

RABINDRA BHARATI UNIVERSITY
VOCAL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

COURSE - B.A. (Compulsory Course) (CBCS) 2020
Semester - VI , Paper – I; English version.
Teacher - Dr. Sankar Bhattacharyya.

Analysis of North Indian Musical Forms

B) KIRTONContd..

Kirton Types

1) **Nama Kirton.**

The following names of the holy personalities are regarded by the Vaisnavas as divine. The names are Radha, Gobinda, Shyam, Krishna, Hari, Rama, Gouranga, Nitai etc. Some of such names are arranged in a prosodic manner so that the reading of the arrangement gives rise, apparently to some rhythmic feelings. The couplet, thus formed , is the holy nama which is regarded as mantra. The Gurus in

the past, introduced these Namas to sing together and termed those as Namakirtan. Sri Chaitanya deva introduced the Nama Kirtan- the couplet is – Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. It is known as Tarakbrahma Naam.

Many types of Naamas are normally sung in Bengal as Naamkirton in houses, temples or in pandals, but when sung in rallies on road it is called Nagarsankirton, which in particular, was introduced by Sri Chaitanyadev in Navadwip and its vicinity.

2) **Pada Kirton.**

The songs of Kirton are composed in sanskrit, brajabuli or in bengali language. None otherthan the ancient Mahajanas could compose such songs. The songs are known as Padas in concordance with the name of one Anga in Prabandha songs. Such Padas are the verses composed mostly in Payar chanda in two feet like a couplet, or in Tripadi i.e. each foot consists of three parts of short length, two of which makes the first line and the third one the second

line. In any of the lines of the last stanza the name of the Padakarta is mentioned which is called *Bhanita*.

A pada is likely to be sung in the traditional pattern which suggests definite Tune and Talas for each part of the song. Although different songs had different musical structures.

3) Pala Kirton.

The word Pala in bengali means a specific part of the Leela of Lord Krishna in Vrindavan. Leela signifies the activities of Lord Krishna throughout his life . His noble performances, the major incidents and the affairs of love with the Gopees, and such leelas are innumerable. There are many titles of Pala Kirton based on the themes of the leelas, but from the musicological point of view, Pala Kirton represents a special class of Kirton. In some of the palas the kirton singer narrates the psychological condition of Srimati Radharani, the heroine of the play. The titles are named as Purvarag, Anurag, Abhisar, Rasleela, Gostho leela, Nauka Vilas, Mathur etc.

The language and idea of a Pala may be tough enough for comon people , for which it requires

explanations to make it intelligible. These explanations are given by the singers in local language and in usual musical manner. These are named as Akhar. The main theme of the most Palas are comedic and in some other it is tragic, but in all cases the play ends in a comedy when Radha and Krishna unite which is called *Milan*.

Gharanas of Kirton

Unlike the Gharanas of Dhrupad or Kheyal , Kirton also has different unique performing styles or Gharanas. These styles were introduced many years after the demise of Sri Chaitanya dev. There are five such styles – Garanhati, Monoharsahi, Reneti, Mandarini and Jharkhandi.

1) **Garanhati**.

In 16th century in Kheturi at Rajsahi, Srila Narattom Dasa introduced this style and gave it a classical shape. This style is based on pure Dhrupad style of songs. About 108 types of talas were used in this

style. Various pure ragas like Bibhas, Kamod, Gouri, Mallar, Barari, Mayur etc were used in the tune. Various ornamentations in mridanga bol are applied to make the song attractive.

2) Monoharsahi.

Monoharsahi style of Kirton was introduced jointly by Gyanadasa, Monohardasa, Raghunandan and Nrisimha Mitra Thakur of Monoharsahi village of Burdhan district. The songs were influenced by Kheyal style specially of bilambit nature. About 58 types of talas are used. All types of sashtriya ragas are applied in the tune.

3) Reneti.

Reneti Korton style was developed in the Ranihati pargana of Burdhan district. Sri Bipradas Ghosh was the founder of this style. Pundits compare this style with the classical Thumri style of singing. But Swami Prajnananandaji opine that this style bears many familiar aspects of Tappa style. About 26 types

of talas are used ; out of which Daskosi and Sashisekhar are most important. Behag raga is the most prominent choice for tune. This style is quite obsolete these days.

4) **Mandarini.**

Mandarini Kirton style was developed in Gar-Mandaran area situated in bengal orissa border. Sri Gokulananda Acharya was the introducer of this style. Only 9 types of talas are used in this style. It is influenced by the local folk styles of the area.

5) **Jharkhandi.**

This type of Kirton style was evolved in the forest area of Jharkhand. Sri Sibdas Kayastha introduced this style on the basis of Brindavani Bhajan. Later on Kabindra Gokul mixed the style with local Jhumur tradition. But the people of Jharkhand opine that it is purely a section of Jhumur song. It is also getting obsolete day by day.

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Tune In Kirton

Kirton song bears some unique specialities which differs it from all other musical styles prevalent in India. The tune of these songs are composed in an unique manner. Kamod, Bhimpolosri, Dhanasri, Mayuri etc ragas are used to compose the tune. Rag Mayuri is a special mixed raga which constructed by mixing the tunes of Behag, Khambaj and Jhijhit ragas. This special tune is popular since late 16th century. The notable point here is that the names of some ragas are used but crisis is that the raga formulae do not correspond to the Hindustani musical grammar. Of course, each of the type song reveals a melodic texture having partial resemblance with any of the modern ragas. The

knowledge of tune in kirton is from Guru parampara. The singer never stress on the word Raga, they use the term *Bhati* in place of it. In Raga music the procedure of expansion of a raga is called *Barhat* ; but in Kirton the procedure of elaboration of the tune is called *Surer Viyan*. The raga decipline is not properly maintained in Kirton – it is a very common say used by the critics of Kirton, but the modern Ragas by way of having lot of changes, have lost their traditional properties. Kirton on contrary, has been holding the traditional pattern of Indian tunes. That is why, in some of the songs of Kirton , the image of a raga can be followed while the actual Raga in its modern sence is absent.

Tala in Kirton

Vital aspect of Kirton is its unique patternization of Tala which is so much significant that some songs of Kirton are identified by the mere named of Talas. Tala in every music has a glorious role but in Kirton it is more glorious than any other. This tala system is known as Kirtanagiya Tala Paddhati – the original tala system of Bengal. It is totally different from Hindustani and Karnataki Tala system. These talas are played in ShriKhol. These talas are Daspayari, Lofa, Ektali, Dothuki, Som, Sashisekhar, Madandola,

Doskoshi, Teot, Rupak etc. All these talas originated and developed in the soil of Bengal. These talas bears the characteristics of Dasapran system of ancient Indian Talas.

Akhar in Kirton

In Hindustani music a Raga is elaborated by Vistar and Tana. But in Kirton, as the inner meaning of the Padas or Lyrics are quite difficult for the commoners to understand, so it is elaborated in easy verses of local language. It is called Akhar. Rabindranath mentioned that Akhar in Kirton is tankari of words. It is a very important and essential part of Kirton performance.

Matan in Kirton

While accompanying a Kirton performance, the word Matan is used by the Srikhol player. Matan means excitement. When the singer complete the Akhar lines in the song , the Srikhol player plays the tala in loud speedy tempo to uprise the listeners in pleasurly excitement. This is Matan. It brings an end to a portion of the song.

Dohar in Kirton

Kirton singers move in troupes which preferably consists of a Mulgayan or the main singer, 4 to 8 Dohar or accompanying singer, 2 Vadaka or the Srihol player. The Dohars are co-singers to the main singer. When the main singer sings a line of a Pada , the Dohars repeats the same until the main singer starts the next Pada. They sing together in the second round of the Pada. They also throws voice to support the Mulgayan.

Gourchandrika in Kirton

Gourchandrika means to praise Lord Gouranga – Sri Chaitanya Mahaprobhu. It is sung as prelude of the Pala Kirton. The verses are composed on the platform of the different Leelas of Sri Krishna. The songs are sung mostly in Bara Talasuch as Som, Doshoshi etc, for most of them belong to the Garanhati Style. It was introduced by Srila Narattom Das Thakur in 16th century at Kheturi Mohotsav.