

**Influence of various Indian music forms on Rabindra Sangeet**  
**Synopsis of the thesis**

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## **Influence of various Indian music forms on Rabindra Sangeet**

### **Preface:**

Rabindra sangeet has remarkable tradition in the history of Indian music. Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, an excellent musician and the originator of Rabindra Sangeet, has written over 2230 songs. These songs have now become an integral part of cultural treasure of Bengal. Tagore has contributed immensely to the Indian literature through his numerous stories, novels etc. all rich in songs and music. These songs and music traverse across multitudes of human emotion, devotional hymns and songs of love.

Rabindra Sangeet has reached masses in the Indian Populism, from a poor boatman on the Ganges to a rich landlord, people of varying demography could find expression to their emotional trials and tribulation in the songs of Tagore, thus making it so unique to Indian music. It has explored every corner of human emotion and perception to give them best possible expression. The philosophical depth of Rabindra sangeet also is unparalleled in the music world.

Rabindra Sangeet forms an integral part of almost every Bengali cultural festival and is seen as one of the most important aspects of Bengali cultural heritage. These songs have also been used in several movies, both in Bengali and non-Bengali cinema.

The National Anthems of both Bangladesh and India are Rabindra Sangeet; these are “Amar Shonar Bangla” (oh my precious Bengal) and “Jana Gana Mana” (ruler of the minds of people), written in an older form of Bangla, closer to Sanskrit, that can be readily re-interpreted in almost all Indian Languages respectively.

### **Need for Research:**

After learning the essence of Rabindra Sangeet created by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, it is observed by the researcher that the basic basis of most of the compositions is the influence of Indian music on Gurudev. Therefore, the curiosity of the researcher to know specially about the influence of various Indian music forms on Rabindra Sangeet was created. Which became the reason for the need to write the thesis. Apart from this, any research has not yet been written on this topic after studying it thoroughly. Therefore, by choosing this topic, the researcher has discussed in detail about the influences of various Indian music forms on Rabindra Sangeet.

Indian music is a unique blend of various forms of music originating in different ethnicities spanning across different eras. Among all these musical forms, Hindustani classical music and Carnatic music form an integral part of Indian classical music. Throughout the ages, these music forms have inspired many other branches of what now we call in total the Indian music. Diving deeper into particular branches of music influencing Rabindra Sangeet amongst many, the researcher has provided a detailed study on how Hindustani Classical music, Carnatic music and regional influences of Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Punjab have played a major role in Rabindra Sangeet.

The researcher believes that this research will remain suitable for the art seekers of the music world and for the students doing research work in future, as a concrete work.

### **Hypothesis:**

Rabindra Sangeet is an integral part of Indian music. Its music is related to rituals, spirituality, meditation, nature etc. The songs of all parjaays of Rabindra sangeet has an expression of feelings and devotion. In Tagore songs along with raga-ragini, folk music also has a great influence. Rabindranath Tagore has a great

vision for music, he follows various Indian music forms and utilize its essence in his Rabindra sangeet in his own way. Inspired by Tagore's vision to Rabindra Sangeet, the researcher is taking Rabindra Sangeet as her basis, and to know the effect of Indian music on Rabindra Sangeet the fact has been produced by talking directly to many scholars and stage performing artists.

### **Data Collection:**

- Through some books giving information about the facts related to Rabindra Sangeet and the influence of various Indian music forms on it, tried to collect information related to subject.
- The main source of information about this subject being the performing artists, the researcher has corroborated the research work on the facts obtained through direct conversation with them.
- Tried to compile the facts through interaction and direct conversation with some artist and scholars.
- From articles liberated in different magazines, various dissertations through Shodhganga, the facts have been presented by compiling the research writings and other received information.
- Internet technology has been extensively used in this research.

### **Review of Literature:**

By interacting directly with the disciples of the finest artists related to the subject presented or by studying the books written on them and by interviews available on the related magazines and YouTube of the artists; the researcher has collected the data. By reviewing all those data, after studying them thoroughly and deeply, the researcher has tried to present the relevant facts that can be analysed analytically.

### **Objective:**

Music is studied experimentally or academically. Rabindranath Tagore used various music forms to create a rich music form called Rabindra Sangeet. The purpose of Rabindra Sangeet is to create awareness among people, and at the same time maintain the art value of Rabindra Sangeet. Keeping these as the building blocks, Rabindra Sangeet includes different aspects of the very human life itself.

Keeping all these things in mind the researcher found the motivation to focus on Rabindra Sangeet as an analytical study.

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The first chapter of this thesis talks about the characteristics and importance of Various forms of Indian classical music such as Prabandha, Jati Gayan, Dhrupad, Dhamar, Thumri, Tappa, Tarana as well as Carnatic music forms such as Ragamalika, Kriti, Padam, Javali, Tillana, Swarajati, Jatiswaram, Varnam. The essence of Various Indian light music forms such as Vaishnava Padavali, Kirtan, Baul Gaan, folk music, Regional music and Patriotic music has also been discussed in this chapter.

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The Second chapter of this thesis includes Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's journey towards Rabindra Sangeet. The learning and music practices in Tagore family. Contribution of Tagore's music teacher - Shrikanth Singh, Yadubhatta, Vishnu Chakraborty and Radhika Goswami in improving his talent. Tagore was very much influenced by the singing styles of all these musical maestros. Gurudev also contributed in developing music institute in Shantiniketan. He introduced various teaching methods. The essence of his teaching method is one of teaching subjects in front of the students and the atmosphere should be created in such a way that the mind of the students is automatically attracted towards it. This teaching was a teaching of complete blissful devotion, there was no coercion behind it. Along with this, this chapter includes knowledge about Rabindra Sangeet gayaki, Tagore's vision to Rabindra sangeet, rasa-analysis and a perfect way to sing Rabindra Sangeet.

Along with this, Rabindra sangeet of other class is also discussed. That is how Tagore was impressed by baul of Lalan Fakir, Ramprasadi, sari gaan etc. Tagore also formed Rabindrik kirtan by breaking the structure of Padavali kirtan.

This chapter of the thesis includes musical instruments which are used in Rabindra Sangeet. Along with this a detailed information regarding Rabindrik taal has been given. A comparative study of Rabindrik taal and Hindustani taal paddhati as well as Rabindrik taal and Carnatic taal paddhati has also been discussed. Tagore's creativity towards ragamishran in many of his songs had make a remarkable change in the music world. A detailed study of ragamishran in Rabindra sangeet has also been explained in this chapter.



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The third chapter of this thesis includes detailed study of different Parjaays in Rabindra Sangeet. The way 10 thaats are described in Hindustani classical music and out of these 10 thaats, different ragas have been originated. Similarly, in Rabindra Sangeet there is importance of 6 parjaays and its sub-parjaays. Almost all the songs in Rabindra Sangeet are part of these parjaays and upa-parjaay. Detailed analysis of songs with one example and notation of each parjaays and upa-parjaays are discussed in this chapter.

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The fourth chapter of this thesis includes Influence of Vedic music on Rabindra Sangeet, Tagore got the main inspiration of Rabindra sangeet from the Vedic Upanishads of ancient India. Along with this, influence of Various forms of Hindustani classical music like Dhrupad, Dhamar, Khayal, Thumri, Tappa on Rabindra Sangeet has been discussed. Influence of Carnatic music on Rabindra Sangeet has also been analysed. Tagore was also influenced by various Indian light music forms like Vaishnava Padavali, Bhanusingh Padavali, Kirtan, Baul Gaan etc. are also discussed with one example of song with notation. Folk music, Indigenous music and Patriotism plays a major role in Rabindra Sangeet. Tagore has created many songs related to folk music and patriotic music. In this chapter a detailed analysis of all these Indian music forms and their influences in Rabindra Sangeet has been discussed with each example of songs and their notation.

## **Conclusion**

In the present thesis, the details of the findings revealed by the researcher have been made on the basis of the facts available from the study and contemplation about the above four chapters. The journey of this thesis starting with Indian

music and its various forms which includes Indian classical music, Carnatic music and various Indian light music forms. In the next two chapters' introduction to Rabindra Sangeet, the emergence of music in Tagore's life, the sowing of musical seeds through his family and teachers, and the arrival of a multi-faceted talent is shown. In these chapters the researcher also found that how Tagore developed a correct opinion about the teaching method of the school in Shantiniketan. He created an environment for the students of Shantiniketan to become closely familiar with the subject matter through their daily practical life experience.

Gurudev's vision to Rabindra Sangeet gayaki, rasa analysis, ragamishran in his songs and a particular way of singing Rabindra sangeet reveals a different musical direction. He has decorated the songs composed by him in a wonderful way in 6 parjaay and their upa -parjaay.

The concluding chapter highlights the influence of Vedic music, various forms of Indian classical music, Carnatic music and light music on Rabindra sangeet. But even though Rabindra Sangeet has the influence of all the above singing styles, yet Rabindra Sangeet emerges in a new form, and this is what gives a different identity to the great personality of Rabindranath Tagore and his music.

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#### **Interview:**

- (1) Live conversation with Pandit Amiya Ranjan Bandyopadhyay - One of the senior most artist of Khayal gayaki in the country and the scion of the Bishnupur Gharana.
- (2) Live conversation with Dr. Pradeep Kumar Mandal - Curator, Rabindra Bhavan, Kolkata on 18/08/2021.
- (3) Live conversation with Professor Debasish Mandal on 19/08/2021.
- (4) Live conversation with Sukhamay Bhattacharya - Guest lecture of Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata on 19/08/2021.
- (5) Live conversation with Devendra Nath Dubey - Sr. Artist, Rabindra Bahvan, Visva Bharati Shantiniketan on 23/08/2021.
- (6) Live conversation with Nityananda Bag - Lecturer, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata on 19/08/2021.



- (7) Live conversation with Sachindra Nath Bhattacharya - Retired Professor and Head, Musicology, University of Calcutta, on 18/08/2021
- (8) Had conversation through Zoom meeting with Tapasi Gosh Madam- Professor in Calcutta University

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