

A STUDY OF THE PRESENTATION STYLES OF THE BHAJAN 'GAIYE GANAPATI JAGABANDANA' BY DIFFERENT KHAYAL SINGERS

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Abstract

'Gaiye Ganapati Jagavandana' is a medieval Period Bhajan written by Saint Tulsidas. This song has always been very popular in the Indian Music Industry. It has been presented by a number of vocal artists on stage and off. Bhajan can be interpreted in multiple ways in different tunes. Keeping the poetry intact, variations can take place at each part of the composition from the beginning to the end in the case of Bhajan presentation. In this paper, three different 'Khayal' singers total four different interpretations of the above mentioned song 'Gaiye Ganapati Jaga Vandana' have been studied and the observation has been interpreted at the end. In addition, keeping the relevance, a very brief comparative study has also been carried out between the same song's two different interpretations by Jagjit Singh and Anup Jalota respectively which were found at the time of data collection for the thesis. Throughout the paper, artists' uniqueness and expressive ability have not been included for in the analysis. The analysis has been carried out according to the mentioned principles in the methodology section. All the data are Studio recording. Public performance or any other source except studio recording has not been taken as data.

Key words: Bhajan, Interpretation, Analysis, Gaiye Ganapati, Presentation

INTRODUCTION

Bhajan is a devotional genre in Indian Music. Terminologically the word 'Bhajan' is found from the time of Bhakti Movement of medieval period of Indian history. In that time society, there were singing poets cum saints like Guru Nanak, Meerabai, Sant Kabir, Tulsidas, Surdas, Raidas whose creation of poetry aimed to spread 'Bhakti'(devotion) and love in the society. The term 'Bhajan' got started to be used from this time. Preliminarily it had come up with Hindu religious values and temple centric ambiance, where the 'purpose' of singing the verses has always been highlighted and participation of people (devotee) has been considered to important in society but not the singer's efficiency. May there be a solo singer with the accompanists or may there be only the devotees at the time of the rituals, the Bhajan singing is a part and parcel, an integral part of worshipping the God. In this case, the presentation of Bhajan remains very simple, easily understandable, catchable and connectable for the mass. Most of the compositions are composed with a repetitive and traditional tune. Bells,

Mandira or some Temple based metal instruments are used at the time of these holy rituals. If there is a solo singer who is often followed by the mass while interpreting a Bhajan, may use a Harmonium and may be accompanied by a Pakhawaj or Tabla. Chanting the God or the Goddess's name is also another feature of Temple 'Bhajans'. In this case the efficiency of the singer is not important.

Apart from this tradition of Temple Music, professional singers are also found to sing Bhajans with the passage of time. Artists of different genres sing Bhajan. Some artists are only found to sing Bhajans, whereas the singers like Anup Jalota , Jagjit Singh, Chitra Singh, Hariharan, Shankar Mahadevan, Tulsi Kumar, Shreya Ghosal , Lata Mangeshkar , Kavita KrishnaMurthy are found to sing Bhajans beside their 'majorly-working -genres' like Bollywood Songs ,Ghazals etc. Artists like Pandit D.V. Paluskar, Pandit Omkar Nath Thakur, Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, Pandit Jasraj, Girija Devi, Channulaal Mishra, Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty etc. are found to perform Bhajans beside their 'majorly-working-genres' of Hindustani Classical music like Khayal, Thumri etc. (Ghosh , 2019).

All these artists are soloists and they present Bhajan in different ways. There is no strict instruction about the Bhajan presentations. There are some popular Ragas and Talas which are often found in Bhajan presentations, but there is no limitation, set for compositional structures and its presentational styles. It is said that Bhajan presentation should be focused on evoking the lyrical meaning. Evaluating and justifying the subject matter of the Bhajan is the key factor to guide its presentational approach. (Naskar, 2009).

While collecting the data for my 'Doctoral Thesis', I found the Bhajan written by famous saint poet Tulsidas 'Gaiye Ganapati Jaga Vandana' by Jagjit Sing (online link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aASYnk-eaXI>) and Anup Jalota (online link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHq30QUcHew>) respectively .

Jagjit Singh is a profound singer in Geet-Ghazal, Bollywood playback as well as Bhajans in independant India. (<https://bollywoodfiles.blogspot.com/2018/02/jagjit-singh-maestro-of-ghazals-who.html>)

Anup Jalota is mostly famous for his Bhajans (<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/hindi/music/news/anupjalota-lesser-known->

facts-about-the-bhajan-samrat/photostory/6585). He performs Ghazal as well as Bollywood playback. Both the singers have sung the song with some commonalities. Both did not use any adlib, both did not elaborate the song by any word repetition and variations. In both the cases very little amount of improvisations are found. Use of chorus voice is found in both the cases and the length of the performance is almost same in both the cases. Used Melodic structure and rhythmic patterns are different. As both the singers are covering almost same genres and a number of similarities are found in the presentation of the same song, I found it interesting to study the presentation of the same song by four Khayal artists. While collecting the Bhajan recordings of Khayal Singers I came across this same song's four renditions by three artists till date. The name of the artists are Pandit Rajan -Sajan Mishra , Pandit Rattan Mohan Sharma and Vidushi Kaushiki Chakrabarty. In this paper I will do a study on the way of presentation of these five different interpretations of the above mentioned Bhajan. Online links for their introduction related to this study is referred below.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRR1qOg6yus> ,
- <https://rattanmohansharma.com/>
- <https://www.darbar.org/artist/kaushiki-chakraborty/27>

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

- Is there any similarity between each interpretation?
- Is there any impact of Khayal singing style in these interpretations?
- Is there any feature, maintained in the presentations of these artists' creation?

HYPOTHESIS

- There is a relation between same genre artists same Bhajan presentation.
- There is a difference between Khayal artists' renditions of Bhajan and the other genre artists' renditions of Bhajans.

METHODOLOGY

Each interpretation would be thoroughly analyzed, will be observed in different parameters. For dictating notations S ,R ,G,M, P, D, N, will be used for respectively Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, the Shudhdha swaras of middle octave.

For denoting the middle octave Vikrit Swars will be used as r, g, m, d, n respectively. For Upper octave notes the sign of ‘^’ will be used with the notes signature and for the lower octave ‘1’ beside the notes signature. For example S^, R^ and m1, P1. The Indian terminologies (Taal, Raga, Bol, Vistar, Aakar, Aaochar, Alap, Tihai, Murki, Khatka, Purbanga, Uttaranga etc.) will be used mostly for explaining the details. (Mukherjee, 2013). The data will be interpreted after that in order to reach the conclusion. This study will be carried out very simply any kind of mathematical calculation will not be included. All the selected interpretations are recorded in studios only.

The Song lyrics:

Gaiye Ganapati JagaVandana,
Shankara Subana Bhawani Nandana,
Sidhdhi Sadana Gaja Badana Vinayaka
Kripa Sindhu Sundara Sab Rayaka||
Modaka Priya Muda Mangala Daata
Vidya Varidhi Budhhi Vidhata
Maangata TulsiDas Karajore
Bas hi Raam Siya Maanasa More||

The above lyrics have been written according to the 1st interpretation taken for study in this paper. Online link: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9-hYHh30Qc>)

1. GAIYE GANAPATI : KAUSHIKI CHAKRABARTY

The first rendition: online link- (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9-hYHh30Qc>)

The sequential order of the presentation: This presentation starts with music track and after almost 20 seconds, the song starts with ‘Gaiye Gaiye’ twice, then the full first line is sung, followed by three more improvisations on its own. Then there are two cycles’ gaps and the ‘Gaiye’ word is repeated for four times in different tunes. Then again the first line is repeated for four times followed by the next line twice and third line once. Again the first line of the first stanza has

been repeated twice with improvisation. Then there are four bars for the interlude. The antara starts next and the last word 'Daata' of the first line is held for 4 seconds with a brief swar vistar. Then the first part of the line 'Modak Priya' has been repeated thrice like 'Gaiye' part of the very first line of this song. At the fourth time the line is sung completely. Again the line is repeated with another brief vistar on 'Daata' with the duration of four seconds. There are 2 bars gap with music followed by the same line. Then 4 bars of music followed by next two lines. After that the next line 'Mangat Tulsidas Karajore' is sung with another brief vistar with the end word 'jore' with raga phrases followed by three more repetitions each time with improvisation. Then 4th line, and again the third and the fourth lines are sung respectively. The singer then repeats the first stanza with first line twice, second, third, fourth line once. Then she ends the first line with Tihai. Improvisations are created with taan ang. The song is sung in two parts- first four lines as 'Sthayee' and the rest four lines as 'Antara'. Each repetition (of any line) has been done with improvisation.

Vistar : In this interpretation the traditional Bol-vistar (which are often found in Khayal or thumri) is absent. But Some words have been extended in different ways as explained below.

At the very beginning the 'Gaiye gaiye', using the phrases S`S`S`, ND`RS` S` is of 6 second, the second is of 12 seconds, using the phrases, S`S`S`, NDRS` S`, S`S`NR`, NDS`S`S`.

Next the word Daata has been extended for almost 7 seconds with the phrase S`NDN DNR` NR`S`ND NDP. Next extension of the same word is of 5 seconds consisted of this phrase S`NDND NR`G`R`S`.

Next the word-part 'jore' from the word 'karjore' has been extended for 4 seconds with the word PmDD DNDP.

The other details: Total length of the song is 6.11 minutes. Taal - kaharwa ; 180bpm approx. The song is composed in Raga Yaman Kalyan and it has been pursued throughout the performance. There are Taan ang used in the improvisations.

Instruments used: Taanpura, Harmonium, Tabla, Pakhawaj, Ghattam, Mridangam, Manjira.

Source: You Tube Channel, Date of Publication: 7th July, 2016.

The Second rendition: online link (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdU5S_9jONc)

This song also starts with music track and the song starts with 'Gaiye Gaiye' repetition. Then the complete line twice, second, third line twice and the fourth line has been sung once. There are then 8 cycles of interlude, followed by the first line of 'antara' ending with an extension of the word 'Daata' on s' for 4 seconds. Then there is aakar vistar of 8 seconds almost. Again the first line of that stanza is sung once, next line twice, third twice and the last once, again the 3rd line with taan ang, followed by the last line. Again the singer comes back to the first stanza and the phrase 'Gaiye Gaiye' gets repeated, followed by the first line twice, second line twice, third line twice, fourth line of the first stanza once. The song ends up with a Tihai with the very first line.

Vistar: In this interpretation there is a vistar with aakar, (like aalapi in Maharashtriyana Khayal). It is of 8 seconds length and the used phrases are S`NR`S`N, NDP PmGR, RG, RGM, GmD, MDN, DNR`NR`S`.

There are also 'Gaiye Gaiye' repetitions like the previously mentioned interpretation. All their durations are of 6 seconds.

Other details: The compositional tune and the used Raga and usage of notes are same with the previous one. The raga has been pursued throughout the presentation. Different kind of ornamentations have been used. Taan ang has been used in improvisation, taal kaharwa, 180 bpm approximately. Here as well, each repetition is an improvisation.

Source: Hamaaro Pranam, Publication date; 2005-01-12: Lable Saregama.

Instruments used: Harmonium, Taanpura, Tabla, Pakhawaj, Violin, Manjira.

RATTAN MOHAN SHARMA

([HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=HAIJJNUEWZG](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAIJJNUEWZG))

(The third interpretation)

The sequential order of the presentation: This interpretation also begins with track. There has been an adlip part with sitar. First line twice, second twice again first twice , second twice again first line twice. Then after one cycle of music, the vistar takes place with aakar using the raga phrases and the vistar rests in S` with a length of two 24 seconds minutes. After that the third line thrice, fourth is sung for four times with different melody in the raga. Other repetitions are improvisations. Then the very first line is sung twice.

After that there are two cycles of interlude, followed by the line 'Modak Priya' starts with two more improvisational repetitions. Then the next three each line is such twice. Again the first line thrice, second line twice and the first line ends with twice repetitions.

Vistar: The duration of the aakar vistar is 24 seconds. The basic phrases are SSGRSRG, RGPGR SRGPGP, GPNSNPGR, SNNPGR RGPGG GPNPP PPNS`G`R`S`NP PS`

The other details: This song has a duration of 4.52 minutes, composed in Raga Hamsadhwani, composed in two stanza's melodic pattern- Sthayee and Antara. Raga is maintained throughout the performance. Taal- Kaharwa- 180 bpm approx.

Used instruments are Tabla, Pakhawaj, Sitar, Taanpura, Flutes .

Source: This song is taken from the album Sampurna Ganesh Puja, published by Strumm Entertainment Pvt. Ltd, published on 27th May, 2014. This song is composed by Kedar Pandit.

RAJAN SAJAN MISHRA

(The fourth interpretation): online link (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRR1qOg6yus>)

The song starts with an aaochar aalap with the raga phrases followed by the first stanza where the first line is sung thrice, the second for twice again the first line for five times, each repetition has been an improvisation keeping the pure raga phrases. After that an interlude occurs, then third line is sung five times, the next line twice and the first line thrice. Again the interlude after which the next line modak priya is sung twice followed by the next line twice and the first line's 6 times repetitions. After that an interlude takes place followed by bol vistar with the melodic phrases of the raga using the words 'Mangata TulsiDas, Mangata TulasiDas Karajore,' which also carries a long note use and the use of the vowel E, with a duration of 32 seconds.

Then, Mangat is sung thrice, next line once, followed by the first line thrice repetition after which again there is a piece of music by flute, with a duration of 11 cycles, The first line twice, second line twice, then the first line is repeated for four times and then the part 'Gaiye Gan' has been used as Tihai at the end.

Vistar: There is one bol-vistar found in the last stanza with a duration of 32 seconds. The first phrase is uttered with the word 'hee' followed by 'a' Mangata TulsiDas Karjore with the following phrase PdNS` R`g`,`R`S`, PdNS`R`g` g`g`g`g`g`g` NNS`g`R`S`, PdS` Pd`R`,`PdS`. The last part of the 'hee' stands on g` for 10 seconds.

The other details: This has been an interpretation of 9:12 seconds, composed in Kirvani. The whole performance pursues the Raga and lots of improvisations are there in the repetitions. In this song as well the each two line has been treated as one stanza, therefore four stanzas are found in this interpretation. Some wordings vary in this interpretation like 'Bas hee Ram Siya Manas More'. 'Bhawani Ke Nandana'.

Used instruments: Tabla, Taanpura, Harmonium, Flute.

Source: This Bhajan is taken from the album 'Best of Ganesh Bhajan', Published on You Tube on 10th March 2016 by 'Music Today'.

DATA INTERPRETATION

- All the interpretations are influenced by Hindustani Raga Music.

- All the elaborations have been done with the help of Hindustani Raga Music.
- Songs have been elaborated in two ways - A. Improvisation (fixed with the compositional pattern) (Mukherji, 2013) B. Vistar (bol-vistar, aakar vistar).
- 'Repetition of lines' is present in every interpretation, but the amount of repetitions are different. Some words have been repeated separately in some interpretations.
- Vistars have been done in very brief and less in number in comparison to Khayal, Thumri singing style.
- Every vistar has a connection with the compositional tune. Most of the time it is inspired by the tune of that line after which it has been sung. The vistars are also executed in such a way that they easily reunite with the compositional tune.
- Each vistar is done with a focus at the Uttaranga. (Upper part of the middle octave and the upper octave).
- All the compositions are set in Kaharwa taal, Madhya Laya and Drut Madhya Laya.
- The lengths of the songs are less than 10 minutes.
- An aaochar or aalap kind of beginning is there in three interpretations. Only one singer's interpretation begins without that. In the case of Rattan Mohan Sharma, the vocal aaochar has been compensated with sitar but it carries the same concept (of aaochar aalap).
- The distribution of lines in the stanzas is different. Some of the words are also varying from presentation to presentation.
- Different kinds of ornamentations have been used in each song. Separately taan or long standing notes have not been found but are present in the improvisation and vistars partially.
- Almost every Hindustani Classical Musical instrument is present in the arrangement.
- A number of interlude music can be present in one presentation.

- Each singer repeated the first stanza before ending the presentation.
- Each interpretation is full of artists' creation in addition to the composition.

BRIEF COMPARISON OF THESE INTERPRETATIONS WITH THE OTHER GENRE ARTISTS' (JAGJIT SINGH AND ANUP JALOTA) PRESENTATION OF THIS SAME SONG

Many ingredients are same between these two genre's presentations like use of Indian Raga ,Taal, repetition (of lines and stanzas), different kinds of ornamentation. A difference is found while checking the details of elaboration. All the Khayal singers did improvisations almost in every repetition and did vistar in the used raga in the composition. No application of 'vistar' is found in the presentations of the other group and improvisations are occasionally found in the repetitions. No usage of chorus voice is present in khayal singers' interpretation whereas both the other genre artists are found to use chorus thoroughly along with their solo part. Aaochar or adlib is missing in their presentation and both the interpretations started with track music. Use of taan ang or long standing notes are also not found in their presentation where as these are found random in each Khayal singer's presentation of this song. Music arrangement is predominantly inspired by Hindustani Classical Music set up in the case of Khayal singers' interpretations whereas the other group music is inspired with the contemporary commercial music arrangement. Around 5 minutes presentation is found in both group's presentation.

HYPOTHESIS TEST

Data interpretation and the next comparison between the Khayal Singers' interpretation and the other genre singers' interpretation clearly prove both the hypothesis to be true.

Therefore the study report shows that these four interpretations have been presented Hindustani Raga music and Khayal style with a lot of variable creativity by each individual singer yet maintained a boundary. All these presentations are extremely influenced by Hindustani Raga Music. Elementary commonalities are found between these presentations and Khayal singing styles. There are a number of parameters which allowed the singers to float with the freedom of creativity. Thus all these presentations carry the reflection of

individual's sense of aesthetics and creativity yet a conscious boundary is also found in each of them as the duration of the creativities remained limited in each case. The above mentioned lines are answering to all the 'objectives' of this papers research.

CONCLUSION

In the conclusion it can be easily said that the Khayal Artists' interpretations of the song 'Gaiye Ganapati Jagabandana' are the balance between limitations and creativities.

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