



The Aesthetical Beauty of Raagpradhan Bangla Gaan : A Brief Study

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ABSTRACT :

Each of the musical styles that have spawned in the genre of bengali music has its own aesthetics. Raagpradhan song is a very special form among them. The fact that bengali songs can be so diverse can only be understood through Raagpradhan songs. The depth of the poetry and the sweetness of the words is the glory of Raagpradhan bengali songs. The lyrics are the soul of raagpradhan song. The blend of different music styles in it gives it another dimension. An attempt has been made to thoroughly describe the various aspects of the aesthetical features of Raagpradhan bengali songs through the discussion paper.

The main objective of the research paper is to shed light on one of the key issues of enhancing the beauty of this style based on appropriate information. This paper also concluded about how the renowned artist's of the golden ages have made this form rich with their different Gayanshaily. The sole purpose of this study is to show how the lyrics of raagpradhan songs are deeply expressive with the touches of Hindustani raga's.

Keywords: Raagpradhan , Aesthetic, Beauty, Gayanshaily, Khyal, Bengali song.

Problem Statement :

Each of the musical styles that have emerged under the influence of classical music has its own distinctiveness and aesthetics. Raagpradhan songs are the most traditional of all the musical styles of bengali music which has a blend of different musical styles but its have managed to maintain its own identity always. And that is the aesthetical beauty of this form. This analysis has been done to show the independentness of a music form which is quite unpopular due to lack of contemporary promotion or negligence at present. This study shed lights on some compositions of golden ages which are the foundation of bengali music. The main purpose of the discussion is to show with the touches of hindustani raga's how raagpradhan is being graceful and melodic.

Research Objectives:-

1. To understand the depth of Raagpradhan song along with its devotional lyrics and poetic beauty.
2. To show the role of Hindustani raga's to express the melody of Raagpradhan music.
3. To examine the popularity of some masterpieces (compositions) of the golden ages created by the outstanding composers of Raagpradhan song.

Research Methodology:

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, utilizing historical analysis, textual interpretation, and musicological study to express about the aesthetical gracefulness of Bangla Raagpradhan songs. The research is structured as follows:

Data Collection Methods:

Analytical Research : Examination of old masterpieces (compositions) of Raagpradhan recordings and manuscripts.

Literature Review:

Analysis of some songs from You Tube, text books and research papers on Raagpradhan music and its connection with Hindustani raga's.

Interviews and Expert Opinions:

Insights from musicologists, classical musicians, and practitioners of Raagpradhan.

Analytical Framework:

Musicological Analysis: Its an analytical study of the aesthetical framework of Raagpradhan songs.

Lyrical Depth:

Some selected Raagpradhan song of the golden age is examined to demonstrate its philosophy and beauty of lyrics.

Introduction:

A musical style became very popular in Bengal in the 19th century, known as “**Raagpradhan**”. Along with the name, there are many features are hidden in this style. It is one of Bengal's own musical style. Among the different genres of bengali music, raagpradhan bengali songs have a special importance. Although the tradition of composing bengali songs based on the hindustani raga's , has been around from the period of Charyapada. In fact raga-ragini's are the only basis of earlier bengali music.

The application of hindustani raga-ragini's has increased the aesthetical beauty of raagpradhan songs as well. The influence of dhrupad and tappa songs has been present in raagpradhan music for a long time. Subsequently, the composition of raagpradhan songs by adopting the style of Khyal and Thumri is a constant new step, which further enhanced the aesthetical aspects of raagpradhan.

Raagpradhan songs were rich for the sweetness of poetry and lyrics from the beginning. Later, raga-ragini's are added in its parts and enhanced its beauty. It goes without saying that it has given a different dimension to raagpradhan songs. Among other musical styles, only raagpradhan songs have equal importance of both lyrics and melody. Melody is the main features of raagpradhan,

Now let's discuss about the lyrical expressions of Raagpradhan:-

Lyrical expressions of Raagpradhan:-

Raagpradhan songs are much richer in the beauty of its lyrics. Lyrics are very important part here. Khyal has influenced raagpradhan so much that in some cases the bani's of khyal have been applied in this songs. The application of the ‘**bolvistar**’ of khyal has made the raagpradhan song even more richer.¹ Apart from khyal songs, many raagpradhan have also been composed in thumri style. And here the aesthetic aspects of this songs are revealed. However, the blend of different music shailis like khyal , thumri and dadra etc. has doubles the beauty of raagpradhan song. Some of the lyrics of such songs which are truly made us anxious even today are mentioned below:

Song : Piya Bholo Abhiman

Music Director and Lyricist : Acharya Jnanprakash Ghosh

**Piya bholo abhiman madhuraati boyee jaay
Keno ankhi cholo cholo ogo kotha kichu bolo,
Dure thaka ki go saaje maya bhora jochonaay.²**

This song composed by Acharya Jnanprakash Ghosh is a worthwhile attempt of raagpradhan song. These timeless songs are woven with a garland of words and melody won't get old ever. The feeling and emotion that this song has is only possible in raagpradhan, not else.

Concept of this song:

A heartfelt appeal to the loved one to forget everything and come to each other again. Because the much awaited night is going on. Birahini priya is asking her priyatama to forget all the sorrows and come back to her. These songs composed around the feelings of human life such as sorrow - happiness, love etc. touches our heart even today.

The lyrics are too expressive of the song and so real that it becomes intertwined with one's own life. Raagpradhan songs are having such melody which combine to create such a rasa that makes our mind satisfied somewhere.

One more outstanding composition by Acharya Gyanprakash Ghosh “**Firaye dio na moree shunyo haate**”. What is in this song? An endless stream of these incomparable compositions never gets old. These are the never ending melody which will be play again and again. The lyrics of the song are as follows:-

Song - Firayee dioo na moree sunyo haate

Music Director - Acharya Gnanprakash Ghosh

Lyrics - Shri Pulak Banerjee

Artist - Vidushi Begum Akhtar

**“ Firayee dioo na moree sunyo haate
Kunje ekhonow kuhu kujane maate.
Nai jodi daao hashi , tabu jeno baje bnashi
Sureri aghat dioo e madhu rate.**

¹ Karchowdhury, Amalendubikash. Raagpradhan ganer utsha sandhane, Pg -8.

² https://youtu.be/_1vjIsIYbRk?si=RtzYqerRuTNCGEOr

**Abahela noy priyo chaho jodi byatha dio,
Ashru madhuri eno e anakhpaate. ”³**

The melody at the beginning of the lyrics of this timeless song rich with the magic of expression. By the touch of a raga the song has become more aesthetical as well. If we talk about the lyrics of the anatar of this song, it is very difficult to express. It is combined with bhava and rasa.

The feeling and flavor of any music is expressed by its singing. There is nothing to say about the Gayaki style. And this is where the successful passage of raagpradhan songs comes in. With the touches of raga, the melody of lyrics and the richness of Gayaki are the aesthetical features of Raagpradhan songs. The composer creates it with one feeling, but the musician conveys a different feeling through singing. Let us look at some aspects of the beauty of an another very popular raagpradhan song.

This survey would be incomplete without shedding light on another timeless creation of raagpradhan song. Directed and composed by Shri Ravi Guha Majumdar and sung by Vidushi Begum Akhtar, this song has created a movement in every corner of Bengal, spreading its waves far and wide.

Song - Jochana koreche adi

Music Director - Shri Ravi Guha Majumdar

Artist - Begum Akhtar

**“ Jochana koreche adi asena amar baari
Goli diye chole jaay lutiye rupoli saari.
Cheye cheye path raati hiyaa mor hoy bhari,
Ruper madhur moho bolona kikore chari.”⁴**

The concept of this song:

What is there in this song? That's why its surprise has not diminished a bit. Even today, when you listen to this song, it feels new. Sung with so much dedication and depth, it can leave a mark on the listener's mind. This is where the aesthetic aspects of raagpradhan songs come to fruition.

The feeling of this song is completely love. There is a magic in these bengali raagpradhan songs written about love. 'Jochana' is the main character of this song. Through Jochana, the poet may hinted at a loved one. Jochana does not come to Birahi's house. Leaving a hint, jochana drifts off to another way. Birahi's heart becomes heavy as she searches for his way. Still, Birahi cannot let go of the infatuation with the beauty of that beloved one. In this way the lyrics became succeed to express the aesthetical beauty of raagpradhan song.

The influence of Hindustani Raga's on Raagpradhan songs:-

Now if we talk about the hindustani raga's then we will understand that the beauty of raagpradhan is more enhanced by the influence of it. Raga's are the base of raagpradhan as we know. With the touches of raga's the lyrics became more expressive and nostalgic. Raagpradhan is mostly influenced by Khyal. But there are no strict restrictions bound. The independentness is the beauty of this form. Many other music styles are also influenced raagpradhan music, that's why sometimes its became khyal ang, sometimes thumri ang and else. The beauty of raagpradhan is also based on the veteran artists who have made this shaili successful.

Some Raagpradhan song which can be called as Khyal ang are mentioned below:

Mon Bale Tumi - Raga Bhairabi⁵

Brindabana Dhana Naba- Raga Brindabani Sarang⁶

Jamini Bibhor - Raga Arana Tetali⁷

Bone Bone Papiya Bole - Raga Bahar⁸

Kotha Gyallo Shyam- Raga Bhairabi⁹

Aji Nijhum Rate - Raga Darbari Kanara¹⁰

Shunno E Buke Pakhi - Raga Chhayana¹¹

Eki Tandra Bijarito - Raga Malkauns¹²

Jago Alok Lagane - Raga Ramkeli¹³

Kholo Kholo Mandir Dwar - Raga Mishra Tilang.¹⁴

³ https://youtu.be/_hO6HAn4CM?si=yUOIt0oBs1Gzfv4

⁴ <https://youtu.be/X1-1fr0G9Qg?si=wGAV1uC8bAAXjp4p>

⁵ <https://youtu.be/geXpugeRdOY?si=Zw7eo4HFdIyJGrIL>

⁶ <https://youtu.be/1ewDgJWv0Wo?si=BFUfuV3Cd2XIaSML>

⁷ <https://youtu.be/BdXZ7YHzlKI?si=vbZ4NYwwVdtz7wcy>

⁸ <https://youtu.be/odYMfCciYCo?si=cFVvqyKCjlkZSLi>

⁹ <https://youtu.be/o3GqP7etkBU?si=6UPSxqPiu7bpkTAA>

¹⁰ <https://youtu.be/OPa2XyVmb5o?si=lOzHD2PgSpqqAgJW>

¹¹ https://youtu.be/9TMu2ewzGV4?si=lRI_wfibt1V9OxW-

¹² <https://youtu.be/Ad3WCzINy0s?si=4q3kCMQ6IcR0C2or>

¹³ <https://youtu.be/re4zMbmphnA?si=PLg1di8IsKGXaEq5>

¹⁴ <https://youtu.be/nMqnylga9Do?si=SUDQQMuF24woGNzC>

Conclusion:

This way Raagpradhan songs always proved that it is the foundation of bengali music. The aesthetical parts of raagpradhan are its melody, expressive lyrics and poetry. The composers has choosed the words very carefully to match the mood of the song with a raga and that is the ultimate beauty of raagpradhan gaan. For this reason raagpradhan is a very rich musical form in the genre of Bengali music. Raagpradhan is not an imitation of Khyal, Thumri, Dadra or any kind of other music shailis. Every music shailis which are mixed in its parts are created an another style of aesthetics. Khyal is the main base of this form. It is the most diverse music style in the genre of bengali music which will remain timeless.

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