



Abdul Karim khan: As a builder of kirana Gharana

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Abstract

Research in the field of vocal music depicts that musical vocalists always have deep impression over the history of Music in any region. It is a matter of great satisfaction and pride that the region of the India subcontinent has witnessed many permutation and combination with regards to vocal Music. From the very onset of the history of our music are find that our vocalists showed a keen desire to promote and preserve our region, vocal faculties of music and also our country. As for as research topic is concerned it has been thoroughly investigated the musical history of legendary master, Ustad Abdul karim khan, he was the renowned musician and the founder of kirana Gharana. Abdul Karim Khan has also given many great musicians to the music world as their students like Bhimsen joshi, Gangubai Hangal and many more.

Keywords: vocal Music, kirana Gharana

Introduction

Abdul Karim Khan's contribution to the music world is very valuable. Not only, he has his own contribution in the music world, but he has prepared many other big artists in the music world. Which we will talk later, first we will discuss about the Abdul Karim Khan. Abdul Karim Khan was a master who stalk the musical sphere like a Hercules for well over a genesis in the early decades of this century. He was not only gave a new 'mob' to the history of Hindustani music. But also set a innovative tendency in classicalism by making a paramount evacuation from the several current variety of traditional signing.

Born in Kairana or Kirana (district Saharanpur, U.P.) There is difference of opinion about this matter. Abdul Karim Khan, who belonged to the kirana village, is a village of UP or a village of Haryana., but there is no doubt that a village named Kirana is found in place of both. Abdul Karim khan was trained initially by his father 'Kale Khan' and his uncle Abdulla Khan. In the 1890s, he served in the princely state of Baroda for sometimes. They elevated through Bombay, Miraj and Hubli, Dharwad successively, founded Aarya Bombay, Miraj and Pune (1913) and opened a branch of the same in Bombay (1917). He was one of the considerable Hindustani vocalists to gain the big acknowledgment in the South. After closing the Bombay branch of the Arya Sangeet Samaj in 1920, he settled for eduringly in Miraj.

In India, the innovation of Artists of the pre-1930 generation by the ensuing genesis poses major problems. The chief being the unfeasibility of privy hazard to the musician concerned in a Mehfil situation. The fierceness of the prejudice is however marginally diluted in the case of musicians like ustad Abdul Karim Khan who were recorded not too barely. Not only was he recorded adequately well having about thirty four pieces to his credence, but the recorded collection is also appropriately representative of his art. In other words it covers the entire major (and also some minor) forms of his total musical

expression. The break-up of his recorded music may prove of some interest.

Khayaals	14 (including both varieties, i.e. bandaa 6 and chotaa 7)
(Taraanaas – 2)	(Marathi Pads 2, Carnatki pads – 2)
Thumris	8 Naatyageets 6

The aesthetic noble that notable his vocalism was its own, entire not perceived or predicted before. His music was soothing, sweet, peaceful and also sensual. It generally evaded sensational comparisons and strains. This was in acute comparison to the earliest Gwalior Gharana, he was known for open thoraxes singing, modesty of form and straight continuous evolution from swara to swara. Nor did it have any rapport to the Agra gharana, made so eminent by the ustad's contemporary, Falyaz Khan and which was remarkable by its dhrupad acclimatized, execution disciplined, dramatic contrasts, rhythmical syncopations and its lyrical enthusiasm and color.

The enduring density and constructions, correlated with the Atrauli-Jaipur gharana, colonized by contempt Alladiya Khan, was also discernible by its absenteeism in Abdul Karim Khan's gayaki. And what is more, whatever the form – be it tarana, Khayal, thumri, hori, Marathi pad or bhajan, the ustad's music was saturate.

It is thence felt with some vindication that the fragment of his recorded music need not be contemplated too inadequate for the desire of scrutiny. In accession, not to debate him at all would conformly debilitate the attempted examination of the total musical viewpoint captured in Hindustani art – music So significant has been his impact through commend and students.

On this backdrop if one acknowledges the phenomenon of musical forms, the ustad is heard to festivity in Khayaal, thumri and the few stage songs he sang with delectation. The three enunciation could to an ambit, be discussed as isolated

forms nonetheless, in all these categories. His assimilation display assertive frequent features. It is therefore commendable to debate the common features proceeding to pledged consideration to the other features of his art, distinct to precise musical categories.

A famous Muslim saint called Khwaja Mira sahib and Miraj is famous for the dargah (tomb). On a set day, every year a fair was held at the tomb at which Khan Saheb, as an adoring Muslim, was customarily present. Speculation his lifetime, no matter how distant a concert tour adequacy have taken him, he never declined to visit miraj about the time of annual fair. Khansaheb used to sit under a tamarind tree in the large open space behind the dargah and give a recital. People used to come from far-flung places for this concert. Khan Saheb constantly sang in the morning. He would first sing a Jaunpuri or Todi or whatever, and always end with a Bhairvi. After the rendering Khan Saheb and his students would ramble through. The market place consorted by Suresh Babu and his younger brother, both attired in clean white clothes and jari caps. There was also another public recital organized by the Arya Sangeet Vidyalaya in Government Theatre and Khan Shaheb also visits there while attending on the Dargah. Him by any one. The young musical prodigy's talent used to be discussed all over the town next day. A part from these visits, Khan Saheb customarily gave a concert at the Ganapati festival celebrations, which was formulated near miraj railway station. Khan Saheb's native home was kirana as we discussed. His descendants originated many Artists, sarangi players, singers and sitar players and other stringed instrument players. Khan Saheb's family had blood ties with the family of Bande Ali Khan and Hassu Haddu Khan. He received his music training from his father Kale Khan and uncle Abdullah Khan while on a concert tour, he happened to visit Baroda where his musical powers attracted attention and he was made court musician. From Baroda he moved to Bombay and then Miraj. Wherever, he went his sweet voice and charming style of music earned him numerous admirers. He moved to Hubli and Dharward for a fairly extended stay. His brother Abdul haq was also with him at the time and two brothers used to sing together. Subsequently, Abdul Haq moved to Northern India. Inattentive of the musical form, the ustad's singing showed a very striking feature the tones of voice. He used. His vocal tone could be characterized as pointed, thin, slightly nasal and occasionally a little hollow. It also gave an enduring impact of an immense intersection pitch. His voice could be mechanically classified as an 'uppar register voice.' That transcended in emphasized those luminous over-tones consistently accessible in affluence in the greater fraction of the scale. Excepting that in dominion of a coordinating lower ranges. The ustad apparently lacked the lessened registry and the musical ramification streaming from this partial vocal development proved inexorable. It is therefore not surprising that most of his chunks were preferred clarified in the uppermost grasps of the scale. The fragments in Jogiyaa (Piyaake Milanki aas), bhairavi (Jamunaake teer) and tilang (Kaaheko nainaa lagaaye) are valuation nothing in this appreciation. In fact the bulks of the compositions in jogiyaa and bhairavi are on the taar saa (the octave note). To import the point a step farther one notices that the spots of explicit musical influence are also found in the higher reaches. This is

not to advise that he was out of piece in the auxiliary parts of the scale. It only means that due to a cohesion to the vocal tone mentioned above, the ustad was not able to abstract the result which he could attain in the higher reaches.

A significant advancement at the while Khan Saheb's stay at Hubli was his meeting with Rambhau Kundgolgar (Sawai Gandharva). The later found Khan Saheb's music so fascinate that he immediately determined to become his pupils. The general thread clinched ceremony took place at Hubli in 1908. Rambhau Kundgolgar was really his first note trustworthy pupil. Rambhau who latterly known as Sawai Gandharva used to say that primitively his voice was not relevant for Khan Saheb's gayaki but Khan Saheb created hard on it to make it malleable and tingly perfect. Khan Saheb's analyzing took him from Hubli to Sholapur and then Pune where he lived for five or six years. Khan Saheb would get up frequently at morn for music practices. Rambhau, tanpura in hand, would escort him at these early dawn sessions. But this time Khan Saheb had ingrained himself as an acclaimed Artist in Maharashtra. He evoked an institution called Arya Sangeet Vidyalaya.

Khan Saheb's Arya Sangeet Vidyalaya was formed firmly on Pandit Vishnu Digambar's Gandharva Mahavidhyalaya, especially in two of its appearance, particularly the long term humor of the disciple's residence and the performances given by the college students all over the country. The disciples of Arya Sangeet Vidyalaya had to sign a fether for a seven years stay before they were permitted. Many disciples, chiefly from destitute inheritance, were taken on in this appearance and all their costs were met by the college. Khan Saheb had no reservation when it came to delivering education of music to his disciples. Infrequently concert tours were formed during which the disciples would maintain assortment entertainment along with such element as Tabalatarang, Jaltarang, Ghanatarang, Shehnai, dance etc. The schedule was sepharical off with a recitation from Khan Saheb.

There is no doubt about the loyalty of Khan Saheb towards his music, Khan Saheb doubtlessly was the first and (possibly the last) Maestro, at least among Muslims, to take up so many habitant disciples, pay from his own pocket for all their expenses, and taught them music willingly and without demanding any fees.

For many years Arya Sangeet Vidyalaya was a reputed institution of Pune. In 1917 Khan Saheb established a branch in Bombay which blossomed for a juncture. Khan Saheb moved to Miraj, the Bombay branch was closed in 1920 and in Miraj he continued to teach others what he knew. Then he finally decided to settle down at Miraj, and he acquired a piece of land outside the city limits, fabricated a house on it and stayed there for the rest of his life.

A style of singing known Gobarhari bani, was also developed by Khan Saheb. This style (or rather sub style) of singing is widely known for its pathos or melancholy undertones. Khan Saheb had an incredibly sweet voice, tonally so perfect that it used to blend inevitably with the drone of the Tanpura. Khan Saheb had wonderful abilities like a special system for voice culture and he accomplished in training several of his pupils as he had trained his own voice culture. Sawai Gandharva once told with Ashok Rannade that even if Khan Saheb had a very late night, he would in variably get up early to practise the Kharaj. Alapi was the linchpin of Khan Saheb's music.

Some Artists gives credit to Khan Saheb for disseminating a gayaki freely employing kans while playing a stringed instrument like the been or sitar the player moves from one note to another by stretching the string across the frets. The result is a serene drift from one note to another without any break. Khan Saheb's alapi was full of such unbroken drifts. The flow of his voice would twist and turn but always moved smoothly and unimpeded. Khan Saheb had a loud grace and veracity which had the power of sending his audience into a reverie like state from the beginning. He had a authoritative tana full of Gamaks although rather lacking in variation. Each adornment was bowed and clearly accomplished.

Rambhau Kundagolkar, he later earned the title Sawai Gandhara, was one of the cherished pupils of ustad Abdul Karim Khan, the builder of Kirana Gharana and elongated, his teacher's style by bringing his own elements into it with his inventive genius. Abdul Karim Khan was a pioneer with an eminently authentic mind. He music symbolized by sugariness, was ultimately deprived of bouncy actions and competitions. Since it had its roots in the Sarangi and Veena played by his fore fathers, Khan Saheb's vocalism paid great consideration to the distillation of Shruti and Swara. There are illuring stories of how the vibration of the Tanpura attune by him was such that one could just listen to it for hours on end. There is as yet another story of Khan Saheb at a concert accompanied by four tanpuras. When the Madhyam of one of the tanpuras Sank, he, without belting an eyelid, turned around and put his finger on the definite Tanpura.

He was deeply altered by a karnatic style of singing. His musical faiths were so equitable that he never oscillated to borrow from other style of music to cultivate his own. He modifies the rented components to ensemble the Kirana style, in one of his oldest rpm recordings, where he distributes karnatic ragas. He also signs Kalpanaswara, something he was completely opposed to. Attributing to the Swara Prasthaara he would say, "Carnatic musicians play Harmonium with their mouth". But if he did change his opinion about this aspect of karnatic music, it was due to Veena Dhanammal. Khan Saheb, who would camp at her house during his visits to Madras, had great regard for her artistry. Contemporary musicologists, such as Tirukkadikkaval Krishnaiyer, are supposed to have said: For Dhanammal's music one can for sake all the fourteen worlds. In a later recording, Khan Saheb sang Rama Nee Samanamevaru in Kharaharapriya and Entha Nerchina in Saveri. It was a great tribute to the skilled artistry of Veena Dhanammal. It was also a salute to the path she chose in order to rise above her social precedence. So Khan Saheb's gratitude was pertinent to all the phenomenal women of those times. When things got going well, Khan Saheb would spend an hour or an hour and a half on a raaga. His alapi followed a self- absorbed pattern that is, he would high spots some elected notes and weave a flimsy fabric of ancillary notes around each one of them. Since the scope for this kind of alapi would not be acceptable in enormous ragas he had a strong predilection for such ragas. Among the morning ragas his favorites were Bhairava, lalit, todi and jounpuri among the afternoon ragas Bhimpalaa, Patadeepak, Multani, Marwa and Miyan Malhar and at night, Yaman, Shuddha Kalyan, Bhoop, Bihag, Bageshri, Purya, Malkauns, Darbari Kanada and Basant. His disciples said that if pressed, Khan Saheb did

occasionally agree to sing a few other ragas as well.

Occasionally, his upcountry relatives would come on a visit, many of them renowned maestri on such occasions Khan Saheb would be the first to tell his disciples to befriend them and pick up some vintage cheejis from them. Once Rambhau (Sawai Gandharva) saying to Ashok Rannade, "Once the famous Sarangi player of Kolhapur, Hyder Baksha, came and stayed with Khan Saheb for a month. We picked up many cheejis from ustad Hyder Baksha on that occasion." Khan Saheb Rahim Baksha was a celebrated sarangi player of Hyderabad. Khan Saheb happened to spend Several months at Hyderabad as Rahim Baksha's guest and the two Maestri used to be claserted together for hours every day, exchanging cheejis they knew. It was Tamanna want more, who was with Khan Saheb on this visit, who told Ashok Rannade this. However, Khan Saheb refrained from talking about such matters with persons not belonging to the charmed circle of his gharana. There has been uncharitable criticism of some aspects of Khan Saheb's gayaki. There is no doubt in it; The Guru has a deep effect on the disciple, whether it is on his voice or on his way of singing.

The preceding altercation has an amusing contrary-proof available in the performing procedure of some of the other extensive followers of the Kiraana gharaana. As is known, of ustad's male followers the late Pt. Sawai Gandharva and Pt. Behrebuwa 'Sounded' entreating a la their teacher one could normally observe in them the carbon vocal approaches as the ustad had practiced, the overlap combo vowel sound, generous use of the higher register and the reliable vocal tone. But On the other hand, Roshanara Begum (in Pakistan) and Pt. Bhimsen Joshi (a well - known disciple of Pt. Sawai Gandharva) do not enjoy the ditto type of appeal because they do not sound like the ustad. The comprehension is that these singers use a two registered voice and a multiple vowel - sounds design. Such changes were priority. Without acquainting them the later, two musicians would not have been able to assassinate the fast taans, an act they perform so adequately. It is in fact a substantiation of a performer's logic to see the same artists also abandon the use of a uniform tone. Another frequently traceable feature of the ustad's singing was his total belief on the bol-aalaaps and the proportionate paucity of the use of aa-kar (exertion of the vowel sound 'AA') in the musical amplification. This was inadvertently connected with the continuity of tone that he so substantially believed in musical continuity of the type described earlier would not have been possible if the vocalization was to depend a vowel-sounds (and especially that of AA). The clear and unexceptional reason is that vowel production by itself means spending more breath than is necessary for producing consonants. Even a non-technical, equilant sense rationale tells us that vowel sound is heard when an interminable, outgoing, our continuance is cancelled at various points in the oral crater in varied ways to produce gramatical sounds, etc.

The third frequent peculiar of his music was the ustad's concept of the role of taal. To judge from his music, the ustad absolutely attach a submissive role to taal. He took the first step towards making the taal less essential and less impertinent, discernible and stringent when he slowed down the tempo of the accompanying rhythm. Nothing could have been more active in debilitate. The influence of the particular

trim of any taal. As we discussed before that there has been merciless criticism of some facets of Khan Saheb's gayaki.

What his disciples had to say about this is as follows

"Khan Saheb had a strong preference for emotional music and he used to discard anything which he felt might damage the emotional appeal of his presentation. He used to avoid bol anga because the words of the text get torn and twisted in the process and consequently the emotional appeal, along with the beauty of the composition, is destroyed, in his presentation rhythmic play (laykari) was replaced by tanas dominated with gamaks. He had taken great pains to make his voice melodious and through constant practice kept it powerful and tonally perfect.

Khan Saheb was as adept in thumri as in pure classical music. Two of his gramophone records 'Jamuna ke tir' and "piyabin nahin awat chain" will bear witness so that, one can go on listening to these recordings without getting satiated. The devotional mood of a bhajan 'Gopala meri karuna kyon nahin awe' often brought tears into his listeners' eyes. Since he wanted all categories of listeners, devotees as well as not so appreciative ones, to enjoy his music, he often included marathi lyrics in his presentation as well as popular stage members such as 'Deyhata ya sharanangata' 'ugicha ke Kanta', Premabhare' etc. It was because his music something to satisfy every taste that he enjoyed such reputation.

Khan Saheb was free from cupidity. He was exceptionally lavish and spontaneous in his eagerness to help the needy. Therefore, money did not last very long in his hands. He is not known to have turned down a suppliant.

He used to patronize all manner of people who were musicians by tradition – tasha (A drum with a blatant metallic sound) players, wind-instrument players and bandsmen. During the urs of Mirasheb dargah, he would call such people and organize competitions amongst them under his personal guidance. The medals, turbans and other prizes won by the successful contestants, all came out of his own money. Very often it was late evening by the time the competitions were over and the instrument players would attend Khan Saheb to his residence to the accompaniment of their diverse instruments. All these musicians and any mendicants who happened to be present were fed at Khan Saheb's cost and the host would have his food when all his guests had been fed.

Khan Saheb was versatile. Miraj has long been famous as a birth place of stringed instruments like the sitar and tanpura. All these craftsmen used to worship Khan Saheb. He knew a great deal about tanpura making and had several first-rate instruments made under his personal supervision and according to his own specifications.

He took great care of his own tanpura and would be very upset if its Jawhari had been the least bit displaced. Hussein Saheb, the famous sitar maker of Miraj, was Khan Saheb's close friend and did all Khan Saheb's work. Abdul Karim Khan was himself an excellent jawhari maker.

The Kirana tradition flourished and has continued to flourish country wide because of Khan Saheb. He was greatly respected as a musician in South India, particularly at Madras. His star pupil Rambhau Kundgolkar was a personification of his music. He lived with Khan Saheb for seven or eight years. He was a dedicated disciple, looked to every need of his Guru

and whole – heartedly assimilated everything. He made a great name for himself not only in Nagpur and the rest of Maharashtra, but even in music conferences held at Calcutta.

Rambhau Kundgolkar ably continued the same teacher-disciple tradition. Among his more celebrated disciples are Gangubai Hangal and Bhimsen Joshi. Rambhau also gave instruction to his own son-in-law Dr. Nanasaheb Deshpande.

Vishwanath buwa Jadhav of Kolhapur really received training from Khan Saheb Nissar Hussein Khan of Gwalior. But when he heard Abdul Karim Khan Saheb music he was so enchanted by that he became a black-thread disciple of Khan Saheb. Other reputed disciples of Khan Saheb include Dasharathbuwa mule and Anantrao Gadgil. Ganesh Ramanchandra Beherebuwa too was a disciple of Khan Saheb for a few years.

Sureshbabu mane and Hirabai Badodekar were both originally Khan Saheb's pupils but later Hirabai took lessons from Khan Saheb Vahid Khan. Hirabai and her sister never fail to perform the annual pilgrimage to Miraj to participate in the death anniversary celebrations of Khan Saheb which coincide with the uses held at Mira Saheb's dargah. Through Hirabai's initiative, a sizeable fund was created with the intention of building a fitting memorial for Khan Saheb at Miraj. With the money earned by her own recitals and presentation of plays, Hirabai succeeded in erecting a building close to Khan Saheb's residence at Miraj. It is planned to start a music school named after Khan Saheb in that building. Accommodation would also be provided to itinerant musicians. Khan Saheb's widow, Smt. Banubai, continued to occupy the house Khan Saheb built and used to give music lessons to those who sought them. She passed away on February 17, 1970.

Pandit Kapileshwaribuwa and his brother also received training from Khan Saheb. In their school, Saraswati Sangeet Vidyalaya at Bombay. The two brothers continue to train their pupils in the traditional Kirana music they learnt from Khan Saheb.

The famous singer, Roshanara Begum (now a resident of Pakistan) became Khan Saheb's formal disciple about two years before his death. But fame really came to her in those few months. In 1947 she left India and migrated to Pakistan.

Khan Saheb used to take good care of his health. Except at the houses of his close friends he would not take so much as a cup of tea. In his early years he was something of a physical culturist and, although leaner of frame, he was strong. He died on October 27, 1947 while on a tour of (the then) Madras presidency.

Some references reveal his authoritative details of his death, Khan Saheb returned from his concert tour to Miraj for the annual urs. After paying the usual homage to Mira Saheb he left Miraj for Madras accompanied by Sahani (a disciple of Khan Saheb) and sitar maker Mohamed Hanif. At Madras, that Sunday, a big reception had been held in his honor at which he was garlanded by a hundred institutions and individuals. Two concerts had been fixed in aid of some institutions at Pondicherry. Accordingly he rested for a day in Madras and left for Pondicherry at 9.30 p.m. the following night. Khan Saheb and a friend Gans mohiddin travelled by second class. The two went to bed around 10 p.m. Gans mohiddin immediately fell asleep but Khan Saheb being

unable to sleep got up and began to pace up and down in the compartment. Around 10.30 p.m. Gans mohiddin was awakened by the burshing of a corner of Khan Saheb's Sherwani against his hand. He got up and sensed that Khan Saheb was not feeling well. He tried to reassure Khan Saheb, told him not to be afraid. Khan Saheb said, "Afraid? I am not afraid, why should one be afraid of death? One has to die sometime,. At 11 p.m. the trains halted at a station called sing Poyam Colam. Khan Saheb decided to get down there. He had his luggage taken out and asked others in his party to disembark. Khan Saheb's bedding was spread on the platform. He sat on it for a while, then turning his face towards Kaba he offered prayers to Allaha and asked for his forgiveness for all the sins he might have committed. Therefore, he continuously chanted God's name in raga Darbari Kanada, then lay down on the bedding (his head in the appropriate direction) and that was the last of it. His body was taken to Madras and his friends and admirers wanted the burial ceremony to be performed there. But there was such a clamor of telegrams from Miraj that it was decided to send the body by car to Miraj. At every town on the way, people wanted to pay Homage to Khan Saheb by offering garlands. So the car had to make numerous halts before it reached Miraj. Khan Saheb's widow spent liberally for the burial and Khan Saheb's body was buried at the spot he loved so much, popular musician left his world, leaving behind his unforgettable artistry in the form of Gramophone recordings."

The year 1972 happened to be Khan Saheb's birth centenary year in September of that year his centenary celebrations were performed at Pune on a magnificent scale. At the urs held at Mira Saheb's dargah at Miraj that year, numerous musicians were in attendance to participate in the centenary celebrations and to pay tributes to Khan Saheb.

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