain, Mehendi Hussain, Nasir Khan, the Kalka-Binda brothers, Bhatkhandeji, the Nawab of Rampur, Ganpatrao, and Moizuddin were his close friends and associates. He sent his court-musician, Kale Nazir Khan, to learn at the feet of Pandit Bhatkhande. The large numbers of old, traditional songs that he collected from various sources are published in the volumes of his "*Maarifunnaghmaat*" which are dedicated to Bhatkhande.

In the introduction of Part I, Nawab Ali writes :- "Bhatkhande has been my Ustad and dearest friend. Current music was badly in need of a *grantha* and this has been fulfilled by the scholarly "*Lakshya Sangeet*" of Chaturpandit, the peerless musicologist. But since "*Lakshya Sangeet*" is written in Sanskrit which many people are not familiar with, I am writing the "*Maarifunnaghmaat*" in Urdu under Panditji's inspiration. I have been able to complete these volumes only through the priceless research work and scholarship of my friend and guru, Bhatkhande".

AGE OF USTADS

Those were the times when the reputed "*gharanedaar*" ustads would rather take their musical wealth with them to their graves, than reveal these hidden treasures to others. Following Bhatkhande's example, Raja Nawab Ali managed to collect a large number of traditional classical songs from willing and unwilling ustads like Muhammad Ali Khan (of the *Seniya* musical line), Munne Khan of Lucknow, Nazir Khan of Saharanpur, Amir Khan and Mohammad Hussain Khan of Lucknow. The volumes of "*Maarifunnaghmaat*" include also a large number of the Chaturpandit's compositions. In his foreword to Vol.II, Nawab Ali Khan acknowledges his gratefulness also to Nawab Chamman Saheb of Bilsa, Dr. Lakshman Gangadhar Natu of Lucknow (a pupil of Mohammad Ali Khan), Esu Chowdhury of Bareilly, and to Satyanand Joshi of Almora.

Prince Saadat Ali (alias Chamman Saheb) of Rampur was a good Sursingar player who had learnt hundreds of Dhrupads and Dhamars of the *Seniya Parampara* from Muhammad Ali Khan Gidhorewale. Chamman Saheb, Nawab Ali, and Bhatkhandeji became close friends - linked by their common devotion to music, but sadly, Chamman Saheb died prematurely in 1922. In his *Kramik* books, Bhatkhande has included dozens of songs he had learnt from Chamman Saheb.

It was Raja Nawab Ali who introduced Bhatkhande into the reputed royal music circles of Rampur - one of the most vital centres of Hindustani music at that time. At Nawab Ali's instance, Bhatkhande became a "*ganda-bandh*" (the ceremonial knot that binds guru and shishya) pupil of Ustad Wazir Khan from whom he learnt a large number of precious Dhrupads and Dhamars of the *Seniya Gharana* - all of which the Chaturpandit has generously published in his *Kramik* books for the benefit of music-lovers for all times to come.

It was in 1911 that Thakur Nawab Ali first came to know of Chaturpandit Bhatkhande's unique missionary work in the field of music. They started mutual correspondence, and became close friends and associates in the work of propagating classical music. In 1916 Bhatkhande requested him to accept the Presidentship of the All India Music Conference in Baroda. It was from Nawab Ali that H.H.Nawab Bahadur Hamid Ali Saheb of Rampur came to learn of Bhatkhande's work. In the two All-India Music Conferences (fourth and fifth) held in Lucknow, Nawab Ali extended his full co-operation to Bhatkhande, Umanath Bali and Rajeswar Bali, and to Sir William Morris. In founding and managing the Bhatkhande College (initially known as the Morris College) Nawab Ali played a very dominant role. His close friendship with Nawab Kalbe Ali Saheb and Hamid Ali Saheb of Rampur was also destined to be of immense help to Bhatkhande for two reasons. Firstly, they were themselves good musicians, great connoisseurs, and lavish patrons of music. Secondly, the leading musicians of Tansen's lineage were all court-musicians of Rampur. Introduced into this important centre of

music, Bhatkhande was able to gather hundreds of rare "cheezen" during his frequent visits to, and sojourns with, his friend, the Nawab Saheb. When the Music College was established in 1926, Nawab Ali became President, and continued to remain so till the end of his life. Some of the early teachers of the college were naturally Nawab Ali's "recruits" such as Bade Agha, Ahmad Khan, and Munne Khan.

Bhatkhande kept up regular correspondence with both Rai Umanath Bali and Thakur Nawab Ali before and after the establishment of the college. We find frequent references to Nawab Ali in Bhatkhande's letters which clearly bring out his great regard for him. At one stage, Nawab Ali had insisted that Ghazals also should be taught in the college. Although Bhatkhande could not have been in favour of this, he could not let down his friends. So he wrote to Shri Umanath Bali:—

"Please send the Urdu Ghazals to Nawab Ali for being set to notation. He will do it in two or three days, and successfully. The Ragas should be Kafi, Bhairavi, Jhinjhoti or Pilu — I have already written to Nawab Ali about it, and he will do the thing".

When Rai Umanath Bali proposed and Panditji supported the idea of holding the first All India Music Conference in Lucknow, Nawab Ali was vehemently against the idea because he was genuinely afraid of a possible "organized, systematic, religious propaganda against the Conferenc by the orthodox Shia community and their priests, as Lucknow was a stronghold of this community at that time". But the Chaturpandit was able to impress on his friend by gentle persuasion :—

"Music has nothing to do with politics or religion — We may expect help from all quarters — A band of zealous workers would be absolutely necessary, though Lucknow can, with its great Rajas and Taluqdars, easily put together Rs.10,000/- if she has a mind to do it..."

Whenever there was a clash of wills between the strong personalities of the Nawab and the Pandit over some issue of the college, the latter would withdraw from the scene, go back to Bombay, and write to his friend Mr. Bali :—

32 "I thought that by getting away from Lucknow, Nawab Ali would be left alone to look after the college affairs, unhampered by my presence and interference... Give him a free hand... We all look to the interest of the college. We have no personal gains to look to at all... I do not like to go back to Lucknow to see with my own eyes the slow death of the institution which, after great selfless efforts, we had all been able to bring into existence..."

Such a selfless attitude on the part of Bhatkhande always helped in bridging the differences and in maintaining their mutual respect and affection. Nawab Ali would write a conciliatory letter to him and Panditji would be relieved and happy. In a letter dated May 9, 1928, he wrote to Raja Nawab Ali:—

"My dear Raja Saheb,

Your letter has lifted a great load of anxiety from my mind... I decided to keep away from the management of the college, and in fact to keep away from Lucknow too, so as to leave the field open to those who thought they could do things better..."

Bhatkhande valued his personal friendship with Nawab Ali to whom he refers as "one of my best-loved friends". Moreover, he was fully aware of the fact that in the general climate of antipathy against music, the patronage and active support of influential friends and music-lovers like Thakur Nawab Ali, Nawab Saheb Hamid Ali Khan of Rampur, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, and many other royal music-patrons like them were indispensable and invaluable.

"I have little doubt", he wrote to his friend Rai Umanath Bali, "with such pillars of strength as yourself and Nawab Ali, the college will withstand difficulties and become a success".

An important road behind the Bhatkhande College is named after Raja Nawab Ali, and his photo adorns one of the rooms in the college.

Raja Nawab Ali's residence in Lucknow used to be the meeting centre of numerous professional musicians who lived in Lucknow, or visited Lucknow in those years, such as Chote Munne Khan, Ustad Khurshid Ali Khan, Ahmad Hussain Khan, Abid Hussain, Bhaiya Ganpatrao, Nazir Khan, Moizuddin and many others. They were drawn to his home because he was not only a great connoisseur and patron of music, but himself a good musician, who could sing Dhrupad, Dhamar and Khayal, and play on several instruments like the Sitar, Harmonium and Tabla. Pdt. Natu told me of the many occasions on which Raja Nawab Ali visited the classes in the college and sometimes when he was in a mood to sing he would ask the young Natu :- "Ama, Natu! Kahin

tabla-bayan ho to le avo! The tabla-bayan would be brought, and Nawab Ali would render a few Dhrupads, Dhamar or Khayal from his good repertoire. Long before he had met Pdt. Bhatkhande, the latter's publications and his laborious collections of traditional bandishes had impressed Nawab Ali deeply. He started corresponding with Panditji. Before long, they met, and it was the beginning of a long friendship which lasted all their lives. He sent Nazir Khan to learn Lakshangeets from the Chaturpandit. Inspired by the latter's example, Raja Nawab Ali also collected a large number of precious old "bandishes" from Ustads and published them in the 3 volumes of his *"Maarifunnaghmaat"*. He has duly mentioned the many Ustads from whom he managed to get these precious *"Khaandaani Cheezen"* (compositions which formed a special heritage inside the family), such as Mohammad Ali Khan (of Lucknow), Nazir Khan (of Moradabad), Nawab Chamman Saheb, Abbankhan (of Saharanpur), Amir Khan (of Lucknow), Mohammad Hussain Khan (Lucknow), Bhunu Solan, Munne Khan (Lucknow), besides numerous compositions learnt from Pdt. Bhatkhande. They are his gifts to posterity. It was Bhatkhande who persuaded Nawab Ali Khan to be the President of the All India Music Conference held in Baroda in 1916 under the inspiration of the cultured ruler of Baroda. Raja Nawab Ali played a vital role in the two historic Music Conferences held in Lucknow, and also in the establishment of the Music College. He was a great help to Pdt. Bhatkhande and the two Balis in steering the young institution through the early troubled years.

Often there were deep differences of opinion, and clash of wills between the scholarly Panditji and the strong-willed Raja on various matters pertaining to the college, but each time, Panditji's affection for him, and Raja Nawab Ali's respect for his guru, smoothed out matters. They were regular correspondents and their mutual letters would have made very interesting reading for us, music-students. Unfortunately, we have not been able to get any, so far. However, we come across numerous references to Nawab Ali in Bhatkhande's letters to Sri Umanath Bali and to "Babu", such as "Do consult Bhai Nawab Ali —" or — "You may approach Chamman Saheb through Bhai Nawab Ali and obtain his permission to publish some of his Urdu books like *'Mankutoohal'*, *'Naghmate-Asafi'* and others."

It was Raja Nawab Ali who introduced Pdt. Bhatkhande into the elite circle of the great music-patron, the Nawab Saheb of Rampur, through whom Bhatkhande was able to obtain a large number of precious compositions which had been the exclusive monopoly of the *"Seniya gharana"* until then.

The deaths of two of his close friends that "diminished his interest in life" according to Bhatkhande himself, were those of Sri Shankarrao Karnad in 1933 (whom he loved more than a brother, and who had been his close companion for over 25 years), and that of his "Bhai" Nawab Ali Khan in 1935. 33



THE TWO - SAKHAS

USTAD SAKHAWAT HUSSAIN & PDT SAKHARAM

1877 to 1955 (Sarod) 1879 to 1967 (Pakhawaj)

One of the inevitable and popular items in nearly every function of the college in the nineteen-forties used to be an instrumental "duet" by Ustad Sakhawat Hussain (Sarod) and Pdt. Sakharam (Pakhawaj). Dr. Rajendra Prasad who presided over the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the college was quite amused when someone (perhaps Pdt. Govind Ballabh Pant) introduced these two aged veterans as the "two SAKHAS" of the college. They would always begin with serious faces but before long, their duet would turn into a duel, each trying to outwit the other with loud clangs and bangs – all in a friendly spirit, of course.

Ustad Sakhawat Hussain used to claim that his ancestors originally belonged to Afghanistan and that many of them were "not only soldiers in the army of Babar, but were also Rabab-players of martial music". Another claim that he used to make was that it was his great-grandfather Ustad Niamatullah Khan who replaced the wooden plates and gutstrings with iron-plates and brass-strings and transformed the Rabab into Sarod. Niamatullah had been the pupil of Bazid Ali Khan (son of Chajju Khan Senia who belonged to the Seniya Gharana). Sakhawat had imbibed his art from his maternal grandfather Karamatullah Khan, who in his turn, had learnt the Sarod from his father Niamatullah Khan. In 1900 he had the great honour of being selected to present Indian instrumental music in the exhibition in Paris through the recommendation of none other than Pandit Motilal Nehru who used to be a great admirer of Indian culture and arts. Ustad Karamatullah is credited with the authorship of "*Asrar-e-Karamat*", an informative book on music.

Sakhawat also received some training from his paternal grandfather, Ustad Inayat Khan, a well-known Sarodiya belonging to Shahjahanpur. Born in Shahjahanpur in 1877, Sakhawat was initiated into the Sarod early in life by his father Ustad Shafaat Khan and then he learnt from Karamatullah Khan. Later on, he got the

guidance of Ustad Kaukab Khan of Calcutta. While narrating the memorable events of his life, Sakhawat always used to highlight with great pride his debut in 1911 before King George V and the Prince of Wales, who visited India at that time. The foreign dignitaries presented him with a gold medal and a Certificate of Merit. He also won rich gifts and rewards from generous royal patrons of music, like the rulers of Baroda, Gwalior, Indore, Bhopal, Alwar, and Jaipur.

In the 3rd All India Music Conference held in Banares, Sakhawat had the honour of being included among some of the outstanding Sarodiyas of the time, such as Ustad Karamatullah, Asadulla, Kaukab Khan and others. He also had the rare privilege of being accompanied on the Tabla by the reputed Biru Misra of



The Two Sakhas - Pdt. Sakharam (Pakhawaj), (1879 - 1967) and Ustad Sakhawat Hussain (Sarod), (1877 - 1955)

Varanasi. After hearing him in this conference, Pdt. Bhatkhande and Raja Nawab Ali decided to recruit Sakhawat as a teacher for Sitar and Sarod in the Bhatkhande College. Sakhawat felt flattered by the request of two such great musicologists, although the salary offered was far from flattering, Rs.60/- must have been a reasonably fair amount at that time (1926 to 1929). Sakhawat Khan argued that serving the Riyaasats and performing in conferences would be more paying for him. But the Chaturpandit convinced him that the college needed his services. The brilliant lawyer argued :- "Our music is confined to the exclusive aristocratic courts, and to the "Shady" *Kothas* of professional women singers. Cut away from the music-loving public, *gharanedar* music is a dying art. We should try to run our college in such a way as to attract young girls and boys from educated and cultured families to come and learn music from our college. As funds are poor, we beg of you to co-operate with us in our efforts".

Sakhawat Hussain agreed, and in 1927 became one of the earliest staff-members of the Bhatkhande Music

College. At first the monthly salary of Rs.60/- was adequate to feed and clothe the small family. Gradually, the family grew, and the financial condition of the institution remained precarious as ever. Sakhawat's son Ilyas Khan, who was the Professor of Sitar in the college for many years, told me in detail about the privations and poverty that the family had to suffer during those days. With many sons to be fed, clothed and educated, Sakhawat Khan had no alternative but to borrow from Baniyas who would soon start pestering him. According to Ilyas Khan, his father often had to wear his mother's Burqua in order to go to the college unseen by the Baniyas. Many a time Rai Umanath Bali helped him by gifting to him Ata, Dal etc. from his own kitchen. But in spite of all these difficulties, Sakhawat Hussain loyally stuck to the college for many years right from its inception. By the time of his death in 1955, his salary had reached the maximum of Rs.250/-.

From 1935 to 1937, Sakhawat had a very lucky break when he became the Sarodiya of Madam Menaka's dance troupe. As the leader of the orchestra, he was able to tour all over Europe where Menaka went with her troupe repeatedly. He won medals when he played at the World Olympics held in Berlin. Sakhawat took immense pride in narrating to us how on his return from Berlin, after his successful tour, no less a person than Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had warmly embraced him in public. He was also very proud of the fact that he had given his Sarod-recitals before the greatest musicologists and the great political leaders like Smt. Sarojini Naidu, President Rajendra Prasad, Pdt. Nehru, Pdt. Pant etc. besides world famous personalities like Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini! While in Germany, Sakhawat Hussain worked in the Agfa Film Company.

Ustad Sakhawat's elder son Umar Khan, a popular Sarodiya who had settled in Calcutta, died early in 1982. Umar Khan's son Shaheed Khan was a Sarod staff artiste of Lucknow Doordarshan. The Ustad's younger son Ilyas Khan, Professor of Sitar in the Bhatkhande College, Lucknow, has retired from service in August 1982 after serving the college loyally for many decades. Although he drew a handsome salary as professor, Ilyas Khan often speaks sadly of the hard times that his father and colleagues had undergone in the early years when they taught sincerely, and yet, could not earn enough to feed and clothe their families. One day he told me unhappily :- "If the college had adequate funds when my *walid* was on the staff, he could have educated my brother and myself, and married off our sisters into better homes. Anyway, I have always served the college with all my ability, because the sweat and personal sacrifices of so many great musicians have gone into the making of this famed college". Among the many pupils that Sakhawat Ustad trained up, special mention may be made of Rasik Bihari Lal, a most promising and popular Sarod artiste of AIR, Lucknow, who, unfortunately, died young. Rasik Bihari's son Mukesh, a very promising young Sarodiya, has become a prominent member of the Instrumental ensemble of the Kathak-Kendra Delhi. Shamsheer Singh, who is on the staff of AIR now, is another disciple of the Ustad. Although Sakhawat gave initial training to his own sons, he thought so highly of his close friend, Ustad Yusuf Ali Khan, that he insisted on his sons receiving most of their *taaleem* from Yusuf Ustad. 35

When the newspapers announced the death of Ustad Sakhawat Hussain in July 1955, Dr.S.K.Chaube, a popular writer on music and a great admirer of the Ustad, wrote :- "While the Bhatkhande College of Hindustani Music has lost an excellent teacher, Lucknow has lost a well-known musician, a gracious personality, and a brilliant wit. He was quite an institution in himself... As a teacher he was a favourite of his students, and his work was marked by an all-round perseverance and personal touch. He lived a life of privation and sacrifice for years, but was at his job doing his utmost for his pupils".

Sakhawat Hussain's Sarod-recitals always appealed to his audiences in concerts, festivals and functions. He never bored his audiences with ponderous preliminaries, and he always chose mixed popular ragas like Zila Kafi, Gaara, Jangala, Pilu, Jhinjhoti, Misra Khamaj etc. During our college-days, there was hardly any function in which the two "Sakhas" did not figure.

PANDIT SAKHARAM

Many years ago, while recording some Pakhawaj solo items by Pdt. Sakharamji for the Archives of AIR, I had requested him to tell me something about his career. This is the brief life-sketch that he dictated to me and signed for me :-

"Born in Indore on Vijaya Dashami Day - 25th October" in the year 1879, Sakharam's heart was set on the ancient percussion instrument—the MRIDANG, even in his childhood. After studying only up to Class III in a Marathi school, he gave up his studies at the age of ten, and started his intensive training in the Mridang under Balasaheb Panse, the son of the unforgettable Mridang-maestro Nanasaheb Panse of Indore, and also under his grandson- Shankarbhaiya. When the Karunesh Prasadik Dramatic Company visited Indore, young Sakharam was recruited by the Company from 1898 to 1904 during which he was able to travel with them extensively all over India. In 1904 when the Company performed in Gwalior, Madhavrao Scindia liked Sakharam's Pakhawaj so much that the royal patron appointed him as a court-artist, a post which he held for the next 16 years. When Bhatkhande went to Gwalior in order to establish the music college there, he met

Sakharam for the first time. They met again a few years later in Indore where Sakharam was running a small music-school of his own. This time Bhatkhande persuaded the talented Pakhawajiya to come over to Lucknow and join the staff of the Bhatkhande College in Lucknow. Sakharam became the teacher for Pakhawaj and Tabla in the college in 1929. While on the staff, he wrote and published the "*Mridang and Tabla Shiksha*" in two parts for the guidance of the students. During his first tenure in this institution (of nearly 16 years) he was awarded two honorary degrees - the "*Vadya Nipun*" of the Bhatkhande Sangeet Vidyapeeth and the "*Mridangacharya*" from the Sangeet and Lalit Kala Akademy, Kanpur.

In 1944/45, Sakharamji left Lucknow and went to Shivgarh at the invitation of the ruler to become the mridang-guru of Prince Jayraj Singh. It was during this period that one of the greatest personal tragedies of his life occurred. Sakharam's only son Sadashiv, who had become an extremely popular Tabla artiste in Lucknow, suddenly fell seriously ill. Sadashiv had acquired a lilting style and had become one of the favourite accompanists of Anna Saheb. Many were the memorable "*mehfils*" in which Sadashiv won everyone's plaudits. He had a pleasing personality and manners and was well on the way to becoming a top-artist.

Unfortunately, he contracted a galloping-type of tuberculosis which cut his life short in the prime of his life. On 29th January, 1950, he died in Indore. Those of us who have had or heard Sadashiv's melodious tabla-accompaniment can never forget his unassuming ways and his charming tabla-sangat. Pdt. Sakharam was a heart-broken old man after this shattering loss. Dr. Ratanjankar invited Sakharam to return to his job in Lucknow which he gladly accepted. In 1950, he returned and resumed his old post in the college. Here, the old man tried to forget his sorrow by accepting a constant chain of engagements at conferences in Lucknow, Kanpur, Nagpur, Allahabad, Varanasi, Madras and Calcutta. He had become a regular broadcaster from AIR Lucknow, ever since its inception.

36 A sincere teacher, Sakharam trained up a number of good students. Although none excelled his son Sadashiv, he used to mention the names of Kunwar Jairaj Singh, Tribhuvan Upadhaya and Ramakant (now on the staff of the college) as the most hard-working. After the passing away of Sadashiv, the aging Sakharam often used to accompany Ratanjankar, Jog and others on the *tabla*. Although essentially a *pakhawajiya*, Sakharam's touch on the *tabla* was very well-modulated and soft, and, of course, his sense of *laya* was perfect. As for the Pakhawaj, he has been considered one of the best in recent times, and one of the outstanding representatives of the reputed "*Nanasaheb Panse gharana*". Apart from the special *parans*, another speciality of this *gharana* is the cluster of complicated, mathematical *Chakradhar parans* in each *matra*, which reveal the artist's amazing mastery over *taala*, and his mathematical precision. Combined with this was his soft, modulated touch on the reverberating *mridang*. Sakharam was equally at ease on the *tabla* also, but he was in his real element when giving a Pakhawaj solo, or providing Pakhawaj-accompaniment for accomplished Dhrupadiyas or Veena-players. The 'Sakhawat-Sakharam duets' — or rather, Sakhawat's Sarod accompanied by Sakharam's thundering Pakhawaj — became so popular that this rare combination never became stale, even after 2 decades.

Although Sakharam lived to the ripe old age of 88 (he died on 19th January 1967), he had lost all his zest for life, and had become a broken-hearted man after the shattering experience of losing his only and brilliant son Sadashiv in the prime of his youth and career. The family has produced only mediocre artistes since then and none outstanding, to perpetuate the memory of this great representative of the "*Nanasaheb Panse gharana*" of Pakhawaj, who had fully deserved the titles of "*Vadyanipun*" and "*Mridangacharya*". From the year 1927 until his retirement, he had served the college loyally in spite of economic hardships. In a letter to principal Ratanjankar dated 15.9.1930, Pdt. Bhatkhande wrote :—

".... Sakharam's finance is weak. See if you can induce Umanath to give him Rs. 50/-. That was our promise to him and we must keep it. If necessary, speak to Raja Saheb (Nawab Ali) about him, and get his consent to the proposal....".

I can still visualize the two ageing stalwarts Ustad Sakhawat and Pdt. Sakharam, armed with their Sarod and Pakhawaj, pitched against each other on the stage for "a musical duel".



AHMAD HUSSAIN KHAN : MIRZA MAHMOOD ALI : MOHAMMAD USMAN & BADE AGHA

Descended from generations of professional musicians, Ahmad Hussain Khan was one of the early professional Ustads to become a teacher in the Bhatkhande College. "Taming" and moulding such performing musicians to become disciplined teachers in a class-room with fixed hours of work must have been fraught with many problems in those years for Pdt. Bhatkhandeji. This is evident from some of the letters that he wrote to friends. At first, it seems, Ahmad Hussain Khan was not agreeable to the idea of his songs being taken down in notation. But gradually, he too seems to have realized the advantages of this notation system. Pdt. Bhatkhande who took interest in the minutest details in the working of the college, once wrote to Rai Umanath Bali, that "no teacher should be allowed to leave the class-rooms during working-hours", and that, if necessary, the ustads should be given "half-an-hour of recess for hukka, cha, and other such things".

Converted into Islam just a few generations prior to him, Ahmad Hussain Khan's family-tree mentions him as a descendant of one *Mukand Singh* who had two sons—Homan Singh and Ras-Elias. The latter became a Sadhu and disappeared from the world and wave of men forever. Homan Singh's two sons were converted into Islam and renamed as Mallu Khan and Kallu Khan. The former produced a line of Beenkars, and the latter, a line of Dhrupadiyas. Ahmad Khan's maternal grandfather was Ustad Bande Ali Khan, a reputed Beenkar. Hasan Khan, the well-known Beenkar of Rampur, was the uncle of Ahmad Hussain Khan.

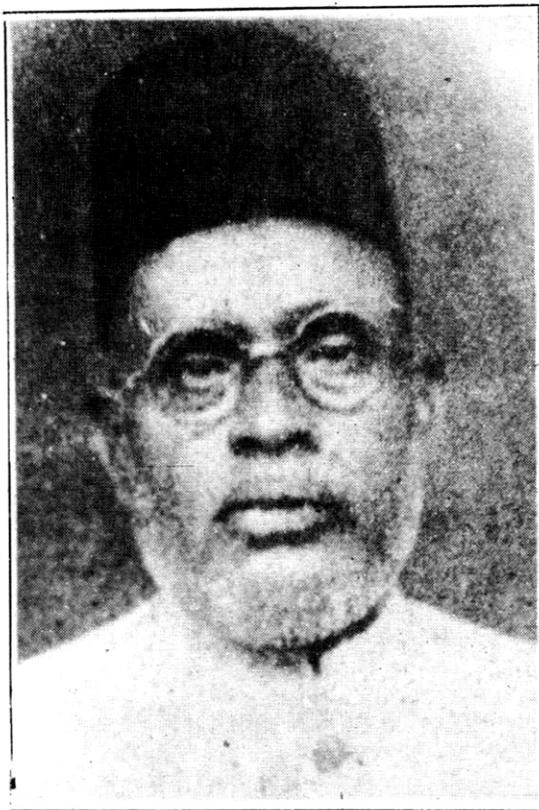
Youngest son of the famous Dhrupad and Dhamar singer, *Ustad Dulha Khan, Ahmad Hussain Khan* was born in Thakurganj, Lucknow in 1887, but he was brought up in Rampur by his elder brother *Raza Hussain Khan* who was not only a good practical musician but was familiar with the modern notation-system of the Chaturpandit. After his marriage in 1912, Ahmad Khan settled down in Lucknow. He had special training in Dhrupad, Dhamar and Sadra. About him, Bhatkhandeji wrote to Mr. Bali on Feb. 28, 1927 : "I would ask our own Ahmad Khan to learn Dhrupads and Dhamars published in our Kramik books and be ready to teach them in the classes. He belongs to a Dhrupad-gharana and may turn out to be a good teacher. He is a willing hand, and energetic too"... 37

In 1925, Ahmad Hussain Khan participated in the Music conference held in Kaisarbagh Baradari. His son Rahmat Hussain (who was a sitar artiste on the staff of *All India Radio*, Lucknow, for a number of years) has recorded in his diary that Ahmad Hussain Khan rendered Dhrupad in Bairagi and Dhamars in Khat and Zeelaf in a morning session of the conference (in 1925). His performance must have impressed Pdt. Bhatkhande and Raja Nawab Ali, because the former awarded him a gold medal of appreciation, and the two veterans requested Ahmad Khan to become a teacher of vocal music in the college. While on the staff, he wrote a book on music entitled — *"Muwallam-E-Naghamat"*. Among his chief disciples may be mentioned his own son Rahmat Hussain, Ayodhya Prasad (who served on the staff for a number of years, Sikandar Hussain, Suraj Bux, Srivastava, "Jali" Khurshid Bai, Allahrakhi Bai, Mushtari Bai, Kaneez Jahan, and several others. Rahmat Hussain who was born in Lucknow in 1914, underwent his sitar training from his father as well as from his uncle Mohammed Hussain Khan. Rahmat Hussain served as a Staff Artiste of AIR, Lucknow from 1943 until his death in 1972. His elder son Basharat worked in Africa for many years as a sitar-teacher, while his younger son Tajammul (also known as Tarun Kumar Sangitagya) has stepped into his father's shoes as a Staff Artiste of AIR Lucknow. According to Tajammul, his grandfather broadcast not only Dhrupads, Dhamars and Sadras, but also an occasional Khayal from Akashvani, Lucknow, during the years 1945 to 1950. Tajammul has joined the staff of the College as a Sitar-teacher on deputation from AIR.

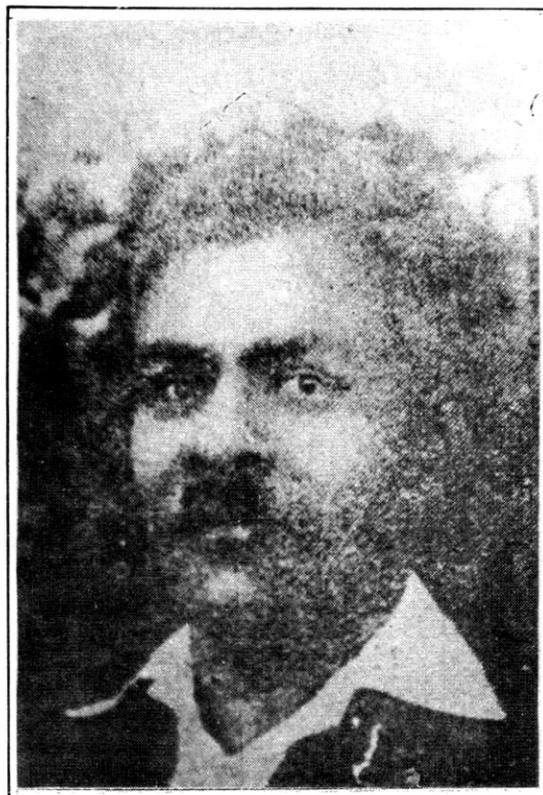
Ahmad Hussain Khan died in his Lucknow residence on 23rd November, 1964.

MIRZA MAHMOOD ALI SARANGIYA

The harmonium which can easily corrupt the *"swara-suddhi"* and voice-production of music-students, has always been scrupulously avoided in the college. In 1932/33, the staff and students of the College staged a musical drama entitled *"Ragrang"* in the White Baradari, Kaisarbagh. It was written by Rai Umanath Bali, and the leading roles were enacted by Shri B. S. Pathak and Shri G. N. Natu, who were good singers at that time. In order to keep out the raucous harmonium from the stage, four local Sarangiwalas were engaged for accompanying the songs of the drama. Mirza Mahmood Ali must have been the best out of these four. For, soon after the drama was staged, he was appointed on the staff, as a teacher for Sarangi, Esraj, and Dilruba, and he was allotted even first year vocal classes sometimes! In most of the vocal *soirees* of the college (by the staff and other distinguished visiting artistes), instrumental accompaniment was usually provided by either



*Ustad Mustaq Hussain Khan (1887 - 1964),
son of Ustad Dulha Khan)*



*Bade Agha (alias Agha Shamsuddin Haidar)
Born in Baghdad in 1892-Died in Lucknow.*

Shri Vishnu Govind Jog on the Violin, or by Mahmood Ali on the Sarangi, until his retirement. Mahmood Ali remained devoted to his work in the college, in spite of the fact that the college was too poor to afford a decent salary for its staff members. He was a regular and sincere teacher who worked inconspicuously throughout his long tenure on the staff. Mirza Mahmood Ali died a few years ago.

MOHAMMAD USMAN spent the major part of his life in the college, first as a student, and then as a teacher for a number of years, until his retirement in 1970. Born in Barabanki district in a family of musicians, Usman had his early lessons from his father Ashiq Ali Khan. Later on, he was sent to Lucknow to undergo further training under Baba nasir Khan who was one of the famous representatives of the *Tanras Khan Gharana of Delhi*. After he completed his training, he was appointed a vocal teacher in the college by Dr. Ratanjankar. Even after becoming a teacher, Usman continued to learn from teachers like Ahmad Khan and R. Daggur. In 1970 he retired from service, but he continues to coach private students in his home in Jawhari Mohalla, Lucknow.

BADE AGHA – alias AGHA SHAMSHUDDIN HAIDER! (Born in Baghdad in 1892. Died in Lucknow).

Agha Shamshuddin Haider's was a strange life which began in Baghdad, and ended in Lucknow! Born in 1892 in the fabled city of Baghdad, he evinced a deep interest in music even as a child. From the age of seven, he began to learn songs from the Jewish singers there. Unfortunately, he lost both his father and his uncle at the age of nine, and thereafter, his life virtually became that of an orphan's. For some time he wandered here and there leading a life full of hardships. Taking pity on the poor orphan's sufferings, an *"auliya fakir"* is said to have blest him and predicted a good future for him. At the age of 15, Agha left his native land, and after many months of aimless wandering, landed up in Lucknow. Perhaps it was the reputation of this "Nawabi" city as a centre of music and musicians that drew him to this place so far away from the land of his birth!

By a stroke of extraordinary good luck, he came into the notice of Raja Nawab Ali who took pity on him and took him under his wings. The kind patron arranged for his music-training and gave him many opportunities to meet and hear several reputed musicians who used to perform in Lucknow. Through Raja Nawab Ali's recommendations, Agha received training in Khayal-singing from Ustad Wazir Khan, and guidance from Pdt. Bhatkhandeji Raja Nawab Ali got him appointed in the Bhatkhande College as a clerk in 1928 and subsequently got him promoted as a teacher of vocal music in the first and second year classes. In the college he was known as "Bade Agha". He was considered an adept in rendering Tappas. Sometimes he used to sing in the College functions, but strangely, I cannot remember his voice or his style! All that I can recall is that he often used to render his own compositions in which he used to weave in his "pen name" *"Agha Piya"*. Many of these compositions were given with notations in his book *"Guldastha-e-Naghmat"* which was reviewed by Sri Beniprasad Srivastava in the 1940 issue of the collegemagazine "NAAD". The reviewer wrote that the book would become widely popular as it contained songs for different tastes such as :- Khayals, Thumris, Dadras, Holis, Chaitis, Kajaris, Lavanis, and Ghazals with a few *tans* for each song. He also wrote that since the author was a good theoretician as well as a practical musician, the songs were well-chosen, and the notations very useful. "Students should avail of the book, and music-lovers should encourage such publications –" and so on. 39

The "NAAD" contains the following note about one of his demonstrations :-

"Prof. Bade Agha demonstrated varieties of light classical and Folk music like Thumri, Dadra, Chaiti, Poorbi, Kajari, Bhajan etc. and spoke on the history of raga Yaman.....all of which was of great benefit for the students....."

One of his last performances in the college was in the Convocation of 1944. In recognition of his many years of service, he was given the honorary title of "Sangeet Nipun".



KHALIFA ABID HUSSAIN KHAN

(1867 – 1936)

There is almost unanimous agreement on the point that Ustads Modu and Bakshu Khans were the founders of the Lucknow Gharana of Tabla. However, it was during the reign of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah that the *Tabla* began to gain immense popularity. Until then, the Pakhawaj had held sway as the supreme percussion instrument. Along with the growing popularity of the *Thumri* and *Kathak*, the accompanying *Tabla* was pushed into a surging wave of unprecedented popularity which has never waned since those days. Today the *Tabla Bayan* have gained international appreciation and we have any number of outstanding *Tabla* maestros. During the two historical All India Music Conferences held in Lucknow in 1924 and 1925, *Abid Hussain* and *Biru Misra* were the two *unforgettable Tabla-artistes* whose performances are still remembered by those who attended these sessions.

The Lucknow-style of *Tabla* was a clever synthesis of the strong (*Zordar*) Pakhawaj bols and the delicate, modulated *Kathak* bols, thus combining dignity with delicate finesse. Lucknow being the home of *Kalka* and

Binda, the greatest of *Kathak* dancers, and the motherland of *Thumri*, the *Tabla baaj* of this place was enriched forever by the stamp of both these arts. The Lucknow Gharana of *Tabla* achieved highest repute under the great *Ustad Abid Hussain Khan*.



Khalifa Abid Hussain (1867 - 1936)

Born in Lucknow, in 1867, *Abid Hussain's* *Tabla-taleem* started at the age of six under the guidance of his father *Ustad Mohammad Khan*. After the latter's death in 1879, his training was continued under his own brother, *Ustad Munne Khan* for the next 12 years or more. *Munne Khan* was one of the most reputed *Tabla-players* of Lucknow in the early part of this century. Thereafter *Abid Hussain* polished his art by his own rigorous *riyaz*. By creating and incorporating numerous impressive dance-bols, he made the Lucknow-style most colourful. Because of his contributions in this respect, and because of his mastery over the *Tabla*, he came to be affectionately known as "*Nachkaran bol ke Khalifa*". *Abid Hussain's* fame spread and he began to be invited to participate in numerous music conferences. It was in the fitness of things that *Pdt. Bhatkhandeji* and *Thakur Nawab Ali* succeeded in persuading *Khalifa Abid Hussain* to join the staff of the *Bhatkhande College* in 1928 as *Professor of Tabla*. *Dr. Chaubey*, one of the early graduates of the college writes about *Abid Hussain*:-

"In our younger days we were fortunate that we knew Lucknow's great *Tabla-player*, *Abid Hussain*, who was respected and feared by his contemporaries. He played wonderfully, with an effortless ease and charm of his own. I can conjure up a slim, graceful figure bending over his incomparable *Tabla* with the gallantry of a lover

and courtier, producing sounds that turned into music the moment they were born."

Even today there are in our midst several music-lovers who had heard *Abid Hussain's* *Tabla* solos as well as accompaniment. One ageing music-connoisseur who had attended both the All India Music Conferences held in Lucknow under *Pdt. Bhatkhandeji's* inspiration, said to me :- "The two *Tabla* experts who dominated those two conferences and made a lasting impression on my memory were *Abid Hussain* of Lucknow, and *Biru Misra* of Varanasi. There is no one to compare with these two as far as sweetness and clarity of bols are

concerned." Those who have listened to Abid Hussain's many recitals while he was on the staff of the college, tell me that his bols were "faultlessly clear and beautifully modulated". This is one of the features that make the Lucknow Gharana quite distinct from other styles. It abounds in *Gat Tukde, Gatparans, Chakkardar, Thipalli, Chaupalli* etc. Besides being an excellent performing artiste, Abid Hussain must have been an equally fine Guru as is evident from the large number of famous disciples trained under him. His numerous shishyas unanimously extol one rare quality of his, namely, that he was a generous teacher. Although he died more than 46 years ago, his special style has been preserved and passed on till today by his vast *Shishya Parampara*. Among his reputed disciples may be mentioned the names of *Biru Misra* (of Banaras), *Ustad Jahangir Khan* (Indore), *Hiren Ganguly* and *Devi Prasanna Ghosh* (Calcutta), *Mehboob Khan, Mirajkar, Chuttan Khan, Jorabagan*, and of course, his own son-in-law and prime disciple, *Khalifa Wajid Hussain* of Lucknow. We get glimpses of Abid Hussain's great art through the styles of the contemporary exponents of the Lucknow gharana like *Khalifa Wajid Hussain* who had settled down in Lucknow, his son *Afaq Hussain* who is on the staff of Lucknow Doordarshan, and *Akbar Hussain Khan* (Ballu Khan) of Akashvani, Lucknow. Even when he was in his late seventies, *Khalifa Wajid Hussain* used to be in good form both as a soloist and as an accompanist, and several solo items of his were recorded by me for the AIR Archives in Delhi. He was really a very simple-hearted person, and his gusto for his art remained unabated till the end. He was quite proud of his son *Afaq Hussain* to whom he has passed on all his art. Born in Lucknow in 1935, *Afaq* has earned a high reputation because of his successful participation in various conferences, concerts, and National Programmes in which he has provided melodious Tabla accompaniment for artistes as varied as *Ustads Amir Khan and Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Pdt. Ravi Shankar* (Sitar), and *Birju Maharaj* (Kathak). The Lucknow Gharana Tabla-exponents are versatile because they are equally at ease as accompanists for Vocal, Instrumental, and Kathak dance. Another popular exponent of the Lucknow style of Tabla is *Akbar Hussain Khan* (popularly known as *Ballu Khan*) of AIR, Lucknow.

That *Khalifa Abid Hussain* was persuaded to become a Professor of Tabla in the *Bhatkhande College* shows how shrewdly *Pdt. Bhatkhande* and *Raja Nawab Ali* selected the staff. *Abid Hussain* who joined the staff of the college in 1928, continued as the Professor till his death eight years later. With such fine performing artistes on the staff, it was no wonder that the weekly demonstrations by staff and students became extremely popular. *Prof. D. P. Mukherji*, who used to attend these regularly, writes about *Abid Hussain* :-

"I have often tried to peep behind the virtuosity of accompaniment and realised that it is the duty of the Tabla-player to serve the music of the musician. From this point of view, *Abid Hussain* of Lucknow was the greatest of the masters I have heard. There have been many brilliant, probably more brilliant players than the "*Khalifa*", as we used to call him, but for sheer control, there has been none like him". 41

Living in the glorious era of *Kalka Prasad* and *Bindadin Maharaj*, who exalted the *Natwari ang* of Kathak to unprecedented heights, *Khalifa Abid Hussain* got many opportunities to accompany these great dancers as well as *Kalka Maharaj's* son *Achchan Maharaj*. Naturally, the Lucknow Gharana of Tabla has developed excellent bols for the intricate footwork of Kathak. Many a time, these Tabla-bols and the *Tatkaar* (rhythms tapped out by the dancer's feet) provide exhilarating mutual competition as well as harmonious accompaniment.

Khalifa Abid Hussain died in Lucknow in June 1936, in the same year as *Pdt. Bhatkhandeji*. But the traditions of his *gharana* are still being held aloft by his descendants and large number of disciples.



SITAR NAWAZ USTAD HAMID HUSSAIN KHAN

Died in Lucknow in obscurity

Ustad Hamid Hussain Khan was one of the earliest among the reputed professional Ustad to join the Staff of the Bhatkhande College. A true descendant of the Seniya gharana, it is a wonder how this excellent performing artiste was persuaded by the Chaturpandit to become a teacher in the college at a time when the idea of imparting musical instruction through an institution had not yet gained favour either with Ustads or with the public. Hamid Hussain's grandfather, Ustad Sawaliya Khan of Farukkabad, had received his training from the great Pyar Khan of the Seniya gharana. Pyar Khan, the respected ustad of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, had been a most accomplished Dhrupadiya, and *vaagyèyakâr*, besides being a virtuoso on the veena and sarod. He was also the originator of the Sursingar. Being childless, he had adopted his sister's son, Bahadur Khan and moulded him into a fine Sursingar artiste.

Hamid Hussain had his musical training under his own father Tullan Khan, and also from his uncle Turab Khan (father of Rahmat Hussain). In 1928, Hamid Hussain was appointed senior Professor of instrumental music in the Bhatkhande College, and he served the college faithfully through all those difficult early years when the shaky finances of the institution put the families of these teachers to untold hardships – including near-starvation month after month.

Two of the early issues of the NAAD, a very valuable college-magazine published in 1940-41, containing numerous contributions by the staff and students, include many fine compositions by "Sitar Nawaz Hamid Hussain Khan, Director of the Faculty of Instrumental Music, Bhatkhande University". One of them includes his detailed *alap* of Kedara in notation. In the footnote to his Madhyalaya Khayal in Rageswari :- "*Itani binati mori maanle Hamid piya*" published in 1940, the editor, Dr. S. N. Ratanjankar wrote :-



Sitar Nawaz Hamid Hussain Khan

"Ustad Hamid Hussain is a sitar maestro with a countrywide reputation. In the recent All-Bengal Music Conference, he astounded his listeners by his masterly recital which lasted for three to four hours. He is also a fine vocalist and composer".

The text of one of his devotional compositions set in rag Puriya had the following word-contents :-

*"Mori vipad haro Raghubeer!
Mori aan dharao dheer veer môrè
Bhaktan ke hit janam liyo tum,
Haamid kahe aan pari mope dheer
Vipad Haro Raghubeer."*

In the various college functions, Hamid Hussain's sitar used to be one of the items that both the staff and students used to look forward to, right from 1928 until the late forties. In the convocation of 1944/45, Hamid Hussain played several solo items and also provided background music for a series of tableaux depicting Lord Buddha's life. Even as late as during the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the College in 1952, by which time Hamid Hussain had become quite a physical wreck, he gave an unscheduled item. As he had not brought his own sitar he just borrowed one from a student and he played such beautiful *alaap* for 45 minutes or so, that many among the audience were moved to tears. That was perhaps his last public performance, and all of us who heard it, still remember that occasion.

EARLIER SITAR GRADUATES

Among the early Sitar graduates of the college, one finds the following names in the records of the Bhatkhande Sangeet Vidyapeeth :- R.G.Verman and J.S.Bhatnagar, (1933) - Sitaram Katyar (1936) - Lionel

Idrie Singhe of Ceylon, and Surendranath Bali (1940) and so on. Ustad Hamid Hussain's sitar-*baaj* was purely of the *Seniya Tantakari* style; there was no mixing up with vocal styles as is the craze nowadays. The purity and profundity of his sitar art were unforgettable. Some of his contemporaries like Pdt.G.N.Natu and others who have heard him in his years of glory, say regretfully - "What an excellent Sitariya he used to be! One does not hear that style anymore. It was entirely of the *Seniya baaj*."

Hamid Hussain had acquired excellence in the sitar not only through fine training but also through years of relentless *riyaz*. His style was noted for its elaborate *alaapchari*, beautiful *swarvistaaar*, and his fine traditional *gats*. He was a good scholar, fine performing artiste, and a sincere teacher. Pdt. Bhatkhandeji recognised his worth fully and also recommended his "*Asli Taleem Sitar*" as a textbook for students of the music college. Besides being a reputed artiste, Hamid Hussain had many fine qualities of the heart such as compassion, guilelessness, and a general attitude of detachment ("*virakti*") which endeared him to his colleagues and pupils. But he had his eccentricities also, like some other great artistes. His utter disregard for conventional virtues like punctuality was quite a joke, as can be inferred from the following incident in AIR Lucknow.

ON A.I.R. LUCKNOW

Hamid Hussain had been scheduled for live broadcasts from AIR Lucknow. After his earlier programme in the day he left his sitar in the care of a "*chela*" in the Radio station and went out, promising to be back well in time for his night item. But when the time for his broadcast came, the Ustad could not be traced anywhere, and a deviation was caused. Long after the close-down of Transmission III, the Ustad sauntered into the studios in a very leisurely mood. Far from feeling ashamed or regretful, the ustad remarked to his *chela* :- "*Ama! inko itni jaldi bhi kya thi? abhi tho gaanebajaneke waqt shuroo hai*" - ("Why were they in such a hurry to close down? The proper hour for music is just beginning").

Many a time when the salary was not forthcoming, and the wolf was at the door, he would send an appeal for help from his colleague and friend Ustad Sakhawat Hussain whose plight was no better. But like many other devoted teachers, these too served the college faithfully. Gradually, ill-health and opium-addiction reduced this once-great artiste into such a physical wreck that he had to give up his job. Mr. M.M.Joshi, one of his most devoted disciples who simply worshipped his Ustad, took him to his own modest residence and served him devotedly in the last lonely years of the Ustad's life. Moved by the sad, neglected state of his Guru. Mr.Joshi wrote in the National Herald during that period:- "Once a sitar-player of all India reputation and a great teacher, Ustad Hamid Hussain, now lives in obscurity - a sick and broken man in a society whose sense of values seems to have been altogether blunted". 43

The rare 1940 issue of "*NAAD*" contains not only some compositions of Ustad Hamid Hussain Khan, but also a review of his books "*Asli Taleem Sitar*" parts I & II published by Babu Ramcharanlal Agarwal in Aminabad, Lucknow (238 pages). The reviewer Beniprasad Srivastava writes in Hindi something to this effect:-

"Prof. Hamid Hussain is not only a great performing artiste, but also an authority on the theoretical and artistic aspects of the sitar. He has generously laid out for the music-loving public, some of the musical treasures from his memory. His years of study and experience as a teacher have made the book invaluable. Books of this type are hardly available for music-students. Besides giving elaborate *alaaps* of 2 ragas as patterns, Hamid Hussain has described in detail how to tune the strings of the Sitar, and how to introduce various embellishments like *kan, meend, soot, ghaseet, gamak, khatka, jamjama* etc. The majority of *Gats* given in this book are from what Hamid Hussain had learnt from his teacher Ustad Sawaliya Khan, the famous Sitariya of Farukkabad. He has published 30 *gats* in different ragas. It is hoped that music-students will fully avail of this gift..."

Hamid Hussain had also written a book for advanced course of study in the sitar, suitable for postgraduate students of music. One wonders if it was ever published, or lost!

Once a widely admired performing artiste and a fine teacher, Ustad Hamid Hussain's life ended in pitiable poverty and obscurity which is one of the worst fates that can befall an artiste.



RAJA BHAIIYA POONCHWALE

(1882 – 1956)

Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale was one of those great musicians and musicologists who was closely associated with Pandit Vishnu Narain Bhatkhande, Dr. Ratanjankar and the Music College, Lucknow. Although he was Principal of the Madho Sangeet Mahavidyalaya, Gwalior, he served the Music College of Lucknow in many ways. Until his meeting with Bhatkhande, Raja Bhaiya had remained an ardent student of practical music. After his momentous meeting with the Chaturpandit, he became a research scholar and he got deeply involved in the research work that the latter was doing. Recalling his earlier contacts with Pandit Bhatkhande (who was addressed as "Rao Saheb" by many of his admirers), Raja Bhaiya said in a talk from AIR, Lucknow in 1941:

"Rao Saheb was a really great and ideal personality. He served the cause of music with everything he had, - body, mind, and wealth. It was through his selfless efforts that the Madho Sangeet Mahavidyalaya of Gwalior and the Bhatkhande College in Lucknow came into existence. I consider myself immensely lucky for having become a disciple and close associate of his in his mission of propagating classical music. Six musicians from Gwalior, including myself, were sent to Bombay on special scholarships by Madhavrao Scindia of Gwalior in order to undergo intensive training under Pandit Bhatkhande. Every morning and evening, our Guru used to come to our residence and give us systematic training in his *Geet-padhdhati* and notation-system. All this he did out of his selfless love for music, accepting nothing in return from us except our dedication to the art. His devotion to music really inspired us. We, the musicians of the Gwalior gharana were a fanatical lot, and so proud of our Gwalior heritage that we often used to enter into arguments with Panditji while preparing notations for our traditional songs. But Rao Saheb never lost his patience. With his serene countenance and his cool, logical arguments, he always won us over completely. Although I was already a performing musician, and a well-trained teacher, there were many beautiful and subtle touches in his renderings of Dhrupads, Dhamars and Khayals which I was unable to imitate. Most people revere him as a Pandit in music. Few have been lucky to hear him and realize what a fine practical singer he used to be! I am one of those....."

KRAMIK SERIES

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In preparing the Kramik series, Raja Bhaiya gave Bhatkhande immense assistance, especially in preparing notations of the numerous songs of the *Gwalior Gharana*. By his utter devotion to the work, Raja Bhaiya won Bhatkhande's love and blessings. The *Kramik Books* include a large number of songs contributed by Raja Bhaiya. Inspired by the Chaturpandit's life, Raja Bhaiya also continued to work on the same lines. His books such as *Thumri Tarangini*, *Naadopaasana*, *Tanamaalika* (in five parts), and his *Dhrupad Dhamar Gaayan* in several volumes, contain numerous rare and precious traditional songs spread out for the benefit of music-students for all times to come. After the death of Pandit Bhatkhande, Raja Bhaiya became a close friend and associate of Dr. Ratanjankar. An examiner and a frequent visitor to the Music College, Lucknow, Raja Bhaiya along with Wadilal used to stay on with Anna Saheb and gave demonstrations for the staff and students. His rich style of "*Khayalbhama*" was really a model for us, and also for his many outstanding disciples who were on the staff, like Pt. G. N. Natu, M. V. Kalvint; V. J. Joshi and Mahadkar.

Originally hailing from Satara District, Raja Bhaiya's ancestors had once belonged to the Peshwa Durbar, later, they came to Bundelkhand along with Shri Shivraubhau Saheb (father-in-law of the Rani of Jhansi). But ever since they were gifted with the *jagir* of Poonch, the family got the surname "Poonchwale".

Balkrishna (as Raja Bhaiya was known in his childhood) was born in 1882 in a wealthy and cultured Maharashtrian home in Gwalior. But bad luck dogged his early years. An attack of polio in childhood left him a complete cripple for several years. It must have been pathetic to see and hear the small boy going from temple to temple with his dotting grand father and praying before each idol:- "Oh God! Please give me back my legs". What followed was a miracle wrought by faith. Balkrishna was able to walk again, although he had a pronounced limp all his life.

Along with his school-education in Hindi, Marathi, and English, Raja Bhaiya's (Balkrishna's) regular and serious training in music also was carried on under a series of famous gurus who were also great performing artistes. His first Guru was *Baldevji*, a disciple of Ustad Mehendi Hussain (of Gwalior) who had inherited the great Khayal-traditions of the Gwalior gharana from his grandfather Hassu Khan, one of the famed founders of the *gharana*.

Balkrishna's next Guru was *Wamanrao Phaltankar* (born in 1830), a much sought-after Dhrupadiya (of Gwalior) and a disciple of Ustad Nissar Hussain Khan of Gwalior. Wamanrao had served in the Dwarkadheesh

temple in Mathura, in the Court of Maharaj Madanpal of Karaulia and in the Gwalior royal darbar. After Wamanrao's death, his son *Mamabuwa* continued to teach Balkrishna who is said to have learnt hundreds of traditional Khayals, Sargams, Taranas and so on.

Originally when Balkrishna's family used to live in Satara, the family-name used to be "Ashtekar"; later, they became rich Jagirdars of Poonch. During the time of his grandfather Ramchandra Rao, they had left Poonch and settled down in Gwalior, a famed centre of classical music in those times. The boy's father Anandrao and his uncle Ganpatrao were deeply interested in classical music, and the former taught him to play on the Harmonium. With the death of Balkrishna's mother in 1951, the family's luck seems to have run out. During these days of financial struggle, the boy's harmonium-training was of great help because he got the job of harmonium-player in the Shinde Dramatic Club of Gwalior. With the small salary, he was able to support his family. When the Club broke up, he was appointed as Harmonium accompanist of Maharaj Madhavrao Scindia, an honour which he retained till the latter's death. Even after this kind patron's death, his close association with the royal family continued because Raja Bhaiya became the Harmonium Guru of Jivajirao Scindia and the vocal teacher of Princess Kamalaraja Saheba.

Meanwhile, Raja Bhaiya had heard a rare gramophone record of the great Shankarrao Pandit of Gwalior and became so impressed with his powerful style that he yearned to become his *shishya*. Although, through the recommendations of Shri Kashinath Pant Mule, Raja Bhaiya was half-heartedly accepted as a pupil by Shankarrao Pandit, the latter utterly ignored him and refused to teach him. Gradually, the young (25 year-old) disciple's utter devotion to the Guru and complete absorption in music thawed the tough heart of the Guru, and he began to teach him. In the next few rewarding years, Raja Bhaiya fully imbibed the rich style and repertoire of the great doyen of the Gwalior Gharana.

When Madhavrao Maharaj Scindia, a great lover of classical music decided to establish the famous Madho Sangeet Mahavidyalaya in Gwalior under the inspiration of Pdt. Bhatkhande's enormous revival work in the field of music, he shrewdly selected 7 highly trained musicians of Gwalior, and sent them to Bombay in order to undergo intensive training in Bhatkhandeji's methods of teaching, notation-system, and compositions amassed by him for the "Kramik" series. The lucky musicians who were thus able to get personal and intensive training under the Chaturpandit were :- Raja Bhaiya, Krishnarao Date, Bhaskarrao Khandeparker, Vishnubuwa Deshpande, Sri Gokhale, Balwantrao Savle, and Chunnilal Kathak.

This was the beginning of a lifelong association, friendship, and close Guru-shishya relationship between two noble devotees of the Muse, both equally selfless and dedicated to the art of music. Raja Bhaiya was already an excellently trained musician with a rich repertoire. The contact with Panditji made him a very keen research scholar. They became a great mutual inspiration, and enriched each other's vast repertoire of traditional "*bandishes*". No amount of praise will be adequate for the great help that Raja Bhaiya rendered to Pdt. Bhatkhande in the difficult task of setting in notation, hundreds of traditional compositions in all their purity for the "*Kramik*" series. The Chaturpandit felt so grateful to his "*shishya*" that he decided to ascribe the entire authorship of the series to Raja Bhaiya. It was with great difficulty that Raja Bhaiya and his friends dissuaded Bhatkhande from this, and insisted on having the original author's name. Sri P.N. Chinchore describes how Raja Bhaiya's eyes used to become filled with tears when he recalled this incident to prove Bhatkhandeji's magnanimity and utter selflessness. 45

Raja Bhaiya drew freely from the fountain of Panditji's amazing scholarship, and learnt a large number of compositions that the latter had collected from exponents of various gharanas. His admiration and respect for Bhatkhande were boundless. In a Radio talk that he broadcast from Lucknow, Raja Bhaiya paid this tribute:

"Bhatkhandeji was an ideal and inspiring personality who had dedicated his body, mind, and soul to the popularisation of classical music and musical education. I was very lucky to have been able to spend so many years in close association with him. It was he who really educated me in the art."

When Bhatkhande started the Music College in Gwalior in 1928, Raja Bhaiya was his natural choice for principalship. Later on, when the College in Lucknow was established, several of Raja Bhaiya's special disciples were brought to Lucknow and appointed as teachers. Among them there are many who deserve special mention for the services they have rendered to the Music College in particular and to music in general. Pdt. Govind Narayan Natu has always revered his guru and followed the ideals set before him by Raja Bhaiya who led a simple life dedicated to the service of Music. In recognition of his services to the art as a teacher, as a composer, and as an examiner, Sri Natu has been honoured with the Fellowship of the Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Academy and the Sarengader Fellowship of the Sursingar Sansad, Bombay.

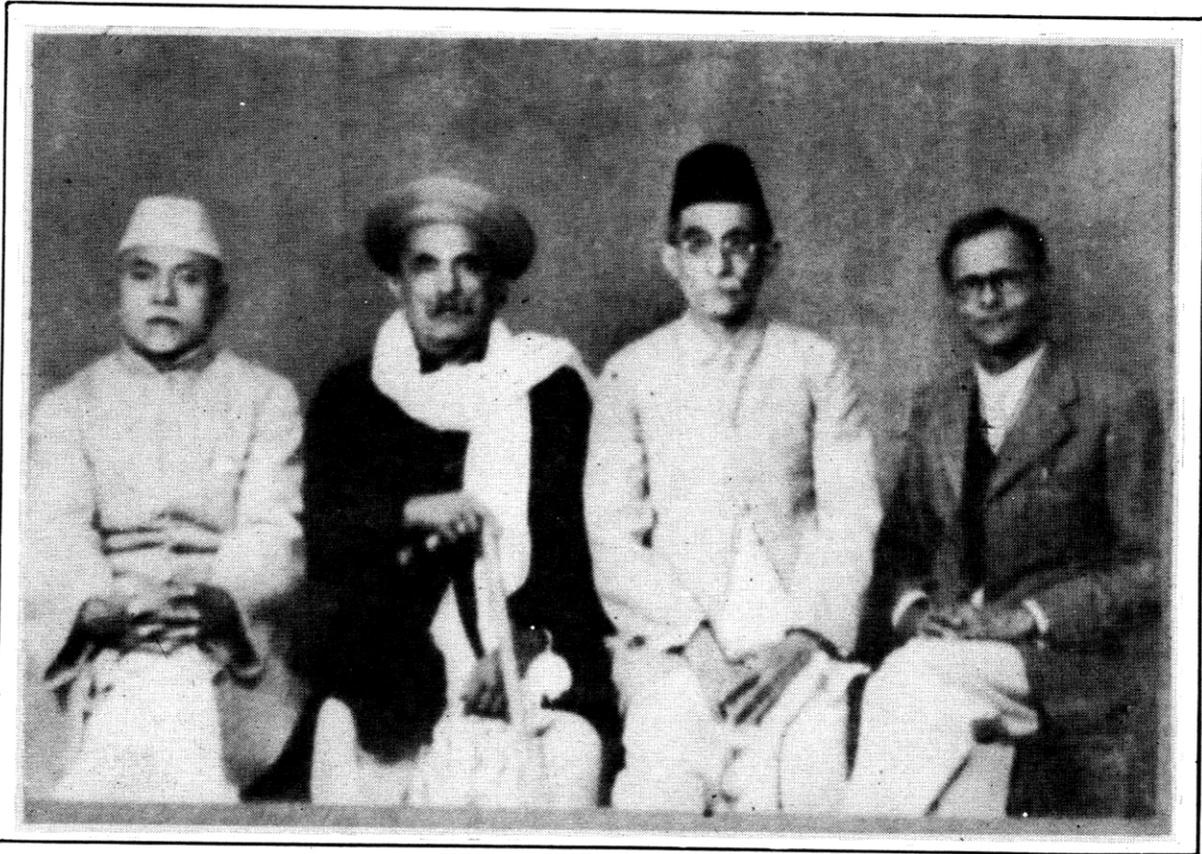
Another disciple of Raja Bhaiya who served the college most sincerely for a number of years is Sri Mukund

Vishnu Kalvint, a faithful exponent of the Gwalior gayaki, who now teaches in Varanasi. He too is a good composer of numerous Khayals etc. A conscientious teacher, his services to music were recognised through an annual Award in 1976 by the U.P. Sangeet Natak Academy.

Gifted with a sonorous voice, and trained under Raja Bhaiya, Sri V. J. Joshi who was on the staff of the Music College, was also a good performing artiste in the nineteen forties who represented the College in the unforgettable pooja festival of the Uday Shankar Culture Centre in Almora in 1942. Soon after this, however, Sri Joshi left Lucknow to take up a more paying post in Kannauj.

Many other talented disciples of Raja Bhaiya are, or have been, occupying high positions in the world of music. Special mention must also be made of his pupil Sri P.N. Chinchore who was on the Music College of Lucknow for some years and later, became Vice-Chancellor of the Khairagarh Music University. He has done a great service to music by compiling the bulky *"Bhatkhande Smriti Grantha"* in 1966. Its 500 and odd pages are packed with valuable information for music-lovers who will always feel grateful to Sri P. N. Chinchore for his great labour of love.

Raja Bhaiya served also as an examiner in many universities and as a member of several Music Boards. During his annual trips to Lucknow as an examiner, he used to stay with his friend Ratanjankar for several days. Many times he gave impressive demonstrations for the staff and students. His style reflected all the beauty and dignity of the true Gwalior gharana which lays prime emphasis on correct and full presentation and interpretation of the full texts of the Khayals, systematic *"badhat"* (elaboration) bol-alaps and bol-tans and a variety of taans for which his gharana is noted. His son Bala Saheb Poochwale who has imbibed his father's true style and vast repertoire, has also won wide esteem as the Principal of the Madho Sangeet Mahavidyalaya for many years. After Raja Bhaiya's death, Bala Saheb has been coming to Lucknow as an examiner. He has truly followed the traditions of his father.



L to R - Ustad Allauddin Khan, Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale, Wadlil Shivram & Dr. Ratanjankar.

Inspired by Bhatkhande's example, Raja Bhaiya gifted numerous rare and valuable compositions to music-students for all times to come – through his publications – *"Tanamālika"* (in five parts), *"Thumri Tarangini"*, and *"Dhrupad & Dhamār Gaayan"*. His slim *"Thumri Tarangini"* alone contains 47 lilting compositions!

In 1942, the year of his Shashtiabdapoorthy (completing 60 years), his disciples, and admirers organised themselves into the "Poonchwale Shashtiabdapoorthy Mahotsav Mandal". They presented him with a purse as a simple token of their appreciation, and they published and dedicated to him a very valuable volume entitled "Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale Ki Sangeetopaasana" in deep admiration of his greatness and generosity as a teacher, his lofty character, and simple, clean living. In his special address, Dr Ratanjankar expressed his great respect and admiration for Raja Bhaiya as a man and as a teacher :-

"Once holding a clerical post, Raja Bhaiya occupies such a high position of honour in the music world now, but he remains the same simple, humble, warm, dignified, virtuous, noble, helpful and compassionate person. I have never heard him talking ill of any musician. He has no vices at all. His personal life has been a model of virtue, goodness, and integrity. As a musician, he is great. I prostrate at the feet of this great musician and saintly personality."

Another admirer, Sri Sadashiv Raghunath Bhagat, wrote in the address presented to him :-

"Your family is not confined to Gwalior only, - it is spread out all over India because your worthy pupils are propagating music in numerous cities".

A little before April 1956, the last month of Raja Bhaiya's long and fruitful life, the Government of India at last decided to recognise his life-long services to music through the Presidential Award, but this selfless music-devotee who had never hankered after awards and rewards, did not live long enough to receive the prestigious Award which came a little too late.

In August 1982 a large number of Raja Bhaiya's admirers and disciples led by Sri Govind Narayan Rajurkar organised a very successful 3 days- music festival in Hyderabad to commemorate the 100th Birth Anniversary of their revered Guru. In this festival they specially honoured the two senior-most and important disciples of Raja Bhaiya, namely, Pdt. Govind Narayan Natu, and Pdt. Balasaheb Poonchwale.

Balasaheb recounts a small but amusing incident which reveals the rare integrity of Bhatkhandeji and Raja Bhaiya :-

When Balasaheb was a young music-student in the College in Gwalior, he never bothered to learn all the necessary ragas of the Course and was quite indifferent. Actually he had prepared only one Raga for the practical examination. As his good luck would have it, Bhatkhande asked him to sing that particular raga, and he did very well. When Panditji told Raja Bhaiya that his son had passed in the examination, he protested strongly :- "Rao Saheb! he does not deserve to pass, because I know that he had prepared *only one* raga, and that was what exactly you asked him to sing. I request you to detain him in the same class for another year so that he learns all the ragas in the course." 47

Bhatkhande agreed fully with his friend, and "failed" Balasaheb with an affectionate admonition :-

"Pandul! you are the son of a musician, a "gawaiya". In order to become a musician, and a worthy son of your father, you must do rigorous riyaz"

That was a turning-point in Balasaheb's life.

Raja Bhaiya is no more, but the gifts of his "Naadopasana" for posterity are his numerous disciples, and books containing rare compositions.



SRI WADILAL SHIVRAM NAYAK

Born 1892

Along with Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale, an austere, and serious-looking person used to come to the Music College as a co-examiner year after year, and stay on for several days, holding marathon musical discussions with Raja Bhaiya and Dr. Ratanjankar. As he never gave any actual music demonstrations for us we had considered Wadilal Shivram as a mere musical "Pandit" until he brought one of his disciples, Geeta Sarabhai (now Smt. Geeta Mayer) as a candidate for the Sangeet Visharad examination. It was only then that we realised that although he never became a performing musician, his music was "a true copy" of his guru Bhatkhandeji's, and that he was a fine teacher known as "a musical god-son" of the Chaturpandit. Wadilal was a great Sanskrit scholar and musicologist. He helped Bhatkhandeji immensely in his mission of musical research and propagation, although he always remained shyly in the background. Because of his reserved and tight-lipped expression, the candidates used to feel quite nervous in his presence.

Wadilal Shivram was born in 1892 in Sidhapur (North Gujarat). As a boy, he was sent to the Bombay Gujarat Dramatic Company to be trained as a professional stage-actor and singer. However, the boy's aptitude being for classical music, he did not have his heart in this field! After he became a disciple of the reputed *Ustad Nazir Khan*, he began to make quick progress in classical music. When Nazir Khan and his family migrated to Hyderabad Deccan (scared away by a plague-epidemic in Bombay), 12-year-old Wadilal accompanied the *Ustad* and stayed with them for the next 2 years almost as a member of the family. By his devotion to them, he earned the affection of the entire family. Wadilal had lost his mother very early in life. Now he lost his father too. In order to support his helpless younger brother, Wadilal had to return to Bombay after 2 years, and rejoin the same old dramatic company at the young age of 15. In 1907, he came into contact with Bhatkhande, who became his true guardian for the rest of his life. For nearly 24 long years, he practically stayed with Panditji, learning numerous traditional Dhrupads, Khayals, and Lakshangeets from him and studying a large number of Sanskrit texts on music under Bhatkhandeji's guidance, in the *Gayan Uttejok Mandali, Bombay*.

48. Bhatkhande's association with the G.U. Mandali was destined to have far-reaching consequences on the course of Hindustani Classical music. It was in 1884 that Vishnu Narain Bhatkhande joined the Mandali – a music-club founded and run by some wealthy Parsis of Bombay. It was strange but true that though the Parsis were a greatly westernised lot, many of them retained a genuine taste for classical music and patronised the art through the *Gayan Uttejok Mandali*. They regularly organised music-sittings at which all the great *Ustads* of the time used to come from all over North India and perform. As a member of this Mandali the Chaturpandit had the advantage of listening to, and coming into contact with the cream of performing musicians in the Hindustani system, such as Tanras Khan, Inayat Hussain Khan, Nathan Khan, Ali Hussain Khan, and many others. It was here that he was able to collect 300 Dhrupads from Raojibuwa Belbaugkar (a pupil of Zainulabdeen Khan of Hyderabad Deccan), and also a large number of Khayals from Ali Hussain Khan and his maternal uncle Vilayat Hussain Khan. All these veterans were in the service of the *Gayan Uttejok Mandali*. These traditional compositions formed the basis on which Bhatkhande effected a fresh systematisation of modern Hindustani music. The practical musicians of the time (who were mostly Muslims) had no knowledge of the old texts, nor of the theory underlying Hindustani music. They had learnt the practical art of music through oral transmutation from father to son, or from *ustad* to *shagird*. Bhatkhande studied all the ancient texts deeply, collected hundreds of traditional songs, and was able to take up a scientific approach to the art of music. He began to read out his notes (the material for his "*Lakshya sangeet*" and "*Hindustani Sangeet Paddhati*") to the members of the Mandali. Among them was one Nazir Khan, one of the leading Sarangi players of the time who had not only accompanied most of the veteran musicians of the time, but could also sing competently as he had learnt a number of traditional songs through his association with the great singers. Unlike the other professional *Ustads* of the time, Nazir Khan was greatly impressed by Bhatkhandeji's lucid talks and notes on the general theory of music and rules of ragas. Nazir Khan had a devoted disciple in Wadilal Shivram who worked as a music director in the Gujerati Dramatic Company. Wadilal was not only a musician and composer, but also a learned Sanskrit scholar. Nazir Khan took his pupil to Panditji because he realised that Bhatkhandeji was not only a profound music-scholar but also a tuneful singer who could practically demonstrate the large number of traditional songs he had collected. In the words of Dr. Ratanjankar :-

"Wadilal was greatly impressed by Bhatkhande's knowledge and practical ability in music, his great culture, and high educational attainments. He became a permanent devotee of Bhatkhande. This attachment was so deep that Wadilal came to be known as one of the "god-sons" of the Chaturpandit, and he continued his work in the field of music with unabated zeal even after the Guru's death, studying all the old Sanskrit texts on music then available, under Bhatkhandeji's instruction, and learning hundreds of traditional compositions".

It was Wadilal who introduced Bhatkhande to Ashiq Ali Khan of Jaipur whose family was known as "Kothiwals" because they had a storehouse of old *Gharaanedaar* songs. Ashiq Ali was down and out financially. Bhatkhande paid him a good amount each month and was able to take down hundreds of

precious songs of their gharana in notation while Ashiq Ali willingly sang these for him. Ashiq Ali was wonderstruck at this strange new notation-system through which Panditji was able to memorise so many precious songs so quickly. But the reaction of his father Mohammad Ali Khan was utterly different! From jealous professionals, he got news of his son's 'folly'; the old man came all the way from Jaipur to Bombay and was almost in a fit of fury against his son for "emptying their house of its most valuable jewels". Bhatkhande touched the irate Ustad's feet and pacified him with a promise never to misuse these precious songs that he had learnt from his son Ashiq Ali. Gradually, even Mohammad Ali was so completely won over by Bhatkhande's rare sincerity, and so deeply impressed by the enormous work he was doing for the revival of Hindustani music, that Mohammad Ali himself gladly taught him numerous compositions. Later on, both father and son willingly recorded many valuable songs for Pdt. Bhatkhande. Unfortunately, these priceless recordings (in wax) got ruined through poor storage. The Chaturpandit has set into notation nearly 300 Khayals and Sadras taught by father and son, for the benefit of music-lovers for ever. He rewarded the two Ustads with handsome emoluments, and humbly acknowledged himself as Mohammad Ali Khan's pupil in his "*Hindustani Sangeet Padhdhati*."

Wadilal's admiration for his Guru Bhatkhande was infectious. Soon, his old Ustad Nazir Khan also became a close friend and admirer of Panditji. According to Anna Saheb, Nazir Khan learnt a large number of Bhatkhande's Lakshangeets and other compositions and taught these to Wadilal, Anjanibai Malpekar of Bombay, Achchanbai of Lucknow and several others.

Wadilal had also received training in Dhrupad from the great Dhrupadiya Zakiruddin Khan in Udaipur. It was he who brought Bhatkhande into contact with Allahbande and Zakiruddin Khans. It was in the Gayan Uttejak Mandali that Vishnu Narain gave regular training to Shri Krishna Narain, Wadilal, Shankarrao Karnad and others. All of them used to address Bhatkhandeji as "*Rao Saheb*".

For a number of years, Wadilal worked as Principal of the Vanastali Rajya Sangeet Vidyalaya in Gujarat and served the cause of music in many ways.

Even after the death of Bhatkhande, his most devoted disciples like Ratanjankar, Raja Bhaiya, Wadilal and others kept in close touch with one another and took great interest in the institutions that each of them headed. All of them led utterly simple lives dedicated to the service of the noble art of music, and won the respect and admiration of other musicians and music-lovers by following the path of ideals set before them by their great Guru.





Padmasri Ustad Yusuf Ali Khan. (1887 - 1962)



Ustad Ilyas Khan (son of Ustad Sakhawat Hussain Khan and a favourite disciple of Yusuf Ali Khan; Ilyas Khan served the College loyally as Professor of Sitar until his retirement.)

PADMASRI USTAD YUSUF ALI KHAN

(1887 – 1962)

Ustad Yusuf Ali Khan was born at a time when classical music was in its springtime glory in Lucknow. In his younger days, he saw the last flashing brilliance of the flame of musical genius in Lucknow. He lived long enough (1887 to 1962) to witness the last chapters of the glory that was of Lucknow, and the gradual decadence of the old culture and art, and aesthetic values. When one talks of Lucknow's past musical glory and of the refined old culture of a bygone era, it is personalities like those of the Kalka-Binda brothers, Khurshid Ali Khan, Faiyaz Khan, Sakhawat and Yusuf 'Ustads', and a host of others who come floating into one's vision. Those were perhaps not days of materialistic affluence and progress; but those were times when artistes and their coteries of disciples and admirers had all the time in the world to enjoy music to their hearts' content.

Yusuf Ali Khan with his handsome personality, sartorial elegance, his skill in the art of delightful conversation, his gift for repartee, his unflinching sense of fun and puckish humour, and his all-round good nature-- was a typical "Lucknawi" and a concise "Lucknow dictionary of music and musicians".

I had the good fortune of knowing and hearing him, although only during the last 18 years of his life. Yusuf Ali was born to be a teacher because he had endless patience and a temperament that rejoiced in imparting his precious *'ilm'* to all eager students. Although the Bhatkhande College acquired him as a Sitar teacher only in his old age, lucky were the batches of students who got chances to learn from this accomplished and most sincere teacher. "Yusuf Ustad" remained a regular and popular broadcaster until his last brief illness. I had the privilege of producing an interview with this veteran and also of recording and listening to numerous programmes of his.

A few months prior to his death, Ustad Yusuf Ali said to me while recalling the years of his early music training :- "It is my firm belief that a person born with artistic talents can unfold into a full-fledged artiste, only by hard, long years of devoted service to one's Guru and of deep dedication to the art. This is true of all arts, especially, music (*"Agar shagird khidmat se Ustad ka dil haath me lega, tho ustad dilse ilm denge"*). An Ustad would prefer to pass on his *ilm* to a devoted disciple, rather than to his own son who does not serve the Guru. My own life is an example of this truth. Let me tell you something about those great Ustads who moulded a plain Yusuf into Ustad Yusuf Ali Khan Sitariya."---

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Yusuf Ali's own musical career illustrates an important fact that music need not be the monopoly of a family of musicians. Musical genius can sometimes blossom out of a family that has no musical traditions. Yusuf was born in Lucknow in the year 1887. His father Bahadur Ali Khan who owned a musical instruments' shop in La Touche Road (Lucknow) was not only an excellent Sitar-manufacturer, but had also acquired considerable proficiency in the art of Sitar -playing. Because of his utterly simple nature, people nicknamed him as "Bhundu Khan" (meaning "simpleton"). He had received sound training in vocal and instrumental music from Ustad Azam Khan Kalpiwale who belonged to the Seniya gharana. Azam Khan was descended from the lineage of Nirmol Shah, a famous Vainik of Jaipur. His chief disciple Bhadah Khan (19th century) had migrated from Jaipur, and after years of wandering, ultimately settled down in Kalpi under the protection of the Rana of Kalpi who was himself a fine Dhruvpad singer and Vainik, and a patron of music. As Bhadah Khan's son Azam was born in Kalpi, their musical lineage began to be known as "Kalpiwala gharana". Actually this was an off-shoot of the "Seniya Gharana" which laid stress on Beenkari and Dhruvpad training.

Azim Khan's son Abdul Gani Khan and Murawwat Khan were born in Khajurgaon after Azim Khan had become a Court musician under the patronage, the music-loving Rana of Khajurgaon. Both of them achieved popularity as instrumentalists and as Dhruvadiyas.

Bahadur Khan's shop in Lucknow was really the meeting and halting place of some of the most well-known Ustads of the times. They came to get their Tanpuras, Sitar, Surbahars, Veenas, and Sarods repaired, but they stayed on as welcome guests enjoying the kind host's warm hospitality. In winter, the tea-pot was constantly full of boiling tea, and in the hot months, the jugs were always overflowing with delicious *"sharbats"*. During the evenings, the host used to accompany these ustads to *mehfils* in the opulent residences of Nawabs and Rajas. Yusuf Ali once told me :-

"I used to go along with my father to these *mehfils*. How can I describe the wonderful atmosphere of those *mehfils*! The artistes used to be so immaculately dressed, and the refined flowery language they used was such that each word was like a blossom..."

Yusuf Ali had imbibed this culture; therefore, we could get a fair idea of what he meant. He was always

immaculately dressed in his typically embroidered (Lucknow Chikkan) "angarakha", choodidaar pyjamas, "dupalli" topi, and a black "sherwani" in winter. A big turquoise ring adorned his finger, and he was always armed with either a Sitar, or with a silver-capped walking-stick. Till the end, he continued to be a gifted conversationalist.

Bhondu Khan put all his three sons, Yusuf, Khurshid, and Gurwat in school, but while the other two were interested in studies, Yusuf was drawn to music, and only music. In later years, he used to repent and blame his 'foolish-self' for missing this chance to get educated. Pleased by the boy's rare aptitude for music, Ustad Azam Khan took him to Khajurgaon and started giving him systematic training in Veena and Dhruvpad. The *taleem*, was later on, continued under Azam Khan son Abdul Ghani Khan, A Sitar expert and an excellent teacher, Ghani Khan became so fond of the handsome and hard-working 13 year-old boy that he adopted young Yusuf as his son with Bhondu Khan's permission.

Describing this period of his life, Yusuf Ali said :-

"Right from the start, Ustad Abdul Ghani Khan had a special soft corner for me. With my father's permission, he adopted me as his son. Thus at the tender age of 13, I had to give up my father's home for my Ustad's which became my second home. I served my Guru so devotedly that he began to love me more than he loved his own sons. Both he and his brother Murawwat Khan were of simple and saintly disposition. Religion and music were their passions in life. In the 13 and odd years that I spent with my Ustad my art was polished and my life disciplined properly. My life was completely devoted to serving my Guru and practising my music. *Apne ko mi-taaye, thabhi riyaz hota hai*".

Describing the gruelling years of training (taleem) Yusuf Ali continued :-

"Every night at 10.30 p.m. I had to start my *riyaz* and continue till 4 A.M. under the vigilant eyes of my Ustad. Lest I nod off to sleep, a tuft of my hair was firmly tied to the *khaprel*. After 4 A.M. came *numaaz*, breakfast, then sleep till 2.30 or 3 p.m.

The Ustad was also very particular that his pupil should develop a robust athletic physique. For this, Yusuf Ali had to draw out 50 or 60 bucketfuls of water from the well everyday and learn wrestling from professionals in the *akhaada* (gymnasium) every evening. In spite of all this heavy work and strenuous training, he used to be quite happy because of his Ustad's love and blessings. The tragic death of a son of Ghani Khan by drowning in an accident in the Ganges completely broke his heart.

52 Thereafter, Murawwat Khan continued his training. When Yusuf's father Bhondu Khan died, Murawwat Khan sent Yusuf with all his blessings to Lucknow so that the latter could look after his father's musical instruments shop. Here he was lucky enough to come into close contact with the great Kathak maestros- the Kalka-Binda brothers of Lucknow. Their house in Jhauul ka pul (Lucknow) used to be the magnetic centre that attracted all the musical celebrities who lived in, or visited Lucknow. The Kalka-Binda brothers became very fond of Yusuf Ali and they gave him many opportunities to play in the distinguished musical gatherings at their residence, and to hear the greatest artistes of those times. Moreover, Yusuf Ali's shop in La Touche Road continued to be the rendezvous of his numerous gifted friends among whom Sakhawat Hussain Khan, Babban Saheb (pupil of the reputed Moizuddin Khan), Achchan Maharaj and Shambhu Maharaj were the closest. They would not only exchange musical ideas but also enjoy the gentle art of witty conversation, and exchange of repartees in the leisurely mood of the times. Although Yusuf Ali had been trained thoroughly on the Veena and in Dhruvpad singing, he was ordered by his Guru to change over to the Sitar because the Guru suddenly developed a superstitious belief that all gifted "Vainiks" died young! However, the early training in Veena and Dhruvpad actually enriched his *baaj*. While in his twenties, Yusuf Ali gave a successful Sitar recital in Delhi in the presence of a large number of professionals who had been invited to the grand wedding of a Nawab. After this, he began to get regular bookings in conference and concerts and radio-broadcasts, especially from his 'parent station'. One of his brothers became a drawing-master while the other (Gurbar Ali) became a good Tabla-player.

One of the memories that the Ustad treasured and frequently described to us with pride was the fact that he along with his Tabla-playing brother Gurbar Ali, were sent to London to perform at the Coronation Festival Exhibition in 1910. Tall, young, handsome with an athletic physique, and attired in his elegant Lucknow outfit, it is said that Yusuf Ali cut a dashing figure in London. No wonder, the ladies in the Hall cooed with delightful cries of "How sweet!" when he drew the meends of Darbari on his Sitar. How amusingly the Ustad used to imitate these scenes for us! He impressed not only by his Sitar-recitals but also by giving demonstrations in Sitar-making. He used to say that a beautifully carved Sitar that he made, is still kept in a collection in London.

On his return from London, Yusuf Ali became a Staff Artiste of AIR, Lucknow, but he resigned a few months later, as he wanted to be free and independent. Wherever Abdul Ghani Khan and Murawwat Khan were invited,

to give performances, they used to send Yusuf Ali saying that he was their musical heir. The "Padmasri" in 1958, and the Presidential Award were the two great honours that really thrilled him in his old age. He used to say :- "The Sangeet Natak Akademy" has inspired me to serve my country as long as I can. The Bhatkhande College has given me a wonderful chance to do this by appointing me as a Professor on the staff. It is a pleasure to be on this staff which has so many distinguished artistes and gurus like Pdt. Ratanjankar, Pdt. Natu, Pdt. Sakharamji, Prof. V. G. Jog, Ustad Sakhawat and others".

During the years that he remained on the staff of the Bhatkhande College, Yusuf Ali gave many recitals, and taught numerous students. Among his prominent disciples may be mentioned the names of Ilyas Khan and Mohamad Ismail (his own son). Ustad Sakhawat Khan not only loved Yusuf Ali Khan as a friend, but also admired him immensely as an artiste and as a teacher. Therefore, he entrusted the training of his own sons, Umar Khan and Ilyas Khan, to the generous Yusuf Ali. Ilyas Khan who sat at the feet of this Guru for many years, has unbounded admiration and respect for him. He has a large stock of anecdotes to prove his Ustad's greatness. One of them deserves repetition to prove the Ustad's deep attachment to Lucknow. In 1933/34 a big All India Competition on Sitar and Sarod-artistes had been organised in Gidhoreriyasat to which the best instrumental virtuosi of the day had been invited. The winner was to be honoured with a costly brocade "saafa" (headgear or turban) and shawl and a purse, and the coveted appointment as Court-musician in the riyasat. The selection was done by the Raja's reputed Ustad Mohammad Ali Khan (son of Basat Khan Rababiya), eighth descendant from Miyan Tansen's lineage. Yusuf Ali was declared winner. He accepted the brocade saafa, shawl, and purse, but politely turned down the honoured court-musicianship saying :-

Ham pai jida Lucknow, ham fida-e Lucknow— I cannot live away from my Lucknow."

Ilyas Khan, who served as Professor of Sitar in the Bhatkhande College for many decades, retired from service in September 1982. The other prominent disciple of Yusuf Ali is his son Mohamad Ismail Khan, who is a Sitar staff artiste of AIR, Lucknow. Ismail has inherited his father's art, but he is a reserved youngman, devoted to his work, and a regular broadcaster. Yusuf Ali's younger son Rahat Ali also has received some Sitar training. Another 'shagirad' Jaffar Khan migrated to Pakistan. Yusuf 'Ustad composed hundreds of gats for the Sitar in traditional ragas. He never took to new ragas, because, (in his own words) "Puraani baaton se his fursat nahi hai" (I have not yet found time to master all the old ragas)". He considered training in Dhruvpad as indispensable to Sitar-students. His own style was characterised by purity of ragas and shaped by his excellent training in Veena and Dhruvpad. He used to play Maseetkhani and Razakhani and was considered an expert in the "Poorab baaj". His three-point advice to his disciples was :-

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1. find an eminent and sincere guru.
 2. serve him with all your heart and earn his blessings and love.
 3. forget yourself in the practice of your art.
- "riyaz me apne aapko mila dena".

During the years when he was on the staff of the Bhatkhande College he is said to have been a very loving teacher with a generous heart. But like all sincere Gurus, he too was a hard task-master if the pupil did not come up to his expectations on any day. Km. Abha Awasthy, a shishya of the Ustad's disciple Ustad Ilyas Khan narrated some interesting episodes in the class of the Bhatkhande College. In an article she mentions that often when Ilyas Khan was teaching in his class, "the bade Ustad saheb" (as the students of Ilyas Khan used to call their guru's guru) would walk in, immaculately dressed and armed with a silver-topped walking-stick. At once, Ilyas Khan would get up, respectfully leaving the "gaddi" (teacher's seat) for the revered Ustad. The latter would pick up the Sitar, start tuning the strings, and then he would gently start playing some raga that haunted his mind at that particular hour. As he went on playing, he forgot the rest of the class and asked Ilyas Khan to repeat some difficult piece that he was demonstrating. When Ilyas tried and failed in the first two or three attempts the Ustad gave him a slap in front of the students who sat "pertified" according to Abhaji. But when Ilyas Khan succeeded in copying him correctly the Ustad was all smiles and praise as he remarked :- "See how the doors and windows of his brain-box have been opened wide now, and how well he has now repeated that piece!"

If the Ustad praised Ilyas Khan after any good recital of the latter, Ilyas Khan would say in the typical modest Lucknow style :- "Sir, the Sitar was well-tuned and therefore, was in good form". Abha says that sometimes Ustad Yusuf Ali Khan used to teach the students of Ilyas Khan's class, and one piece of advice that he gave strongly has stuck to the minds of the students indelibly:-

"You must acquire the art by sheer hard riyaz, nothing else. The art of music is not the condensed essence of some "sharbat" that can be dissolved and swallowed by you to make you an artiste instantaneously".

Yusuf Ali figured regularly in Radio Programmes. Even after he fell seriously ill towards the fag end of his life,

he recovered temporarily and resumed his visits to the College and the Akashvani. But then a little incident filled his mind with gloomy forebodings. One day a couple of rats running helter-skelter in his room, dropped something on his precious Sitar, and it broke! Yusuf Ali somehow linked his own life with the life of his life-long companion, his Sitar. He felt that the ruin of his precious Sitar was symbolic or a portent of his own impending end! Strangely, he did not outlive his Sitar for long! Soon after this musical disaster in his home, the Ustad peacefully passed away at sunset time on 14th October, 1962. Visiting his ailing friend Yusuf Ali, his very dear friend Babban Khan had said to him lovingly:— "Friend! How I wish I could transfer your illness on to me and die before you!" To this Yusuf Ali had replied:— "My friend! What shall I do without you? If you go, I too shall follow you".

And so it happened! Yusuf Ali died a fortnight after his friend Babban Khan did.

Yusuf Ali's students and colleagues in the Music College often remember him and talk of this kind, courteous and generous ustad who would never hesitate to teach even a rival's son.

The All India Radio has got many of his items on tapes in their Archives. Once, after his death, they did revive public memory about Ustad Yusuf Ali Khan by presenting a National Programme based on his recordings.

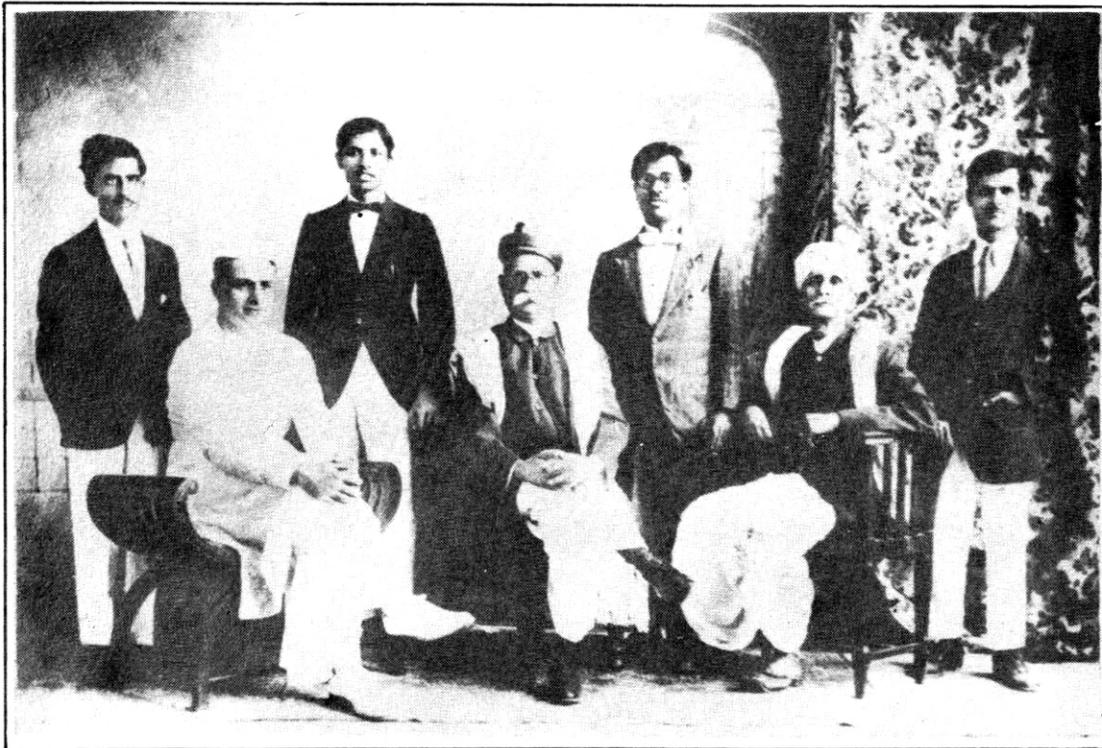


THE JOSHI BROTHERS AND SEVERAL OTHER CLOSE ASSOCIATES OF THE CHATURPANDIT

(Dr. B. V. Keskar, Prof. D. P. Mukherji, Shankar Rao Karnad Thakur Jaideva Singh and others)

Among the earliest batches of teachers who joined the staff of the college right from 1926 were Shri Madhavrao Keshavrao Joshi, Shri Balaji Sridhar Pathak, Chchote Munne Khan, Miss Khurshid, Mrs. Wadikar besides Shri Ratanjankar, Shri Natu, the two Sakhaas, Abid Hussain and Hamid Hussain.

Dattatreya Keshav Joshi, or "Dadasaheb", as he was known among his friends was a well-known Sanskrit scholar and musicologist from Poona, who had learnt music from Ganpatrao Bhilwadikar of the Gwalior Gharana. He became a close friend and great admirer of Bhatkhandeji, and gave him tremendous help in the publication of the invaluable *KRAMIK BOOKS!* He introduced Panditji to Bhilwadikar from whom the former was able to learn a number of Khayals for the Kramik books, and also took on the important work of correcting the voluminous proofs of the *Kramik Pustak Malika*. He also wrote two books of his own "Rag Kosh" and "Hindustani Sangeet Padhdhati". He accompanied Bhatkhande to all the All India Music Conferences organised by him, and he also came and stayed with him in the Bhatkhande College during the initial two years. His younger brother, Madhavrao Keshav Joshi had been Deputy Inspector of Schools in Bombay. As soon as he retired from service, Bhatkhande persuaded him to come over to Lucknow and accept the post of the principal of this new institution. Thus Madhavrao Keshav Joshi became the first principal of the Morris College of Music, Lucknow in the year 1926. The Joshi brothers lived in the college premises for the next two years. While Nanasaheb (as Madhavrao was more familiarly known) looked after the administrative side of the institution, Dadasaheb the elder brother, taught vocal music in the first year classes, and, of course helped the Chaturpandit with the manuscript-correction work for months after months. Two years later, the Joshi-brothers went back to Poona, and young Sri Krishna Narayan Ratanjankar took over as principal, a post which he adorned with dignity for the next 28 years or so.



Standing : L to R - G.N. Ratanjankar; G.N. Natu; L.D. Joshi; S.N. Ratanjankar.
Seated : L to R - Dr. H.N. Hukku; Madhavrao Keshav Joshi; (the first Principal of the college)
and his elder brother D.K. Joshi.

Although the classes were started in July 1926, the formal opening of the college was done in September by Sir William Morris. Pdt. Bhatkhande stayed on in the college for over six months guiding and training the teachers, and supervising the classes. With his deep scholarship, noble nature, endless patience, and rare

ability to demonstrate beautifully the hundreds of songs given in the Kramik series, he was really "an ideal guru" according to all his disciples. In 1928 the college was shifted from the Topewali Kothi to the Council Chambers near Kaisarbagh, a site gifted by the Government of U.P.

56 Srikrishna Narayan Ratanjankar was quite young when he was appointed Principal of the College in 1992. Although he had no previous experience he had imbibed many good qualities of his guru, such as selfless dedication to music, a burning enthusiasm to spread knowledge of the art and science among all, and utter indifference to fame, money, and personal publicity. The selflessness with which the youngman threw himself into the work, won for him the deep affection of his guru. During the early years of the College, the Chaturpandit used to visit the institution often and spend many weeks and months here sharing the little room of his favourite disciple "Babu" (his pet name for Srikrishna). Dr. Ratanjankar often used to say that some of the happiest days of his life were those spent in this humble room in the ennobling company of his Guru. During Durga Pooja, Bhatkhandeji took Babu to the Theosophical Society, Kamachcha (Varanasi), where they made many lasting friendships with eminent persons like *Pdt. Madan Mohan Malavya*, and music lovers like *Dr. B. V. Keskar*, *Mahadev Samant* of the Rajghat School, music-scholars like *Thakur Jaidev Singh* and many others. Although Dr. Keskar was Professor of Sanskrit in the Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, he had devoted a great deal of time to learn authentic traditional Dhruv pads from Harnarain Mukherji of Varanasi, and to study several texts on music. Even as a college student, he had developed a deep interest in classical music, and had eagerly gone to meet the great savant who was bringing about such an unprecedented renaissance in Hindustani music. Bhatkhande's serene personality, deep erudition, unending good humour, and charming gift of conversation completely captivated Dr Keskar. He used to visit Panditji in Lucknow and Bombay and enjoy long, interesting, and informative discussions with him on music. It was really Bhatkhandeji who got Dr. Keskar so deeply interested in classical music, and it was this knowledge that helped him to do so much for classical music when much later, he became Minister of Information and Broadcasting. He was always in close contact with Bhatkhande, and later, with Dr. Ratanjankar. Dr. Keskar, Thakur Jaidev Singh, Prof. D. P. Mukherji and many other scholars and music-lovers took continued interest in the progress of the college. Subsequently, a Committee headed by him and known as the Keskar Committee was appointed in order to inspect all the Music Institutions in U. P. Mr. Bhide, Pdt. Natu, and Thakur Jaidev Singh were important members of this Committee. After studying the workings of all the music institutions in U. P., the Committee recommended that the Government should take over the Bhatkhande Music College of Lucknow as they found that this premier Institution had the most superior system of imparting musical education. They also recommended that due recognition should be given to the Bhatkhande Sangeet Vidyapeeth as an established examining body. Dr. Keskar did a great service to music by translating Bhatkhande's "Kramik Books" from Marathi into Hindi entitled "Shastra Pravesh".

One of the most ardent admirers and frequent visitors of Bhatkhande used to be the great music-lover and musicologist *Prof. D. P. Mukherji* of Lucknow University. He seldom missed the Saturday demonstrations arranged in the college, and he used to have long musical discussions with Panditji. Prof. Mukherji had got numerous opportunities to listen to the top musicians of the times from all over North India, and to imbibe a lot of musical knowledge by his constant association with musicologists and musicians.

Dilip Kumar Roy was another distinguished admirer of Bhatkhande's selfless missionary work in the field of music. With the Chaturpandit's permission, Roy took young Srikrishna (as Ratanjankar was known) with him to Calcutta where he arranged a number of recitals by him in public and private. Srikrishna used to be in top form as a vocalist at that time. He created such a good impression in Calcutta that he succeeded not only in enhancing the reputation of his Guru and his college, but also in attracting into the college many distinguished Bengali students from Calcutta such as Dilip Kumar Roy's two cousins *Hemendralal Roy* and *Robindralal Roy* (who later on occupied such important positions as the Head of the Music Faculty in Shantiniketan and the Delhi University), the two "Sanyal brothers" *Pahadi*, and *D.N. - Ambika Prasad Mozumdar* and several others. Right from those early years, the college has always had a large number of Bengali students, boys as well as girls. Until the middle of the nineteen forties, one used to come across a large number of Kashmiri girl students from several well-known Kashmiri families of Lucknow such as *Katjus*, *Mullas*, *Tankhas*, *Dhar*, *Takru*, *Shivpuri*, *Bahadur*, *Hukku* and so on. Today one finds hardly any ! This is really surprising, especially in the light of the fact that everywhere in the country the craze for, and interest in, classical and light classical music, and for dance is growing and spreading so enormously!

Among Bhatkhande's closest associates and friends who helped in organising the two All India Music Conferences in Lucknow and who took great interest in the birth and growth of the college were *Brij Kishen Kaul*, *Narayan Govind Ratanjankar* (father of Srikrishna, and a discerning music-lover, and a well-trained musician), *Shankarrao Karnad* (who was in Bhatkhande's own words, "dearer to me than my own brother"), *Prem Vallabh Joshi*, and *Bhalchandra Sitaram Sukhthankar*.

Shankarrao Karnad was a High Court Advocate (in Bombay) by profession, but he had learnt music from a

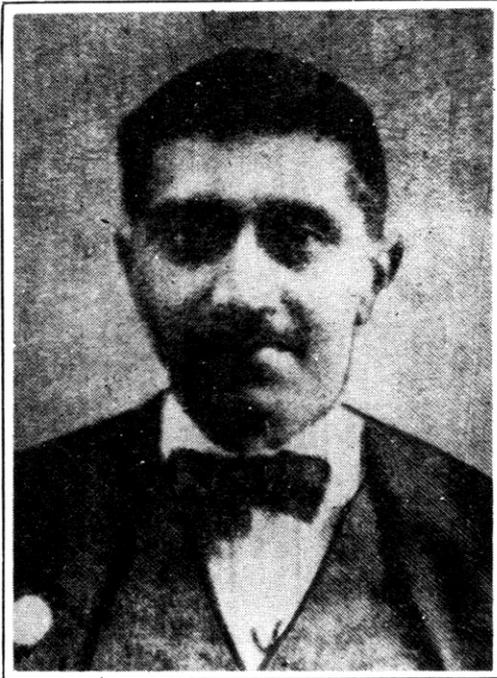
disciple of the famous Professor Maulabaux of Baroda, and later on from Pdt. Bhatkhande! In fact, he came to be regarded as one of the Chaturpandit's eminent pupils. Their *guru shishya* ties developed into the closest ties of friendship, and Karnad became his constant companion in all the five Music Conferences organised by him, and also during his nursing of the Music College of Lucknow in its infancy. One of Karnad's most cherished possessions was a hand-written collection of traditional songs with notations in the neat and bold handwriting of Panditji. Shankarrao Karnad's sudden death in 1933 was a great shock to Bhatkhande who wrote to "Babu" on 21-1-1933:

"...My dear Babu, I have very sad news for you - our dearest friend Shankarrao Karnad breathed his last, day before yesterday. It would be impossible to express what grief that has brought to me. He was more than my own brother to me all these 25 years past. As you know, he was the only friend I had to whom, I always turned for advice. My interest in life is considerably diminished. God's will be done."

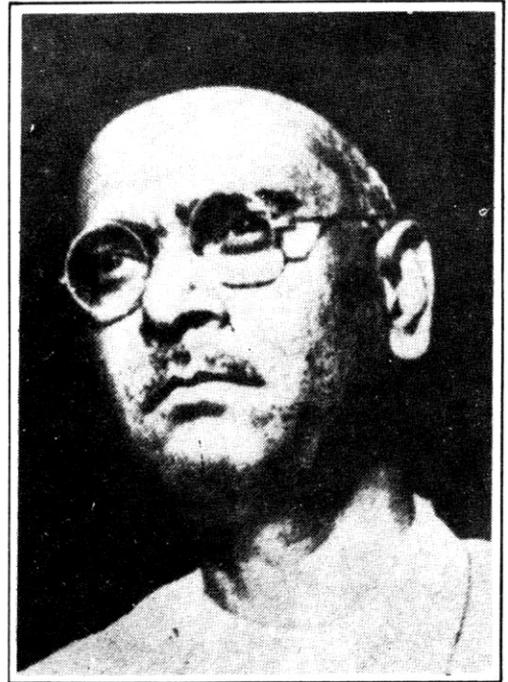
Padmabhushan Thakur Jaidev Singh now settled in Varanasi, has served the cause of music in many capacities since the last many decades. He has also had many opportunities to come into close contact with Bhatkhande and Ratanjankar and other well-wishers of the college. A scholar in three languages, Hindi, Sanskrit, and English, and a learned musicologist, Thakur Saheb's articles and talks on music have been a great inspiration to music-students like us. First a professor in Kanpur, then Principal of the college in Lakhimpur Kheri, Chief Producer of Music in All India Radio, Delhi, a member of the Keskar Committee of Lucknow, and of the management committee of the Khairagarh Music University, and Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademy, Thakur Saheb's association with the college has been long and his services to music varied. He has served the college in many committees; the managing committee, the advisory committee, selection board, and so on. As one who deeply and thoroughly studied Bhatkhande's life-work, Thakur Saheb's brief summing up is of great value to music students. Thakur Saheb writes :-

"Bhatkhande's services to music are unparalleled in every respect, - Shastras, research, teaching and propagation. The four parts of his *Hindustani Sangeet Padhdhati* alone cover 2500 pages, whereas the six volumes of his *Kramik Sangeet* run into 2654 pages! His *Sreem allakshya Sangeetam* and other shorter publications consist of 6500 pages! It is incredible how one man could have done so much in one lifetime. But Bhatkhande did achieve the impossible!"





Bhalchandra Sitaram Sukthankar



Ambadas Agle



Late Chidanand Nagarkar, an excellent performing artiste, who died in the peak of his career. His gramophone record and his numerous tapes with Akashvani kept his art alive.



Late Acharya Chinmoy Lahiri, a well-known vocalist and an excellent guru who has trained fine artistes like Parween Sultana, Ranjana Chakrabarty, Tanima Thakur, Mandira Lahiri and others. He died on 17/8/84.

SUKHTHANKAR, PATHAK, CHOTE MUNNE KHAN, AMBADAS AGLE

and some distinguished students of the College.

The cultured Sukhthankar family of Bombay played a vital role in Pdt. Bhatkhande's life and work. Shantaram Narayan Patkar, a well-known and wealthy lawyer of Bombay, had no sons. He had two daughters, one of whom died young. The other one, Dhakhlibai was married to Sitaram Sukhthankar, who unfortunately died suddenly, leaving his young widow with five small children and a lot of money. Dhakhlibai's father Shantaram Patkar, had come to know of Bhatkhande's simple life with high thinking and his rare qualities of honesty, nobility, and integrity. He, therefore, appointed Panditji as trustee for all their property, and also made arrangements for his stay in the Sukhthankar home like a guardian of the family, a responsibility that he fully discharged till the end of his life. Smt. Dhakhlibai and her family had a deep love for music and they took keen interest in Panditji's musical research and study. When Bhatkhande toured the length and breadth of the country for collecting musical material and for meeting musicians and musicologists, the Sukhthankar family accompanied him everywhere. Dhakhlibai's second son *Bhalchandra Sitaram Sukhthankar* became Bhatkhande's ardent admirer and constant companion, and he devoted most of his time in helping him in spite of being a busy solicitor himself. He was with Panditji at all the music conferences organised by the latter, and was a great help in organising the conferences in Lucknow, and in founding the music college here. He rendered an invaluable service to music by continuing to look after the publication of Bhatkhande's books even after the latter's death. Thanks to the Sukhthankar Trust, the publication of the Kramik books continued uninterruptedly. Unfortunately, Sitaram died young; he survived his guru only by four years or so.

Miss Khurshid (a Parsi disciple), and *Miss Wadikar* (a Maharashtrian disciple) who had undergone good training from Bhatkhande and Wadilal Shivram in the Gayan Uttejank Mandali (Bombay) were the two earliest women teachers of the college.

Among the earliest batch of teachers was *Balaji Sridhar Pathak*, who is now settled in Allahabad. A class-fellow of G.N.Natu throughout their training period in the Madho Sangeet Vidyalaya, Gwalior, they later became colleagues in the music college of Lucknow and lived together in the college premises. Born in Sagar in 1909, Balaji left for Gwalior at the age of 11 to learn music seriously. After taking his initial training from Khandeparkar, he joined the M.S.Vidyalaya. He got his first opportunity to come face to face with Pdt. Bhatkhande when the latter visited Gwalior as an examiner. Panditji's personality and music produced a lasting impression on Balaji's mind, and he decided to follow whatever path this great guru would suggest for him. During their student-days, Natu and Pathak were often made to sing Jugalbandis. The words of praise and encouragement that the two promising boys then received from Bhatkhande are still cherished by the two aged teachers even now. After securing his music - degree, Pathak came to Lucknow on Panditji's advice in order to undergo more advanced training under Srikrishna Narayan Ratanjankar. Bhatkhandeji made it easier for him by appointing him as a teacher of music in the college and by arranging for his stay in the college premises along with Ratanjankar and Natu. Pathak has said that some of the happiest years of his life were those spent in the musical atmosphere of this humble institution. From morning till night, they were engrossed in musical activities. It was music, musical discussions and study, research, and demonstrations for them all the time. Describing their life of utter simplicity and lofty thinking, Pathak has written:—

"For us, Pdt. Bhatkhande was a divine saviour born to salvage our music and to breathe fresh life into this dying art. How lucky we were to have had this rare chance of spending some years in closest contact with this great man, and of hearing him sing in his sweet and dignified voice! The hour or two after supper when we used to have long musical discussions with the guru in the little room he shared with Babu, were the most enjoyable part of our daily routine. Long after we had gone to bed, Panditji would sit and go on writing his books. During the nights he used to be busy with Part IV of his "*Sangeet Padhati*" series. Truly, the hours were drenched in music, and the entire atmosphere became surcharged with music whenever Chaturpandit was with us". After some years, Pathak migrated to Allahabad where he has been a Professor of Music in the university until his retirement. He founded the Lukerganj Sangeet Vidyalaya, and has played a prominent role in propagating Bhatkhande's system of teaching music. He has revisited his college in Lucknow as an examiner many times.

Among the reputed musicians of Lucknow in the close of the last century and beginning of this century were Shakkhar Khan, and his son Bade Mohammad Khan, Bade and Chote Munne Khans. Hailing from the reputed Haddu - Hassu gharana of Gwalior, *Chote Munne Khan* was a well-known performing artiste of Lucknow, and he was reputed for his rendering of Dhrupads, Sadras and Dhamars. During the initial years, the college had the privilege of having this *gharanedar* Ustad as a teacher on its staff. Although he had become quite old



Seated: Bhatkhandeji; Umanath Bali. Behind Row:- Shankarrao Karnad; Sukhthankar; Brij Krishna Kaul.



Krishna Udayavarkar who was already a famous vocalist of the Agra gharana, a National Programme artiste, and a great sensation in Music Conferences when she appeared for the Music College Degree Exam. as a private candidate.



Dr. Sumati Mutatkar, who distinguished herself in the academic field as Dean, Faculty of Music, Delhi University; after retirement, she was appointed Emeritus Producer, Akashvani, Delhi. She is a good exponent of Dhrupad-Dhamar which are generally considered a male monopoly.

by then, he proved to be a sincere and good teacher. Because of his good repertoire of Khayals, Sadras etc. of the Gwalior Parampara, he was an asset for the college. Chote Munne Khan is also said to have helped Bhatkhandeji by contributing some good Khayals of the Gwalior gharana for the *KRAMIK* series. The Khayal in Yamani Bilawal beginning with the words "Aan paro ri kaun gunan" was one of his gifts to Bhatkhandeji.

Mridangacharya *Ambadas Agle* was a reputed Pakhawajiya of the famous Nanasaheb Panse gharana who served on the staff of the college for some time. Born in Indore in 1920, *Ambadas* was thoroughly trained in the art by his father Mridangacharya Sakharam Agle. By the age of twenty he had become so proficient in the art that he was appointed a Court-musician in Indore.

Considered one of the best Pakhawajiyas of the time, he was persuaded to join the staff under the Principalship of Dr. Ratanjankar. His colleagues still praise the sweetness of his style and the clarity of his *mridang bols*. Pre-eminently a performing artiste, he did not enjoy teaching work, and so, he left the college and went back to Indore after a few years of teaching.

One cannot forget the numerous other teachers such as S.A. Mahadkar, Guruji, Ayodhya Prasad, V.J. Joshi, Girija Shankar, V.M. Tripathi, M.V. Kalvint, Sarju Prasad and so many others who served the college for a number of years each in his humble capacity, in his own way.

OLD STUDENTS OF THE COLLEGE.

During its fifty and odd years of existence, the Bhatkhande College has trained thousands of students, among whom many have risen to positions of eminence and prestige in the field of music. As the list is long, and as the college strangely does not have a complete list of *OLD STUDENTS* (in spite of repeated requests and advice!), it will be possible to highlight only a few names. Their contributions to the popularisation of classical music have been varied. Some have become good performing musicians; others have turned out to be fine teachers; still others have risen to occupy eminent positions in Universities, AIR stations, and so on.

ACHARYA CHINMOY LAHIRI of Calcutta, one of the earliest graduates of the college has distinguished himself not only as a good performing artiste of National Programme calibre, but as a gifted teacher who has trained outstanding vocalists like Parween Sultana (Acharya Lahiri died in Calcutta on 17th August 1984 at the age of 68) and promising ones like Ranjana Chakrabarty, Tanima Thakur and Mandira Sharma.

ROBINDRALAL ROY, another of the early graduates of the college, occupied important posts such as Head of the Faculty of Music in Shantiniketan and in the Delhi University. That he must have been a good teacher is obvious from the way he has trained up his gifted daughter *MALAVIKA* (Kanan).

PAHADI SANYAL (of New Theatres fame), *Roshan* (registered in the college records as *ROSHANLAL NAGRATH*), and *TALAT MAHMUD* here also students of this college in the early years. *Swarnalata Syal* and *Yasodhara Katju* were promising Kathak students of Mohanrao Kalyanpurkar. They were lured away into the glamour world of films before they had completed the course in the college.

CHIDANAND NAGARKAR who won wide popularity as a good Khayaliya, often figured in the National Programmes of AIR, and later became Principal of the Sangeet Shiksha Peeth of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. His one and only gramophone record (in which he had rendered two compositions of Anna Saheb—Khayal in Narayani and Lakshangeet in Miyan-ki-Malhar) achieved much popularity. This solitary record and his tapes are still broadcast from the AIR every now and then. His heart attack and tragic death in the prime of his career was a great loss to the world of music.

Nagarkar's successor as Principal of the Vidya Bhavan College is *DINKAR KAIKINI*, one of Dr. Ratanjankar's most outstanding disciples.

Dinkar came to stay with Anna Saheb while he was a very young boy, and was trained in the real Gurukula style, living in the college premises with the guru for a number of years. He has not only imbibed Anna Saheb's rich style and repertoire, but he also grafted into his own style many of the attractive features of the Agra gharana which eminently suits his deep, manly voice. The depth and grandeur of his alap, the well-knit bol-taans, and an immaculate sense of rhythm are typical of Dinkar's singing, and he is perhaps one of the few Khayaliyas today who can render the elaborate "NomThom Alap of Dhrupad with confidence.

Today it is *K.G. GINDE* who has preserved Anna Saheb's style in all its purity, and also the maximum numbers of ragas and compositions from his rich repertoire. Sri Ginde's collection of rare ragas and *bandishes* is remarkable.

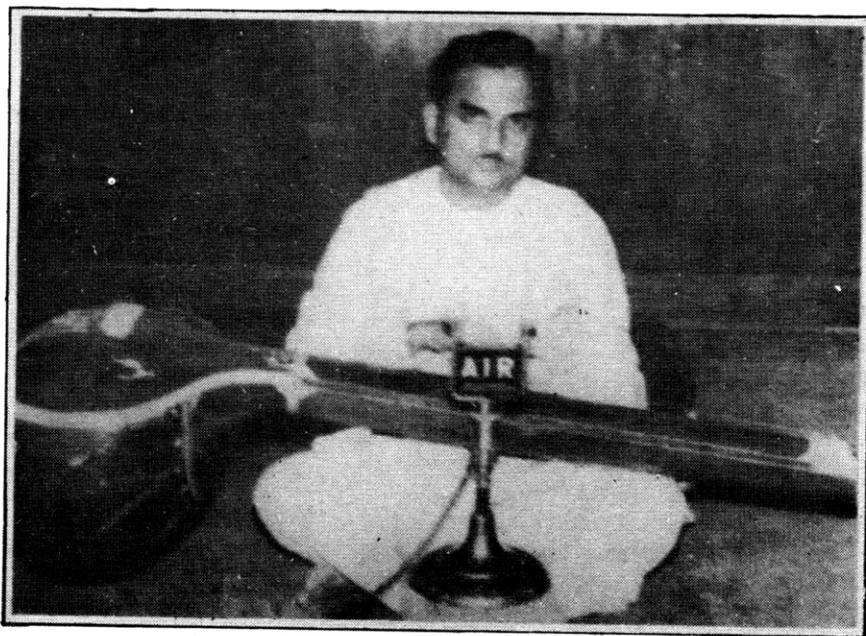
There were certain pairs of students who used to lend vocal support to Dr. Ratanjankar and Shri Natu for



Principal K.g. Ginde (Bombay) who has retained his guru's style most faithfully and has a fantastic repertoire of ragas and "bandishes".



Prof. S.C.R. Bhat, an eminent Prof. of Music (Bombay) who has given many Jugalbandis with Sri. Ginde in National Programmes and other concerts.



Principal Dinkar Kalkini (Bombay) who learnt from Dr. Ratanjankar in true Gurukula style, but his style has been considerably influenced by Ustad Faiyaz Khan's Rangeela style.

their Jugalbandis. Nagarkar-Dinkar, Bhat-Ginde were the more popular of these. After working as a Producer of Classical music in AIR Delhi for a number of years, Dinkar is now Principal of the Vidya Bhavan College.

Sri.K.G.Ginde (Principal of the Ballabhadas College), and Dr.S.C.R. Bhat (also a fine teacher in the same college), have presented Jugalbandis of Dhrupads, Alap and Khayals in the National Programmes of AIR.

Dr. Samar Bahadur Singh, one of the oldest of the old students of the college worked on the Staff of AIR in many capacities, retired as Deputy D.G. and worked as Secretary in the U P. Sangeet Natak Akademy for some time.

DR. SUMATI MUTATKAR who took her Doctorate in music under the guidance of Dr Ratanjankar, is perhaps one of the very few female singers who has given National Programmes exclusively of Dhrupads and Dhamars. She has served music as Deputy Chief Producer in AIR, as Dean of the Faculty of Music, Delhi University, and is now an Emeritus Producer of the AIR, Delhi. She is a good scholar in Music.

PRABHAT NARAYAN CHINCHORE from Indore deserves all praise for the excellent job he did of compiling and editing the valuable and informative "*Bhatkhande Smriti Granth*". After graduating from Indore he came to Lucknow to take his M.A. degree in Sanskrit and to undergo advanced training in the theory and practice of music under Dr. Ratanjankar. In the course of his 12 years' stay in Lucknow, he established contact with many leading musicians of the time for his research. Afterwards, he was appointed Head of the Music Department in Viswa Bharati, and later on, he became Vice-Chancellor of the Khairagarh University of Music.

RANGARAO KADAMBARI came from Andhra Pradesh. After taking his Music degree, he settled down in Kathmandu as a popular music teacher.

One student whose excellent singing I still recall with nostalgia was young and pretty KRISHNA UDAYAVARKAR who had come from Bombay to take her M.A. in English and Sangeet Visharad degrees simultaneously. Even before joining the college she had received fine training in the Agra gharana from Ustad Khadim Hussain Khan in Bombay. This training and her natural genius had already shaped her into such a confident and high class singer that she figured in the National Programme (a really prestigious programme during those years)! If ever the Rangila style sounded attractive in a melodious and fine female voice, it was in Krishna's. But by some strange irony of fate, she forsook fame and a brilliant career when she plunged into a life of spiritualism and asceticism, a great loss for the world of music.

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Another Graduate from one of the earliest batches from the College, *SRI SITA SARAN SINGH* served on the Staff of AIR, Delhi as Producer of Music for some years. Settled in Lucknow, he continues to coach students, he broadcasts, participates in T.V. programmes, and as a music critic of some newspapers, takes active interest in the musical activities of this city.

SRI M. V. KALVINT, once a respected Guru in the college now lives in Varanasi. He is an eminent guru and a prolific composer. Among his numerous students, he has also trained up his own daughter Vidya (now Mrs. Katgade) in vocal music.

SRI S.A. MAHADKAR, another teacher of the college, now teaches in Hyderabad and continues to be a prolific composer whose compositions constantly appear in some of the important Music magazines.

There are hundreds of Graduates from this College who are now scattered all over the world. Many of them are serving music in one way or other. The Government of Sri Lanka, Assam, Mauritius, and Nepal have been sending students on special scholarships to study music in the Bhatkhande College. Armed with Degrees, they return to their native lands for spreading musical knowledge. Lionel Idri Singhe and Amardeo became Principal of a College and a Station Director of Radio Ceylon when they returned to Ceylon after their training in this college. Sri Vikram Singhe who came long ago from Sri Lanka as a promising Kandyan dancer, became a pupil of Guru Achchan Maharaj and has worked as a Kathak teacher on the Staff of the College and of the Kathak Kendra in Lucknow.

The list of students is endless, but since the College has maintained no proper record of old students, it is difficult to give a comprehensive list. I apologise to those whose record of musical services I have not been able to give here, for want of correct information.





Mohanrao Kalyanpurkar, under whose Deanship, the Kathak Faculty gained immense popularity and respectability.



The photo of Maharaj Bindadin in front of which Mohanrao (like his guru, Pdt. Sundar Prasad) used to light a bunch of Agarbathis (Scented sticks) before commencing his class every afternoon.

MOHANRAO KALLYANPURKAR

(Head of the Dance Faculty)

Whenever I recall Mohanrao Kallyanpurkar's Kathak-classes, what comes foremost in my mind is the fragrance of a bunch of exquisite Mysore agarbathies that he used to light in front of a large portrait of Maharaj Bindadin in the Dance-hall before he would start his classes at 3 p.m. every afternoon with "Tha, theyi, that-". Today there are many highly-educated dancers on the scene, but in those days, Mohanrao was one of the very few educated men who took to Kathak as a profession. A student of science, he left college before graduation because his interest in music and dance became too all-engrossing. He learnt the Sitar from Ustad Mohammad Khan of Bombay, the Tabla from Ustad Ghulam Mohammad Khan, and had his early dance-training under guru Sundar Prasad. Pandit Sundar Prasad's style was a mixture of the best elements of the Jaipur and Lucknow styles of Kathak with the Lucknow-ang predominating, because he had undergone many years of training in Lucknow directly under Maharaj Bindadin. An excellent teacher, Sundar Prasad trained a number of eminent Kathak dancers such as Madam Menaka, the Pooviah sisters, Mohanrao, Sunalini, Sohanlal, Hiralal, Rani Karna and Roshankumari.

Later on, Mohanrao had the good fortune of receiving years of intensive training under gurus Achchan Maharaj and Shambhu Maharaj in Lucknow. Mohanrao was born on 12th August, 1913. The fact that he came from a very cultured Saraswat family of Bangalore, and that he himself was an educated dancer was to his great advantage because he was at home in every kind of society.

Kallyanpurkar's career as a dance teacher commenced when he began to teach in the Maharaj Bindadin School of Kathak in Bombay. In 1937, he started the Maharaj Bindadin School in Lucknow. Two years later, he was appointed Head of the Dance Department in the (Morris) Bhatkhande College of Music, a post which he held until his retirement. A polished and sincere teacher, and an accomplished dancer and composer, he choreographed and presented a number of successful Kathak ballets during the years I was in this college. "Shakuntalam", "Malati Madhav", "Vikramorvasiyam", "Meghadoot", and "War & Peace" were some of his good dance-ballets in which Mohanrao always danced the leading role. Among those who danced the heroine's roles, I remember Yashodhara Katju (a student of his), Kumudini Pai, and Suniti Kaikini, the latter two being his colleagues in the Dance Faculty. In his classes were students of all ages—students from Punjab, Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala and Andhra. There were quite a few promising young pupils like Swarnalata Syal and Yashodhara Katju, who were, however, spotted by the talent-scouts from Bombay and whisked away into the glamour-world of films! There were others like the beautiful Mridula, and earnest Uma Gupta (who taught in the college for many years) who had to give up dancing after they settled down to domesticity.

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However, one of his talented disciples, Poornima Joshi (now Mrs. Pande) who is also academically highly-qualified, maintains her figure and her art as she is Assistant Professor of Kathak in the college. Perhaps, Rohini Bhate is the only other pupil of Mohanrao who has continued her career by running the Nritya Bharati School of Kathak in Poona.

Endowed with a tall, slim figure, and expressive eyes, Mohanrao looked every inch a dancer. When the Kathak Faculty was started in the Bhatkhande College, he was the natural choice. After his appointment in 1939, he organised the entire Faculty of Dance, drew up proper syllabi for the "Nritya-Visharad" and "Nipun" classes, and finalised the pattern for conducting practical and theory examinations in dance. These have been widely accepted in many institutions in U.P., in the Jayajirao University of Baroda, the Indira Kala Viswavidyalaya of Khairagarh, and the Education Department of Andhra Pradesh. He was appointed an examiner in all these universities. A good singer, and an accomplished tabla-player and dancer, he had also learnt a large number of the beautiful compositions of the Bindadin Gharana. Because of his close contacts with the Bindadin Gharana and his high esteem for Guru Achchan Maharaj and Shambhu Maharaj, these two Kathak virtousi had great affection for Mohanrao.

Therefore, we the students of that era had the rare privilege of witnessing many informal dance-demonstrations by these two great Kathak stalwarts who used to visit the college and dance just for the staff and students! Achchan Maharaj was the true recipient of the knowledge of his predecessors because he was really the only one out of the three brothers who had received exhaustive training from their father Kalkaprasad and from their uncle Bindadin. Although he had served as a court-dancer in many princely states like Raigarh, Rampur, and Nepal, Achchan retained his childlike simplicity and modesty. Of course, by the time we saw him towards the fag end of his life, he had become quite paunchy, but when he stood up to dance, he was suddenly transformed into "a model of grace and agility". His *tatkar* (footwork) was really a marvel because his fat legs bound with seers of heavy ghunghrus seemed to become weightless as soon as he stood

up to dance! With his large expressive eyes, he excelled in *bhava*. Achchan's death in 1946 was a great shock to us. Briju was a very young boy at that time.

Thanks to Mohanrao's closeness to that family, we also had the good fortune of seeing the inspired Bhaavanritya of the unpredictable Shambhu in those years when he could still dance well enough to justify his reputation as "*nritya-samrat*" and "*abhinaya-chakravarty*". A remarkably gifted artiste, Shambhu Maharaj could sing, dance, and play on the harmonium and tabla with equal ease. He had learnt Thumri-singing from Rahimuddin Khan, the younger brother of the celebrated Moizuddin. No one could do fuller justice to Bhava-expression and the *Natwari ang* of Kathak. Whereas Achchan Maharaj was modest and soft-spoken, Shambhu as an examiner was a real terror for the examinees, because the slightest carelessness in a gesture, or an error in a step used to provoke caustic comments from him. For instance, once a promising young candidate was portraying (through facial expressions and dance-movements) the role of a young Gopi filling a pitcher of water from the river Jamuna. The boy rose up with the imaginary "*gagari*" with a slightly lethargic movement. At once Shambhu, the examiner stood up and shouted: "Eh! You there! are you portraying a Gopi afflicted with rheumatism or arthritis? You should do it with a youthful spring like this" - Shambhu would then climb on the stage and demonstrate the "*gat-nikaas*" in his own inimitable way.

Mohanrao never ceased to learn from these two great gurus. During the many decades that he devoted to the Bhatkhande College of Lucknow, he occupied many honoured posts of prestige and won a few coveted honours too. An examiner for Kathak at many schools and institutions throughout India, a judge for many awards in dance, a member of the General Council of the Sangeet Natak Akademy and of the Experts Committee for Dance, a member of the panel of the Ministry of Education, a judge for the folk dance festival on Republic day, and so on Mohanrao won three important awards for his services to dance :-

- (1) the Presidential Award from the Sangeet Natak Akademy for Kathak in 1962.
- (2) the Honorary degree of Nritya Nipun from the Bhatkhande Sangeet Vidyapeeth in 1943.
- (3) the Karnatak State Award for Kathak in 1971.

Besides writing some articles on dance, Kallyanpurkar helped Umanath Bali in translating the *Abhinayadarpan* of Nandikeswara, and contributed a valuable chapter for the special issue of *MARG* on "Kathak".

After his retirement from his dear College in 1967, he worked for a few months as Director of the Kathak Kendra, New Delhi and then, as a Professor Emeritus in the National Centre for the Performing Arts, Bombay from where he wrote :-

"I am getting on well here at the National Centre, - the work is not very exacting as my pupils are all performing artistes. I enjoy my work-".

Like Ratanjankar, Mohanrao also had to leave his family behind in Maharashtra (Hubli) and spend the best years of his life living in a single room in the College, or sharing a little room with Anna Saheb, at a time when the salary was too low to attract any educated young man. I wonder how many of his students remember this sacrifice of his with gratitude. We must give Mohanrao much of the credit for attracting large numbers of cultured and talented young boys and girls into the field of Kathak. Rai Umanath Bali who had the highest regard for Mohanrao, started the trend by sending his own daughters to learn Kathak from him in the College. Among my contemporaries in the Kathak classes of Kallyanpurkar ("*Master Saheb*" as we called him), were Punjabis, Kashmiris, Maharashtrians, an Andhra girl, and many girls and boys from U.P.

Anyway, it is good that Mohanrao's training and experience as a dance-teacher were put to full use, and that, at least now, in the evening of his life, he is able to be near his family His wife and one of his two sons are in the medical profession in Hubli.



PADMA BHUSHAN VISHNU GOVIND JOG – A FRIEND OF ALL GHARANAS.

Vishnu Govind Jog is known by many names to many people:— “Professor Jog” to his numerous students, “Jog Saheb” to his colleagues in the A.I.R., “Pandit Jog” to music conference-organisers, and a Marathi pet-name meaning “a chubby little boy” to those who have known him as a child. Jog’s popularity is tremendous; few artistes have had such warm and friendly contacts with so many musicians as he has had. With good feelings for all musicians, and rancour towards none, he seems to have earned the friendship of exponents of the various conflicting Gharanas in Hindustani music. This in itself is a rare achievement.

Although the violin has been well-adapted into Indian-music, it is not half as popular in the North as it is in Karnatic music. Still Jog has, through three long decades of violin recitals from an uncountable number of platforms, managed to earn a niche for himself and his violin in the world of Indian music. He has a large number of students and admirers scattered all over India, Ceylon, and Assam. He is an adept in establishing



Padma Bhushan Vishnu Govind Jog. (Professor of Violin in the College from (1938 - 1953).

Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. He also took harmonium lessons from the reputed harmonium-player, Bhaiya Ganpatrao, a pupil of Pdt. Bhaskarbuwa Bakhle. By the age of ten, Jog had decided that instead of dabbling in too many things, he would concentrate on the violin, and his violin-taleem began under Vighneswar Shastri and Krishnam Bhatt of Karwar. In 1938, Mirashibuwa took the young boy to Lucknow to present a violin-item in the music conference organised by Pandit S.N.Ratanjankar. In Jog’s own words :- “I was proud to be the only violinist scheduled in the programme, although my audience could be counted on my fingers! Anyway I gave an earnest rendering of the only 2 ragas I felt confident enough to play – they were two first-year ragas, Kafi and Khamaj. The great stalwarts of the music-world were all there – like Ustad Faiyaz Khan, Manji Khan, Mushtaq Hussain and so on – all of them resplendent in their courtly black Sherwanis and topis, with shining rows of medals on their chests I admired them all, but when I saw Ustad Allaudin Khan, I could not take my eyes off him. Fresh from his London-trip with Uday Shankar and troupe, Baba was bursting with pink health. He wore such simple clothes, but there was some noble quality on his face which made him stand out in the entire gathering. Baba had mastered so many instruments, but his sarod and violin impressed me most deeply. Unprepared and ill-clad for the biting December cold of Lucknow, I was shivering in my thin Bombay clothes, and my teeth were chattering. Altogether I must have looked a pitiable sight. Baba’s compassionate heart immediately noticed my plight, and he took me under his wing. He insisted on my using his warm new London-blanket for the rest of my stay in Lucknow! How can one forget such kindness!”

TRIPS TO MAIHAR

Jog’s guardian and brother Shankarrao Athawale discussed the boy’s future with Pandit Ratanjankar who

instantaneous rapport with his audiences as soon as he comes on the stage, and few can play to the gallery as shrewdly as he does. Through the last three decades I have watched Jog’s “tricks of the trade” and his applause-winning gimmicks working as effectively as ever, over different types of audiences in Lucknow, Delhi, Bombay, and Calcutta! The ability to sense the pulse and mood of the audience has helped him to reach audiences who may not normally be too involved with classical music. He has thus contributed much to the popularisation of the violin in Hindustani music. One realises this when one repeatedly finds that Jog can draw big audiences in whichever conference he performs.

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Many and varied were the musical fountains from which Jog drew his musical training. Naturally, his style is a multi-flavoured cocktail in which are blended the features of different vocal and instrumental gharanas.

Born in Satara, (Bombay) in 1922, Jog was initiated in vocal music at the age of six by his cousin Shankar Rao Athawale, a disciple of Pandit

generously undertook the task of being guru and guardian for the promising boy. Pandit Ratanjankar took him to Lucknow and in 1938 appointed him violin teacher in the Bhatkhande Music College, known as "Morris Music College" in those days. Though he was just 16, Jog was soon recognised as a sincere and painstaking teacher, and his classes used to attract large numbers of students every year. Anna Saheb kept a strict watch over him and gave him regular *taleem*. But each time Baba came to the college as an examiner, Jog felt a strong temptation to follow him to Maihar, and once he did exactly that! Armed only with his violin, and with no money in his pocket, young Jog slipped away unnoticed and travelling without ticket, arrived in Baba's residence in Maihar at an unearthly hour. Luckily for him, both Ali Akbar and Ravi Shankar had taken a liking for him. They recommended him to Baba as "an affectionate and devoted music aspirant". Baba, as was his generous wont welcomed him and put him up in Ali Akbar's room. During this short stay of Jog's, Baba utilized every possible hour to teach him gats in Yaman-Kalyan and Bhopali both of which are still indelibly impressed in his memory. He had a taste of Baba's famed fury only when in the normal music-college style, he tried a short-cut to memorise the gats quickly by jotting down the notations on paper. As soon as Baba learnt that Jog had left Lucknow without his mentor's permission, he sent him packing back.

After the return of the young "absconder", Pandit Ratanjankar intensified Jog's training and encouraged him to write and publish the "*Belashikshak*" in five parts, which have now become standard texts for violin-students. Each time Ustad Allaadin Khan visited Lucknow, which was quite frequently in those days, Jog would follow him about devotedly like a shadow. He says that Bihag, Bhairav, Hemant were some of the ragas that he picked up from the Ustad. But Jog hastens to add :- "However, the bulk of my repertoire of ragas I owe to Anna Saheb who kept his promise to my brother and trained me lovingly for years and years. Not only did he teach me the numerous fundamental, and several rare ragas, but he trained me in the art of accompaniment by providing me with many opportunities."

Jog has told me more than once :- "I have been exceptionally lucky in this respect. There is hardly any great vocalist of recent times whom I have not accompanied at some conference or Radio concert.

AS ACCOMPANIST

68 No other violinist has accompanied such a galaxy of musicians as Jog has done. He was a great favourite of his guru's (Ratanjankar's) guru Aftab-e-Mausiqui Ustad Faiyaz Khan. He has accompanied top artistes of every Gharana such as Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Pandit Omkar Nath Thakur, Ustad Amir Khan, Ustad Mushtaq Hussain Khan, Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale, Kumar Gandharva, Begum Akhtar, Siddheswari Devi, Kesarbai Kerkar, Hirabai Barodekar, Gangubai Hangal, Girija Devi, Manik Verma, Malavika Kanan and others – the list is long. The great tabla maestros like Thirakwa, Kanthe Maharaj, Kishan Maharaj, Shamta Prasad, Chaturlal, Allahrakha, Karamatullah, Gyan Prakash Ghosh, Nikhil Ghosh, Shankar Ghosh, Zakir Hussain, Mahapurush Misra, these and many more have accompanied Jog on the tabla. He has also had numerous opportunities to present Jugalbandis with Bismillah Khan, Ali Akbar, Ravi Shankar, Bahadur Khan and others. All this invaluable experience gave him great self-confidence and enriched his style. Jog's experience in Jugalbandis started with the now famous Bismillah-Jog duets which were for the first time tried out in Lalababu's Music Conference in Calcutta in 1946/47. Today the long-playing discs of their duets sell like hot cakes, and are as popular as the Ali Akbar-Ravi Shankar duets. Really speaking, the wind and string instruments do not blend very well. But because of the great mutual regard that the two artistes have for each other, Bismillah and Jog have somehow managed to make this unpromising combination click with the public. Their L.P. records have achieved spectacular commercial success all over the country. A great admirer of South Indian Music and musicians, Jog has also broadcast duets with Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu and T. Chowdiah. He is all admiration for the violin technique of the South and for the great contemporary violinists like (late) Parur Sundaram, M. S. Gopalkrishnan, T. N. Krishnan, Lalgudi Jayaram and others.

Young Jog was among the large group of musicians from all over North India, whom Uday Shankar had invited to participate in the Pooja Festival in 1942 in the Culture Centre, Almora. Jog was a very popular figure there and a favourite of Baba. From 1938 to 1953 Jog continued to be on the staff of the Bhatkhande Music College, Lucknow, where he remained one of the most popular teachers always. He joined the All India Radio, Lucknow, as a Music Producer in 1953 and later on worked in the Bombay and Calcutta stations also until his transfer to Delhi in 1973, when he resigned from Akashvani. Today he is an extremely popular artiste settled in Calcutta. He is always busy with his numerous engagements all over the country. While Jog was on the staff of the Bhatkhande College, H.H. the Sawai Maharaja Punya Pratap Singh of Ajaigarh had, after many years of research, invented a musical instrument that "combined all the good qualities of the Sarangi and the Violin" and named it "*Punya Pratap Vina*". Sri Jog played on this new invention in the presence of Anna Saheb, and they both certified it as an excellent accompaniment for vocal music. Like the violin, it had 4 principal strings and 50 tarabs as against the 46 of Sarangi, and it was played with a bow. They had visualised the *Punya Pratap Vina* as a substitute for the Violin ("which lacks in sweetness and resonance") and for the Sarangi which (in spite of its sweetness and resonance) is looked down upon and "tabooed in good society on account of its bad

association'. There was also a photograph of Sri Jog playing on this new invention in the College Souvenir. However, Jog is still wedded to his Violin.

WITH HIRABAI BARODEKAR AND PARTY

Jog's first trip abroad was with Hirabai Barodekar and Party to East Africa on a performing tour in the year 1948. He had the privilege of visiting Nepal twice as a member of the Government of India's official delegations. In 1968, he accepted Ali Akbar Khan's invitation to join the staff of the Ali Akbar College of Music in Berkeley (California), where he conducted vocal, violin and flute classes. But Jog could not stick to the hectic pace of life in the U.S.A. long.

He fell quite ill, had to cut short his term, and fly back home to regain his health. Explaining this unfortunate experience, Jog told me :- Of course it is easy to collect dollars in a rich and music-loving place like the United States, but my palate craved for simple home food, and I found the heavy routine of the College too tiring for me. Above all, I was pained to find that I had no time left for my own *riyaz*. As his gift to the Ali Akbar College, he recorded a duet with Bahadur Khan (sarod), tabla accompaniment being by Shankar Ghosh. This L.P. disc was recorded by the World Pacific Records Company.

In 1970, Jog was invited to perform in the Festival of Arts in London, after which he undertook an extensive performing tour of Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Paris, Washington, and New York, and gave a long lecture demonstration in the International House, Berkeley.

One of his most precious possessions today is Baba's old violin which the generous Ustad presented him with, when Jog played on the occasion of Baba's Centenary Celebrations organised by the Madhya Pradesh Government.

Among Jog's already well-known students are Sisirkana Dhar Chowdhury (violin) and Kumari Zarin Daruwala (sarod) who had their initial training under him. Among his promising pupils today are Randhir Roy (esraj), Kalyani Banerji (sitar), Pratap Pawar and Anant Jog (violin).

An unassuming person with a jolly temperament and pleasant manners, Jog has a large stock of amusing personal anecdotes and a great talent for mimicry all of which makes him a very interesting conversationalist. Professor of violin for 15 years from 1938 to 1953 and music producer, All-India Radio from 1953 till 1973, Jog has this firm conviction:—

"Music Colleges cannot produce great singers. Only the good old Guru-Shishya-Parampara can mould them. But alas! this good old system is fast disappearing under the stress of modern life. Today's music is mostly music for the masses, for which we have to make many concessions". Today Jog is deeply involved in activities of the Sangeet Research Academy (Calcutta) as a performing artiste. He is part of the S.R.A. team of artistes, who perform in their conferences in different parts of the country. Perhaps one of the reasons why Jog has joined the S.R.A. is the fact that there, they have been reviving the time-honoured "Gurukula" style of moulding and grooming promising young music-students.

Jog has also been a recipient of the Sangeet Natak Academy Award and Padma Bhushan. His 60th Birthday was celebrated on a grand scale by his large circle of friends and disciples in Calcutta in August 1982. Few artistes have such a wide circle of friends from all walks of life as he has. So deep are his reverence and love for "Anna Saheb" that he often expresses them in the course of his recitals before vast audiences, and looks visibly moved by nostalgic memories.





Ustad Ahmad Jhan Thirakwa the "Tabla Wizard" (1878 - 1976). Prof. and Head of the Dept. of Percussion, Bhatkhande College (Emeritus Prof.)



Thirakwa Sahab in the College along with son-in-law Ahmed Ali (of AIR, LKW), Ram Kumar Sharma (a disciple) - now on the staff of the College; and another disciple.

USTAD AHMADJAN THIRAKWA

(1878-1976)

In the history of Hindustani music, one comes across the names of several outstanding percussionists, but none has dominated the field so undisputedly and for so many continuous decades as Thirakwa Saheb did. Even in his nineties he continued to remain a brilliant performing artiste and an energetic teacher. He was truly a colossus among Tabla-maestros, and he enjoyed the rare distinction of having accompanied many generations of musicians from the 19th century to the present times.

Ahmadjan's long life of almost 10 decades falls into 4 distinct periods :-

1. The years of rigorous *taleem* and *riyaz*.
2. The colourful years as a Court-musician of Rampur.
3. His busy years as Professor and Head of the Department of Tabla, Bhatkhande College, Lucknow, and later, as Professor Emeritus in the same college.
4. His last years as a Visiting Professor in the National Centre for Performing Arts, Bombay.

I got to know Thirakwa Saheb well and hear his recitals during the peak of his career, during his glorious courtly period when he was a precious asset in the royal durbar of Rampur. Although he had not had any formal schooling, Thirakwa had an innate sense of dignity and courtly manners. As an artiste he had won the respect of the entire music-world. In the exclusive *mehfils* of the late Nawab Saheb of Rampur, Thirakwa had to give solo recitals, and provide Tabla accompaniment for great Ustads like Mushtaq Hussain Khan and Hafiz Ali Khan or for the Nawab's Castanet or Ghunghroo recitals. He never protested even when asked to accompany lesser artistes. As a broadcaster also, he was a most accommodating and co-operative artiste. In special deference to the AIR-contracts, he learnt to sign his initials "A.T." in English for which he took a lot of pains each time! Thirakwa was as much at home in the AIR Studios as in the courtly darbars, as well as on the conference platforms facing mammoth audiences. Never did he give occasion for any complaint from the organisers. I vividly recall some of the memorable occasions on which he provided excellent accompaniment for Ustads Faiyaz Khan (his favourite musician), Hafiz Ali Khan, Mushtaq Hussain Khan, Gajananrao Joshi, and Bismillah-Jog Jugalbandis. There was no air of condescension even when he accompanied younger artistes like Rais Khan, Manik Verma, or Sisirkana Dar Chowdhury. It is heartening to be able to say that the AIR Archives have got plenty of his tape-recordings, – solos as well as accompaniment.

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Born in a family of musicians in Moradabad, in 1878, Ahmadjan was initially given training in vocal music right from childhood under Ustad Mithoo Khan, and in Sarangi from his own father Ustad Hussain Bux, a well-known Sarangiya, but the boy showed little interest in these lessons. But when he heard Ustad Munir Khan, the great Tabla maestro of Meerut, he felt at once attracted to the art. "My rooh really lay in the Tabla", he said to me in an interview. After some preliminary training in Tabla from his uncles Faiyaz Khan and Baswa Khan, Ahmadjan, at the age of 12 became "a *ganda-bandh shagird*" of Munir Khan. The Ustad was not only a great Tabaliya, but also an exacting and generous guru who made his young pupil eat excellent nourishing food, sleep for 5 hours, and devote at least 16 hours daily for his rigorous "riyaz"! This excellent diet, disciplined life, and unrelenting *riyaz* paid good dividends because Thirakwa's health as well as art remained unimpaired till the far end of his extraordinarily long and busy life of 98 years. What with Munir Khan's strict *taleem* and young Ahmadjan's devotion to the art, he emerged as "Thirakkoo" or "Thirakwa", the "Tabla Wizard with the dancing fingers. This loving epithet was bestowed on him by none other than Munir Khan's father Kale Khan who used to watch with great delight the boy's fingers "dancing" ("*thirakte hain*") on the Tabla-bayan.

Sixteen-year-old Thirakwa's debut in a big conference in Khetbadi, Bombay, in 1894 was literally a 'thundering' success because the 'thunderous' applause after his recital in the conference "never ceased to echo in his ears" as he himself told me many decades later in Lucknow. He became the Tabla-artiste in Bal Gandharava's Theatrical Company and won wider popularity. Invitations for Music Conferences began to pour in, and Thirakwa was appointed a Court-musician of Rampur in 1936. During the next 30 years he adorned and served the darbar loyally, and rose into all-India fame.

When the Court-musicians were all disbanded later, their admirers felt very concerned about their future. How were these royally protected and patronised artistes going to fare when thrown out into the confused world of democratised music? However, there was no such problem for the likes of Thirakwa. He stepped out of this exclusive aristocratic preserve with great dignity, and was soon appointed Professor of the Faculty of Percussion in the Bhatkhande Music College of Lucknow. Although he was a very busy artiste with his numerous outside bookings in conferences, sammelans, radio concerts etc., he did not take his teaching assignment lightly as some of the other Ustads did. Had the Chaturpandi been alive at that time, it would have pleased him so much to see this colossus among percussionists sitting on the teacher's "gaddi" in the Music College.

During the 5 years course, the students can only acquire a firm and lasting foundation of the art on which he can go on building and adding to his mastery according to the depth of his interest in the art, his inborn talents, and his capacity for hard, sustained *riyaz*. Numerous disciples of Ustad Thirakwa scattered all over North India have won renown. Among them may be mentioned the names of Lalji Gokhale (of AIR Bombay), Prem Vallabh and Ghulam Ahmad (of AIR Delhi), Chchote Gokhale (of Pune), Nikhil Ghosh (Director of Sangit Maha Bharati, Bombay), Ahmad Ali (of AIR Lkw), Ram Kumar Sharma (of the Bhatkhande College, Lkw) and many others.

There was hardly any contemporary maestro whom this Tabla wizard had not accompanied on the Tabla in the course of his long and glorious career that spanned several decades. The lists of artistes whom he accompanied will look like a "Who's who" of great musicians of that era. Among these prominent names may be mentioned the names of Ustads Allahbade and Zakiruddin Khans, Faiyaz Khan, Mushtaq Hussain Khan, Rajab Ali Khan, Wahid Khan, Imdad Khan, Alladiya Khan, Allauddin Khan, Abdul Aziz Khan (Beenkar), Abdul Karim Khan, Ali Akbar Khan, Pdt. Bhaskarbuwa Bakhle, Pdt. Ravi Shankar, Bismillah-Jog, Gajananrao Joshi, Smt. Sidheswari Devi, Begum Akhtar, Dagur Brothers, and so many others! This is a record which, I think, no one will ever be able to surpass!

Thirakwa never hesitated to confess that the singer he most enjoyed accompanying was the Aftab-e-Mausiqui whom he admired and loved. "His control over laya was superb. The like of him I shall never hear again", Thirakwa used to say about the Ustad who died many years before him. And Faiyaz Khan always used to say:—"Thirakwa is my first choice as accompanist. There is none like him."

The magnanimity of the truly great an unruffled temperament, lack of fuss, and a rare dignity were some of the qualities that I found common to both these great artistes, with whom I had regular contacts as family friends and officially in the Akashvani. At heart, both always remained simple, devoted to their art, far above disputes and courtly and charming in manners. Thirakwa was proficient in all styles of Tabla-baaj such all *Dilli*, *Poorab*, *Farukkabadi*, and *Ajrada*, but the last two were his favourites. His recipes for success for his students were "correct and genuine talem, long hard years of *riyaz*, regular physical exercises, and lots of good nourishing food". He has proved the worth of these through his own personal example. Even after he had crossed the age of 90, and although his ordinary speaking voice had become shaky, the standard of his Tabla recitals remained 'top' as ever. When reciting the complicated Tabla parans, his voice sounded steady like a young man's! Most of us can still recall that memorable recital of his in the Radio Sangeet Sammelan of 1974.

After his retirement as Professor of Tabla in the Bhatkhande College, Thirakwa was appointed Emeritus Professor in the same College. Later on, he went to Bombay accepting the Visiting Professorship of the National Centre for Performing Arts. There he was also the inspiration behind Nikhil Ghosh's Sangeet Maha Bharati. But before leaving Lucknow, he had assured his lifelong friends, admirers, and pupils :-

"Mai hamesha hamesha Lucknow me rehunga" (I shall stay in Lucknow for ever and ever).

In January 1976, Thirakwa came to Lucknow during the Moharram celebrations to keep a tryst with destiny, and to fulfil his promise. On the mournful 10th day ("Ashra") of Moharram, he was on his way to the Charbagh Railway Station to catch the train back to Bombay. But his "Rooh" refused to leave Lucknow. Khan Saheb collapsed and died in the rikshaw! Thirakwa's death marked the end of the courtly era in music. He was a vital link between 2 eras in Indian music. A simple "Mazaar" in his name has been erected in Aishbagh, Lucknow, by a handful of his disciples such as Lalji Gokhale, Sudhir Varma, Ram Kumar Sharma, Lalit Mohan Joshi, Mohanlal Joshi etc. and a few other music-lovers of Lucknow. A good documentary about the late Ustad and his daily routine and the important landmarks of his life, has been made.

Although the Tabla wizard's dancing fingers were stilled for ever on 13th January, 1976, his great art lives through his large number of disciples, his Tapes, and his Long Playing Discs. But there will never be another "Thirakwa" as Faiyaz Khan always used to say.



USTAD RAHIMUDDIN KHAN DAGGUR. DHRUPADIYA

(1904 – 1975) in Delhi

The great giants of Hindustani classical music who participated so gloriously in the memorable All India Music Conferences of the nineteen-twenties are no more with us. But thanks to the unique "guru-shishya-parampara" of our music, most of them have left behind rich traditions of their art, and capable legatees of their heritage. The earlier part of this century was still the era of the Dhrupad. The names of Ustads *ALLABANDE KHAN* and *ZAKIRUDDIN KHAN*- the two illustrious successors of *USTAD BAIRAM KHAN* were uttered with respect. These two brothers traced their back to Swami Haridas Dagur of Brindaban, and they were regarded as the greatest exponents of the Dagur Bani of Dhrupad during their life-time. After their death, Ustad Allabande Khan's son *NASIRUDDIN* rose into eminence. With his mastery over his art, his dignified bearing and elegant countenance, and his highly sensitive and intelligent renderings of alap and Dhrupad, he came to be regarded as the last great imaginative exponent of his family-style after the death of his father Allabande Khan, and uncle Zakiruddin. One of the greatest Dhrupadiyas of recent times, Allabande Khan used to be the court singer of the ruler of Alwar.

Bhatkhande had, of course, heard the great Allabande Khan many times and greatly wished to acquire him



Ustad Rahimuddin Khan Daggur

for the staff of his music college, Lucknow. But it was almost impossible at that time to persuade a "blue-blooded Dhrupadiya" steeped in ancient traditions, to agree to be chained to an institution for teaching music. Pdt. Bhatkhande wrote to a friend: "For Dhrupad there is Allabande Khan of Alwar.... But will he teach in classes and sing every week? He may not come down from his residence in the clouds....".

Bhatkhande had experienced great difficulty in trying to get authentic teachers of Dhrupad for the college. There were many great Dhrupadiyas, but they lived in a royal world of their own. Moreover, these fanatical Dhrupadiyas looked down with antipathy and displeasure on the mounting popularity of the more romantic Khayal .

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In the course of half-century, conditions in the world of music had altered so much that Ustad Allabande's younger son *RAHIMUDDIN KHAN* willingly joined the staff of the Bhatkhande Music College as a Professor of Dhrupad and Dhamar, a post which he held for many years until his retirement. Perhaps one reason for this changed attitude was the fact that the popularity of Dhrupad-Dhamar had begun to wane, giving place to the more popular and imaginative *KHAYAL*.

Younger son of Allabande Khan and nephew of Zakiruddin Khan, Rahimuddin Dagur had naturally inherited the coveted Dhrupad-Dhamar wealth of his family. Born in Udaipur in 1904, Rahimuddin had his early training under his father Allabande Khan, and later, under his elder brother Nasiruddin, for a much longer period. It was after graduating from the Aligarh Muslim University that Rahimuddin began to devote 10 to 12 hours per day to his music-riyaz. For 6 years he lived in Indore as a court-musician. After leaving Indore, he began to participate in a large number of Conferences and achieved considerable fame as a performing artist in music concerts and as a broadcaster.

Rahimuddin came into limelight in Lucknow after his successful performance in the Lucknow Exhibition Music Conference (held in the Victoria Park) in 1936. Those who have heard his elder brother Nasiruddin, say that Rahimuddin never reached the stature of his brother who was the last of the race of the musical giants in their family. Having had his training under his father, Ustad Allabande Khan, and elder brother, Nasiruddin Khan, Rahimuddin had imbibed the authentic traditions of the family. Like his brother, he too used to commence his performances with recitation of some Slokas in Sanskrit. He invariably used to devote the major part of his programme to elaborate alap (No Thom) through which he gradually built up the entire structure of the raga like a master-craftsman. Rahimuddin strictly adhered to the orthodox technique, but there was no lack of sensitivity in his renderings. He used to render all the four stanzas of the Dhrupads (Asthai, Antara, Sanchari and Abhog) with meticulous care and artistic zeal, and his "duels" with the accompanying Pakhawajjiya were always lively without losing the authentic dignity of the style. Rahimuddin was handicapped

by a voice "that lacked in masculine timbre" and vigour, and it tended to be tremulous especially in the upper notes. But he tried to compensate for these handicaps by his sensitive and elaborate Alaps, and by the delightful way in which he displayed his mastery over rhythmic variations while rendering Dhrupads, Dhamars or Sadras to the accompaniment of a skilful Pakhawajiya. In most of his recitals that I attended or recorded for AIR, he was accompanied either on the Pakhawaj by Pandit Sakharam or Pandit Ayodhya Prasad, or on the Tabla by Ustad Thirakwa Khan.

When Ustad Rahimuddin Khan was appointed as a Professor of The Bhatkhande College, connoisseurs and admirers of ancient musical traditions welcomed the appointment genuinely. One music-critic welcomed the choice in the following words:- "It is gratifying that an eminent Dhrupad-singer of his training and status has been roped in by the Bhatkhande College. I hope the students of the Dhrupad style both in this institution and outside will treat this as an excellent opportunity for learning the style in its authentic version. Ustad Rahimuddin Dagur should also regard this as a good opportunity to impart the fundamentals of his family style to all pain taking and deserving students of music. Today, with the revival of music and art in our country, the musician has an important duty to perform and that is to impart all he knows to others with a sincere, ungrudging heart. I hope Ustad Rahimuddin will do this with grace and willingness.... There is a lot about him that appeals to the eye-men and ear-men both...." (Dr. Chaubey).

Like all staunch Dhrupadiyas, Rahimuddin Khan always remained "allergic" to the Khayal with its romantic flights of fancy and embellishments which are all taboo in the austere Dhrupad style. In his music one found "inspiration and graces sacrificing themselves to correct art and training". In a world of changing musical styles, he stuck to his pure traditional style which is becoming rare with each passing day. The Dhrupad has lost much of its popularity today, and the few fine Dhrupadiyas that we still have in our midst, seem to be fighting a desperate battle to keep the authentic Dhrupad style traditions alive. During the many years that Rahimuddin Dagur was on the staff of the Bhatkhande College, several batches of students had the rare privilege of learning Dhrupads and Dhamars from this representative of a great line of Dhrupadiyas.

Rahimuddin Khan had a dignified personality. He always used to tell his students that they should strictly stick to "the 10 rules of the Dhrupad" without which the entire beauty of the structure would be lost. During the many years when he was on the Staff of the Bhatkhande College, Lucknow, he used to be a regular broadcaster, and a participant in many Music Conferences. Besides ordinary and current ragas, he used to render rare compositions in rarer ragas such as Charju-ki-Malhar, and Adbhut-Kalyan. A broad-minded artist, 74 Rahimuddin never hesitated to praise the merits of other artistes.

After his retirement from the College, Rahimuddin Dagur migrated to Delhi where he died a few years ago. It was a happy coincidence that although Pdt. Bhatkhande could not "rope in" Ustad Allabande Khan for the College, the latter's son willingly served the College for many years. In fact, all the teachers trained by Pandit Bhatkhande and Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale have been good teachers of not only Khayal, but also of Dhrupads and Dhamars. Dr. Ratanjankar used to render Alaps and Dhrupads and Dhamars beautifully in his National Programmes and other concerts. Through the last three decades or so, Dr. Ratanjankar, Pandit G.N. Natu and many others have trained numerous batches of students to render Dhrupads and Dhamars as solos, or in chorus (*vrindagan*). When Pandit Bhatkhande found it difficult to get any Dhrupadiya of repute for the College, he wrote:—

"Let us ask our own Ahmad Khan to learn Dhrupad and Dhamars published in our *KRAMIK* books and be ready to teach them in the classes. He belongs to Dhrupad-gharana and may turn out to be a good teacher. He is a willing hand and energetic too. But, please warn him not to leave class-rooms during working hours if necessary, half-an-hour's recess should be given for hukka, tea etc... The students seem to be satisfied with Srikrishna, Natu, Pathak and Sakharam..."

It would have certainly gladdened the heart of the Chaturpandit to see the son of Ustad Allabande Khan adorning the "chair" for Dhrupad in the Bhatkhande College of Music, and teaching Dhrupads and Dhamars to batches of students, and not only to his own son, Fahimuddin at home as the previous generations of Gharanedar Dhrupadiyas used to do!



PADMA BHUSHAN BEGUM AKHTAR.

(1910 or 1914 – 1974)

Even as early as in the Nineteen twenties when the general public used to look down with puritanical horror on the art of the professional women-singers of the day, Pdt. Bhatkhande was broad-minded enough to write in a letter dated 28th July 1928 to Rai Umanath Bali:—

“I approve of the suggestion you have made.. especially, having a competition for professional female artistes... We are fairly advanced now, and people will not misjudge our motives. The idea of opening a school for the benefit of the professional female singers has reached the ears of Achchanbai and Bichwa, two of the first-class local artistes, and I am told that they liked it very much. As far as I know, the best female artistes will be found in U.P., Punjab, Bengal, Gwalior, Indore, Baroda, and Jaipur. There is nothing worth looking for on this side (Bombay). Ghazal and Thumri-singing is only to be found in Upper India.

It is no secret that people like female-singing much better than the singing of the so-called male experts. The art of vocal music is fast dying away. If Raja Nawab Ali and the Maharaja of Mahmudabad are at your back to support you, do take up the matter...”.



Begum Akhtar. (1914 - 1974) who adorned the Chair of the Professor, Light Classical Music in the College for a few years.

In spite of the broad-mindedness of these few music-lovers, they had to give up the idea “for fear of losing public confidence, and of frightening away some of their extra-puritan sympathisers”. The time was not yet ripe for the introduction of Thumri and Dadra into the College.

Many years later, the matter was again taken up by the Special Advisory Committee of the College under the Chairmanship of Mr. Bhide. (The author of this book was one of the Members of this Committee). There were many unanimous decisions. One of them was to restart the Bharatanatyam classes which were once being conducted by Guru Tanjorekar, but had to be closed when the financial position of the College became too precarious. The second important decision was to start classes for Light Classical Music under some reputed exponent. Smt. Siddheswari Devi had unofficially expressed her willingness to join the Staff. However, the Bharatiya Kala Kendra of Delhi was quicker in practice! They created a Chair and promptly appointed Smt. Siddheswari Devi on the Staff of the Kendra where she worked sincerely as a guru until her death in March 1977.

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Although these two decisions of the Committee had been submitted many years ago, it was not until recently that they took concrete shape in the College. The Chair for Light Classical music was at last created, and Begum Akhtar, still at the peak of her career as a performing artiste, was offered the honour. The College was honoured by her ready acceptance of the chair. Naturally there was a great rush for admission into her classes. These applicants were strictly screened and only a few were admitted. But Begum Saheba was constantly booked for programmes all over the North, and hardly found time to teach her eager students waiting for her rare appearance in class. Her tenure as a professor was not long enough; and, she was not temperamentally cut out to be a teacher in classes. In her life-time she could groom only a handful of disciples, and these were girls who could go to her house and learn in the gurukula style. For instance Shanti Hiranand

lived with "Ammi" like a daughter-cum-disciple for a number of years. Spending a lot of time listening to "Ammi" and lending her vocal support in her numerous recitals, Shanti is the disciple who has imbibed a great deal of the guru's art. The others who learnt from Begum Saheba for short periods are Anjali Banerji, Rita Ganguly and a couple of others.

The last years of Begum Akhtar's life were some of her busiest, and she was constantly travelling by plane, train, and car to fulfil her long chain of engagements. Naturally she could hardly find any time to teach regularly in the classes. However, it was a mutually complimentary arrangement. The College recognised the important place of Light Classical music today, and the "Queen of Lucknow Thumri and Ghazals" acknowledged the prestigious position of the College.

Long before the advent of the T.V. (Doordarshan), Radio and Tape-Recorders, Akhtari Bai's gramophone-records of short duration had earned for her, country-wide popularity. There were scores of these 78 R.P.M. brief records, and many of them continue to be super-hits even after the passage of so many decades. At an age when most singers sit back and bask in their past achievements, Begum Akhtar continued to sing from glory to glory with ever-mounting popularity. Few musicians have enjoyed such a long and successful career. She lived long enough to record also several programmes for Doordarshan which they continue to telecast from time to time.

Many many years ago, a well-known Theatrical Company of Calcutta had organized an ambitious Music Conference to raise funds for the relief of the families of the victims of the Bihar Earthquake which had rendered thousands homeless. The milling crowds of music-lovers so typical of Calcutta, were clamouring for the programme commence, but none of the reputed ustads billed for the programme had arrived yet. Ustad Ata Mohammad Khan of Patiala who was there with his young pupil "Bibbi" (Akhtari's childhood name) came to their rescue by suggesting that they ask the little girl to give a song. Although initially, her knees turned to water, and she trembled with stage-fright, she soon felt relaxed as the curtain went up, and she sang in full-throated ease, her voice soaring higher and higher like a nightingale's. The prolonged applause and repeated *farmaishes* encouraged her to sing 4 Ghazals and 5 Dadras at a stretch! More than the rave-reviews in the next day's papers, what really thrilled her was the praise and the gift of a Khadi Sari from the poetess-nightingale of India... Smt. Sarojini Naidu who was so deeply impressed with Akhtari's music that she visited her specially to express her appreciation and to give her the gift.

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Although born into an unmusical family in Faizabad in 1914 (or 7th October 1910 according to some!) Bibbi's passion for music and her precocious gift for memorising the songs she heard were evident from early childhood. As a little girl, she went crazy about the stage-singing and acting of Chandabai, the actress of a roving theatrical company who performed in Faizabad during their wanderings. Her early music-training under Ustads Imdad Khan of Patna and Ghulam Mohamad Khan of Gaya did not last long because she was not yet ready to learn serious classical music. But her rich voice and abundant talent impressed Ustad Sakhawat Hussain Khan who was professor of Sarod in the Bhatkhande College of Lucknow. He was a friend of the family and wished the young girl's talents to be properly guided and trained. Using his personal influence, Sakhawat Hussain Khan kindly persuaded Ustad Ata Mohamad Khan of Patiala.— a famous representative of Ustad Tanras Khan's gharana, to shift to Fyzabad and take charge of the musical training of the promising "Bibbi". At first the Ustad's prolonged voice-exercises bored her to tears, but gradually as she heard the ustad's beautiful renderings of classical ragas, she got genuinely interested. She began to do all those elaborate voice-exercises which moulded her voice so excellently for which she felt deeply grateful to this ustad for the rest of her life.

Akhtari, and her mother whose family-circumstances were most unhappy, shifted to Calcutta along with Ustad Ata Mohamad Khan. Unable to bear a life of privations and penury any longer, the young Akhtari defied her mother and her ustad, and she cut her first Megaphone Record. The Ghazal "*woh-asire dam-e*" was an instant hit, and was, therefore, followed by scores of Thumris, Dadras and Ghazals. "Akhtari Bai Fyzabadi's" name became famous all over the country, and those early gramophone records can still be heard from various Stations of the AIR, and in the private collections of music-lovers.

When I first saw and heard her in the Nineteen Forties, she was already a celebrity with a vast fan-following. Added to her excellently trained and excitingly sonorous voice were her glamorous personality and sartorial splendour. Film-directors vied with one another to lure her away into the glamour-world, and for a time she fell under the spell of an acting career. "*Ek Din Kee Baadshahat*", "*Mumtaz Begum*", "*Naseeb Ka Chakkar*" and "*Roti*" were some of the films in which she acted, while she did playback-singing for others such as "*Ehsan*", "*Daana-Paani*" and Satyajit Ray's "*Jalsaghar*". All these activities hurt Ustad Ata Mohamad Khan until he gave an ultimatum. If she was going to continue as an actress, he was going to discontinue as her teacher.

At this crucial point in Akhtari's career what helped her to make the right choice was the opportunity she got

to hear the inspiring music of celebrities like Jaddan Bai, Gauharjan, Malkajan, and Moizuddin Khan. She left the glamour world of films, and began to devote 10 to 12 hours each day for her "riyaz". Invitations began to pour in from the famed Courts of Rampur, Hyderabad etc, and her fame spread.

However, the Ustad who exerted the maximum influence on her style was Ustad Wahid Khan of Lahore who duly accepted her as a "ganda-bandh shagird" and moulded her style into maturity. Not only her music, but her own personality and her attitude to life had matured by now. The rootless life of a singer without any anchor in life began to irk and worry her. Her meeting with, and falling in love with Barrister Ishtiaq Ahmed Abbasi, a typical product of Lucknow culture, a connoisseur of Urdu poetry, and a charming conversationalist, was one of the vital turning points in Akhtari's life. After marriage, she relaxed into a simple life of domesticity, and gave up singing. Akhtari bai was forgotten as Begum Abbasi revelled in the life of an ordinary housewife for nearly a year or more in her home which had all the old-world charm of Lucknow culture. However, the music in her could not be suppressed any longer. Slowly she emerged out of her hibernation, first as a broadcaster, then as a concert-artist. The new name in which she surfaced out of her stifling music-less years was at first "Akhter Ishtiaq" which was later changed into "Begum Akhtar", the name by which she is known ever since, and will be known by posterity owing to the large number of Long Playing records and archival tapes that she has left for us. She was flooded with singing engagements until Begum Akhtar was hailed as "the Queen of Lucknow Thumri and Ghazals". Her Long Playing records flooded the record-shops all over India and even abroad and were sold like hot cakes.

The Sangeet Natak Akademy honoured her. She was awarded the "Padmasri" and then the "Padmabhusan". The Government of India sent her to Afghanistan 1963, and U.S.S.R 1967 in their Cultural Delegations. In Karachi she won repeated applause when she sang her famous Da dra:-

"Hamari atariya pe aawo sajana, Saare jhagda Khatam hoi jaye".

Begum Akhtar's contributions to Light Classical music and Ghazal have won for her lasting fame. By a lovely blending of the Punjab ang and Poorab ang Thumri, she has given a stamp of her own to the Lucknow ang Thumri. As for Ghazals, she has been a real "Queen" in this realm, and her repertoire endless. Neither did age blunt the rich timbre of her voice, nor did too many singing engagements create any monotony in her music. Because of her solid training in classical music, she could render her songs in varied ragas according to her mood of the moment. To the end, her singing retained "that bubbling effervescent quality".

The Akashwani Lucknow has a rich collection of her recordings as she was a very popular and frequent broadcaster of the top grade.

But unfortunately Begum Saheb has kept very few pupils to carry her style forward for posterity. They are Shanti Hiranand, Anjali Banerji, and Rita Ganguly... all three being Delhi based artistes. Smt Shobha Gurtu was not her disciple, but is obviously a great admirer of her style. Shobha Gurtu the renowned exponent of light classical varieties and of Ghazals, has a rich voice and style that bring nostalgic memories of Begum Akhtar's music. Her singing brought tears into the eyes of Sri Ishtiaq Ahmad Abbasi (husband of Begum Akhtar) as he sat in the front row in the Hall for a concert of Shobhaji after Begum Saheba's death.

When Begum Akhtar was appointed as Professor of light classical music in the Bhatkhande College, there was a rush of students for admission. I seriously planned to become her "shagird" in the college, but I backed out because the disillusioned students who had already joined, told me that she was hardly ever present in Lucknow to take the classes. Had she lived longer, and had her heavy bookings outside Lucknow slackened, she might have cared to groom a few more worthy students to perpetuate her unique style.

Serious heart-trouble and deteriorating ill-health could not slacken the momentum of her singing career. Against the advice and pleas of her doctors and friends, she undertook that long journey to Ahmedabad where she gave her swan-song and died the way she had always wanted tosinging till almost the last day of her life. In one of her last soirees in Delhi, she had sung the prophetic Ghazal :-

*"Mohabbat karnewale kam na honge,
Teri mehfil me lekin ham na honge!"*

In the very last recording that she did for Akashwani, she had sung the following Ghazal with a deep sense of pathos and a rare emotional intensity :-

*"Mai dhoondhta hun jise,
Woh yahan nahi milta ---"*

Through this eloquent Ghazal of Poet Kaifi Azmi, was she expressing the eternal, insatiable quest of an artistic soul?





BABA (Ustad Allaudin Khan of Mathar), a regular Examiner, a frequent visitor, and admirer of Bhatkhande, and a great source of inspiration for the students and Staff.



Ustad Bundu Khan - the superb Sarangi maestro a great admirer of Pdt. Bhatkhande, and a visitor of the College.



Ustad Faiyaz Khan - the guru of Pdt. Ratanjankar. The Ustad's recitals inspired many music-students like Nagarkar, Dinkar, Krishna Udayavarkar and others.

Where are selfless workers like Bhatkhande?

"FLED IS THAT MUSIC !"
Was it a vision or a waking dream ?

Pandit Bhatkhande has rightly been called "the Father of Music Conferences", for it was he who ushered in the modern era of All India Music Conferences. However, the five conferences that were organised by him in Baroda, Delhi, Banaras and in Lucknow (twice) during the decade 1916 to 26 were quite different from today's music conferences. For the first time, it was these shrewdly conceived conferences that provided a common platform for musicologists of the north and south. With the active help and patronage of the cultured rulers of many states and the cooperation of a large number of admirers and friends, Bhatkhandeji was able to get together the representatives of all the major *gharanas* of Hindustani music. Besides numerous music concerts, several seminars also were arranged in which leading musicians and musicologists held detailed discussions on various controversial issues in Hindustani music such as "Notation system", "Thaat-Raga-Paddhati", "Raga-Raganga" classification, and so on. After taking note of all the points of view, Bhatkhandeji presented his own lucid *Thaat-Raga* classification and simple notation-system, which were almost unanimously accepted in the Lucknow conferences. These have, in fact, become the foundation of our present Hindustani music system. What had been the jealously guarded musical treasures of a few *gharanas* have now—through the Chaturpandit's life-long-efforts — been spread out magnanimously for music-lovers and students for all times to come. No wonder Bhatkhande is regarded as *the architect and lawgiver of modern Hindustani music*.

Music Conferences

For the organisation of these memorable Music Conferences, the Chaturpandit got the fullest patronage and help of many music-loving rajahs and taluqdars who had become great admirers of his selfless missionary work in the field of music. Prominent among them were the Nawab Saheb of Rampur, Raja Nawab Ali Khan of Akbarpur, Sir William Morris the Governor, the two Balis (Rai Umanath Bali and Rai Rajeswar Bali) and the rulers of Baroda, Gwalior, Dholpur, Dharampur, Jaipur, Indore, Gwalior, Maihar, Alwar, Patiala, Gidhaur etc. All of them sent their distinguished Court-musicians to participate in these historic conferences. The venue of both the conferences held in Lucknow in 1924 and 1925 was the Kaisarbagh Baradari. It is said that nearly 5,000 music-lovers attended each session. This was a novel and exciting experience for the people of Lucknow who had never before seen a Music Conference on such a large scale. The decision to establish a music college in Lucknow received unanimous support in these, and accordingly, music classes were started in 1926 in the Topewali Kothi near Kaisarbagh. Among his numerous friends who gave valuable help in organising these conferences, one was Shri Narayan Govind Ratanjankar (father of Sreekrishna Narayan), a discerning music-lover who took deep interest in music and entrusted his son's entire career to Pandit Bhatkhande. Narayan G. Ratanjankar gave much active help to him and also stayed on in the college during the two initial years, taking full interest in the infancy and growth of the institution. How much it must have delighted his heart to watch young Krishna Narayan singing in top form in these prestigious conferences in which the reputed musicians of nearly all the *gharanas* used to assemble! Raja Bhaiya Poonchwale, Brij Krishna Kaul, Wadilal Shivram, Bhalchandra Sukhthankar, Premvallabh Joshi, D.K. Joshi, and Shankar Rao Karnad were some of the other friends who worked hard to make the conferences and the Music College a great success.

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Mr. B.S. Pathak has written how he was simply overawed and inspired by the brilliant galaxy of musicians who participated in the historic Music Conferences of Lucknow. Mr. Pathak who had been sent from Gwalior as a promising student along with some others under the chaperonship of Raja Bhaiya from Gwalior, reminisces :— "Among the stalwarts who participated in the Lucknow Conferences of 1924 and 25, I still remember quite a few — such as Khan Saheb Allahbande Khan, Mohammad Ali Khan and Ashiq Ali Khan of Jaipur, Ustad Faiyaz Khan of Baroda, Krishnarao Pandit of Gwalior, Chandan Chaubey of Mathura, Wazir Khan of Rampur, Mushtaq Hussain of Rampur, Alauddin Khan of Maihar, Murad Khan of Indore, Imdad Khan, Dilip Chandra VEDI, Gopeswar Banerji, Bhagwandas (Pakhawajiya), Lala Jhalli of Tikamgarh (Pakhawaj), Biru Misra of Varanasi (Tabla), and Manmohan (Sitar). Each day, either before or after the conference-sessions, many of these *Kalavants* used to drop in at the college-room of Bhatkhandeji and carry on long discussions regarding music-theory, controversial raga-forms etc, and give practical demonstrations of such ragas, for the handful of staff and students privileged to be present on such evenings. These were really unforgettable experiences" Mr. Pathak recalls how it was in these exclusive college soirees that he had heard stalwarts like Ustads Alauddin Khan and Karamat Khan (Jaipur) for the first time. The former was a close friend and the latter a guru of Bhatkhande. Although Karamat Khan was nearly 90 then, he could still render ragas beautifully. Such was the Chaturpandit's personality and scholarship that he was revered by *"Kalavants"*, as well as by high society alike. The dignified Dhrupad was his favourite style, and he had learnt a large number of such traditional Dhrupads

from reputed descendants of the Seniya Parampara such as Raoji Buwa, Ganpatbuwa, Raja Bhaiya, Mohammad Ali Khan Kothiwai, Nazir Khan, Nawab Sahebs Hamid Ali Khan and Jhamman Khan of Rampur, Wazir Khan and Allahbande Khan. It was Wadilal Shivram who had introduced Bhatkhande to Ustads Zakiruddin and Allahbande, the two illustrious nephews of Ustad Bahram Khan, and famous exponents of the authoritative Dhrupad style. He had learnt nearly 400 songs of the Gwalior Gharana from Shri Eknath Pandit of Gwalior. No wonder that Bhatkhandeji's Kramik books are considered as "real Trivenis" as they contain hundreds of valuable traditional compositions from the Gwalior, Rampur and Jaipur gharanas. Whenever necessary in the course of the discussions, Bhatkhande could render Dhrupads as well as Khayals of the Gwalior parampara impressively in his tuneful, lowpitched voice and in a dignified style. No wonder that some of the greatest musicians of the time remained his good friends and admirers and frequent visitors.

His numerous close associates, friends, admirers, and music-students who had the good fortune of hearing Pdt. Bhatkhande render traditional Dhrupads, Khayals etc. have left glowing accounts of his low-pitched, widely-ranged, and well-modulated voice, and his correct and dignified presentation of hundreds of traditional compositions. They say that wherever Panditji was, the entire atmosphere used to become "Naadamaya" (surcharged with music) because he lived, moved, and had his being in the world of Music. His interesting conversation attracted numerous visitors every day, and his topics were all centred around his vast fund of experiences and contacts with hundreds of musicians and music-scholars all over India.

Bhatkhande was born to retrieve the forgotten treasures of Hindustani music and restore these national treasures to the rightful owners, namely, the people who had lost touch with them for many centuries. In order to collect the enormous number of traditional "cheezen" concealed in various gharanas, he had to hunt in every nook and corner of the country, endure untold hardships, face much antagonism, and even bear abuses and insults! But he bore it all with Yogic equanimity and a disarming humility, until his utter sincerity, lack of ego, and dedication to the cause of Music gradually bore down all opposition and won for him the unstinted co-operation, deep affection and respect of countless music-lovers including royal patrons and pundits, and professional ustads. A few out of the many anecdotes given in the Bhatkhande Commemoration Volume are adequate to prove the utter selflessness with which Bhatkhande strove all his life for his noble aim in life. For instance, when Maharaja Madhavrao Scindia requested him to take charge of the Madho Sangeet Mahavidyalaya and offered him Rs. 600/- per month (a lavish sum in those times) and a free house, Bhatkhande politely refused saying – "I get Rs. 100/- from my bank-account each month and that is sufficient for my few needs. I am getting old and do not want to be tied down to a job. However, I shall come twice a year as an Examiner and conduct the examinations personally."

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The rulers of various states sent chosen musicians to Bhatkhande to be personally trained by him and to be groomed by him into good teachers. Bhatkhande devoted many months to this work, but refused to accept any "Guru dakshina" except a promise from all of them that they would devote their lives to the propagation of musical knowledge. How well he succeeded in this is proved by the large number of teachers he trained, and their lives of dedication to their guru's mission, such as Raja Bhaiya, Bhaskarrao Khandeparkar, Wadilal, Ratanjankar, Govind Narayan Natu, Balaji Sreedhar Pathak, N.L. Gune, Govindrao Rajurkar, Shankarrao Karnad, Sri Samant, Krishnarao Date, the Joshi Brothers and others. In 1923 when Atiya Begum, a well-known music-lover visited Bhatkhandeji and inspected the classes, a little soiree was arranged in which Natu and Pathak gave a fine Jugulbandi recital. After this performance, he asked Atiya Begum :—"Is it not really creditable that these musician-teachers are training up good singers from families who have no traditions of music? From now on, not only *Khandani* musicians, but also talented music-students from other families also can become good musicians".

Restoring respectability to music was a common burning passion with both Bhatkhande and his great contemporary musician Pdt. Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. The tribute that the famed musician Anjanibai Malpekar of Bombay paid to Bhatkhandeji is sufficient to prove how well he succeeded in this mission. Anjanibai was the foremost disciple of Ustad Nazir Khan who had become a great admirer of Pdt. Bhatkhande ever since their association in the Gayan Uttejak Mandali of Bombay. Deeply impressed by Panditji's selfless and dynamic work in the field of Music, Nazir Khan had appealed to him :-

"Rao Saheb! musicians are languishing on the footpaths and dying of penury! Save their lives and keep our music alive". That was what exactly Bhatkhande achieved. Many years later when Anjanibai Malpekar was going to receive the prestigious Sangeet Natak Academy Award from the President of India, she confessed that it was to Pdt. Bhatkhande that her deeply grateful thoughts flashed back in that great moment in her life. Had it not been for his constant encouragement and fatherly affection for her, she would never have reached the top, owing to the numerous obstacles she had to overcome. If musicians are being honoured now by the high and mighty of the land, it is because the Art has been reinstated on its highly honoured pedestal as in days of yore, thanks to the dedicated lives of musical crusaders like Pdt. Vishnu Digambar and Pdt. Bhatkhande.

Among the Chaturpandit's admirers, friends and visitors were some of the celebrated musicians and

scholars of the times. As Ratanjankar used to accompany his guru and mentor everywhere and was his prime disciple, the friends of Panditji maintained their contacts with "Babu" and the college, even after the death of Bhatkhande.

During Dr. Ratanjankar's long tenure as Principal, the most reputed professional musicians of those times used to visit the college and give informal music sittings. This was how we, the students of that era had the rare privilege of listening to some of the great maestros in delightfully informal and highly educative mehfil in the college.

Ustad Allaiddin Khan ("Baba" as we called him) who was a good friend and admirer of Bhatkhande and Ratanjankar, used to visit the college as an Examiner, and he performed many times in the College functions. Although we were scared of his legendary temper, how we used to look forward to his unforgettable Sarod-recitals in some of the college-functions! Recalling his long association with the Chaturpandit, Baba remarked much later in life:—"It was as co-disciples (*gurubandhus*) of Ustad Wazir Khan that we met in Rampur. Soon we became close friends and mutual admirers sharing a common passion for Music. Panditji appointed me as an Examiner in the college and invited me to the great Music Conferences that he organised. It was he who gave me the first opportunity to present my *Maihar Band* in the Lucknow Conferences. Today I am reaching my century, and my memory is becoming feeble in other matters. But I still vividly recall the beautiful moments I spent in his inspiring company. Those were really the most unforgettable moments of my life". *Ustad Ali Akbar* also visited and performed in the college, during his Lucknow days.

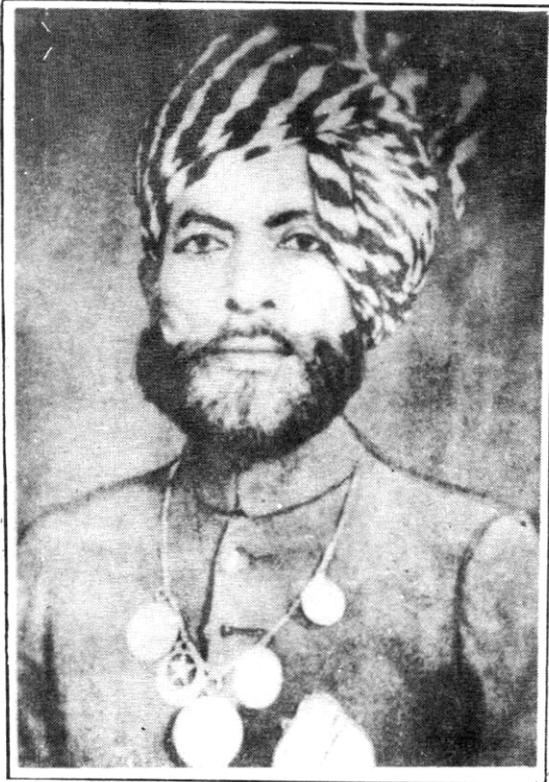
Aftab-e-Mausiqui Ustad Faiyaz Khan was a musical giant whom Bhatkhande admired so much, that he sent his own pet-disciple Ratanjankar to learn at the Ustad's feet in real "gurukula" style. Ustad Faiyaz Khan used to be a frequent visitor to Lucknow and a regular broadcaster from AIR, Lucknow. This is how, many of Dr. Ratanjankar's disciples like Chidanand Nagarkar, Dinkar Kaikini, Sunil Bose and others have been able to incorporate some features of the "Rangila" style into their own singing. Music-lovers who attended those two Conferences in Lucknow still recall Faiyaz Khan's grand concert in which he was given vocal support by Dr. Ratanjankar and Pdt. Dilip Chandra VEDI. His *Ramkali* and *Thumri* are still remembered. Faiyaz Khan used to say :—"It was Pdt. Bhatkhande who made me a real *gawaiya*. I owe a lot to him." A dhrupadiya by training, Khan Saheb added new dimensions to Khayal singing. At the Chaturpandit's request, he composed many Khayals with his pen-name "*Prem Piya*". Some of these are included in the Kramik series.

Ustad Mushtaq Hussain Khan of Rampur was another Examiner whose recitals used to be extremely valuable for us. His "*khayal bharna*", "*taans*", "*boltaans*", "*sapaat taans*" etc. were of the Gwalior traditions of Haddu -Hassu. His repertoire of Khayals, Thumris, Tappas, and Taranas was vast indeed!

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The only time I had the rare privilege of hearing in person the Sarangi-wizard *Ustad Bundu Khan* was in a demonstration he gave for staff and students in the Veena Hall of the college. We now realize that this hall is acoustically very poor and defective. But in those days Lucknow did not have any acoustically good auditoria. Therefore, the famed musicians of the time did not hesitate to open up the springs of their art in the Veena Hall of the College. Ustad Bundu Khan who had contacts with all the reputed vocal and instrumental artistes of the times, played a vital role in popularising Bhatkhandeji's compositions among the illiterate professional musicians of the time. He had memorised hundreds of Panditji's Lakshangeets, and he used to render them on his Sarangi in his public performances. Often he would burst into singing them and become quite emotional when moved by the beauty of a Raga or a "*bandish*". I vividly recall the many Malhar-varieties and Kanada-varieties (with hair-splitting differences) that he demonstrated for us in the Veena Hall one night in the presence of Dr. Ratanjankar, Pdt. Natu and other Staff members and a large number of students. Ustad Bundu Khan used to say :—"What Pdt. Bhatkhande wrought in the world of music was nothing short of a miracle. But for his dedicated life, we would never have seen the wonderful spectacle of the evergrowing popularity of shastriya sangeet. I have memorised hundreds of his precious Lakshangeets, and these have been my guidelines for the delineation of Ragas. Whenever I visit this college and meet Sri Ratanjankar, I remember Pdt. Bhatkhandeji vividly. This college is the fruition of one of his cherished dreams. May this institution raise the standard of music and propagate love for, and knowledge of this art, for this was the cause for which Panditji dedicated his entire life."

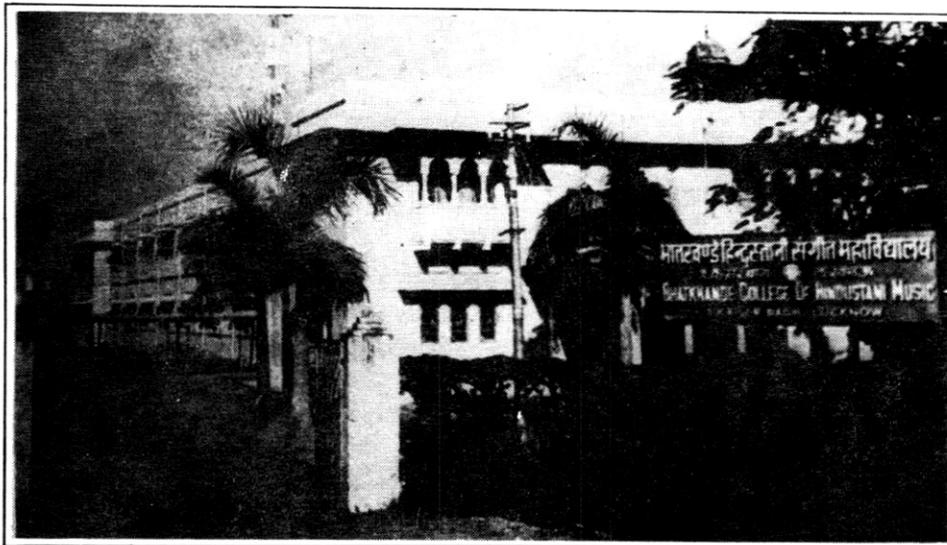
Ustad Nissar Hussain Khan of the Sahaswan gharana, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Rabindralal Roy, Ustad Allaiddin Khan, Shambhu Maharaj, Shivendranath Basu (urf Santu babu), Thirakwa Saheb have all been examiners of the college at some time or other. Pdt. Gajananrao Joshi gave many a vocal and violin recital in the college accompanied by his favourite Tabla-maestro, Ustad Thirakwa. Among the many concerts I attended in the College-hall, I also remember those of Ustad Amir Khan, Ustad Mushtaq Hussain, Raja Bhaiya, V.G. Jog, A. Kanan, Gyan Prakash Ghosh, Meera Banerji, Kartick Kumar and a few others. In more recent times, the college-functions have been shifted into the superior Ravindralaya auditorium where reputed artistes of today have been performing during the annual Bhatkhande Jayanti celebrations for 3 days in August. During



Ustad Mus taq Hussain, another Examiner and great inspiration for Staff and students.



Bhatkhande Commemoration Stamp.



Part of the new building of the College adjacent to the old complex of buildings.

the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the College in 1977, a large number of contemporary artistes (vocalists, instrumentalists, and dancers) participated, but one missed the many distinguished old students who could not come for the simple reason that they were not invited or informed!

It is true that most of the artistes who used to visit the college in order to meet Bhatkhandeji, did not approve of the system of imparting music training through text-books. But they could not help feeling gratified to note the growing desire for musical knowledge and the role of the teachers of the college in educating people of all ages and from all walks of life to appreciate traditional music. The college has trained up thousands, and generations, of "Kansens", connoisseurs of classical music.

In 1933 during Pdt. Bhatkhande's last visit to the Music College, Lucknow, he had remained busy all day long and late into the night with his musical discussions and writings. But one evening he suddenly became pensive. Turning to Natu and Pathak, he said wistfully :-

"I am entrusting this tender sapling - institution in your hands. You must continue to nurture it with your selfless services. I am confident that you will always extend your fullest co-operation to Babu. Together, all of you must strive to make this college a model institution."

The sapling has grown and spread; new buildings have been added; the number of staff-members has swelled; their emoluments have become very tempting; new sections have been added; the Government has taken over, and there is no longer any shortage of funds. But, barring a few, where are the selfless, dedicated workers of the type inspired and moulded by Bhatkhande?

Bhatkhande's voluminous publications were :-

"Hindustani Sangeet Padhdhati" 4 Parts - 2500 pages; "Kramik" series; 7 volumes - 2654 pages; "Sreemallakshya sangeetam" - 6500 pages besides various other articles.

The royalties of these publications alone could have fetched him a fortune; but he had taken a decision early in life that he would not accept any emoluments for all this work in the cause of the Muse. All the money that came from the sales of his books was put in a Trust so that his books should never go out of print, and should always be available to music-students for ever! In the words of Padmabhushan Thakur Jaidev Singh, "Nowhere in the world, in no other music have I come across a single individual who has done so much for the art as Bhatkhande did in his lifetime. It is unparalleled in the entire history of music". 83



CORRIGENDA

Page	Para	Line	
17	4	Last	Read – who between Guru & was so loving
19	4	4	Read – During the next 4 years instead of The next 4 years
20	6	12	Read – Bhatkhande Wrote after In a letter to dear Babu
25	–	–	Footnote after the end of the article: – Pdt. Natu died on 21st September, 1985 before the release of this book
35	3	2	After Shaheed Khan read is instead of was
38	–	–	Caption Ustad Mustaq Hussain Khan should be read Ustad Ahmad Hussain Khan
39	2	4	Read – Nasir instead of nasir
43	–	–	Footnote under the end of the article: – ASALI TALEEM SITAR or ISRARE HAMID has just been published by Ramcharanlal Agarwal, 43, Aminabad Park, Lucknow.
51	6	1	Read – Sons instead of Son
51	6	2	Read – of between patronage and the music
52	2	5	Read – Azam Khan's instead of Azam Khan
52	8	13	Read – Vainiks instead of Vainiks
53	2	8	Read – of instead of on after Competition
58	–	–	Below the photograph of Chidanand Nagarkar read born 1919 – died 26.5.71
61	6	3	Read – (Acharya Lahiri died in Calcutta on 17th August 1984 at the age of 68) after Mandira Sharma and not after Parween Sultana
61	8	2	Read – were instead of here after TALAT MAHMUD
61	8	2	Swarnalata Syal and the college should be a separate paragraph
65	5	10	Read – Virtuosi instead of Virtousi
69	Last	3	Read – reverence instead of reference
73	1	6	Read lineage between traced their and back to swami
73	Last	7	Read – Nom Thom instead of No Thom
74	2	7	Read – painstaking instead of pain taking
77	6	1	Read – left after Begum Sahab has instead of Kept



Biodata of Smt Susheela Misra

Born in Kerala, Susheela, the eldest daughter of late Prof. P. Sankaran Nambiyar (scholar, writer, and educationist) graduated from the Maharaja's College, Ernakulam (Madras University), winning Gold medals and several book-prizes for topping in English, Music,

and Dramatics. She took her Master's Degree in English Language & Literature from the Presidency College, Madras. As she had received regular training in Karnatic music for many years from well-known exponents, she was a regular broadcaster of Karnatic vocal classical music from the Madras and Tiruchi Stations of AIR during her College years.

Later on, she switched over to Hindustani classical music and took her Bachelor's Degree in music from the Bhatkhande College, Lucknow where she settled down after her marriage to late Dr. Shiva Saran Misra, M.D. (Hons); F.R.C.P. (London); F.A.M.S. — a physician of international renown.

From 1944 she became a regular broadcaster of Hindustani classical and light classical music from Akashwani, Lucknow. In 1952 she joined the Staff of AIR, Lucknow as *Producer, Classical Music*, a post which she served with distinction and devotion for the next 28 years.

Mrs Misra has to her credit numerous Music Appreciation Programmes including a National Programme on Dr Ratanjankar, and Interviews with many reputed artistes. For Lucknow Doordarshan's prestigious Series — "*Phan Aur Phankar*", she has already interviewed many famous musicians and dancers such as "Girija Devi", "Rukmini Devi Arundale", "Pdt. Kishan Maharaj", "Ustad Amjad Ali Khan", "Dr N. Rajam", and others.

A prolific writer on Music and Dance, Smt Susheela Misra has to her credit nearly 300 articles already published in all the leading Journals of this country. She is the author of 4 books on Music, and is presently engaged in writing more books. Two of the famous Malayalam novels translated by her into English have been published by the Kerala Sahitya Akademy. She has also translated stories from Malayalam into English for the International Short Story Competitions held by the New York Herald Tribune. She has travelled widely here and abroad, and written a series of travelogues after her tour of Japan, Bangkok, and Hongkong.

In 1965 the Bharatiya Sangeet & Lalit Kala Akademy of Kanpur conferred their Doctorate on her, and in 1976 the Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademy honoured her by conferring their Fellowship on her for her "outstanding services to music".

Other Works by the same author.

1. "MUSIC PROFILES" (1955)
2. "GREAT MASTERS OF HINDUSTANI MUSIC". (1981). (Hem Publishers Pvt Ltd, New Delhi).
3. "Lucknow Ke Sangeet Aur Nritya Paramparaayen"—(In Hindi— under publication by U.P.S.N. Akademy).
4. Nearly 300 articles on Music and Dance in all the leading Journals of this country.
5. "The BEAUTIFUL & THE HANDSOME" — Sahitya-Akademy Award-winning Novel of late Uroob in Malayalam, translated into English by Smt Misra, and published by the Kerala Sahitya Akademy as a special Silver Jubilee Publication in 1982.
6. "AMMINI" — an intense psychological novel by Uroob (in Malayalam) translated into English by Smt Misra, and published by Kerala Sahitya Akademy.
7. Many Short Stories translated from Malayalam and Hindi into English for International Short Story Competitions, and for some Journals.

MUSIC MAKERS OF THE BHATKHANDI COLLEGE OF HINDUSTANI MUSIC • SUSHEELA MISRA