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Preserving The Haveli Dhrupad Tradition In West Bengal: The Enduring Legacy Of Sangeet Acharya Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya.

Dr Ashok Barman

Assistant Professor

Department of Fine Arts and Music

Rajiv Gandhi University

ABSTRACT

This paper delves into the preservation of the Haveli Dhrupad tradition in West Bengal, focusing on Sangeet Acharya Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya's legacy. Unlike the Bishnupur style, the Haveli tradition thrived under figures like Ganga Narayan Chatterjee and was upheld through a dedicated lineage, culminating in Bhattacharya's contributions. The study traces the tradition's origins, evolution of the four major Dhrupad "Banis," and leading exponents' roles in its stylistic identity. It highlights Bhattacharya's impact as both vocalist and composer at Rabindra Bharati University and his documented repertoire. By examining compositions and their notations, the paper emphasizes oral transmission, documentation, and innovation to sustain the Haveli Dhrupad tradition, affirming its cultural significance within Bengal's musical landscape.

KEY WORDS: Dhrupad, Gharana ,Bani, Bandish.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

- To trace the historical development and preservation of the Haveli Dhrupad tradition in West Bengal, highlighting its distinction from the Bishnupur style.
- To examine the lineage and contributions of key exponents, especially Ganga Narayan Chatterjee and Sangeet Acharya Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya, in sustaining and transmitting the Khandarbani tradition.
- To elucidate the stylistic features and evolution of the four major Dhrupad Banis—Gauhar, Khandar, Dagar, and Nauhar—and their relevance within the Haveli tradition.

- To underscore the significance of oral tradition, documentation, and innovation in the continuity and vitality of Haveli Dhrupad in Bengal's musical landscape.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a multidisciplinary qualitative approach to investigate the preservation and legacy of the Haveli Dhrupad tradition in West Bengal, with a central focus on Sangeet Acharya Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya and his musical lineage. The methodology is structured around the following key components:

- Primary and secondary historical sources, including rare manuscripts, archival documents, and published histories, were consulted to trace the origins and evolution of the Haveli Dhrupad tradition. Special attention was paid to distinguishing the Haveli style from the Bishnupur tradition and mapping the transmission of the Khandar bani lineage.
- In-depth interviews were conducted with direct disciples, family members, and collaborators of Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya. These personal narratives provided nuanced insights into his teaching methods, compositional process, and the transmission of repertoire.
- Systematic documentation of rare compositions, notations, and oral instructions was carried out in collaboration with Bhattacharya's family and present-day exponents. Audio and video recordings supplemented written sources, ensuring the preservation of otherwise ephemeral elements of the tradition.
- The data collected were thematically analyzed to identify recurring motifs in teaching, performance, and innovation. The broader cultural significance and contemporary relevance of the Haveli Dhrupad tradition were contextualized within Bengal's musical landscape.

By integrating these methods, the study aims to present a holistic account of the continuity, transformation, and enduring significance of the Haveli Dhrupad tradition as embodied in the life and work of Sangeet Acharya Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya.

INTRODUCTION:

In Bengal, unlike Hindustani Dhrupad, two main streams developed separately: Bishnupur style and Haveli Style. The Bishnupuri style has already been discussed in the first chapter. However, this chapter will provide a detailed discussion on the Haveli style of Dhrupad. Sangetacharya Udaybhushan Bhattacharya was a preserver of this tradition, while Ganga Narayan Chatterjee (1808-1874) of North Calcutta was a prominent figure in promoting this style. Before studying Uday Bhushan Ji, it is essential to discuss Ganga Narayan Chatterjee, a Khandar Bani singer, as Uday Bhushan followed this tradition until his death in 1978 A.D.

Ganga Narayan Chatterjee was born in Bilva-Puskarini Village of Nadia District, West Bengal. His father's name was Nakur Chandra. From a young age, he possessed a very powerful voice. He received encouragement for his vocal prowess from the renowned Dhrupad singer Hariprasad Misra, while Mohar Prasad Misra advised him to pursue advanced Dhrupad training. At the age of 17 or 18 (around 1825-26 AD), he traveled to the western region of Bengal in search of a suitable Guru or trainer.

Details about his musical training are scarce. However, it is known that one of his Gurus was Mir Nasiram, who held the title "Mir" despite being a Hindu. Nasiram was a Dhrupad singer who primarily played the Veena, as this was the only accompanying stringed instrument at the time, while the Sarangi was used for Khayal. Consequently, all Gharana-Khayal singers were essentially sarangi players, such as Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Abdul Karim Khan, and Ustad Amir Khan. Nonetheless, Sasiram belonged to North India.

In Medieval period, the style of singing Dhrupad is called Bani. By mistake the spelling of this word is written by many as Vani. The meaning of 'Vani' is language. Bani of Dhrupada was of four kinds e.g. – i) Gaudhar ii) Kahndar iii) Dagar iv) Nauhar

Uday Bhushan ji was born in 1917 in the North Kolkata area near Jorasako. He received his early education at Oriental Seminary Boys School, which was located close to his home. Notably, Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore briefly attended this school. Uday Bhushan's musical training was primarily under his father, Krishnadhan Bhattacharjee, who was not only a Dhrupad singer but also an accomplished Dhrupad composer, although his works were unfortunately not widely published. Only a few of his compositions were released by his sister and disciple, Srimati Itu Banerjee, in a book titled "Bani Snchayan." Examples of his compositions, along with their notations, from this book will be cited later.

In 1969, Uday Bhushan was appointed as a lecturer in Dhrupad at Rabindra Bharati University in Jorasako, North Kolkata. During his tenure, he taught Kahndar bani Dhrupad compositions and was highly popular among students. He retired from his position in 1978 and passed away during his service. Throughout his lifetime, he was invited to perform Dhrupad at various locations in North India, including Varanasi, Patna, Mathura, Vrindavan, Agra, and Delhi.

Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya composed approximately 200 Dhrupad and Dhamar compositions.

Now, we will try to ensure some of Uday Bhushan's compositions so far we are able to collect from different sources:

1 st Line of the compositions	Raga	Tala
Prema Nagara	Bilashkahani Todi	Choutala
Aju Hori Khelata	Bhairabi	Dhamar
Chalata Gopala	Yaman	Choutal
Bor Rahe	Bahar	Choutal
Arey Mere Lal	Bhimpalashri	Dhamar
Hari Narayana Nam	Behag	Choutal
Choro Re Giridhari	Todi	Dhamar

Aba Kaise Faguna	Behag	Dhamar
Anandita Bhabani	Malashree	TalFarta
Devi Saraswati	Desh	Teora
Murli Bajawata	Ragamala	Teora
Barkha Ritu Ai	Mia Malhar	Teora
Aju Mose Khelane	Mia ki Malhar	Dhamar
Sambhu Shiva Deva	Hindol	Choutal
Yasoda Mai	Hindol	Dhamar
Nava Durvadala	Jaijayanti	Dhamar
Ajao Brijaraj	Jaijayanti	Dhamar
Haraparbati Pati	Chandra Kounsh	Choutal
E Mahamaya	Malkounsh	Choutal
Kyese jau Mai	Chayanat	Dhamar
Sampada tuya pada dehi	Bhim	Subha Jhampat
Bhavani		
Hara bhaje Hari Hari , Hari	Hangshadhwani	Jhamptala
Bhaje Hara Hara		
Hara Parwati Mahadeva	Chandrakounsh	Choutal
Bhasama Bhushama	Purba Kalyan	Choutal
Mahadeva, Jatame Ganga		
lalate sohe		
Madhaba Madhusudana	Tilang	Surgaktal
Mukunda		
Nabadurbodala shyama	Jaijawanti	Choutal
barana Dhare		
Parlagadere Naiya Kanhaiya	Kafi	Jhamptal
Ab Tu Na Main Pehchan,	Lalit	Chautal
Kaun Birajat Hain Mere		
Antar Mein		
Uud Jao Man Tum Hari	Abhogi	Chautal
charan Kamal par		
Piyasa Na Mite Re Kanahya,	Bhairab	Chautal
Tori Murli ke Dhun Suni.		
Prem Nagar Vrindaban	Bilaskhani Todi	Chautal
Ananda Dham		
Chinta Na Karo Re Mon,	Mudra ki Kanada	Chautal
Tero Antar Mein Baitha		
Rahat Chinta moni		

Kaun Gun Gaun Main Tuhi Gun Sagar	Kalabati	Chautal
Re Madhusudan, Narayan..	Desh	Dhamar
He Mahamaya , Daya Na Hota Mo Pa	Malkaush	Chautal
Tum Ho Bade Nithur Binati Na Mano He Bhagwan	Kafi Bagesree	Chautal
Kunjan Madha Dolat Hain..	Emon Kalyan	Dhamar
Barakha Ritu Aaye Sab Goriya ke Sanga Aaye Khelana Hori Syama Sundar	Mia ki Malhar Bihag	Choutal Dhamar
Hari ke Sansar Ananda Apaar Santap Har le Man Ko re Manmohan	Jogkounsh Misra Shivrangani	Chautal Chautal
Maan Rakho re Banmali Yamuna Tire Khelata Shyam sundar	Gorakh Kalyan Aadana	Chautal Dhamar
Gagri Mori China Laye Re Brijraj	Khambaj	Dhamar
Main to Na Jaanu Yamuna Jal Aaj Gun Gaye Sab Bhumandal	Durga Basant	Dhamar Chautal
Madhkar Aaye Dhaye Sab Alidal	Basanta Bahar	Chautal
Shyam Naam Ki Mahima Dekho Lajat Saudamini Sabadukha Daridra Hare Dukhhari	Bahar Puriya Sudha Kaunsh	Druth Chautal Chautal Sur Fank Taal
Data Dayal Na Hota Kahe Mopara	Malgunji	Jhanptaal
Range Range Khelat Bhagwan	Kafi	Dhamar
Ssada Gao re Hari Naam Fagun ke din mein Khelat Madhu Maharaj	Puriya Dhanesree Malkaunsh	Chautal Dhamar

Madhusudana	Manomohan	kedar	Chautal
Madan Mathan			
Ram Ranghunandan	Rajeeb	Bilawal	Jhanptal
Lochan			
Sangeet Ki Adhikar sab ko na	Gaur		Chautal
Milat			
Sadhan Karat Aawaat Manab	Madoa		Chautal
bhum Par			
Madhumandal Niratat Kanhai	Nayaki Kananda		Dhamar
Baaje Murali Ati Madhura	Brindawani		Chautal
	Saranga		
Jai Ram Raghunath	Behag		Sur Fank Taal

1

A few more compositions can be traced from the above book Sangeet Sanchayan written by Itu Banerjee (Sister and disciple of Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya) and published by Late Saoilen Chatterjee , brother and disciple Acharya Udaybhushan , In 1986.

THE CHILDHOOD OF UDAY BHUSHAN BHATTACHARYYA:

Born on 26th February 1917, Uday Bhushan Bhattacharyya's early life was deeply influenced by his father, Suryogi Krishnadhan Bhattacharyya (1883-1945). In 1920, Krishnadhan Bhattacharyya commenced his training in Dhrupad under the tutelage of Hara Prasad Bandyopadhyay in Chitpur, North Calcutta. Upon completing his musical education, Krishnadhan founded the 'Bharat Sangeet Vidyalaya,' situated at 8 Pary Lane.

From the tender age of four, Uday Bhushan began his lessons in Indian classical music under his father's guidance. In addition to practicing Dhrupad, Krishnadhan Bhattacharyya devotedly worshipped the deity "Gopal Jiu," established by their forefathers, through the wisdom of his songs. Uday Bhushan grew up in a profoundly spiritual environment, which significantly shaped his persona. At sixteen, he left home for Vrindaban Dham to present his music in various temples, thereby showcasing his talent widely. However, he eventually returned home, aligning himself with his father's philosophies.

Krishnadhan Bhattacharyya was not only proficient in music but also erudite in the Sanskrit language. He often recited numerous Stotras and the Bhagavad Gita to his audience and actively engaged in various social welfare initiatives. Young Uday Bhushan greatly admired his father's qualities. Upon Uday Bhushan's return, Krishnadhan entrusted him with the responsibility of mentoring young students.

Throughout his life, Uday Bhushan regarded his father as his sole guru or mentor. Music was a constant companion for Uday Bhushan, providing solace to his soul and mind. His dedication to Dhrupad was unwavering, and he worked tirelessly to promote its practice. For Uday Bhushan, music was essential for the sustenance of the mind and soul.

¹ List of Songs collected from Keya Banerjee daughter of Itu Banerjee

Education

After qualifying Matric from the Metropolitan School of Kolkata Uday didn't engage himself in higher education. He started working on his father's left over assignments of expanding the scope and practice of Dhrupad. He made the practice of Dhrupad common among female disciples, alongside the male disciples. He was the practitioner and patron of Dhrupad from Khandarban. He burgeoned the practice of Dhrupad in chorus forms, maintaining its calm and sootherness. He even distributed in his compositions the intricacies of melodies and talas which gave birth to a new genre of music.

In Indian classical music, Uday Bhushan is such a luminous star who is an awe-inspiring acharya and an ideal guru. This thoroughly calm practitioner of music gave credit to the age-old practice of Dhrupad yet included some nuances in its practice. Such nuances brought a fresh tide of enthusiasm into the almost extinguished flicker of performing Dhrupad. Through his late father, Krishnadhan Bhattacharyya's lessons Uday Bhushan received completion of his education. He applied many such idiosyncrasies in Dhrupad Music which delineates his thorough knowledge of the subject. He has expressed the connection between melody and musical vocabularies with perfect ease. He expanded his music fraternity by including several renowned disciples. He gave birth to an absolutely new school of music which has many idiosyncratic properties.

Uday Bhushan has always remained a person who never bothered about self-promotion. He was reluctant to perform his own music. He expanded the practice, and promotion of his music through his disciples, in places like Delhi, Mathura, Vrindaban, Agra, Benaras, Jaipur, and Bhopal. In these places, Uday Bhushan performed his school of Dhrupad music. While performing he gained a lot of praise and honour. He was welcomed by the then emperor of Nepal. By getting invited by the erstwhile emperor of Nepal he performed along with all his students. Uday Bhushan left an indelible impact through his music in the musical arena of Nepal.

He couldn't ignore the special request made by the organisers of the event. Uday Bhushan ended up performing in Bengal Sanskriti Sammelan . He presented his music there in front of all. His sister Itu Bandyopadhyay helped him all the more to deliver his best in this concert.

Uday Bhushan was associated with Akashvani Kolkata for a considerable amount of time. He was appointed at Rabindra Bharati University as a Professor. At the same time, he too was appointed as the examiner of music course at Calcutta University. He has worked as a teacher of music in multiple schools. They are:

Giti O Vani, Belgharia

Mahamandal ashram, Dakhineswar

Ucchanga sangeet Vidyalaya, Chuchura

Bharat Sangeet Vidyalaya, Barrackpore, and Chuchura.

In the annual functions conducted by these schools, he used to deliver his own music.

Notable disciples

Itu Bandyopadhyay, sister, alumna and Professor of Rabindra Bharati University.

Arun Bhattacharya, his son and Eminent Dhrupad Artist.

Achala Sil, Kolkata

Shibaprasad Bhattacharya, Brother, and student who composed the dance- drama based on dhrupad Music and Raga. It is known as “Dhrupad Chandam”.

Shailen Bhattacharya Brother, and student who became the in-charge of Bharat Sangeet Vidyalaya.

Shudhirlal Sarkar, artist Akashvani Kolkata

Biman Mukhopadhyay, Critic of music and artist

Sanjib Chattopadhyay, Notable Literate.

Many of his students have remained ace students from Rabindra Bharati University. They are namely—

Late Dr. Debabrata Singh Thakur, principal Doni Polo Music College Arunachal Pradesh and Bishnupur Ramsaran Sangeet Mahavidyalaya.

Dr. Shukla Chatterjee, Head of the music department Rabindra Bharati University

Prf. kaberi Kar, Professor of Rabindra Bharati University, and Visva Bharati University.

Dr. Gour Sharan das, Bengal Music College.

Pandit Ajay chakraborty, Padma Vibhushan.

Chandana chakraborty, owner and Principal of Shruti Nandan

Shreelekha Mukherjee, National award winning actress

Arundhati Chaudhary, Singer of light music

Manjulika Das, ancestor of K.C Das Family of dessert and sweet makers.

Dr. Ashoke Kumar Chatterjee , Chairperson, Ustad Rahim Fahimuddin Khan Dagar , Memorial Foundation. West Bengal.

THE ART OF SINGING A DHRUPAD STYLE OF UDAY BHUSHAN BHATTACHARYA

1. First the artist will sing aalap, vistar, and Sargam.
2. He will present the composition of Chartuk.(Four Stanzas of Lyrics)
3. In a dhrupad composition he took the whole pada of Sthayi, Antara. And then it gets distributed over as double, triple, or quadruple speed, Ari , Kuwari, Atit and Anagat, Etc.
4. At the end of laykari bat, they use to present Tehai, and Naw-Tehai.

THE FUNDAMENTAL QUALITY OF UDAY BHUSHAN'S MUSIC COMPOSITIONS :

- 1) Dhrupad music and the poetry of it is mainly based on Vedas and Vedantas, Geeta Chandi etc. The poetical philosophy is of classical importance but it is lucid to be understood and remembered.
- 2) He had given immense importance to Dhruva Pada, or Dhrupad. In the prologue of singing a Dhrupad, which is known as alaap we introduced many such things. He applied double, quadruple, and Sargam in Alaap. In Indian Shastras, we get the mention of the raga Sargam, which we sometimes apply to Dhrupad or Khayal. The poetical rendition of music used to get replaced by different swaras which again used to get ameliorated by the infusion of tala. Uday Bhushan applied only that part of the Sargam into alaap which we can't see in any other type of alaap.
- 3) Along with several popular ragas, curating Dhrupad through many less popular Ragas.
- 4) Alongside Dhrupad and Dhamar Composing Tribat, Chaturanga Ragmala with the help of Dhrupad.²

CHATURANGA:

Chaturanga, meaning "four parts," includes text (pada) from any language, meaningless syllables like those in Sama-Gana and Sargam, and bols from Mridanga, Tabla, or instrumental music. Originally known as "Chaturanga Prabandha," it was sometimes sung by Dhrupad vocalists to conclude performances. Chaturanga led to the tradition of singing Tarana, with Taranas of Dhrupad singers being distinct from Khayal singers. These Taranas are occasionally performed in Vilambita Laya. Amir Khusru is believed to have drawn inspiration for Tarana from Chaturanga. Essentially, Chaturanga must contain four components. Some Dhrupads replace the Sargam part with mnemonic syllables or Alapa syllables like Nom-Tom. This class of Dhrupad evolved mainly from Chaturanga's resources and uses many talas in Madhya and Vilambita Layas.

² During the conversation with Itu Banerjee

After singing the first two parts—Sthayi and Antara—its Gayaki begins. It is similar to Dhrupad-Gayaki but uses Anibadhha's meaningless syllables and Gana Bols from instrumental music.³

The composition of Chaturanga by Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya added in this chapter

Raga Yaman Kalyan

Tala Surfaktal

Chaturanga

Ascending: N R G m P D N S

Descending: S N D P m G M G R S⁴

Dissonance (Badi): pancham (P)

Consonance (Sambadi): N

Primordial Class: Sampurna

Sthayi

Tanum Derey Na Tadiyana Ete Tere Dani
Na Dre Dre Tum Dry Dry Dani

Antara

Na Dry Dry Dim Dim Tadim Tanum Tanum
Tana Dere Na Tadare Dani Drim⁵

Sanchari

G m P D N D NS
N R N D m G R D N R S

Yese Banaye Chaturanga Guru Ki Pradad Se Pamar gaye

Abhoga

Dhuma Kita Kita Taka Dhuma kita Taka

Tere Keta

Dha Tere Kita Taka Dhelange

Kat Ta Thunana Tere keta Gani Gana Dha

Tere Kete Gadi Gana Dha

Tere keta Gadi Gana⁶

³ The origin and development of Dhrupad P166 KK bagchi Company 286 BB Ganguly Street , Calcutta 700014 WB.

⁴

⁵ Dhruapd collected from Keya Banerjee daughter of Itu Banerjee

⁶ Dhruapd collected from Keya Banerjee daughter of Itu Banerjee

Conclusion :

The Haveli Dhrupad tradition in West Bengal, though often overshadowed by the more widely recognized Bishnupur gharana, holds a unique and spiritually profound place in India's classical music heritage. This study highlights the enduring contributions of **Sangeet Acharya Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya**, whose life and work were instrumental in sustaining and enriching this tradition, particularly the **Khandarbani** style.

Rooted in devotion, discipline, and a deep understanding of both musical and philosophical principles, Uday Bhushan's compositions reflect a rare combination of **technical mastery** and **emotional depth**. His efforts to **document, teach, and expand** the Dhrupad repertoire ensured that this ancient art form remained vibrant and accessible to future generations. His inclusion of rare ragas, innovative tala structures, and use of **Chaturanga** and **Tribat** further illustrate his creative genius and commitment to the tradition.

Through institutions like **Rabindra Bharati University**, performances across India and Nepal, and the guidance of numerous disciples, Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya left behind not just a collection of compositions, but a **living legacy**. His music continues to echo in the voices of his students, in archival recordings, and in scholarly work, preserving a sacred musical lineage that connects the present to centuries of spiritual and artistic expression.

In conclusion, Uday Bhushan Bhattacharya was more than a musician—he was a **cultural torchbearer**, whose work revitalized the Haveli Dhrupad tradition in Bengal and ensured its place within the broader narrative of Indian classical music. His legacy reminds us that with devotion, knowledge, and humility, even the most ancient traditions can find new life and lasting relevance.

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