

IMPORTANCE OF GURU SHISHYA PARAMPARA

Sri. Dhanvada Anantha Rao.

All India Radio “A” Grade Artist, Assistant Professor (Mridangam), Department of Performing Arts, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam Campus, Puttaparthi



ABSTRACT

The Guru-Shishya Parampara is not just for the topic purpose. As a shishya, we observe the things that Guru is trying to pour his teaching experience into a student. Guru-shishya relationships are life-driven but, to a certain extent content-driven. During the learning process, a shishya takes on the qualities of the Guru. Learning occurs more "heart to heart" and "soul to soul" than "mind to mind" as in a student-teacher interaction. The tradition of this Gurukula system is such that Guru accepts the Shishya and assumes responsibility for his spiritual learning and personal development. This process cannot be acquired by reading books. In modern systems, especially in music particularly in mridangam, there are several artists experienced the Gurukula system. Some of them are T. K. Murthy sir learned mridangam from Thanjavur Vaidyanatha Iyer (Thanjavur style), Palghat Raghu, Trichy Sankaran, Karaikudi Mani Iyer, Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman, V. Narasimham garu and many others who learned from their respective Gurus in the mode of Gurukula shikshana. This research paper mainly focuses on Guru – Shishya Parampara in Carnatic Music. This article uses it as an important tool to understand the importance of mridangam in music. This article helps in teaching basic level mridangam skills.

Keywords: Tradition, Explanation, Lord Krishna and Arjuna, Sri V. Narasimham garu.

Introduction

What is Guru? The term “Guru” refers to the individual from whose soul such an impulse emanates.

What is Shishya? The term “Shishya” refers to the individual whose soul receives the impulse.

What is Parampara? The term “Parampara” refers to the continuous process without stopping the tradition of the Guru – Shishya.

Who is this Guru?

“Gu” denotes darkness, whereas “Ru” denotes light. Hence, “Guru” can be paraphrased as “one who can make light out of your darkness. Guru is the teacher who directs the life of the Shishya. He is not there to lecture, preach, or award you with a diploma. Without any lures for fame or riches, the Guru guides his disciples toward the ultimate objective. He leads his disciple down the path of God while also keeping an eye on his development. He exudes self-assurance, commitment, self-control, profound insight, and illumination by love.

Who is this Shishya?

The Shishya should value humility, moderation, and love above everything else, one who pays close attention to Guru’s teachings, one who spreads the Guru’s teachings to the less developed soul and abides by the Guru’s instructions. Typically, the shishya settles in his Guru’s house under a Gurukula system.

The tradition of Guru Shishya Parampara:

According to the Guru Shishya tradition, a student asks to be admitted or makes a “Shishyvruthi” request, to a Guru in his field of specialization. After the Shishya is accepted by the Guru, he will go through a formal initiation process known as “Gandabandhan”, during which the Guru accepts the Shishya and assumes the responsibility for his spiritual well-being and personal development. Here, the primary goal is to disseminate knowledge of Indian tradition that cannot be acquired by reading books.

If the Guru determines that the Shishya is prepared to graduate to the real world after finishing his portion of training, he holds a test and invites Guru from other Gurukuls and subject-matter experts. Even though the new millennium has begun, our culture or tradition has not been forgotten. We might say that the Guru is the source of all knowledge, arts, and culture.

Guru Brahma Guru Vishnu Guru devo Maheshwarah

Guru sakshath para brahma Tasmai sree Guruve Namah:

Meaning: - Salutation to that noble teacher who is Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara, and who is verily the supreme Brahman.

Inner Meaning: - A Real Guru (Sadguru) is someone who has gained knowledge of the truth through experience and whose day-to-day deeds, words, and thoughts are reflective of this revelation. “Gu” is a symbol for “Gunaathitha,” a person who has transcended the three Gunas. “Ru” stands for rupa varjitha, which means “One who realized the formless aspect of Godhead.

He extinguishes ignorance's darkness by igniting the torch of Jnana. The light marks our Divinity visible. The Trinity Gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara are compared to such a Guru.

Explanation: - Because he installs character in youngsters, the Guru is like Lord Brahma. He safeguards their positive traits, making him similar to Lord Vishnu. He destroys the negative emotions and traits in them, making him similar to Lord Maheshwara. A Guru or instructor is contrasted in this stotra with the Trinity Gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara. Because a sincere Guru must do all three of the Trinity Gods' tasks (Creation, sustenance, and eradication of evil), he is regarded as greater as or more sacred than the Trinity Gods.

Lord Krishna (Guru) & Arjuna (Shishya) in Bhagavad Geetha as a Learning Lessons for our Life.

- Gurus typically give their advice in two ways. They will begin by stating the paramartha, the ultimate truth that has to be understood. The Guru will occasionally give instructions by the disciple's maturity and skills. That is not the Ultimate Reality. Arjuna, the disciple, is currently in a situation from which he is unable to recover from the problem. As a result, while imparting instructions, Lord Krishna (Guru) acknowledges that the disciple has the situation. Although it is possible, the Ultimate Truth does not command that. Lord Krishna instructed Arjuna in this manner in this particular instance.



- Do karma, Lord Krishna commands. Do good deeds to get to heaven. This is not what the Ultimate Truth has to be said. Karma yoga is not what it states. The lord claims that after being victorious, you will enter heaven. Once you've triumphed, you can enjoy life on Earth. That is how those who are trapped in Samsara. But that's what the Lord said because Arjuna was in that state. Whatever means were available; the Lord had to alter according to Arjuna's situation. Occasionally it may be necessary to make some enticing promises. In this manner, the Lord makes these heartfelt vows to Arjuna before turning right back to spiritual truths. They are ever-evolving. Shankara claims that these words are "incidental" and "prasangika" for this reason.
- The Lord encourages Arjuna to act by describing desired outcomes. We typically tell someone, "don't do it." Consider a situation when a drunken individual seeks the Guru's help to overcome who eats meat seeks for a Guru to remove the habit. I want to break free from this habit, but I can't, he claims. What general instruction will there be? Then you do one thing, he'll say. You visit the spirits shop to purchase wine. Go to the Shiva temple, worship it there, and then consume it privately in your room. If this is said, then at least some of the person's anything. This is not said to be understood by others. Everyone should know their mistakes and avoid those mistakes, moving towards the positive side. Once we get addicted to it we can't come out of it. But, if comes from a source it is good for you.
- It is essential to practice karma yoga. What is referred to as the Karma Yoga buddhi is the tattva,
- or principle, of the practice. What is the nature of Karma Yoga, as we now know it? Describe Karma Yoga. How should Karma Yoga be practiced? Who is a god candidate to do Karma Yoga? What yields from Karma Yoga? Understanding all of these is referred to as "karma yoga buddhi," or the Understanding of Karma Yoga. Thus, this buddhi is the first item required to engage in Karma Yoga. Knowledge is the only area where action may be taken. So what occurs when someone practices Karma Yoga after attaining perfect awareness of it? It says "Karmabandham prahsyasi,"
- Here, the Lord demonstrates how Karma Yoga practice frees one from karma's shackles. The buddhi, or accurate knowledge, or philosophy, of Karma Yoga, is the reason it is practiced. So before engaging in Karma Yoga, one needs to have a basic understanding of it. After comprehending everything, one should practice Karma Yoga. Karma's shackle will then be broken.
- When God connects the soul with a genuine Guru, it is one of his most gracious acts. However, the method used to communicate spiritual information from the teacher to the pupil differs significantly from that used to impart knowledge of the worldly kind. A deep regard for the teacher is not necessary for secular education. You can just pay the teacher's fees to purchase the transmission of



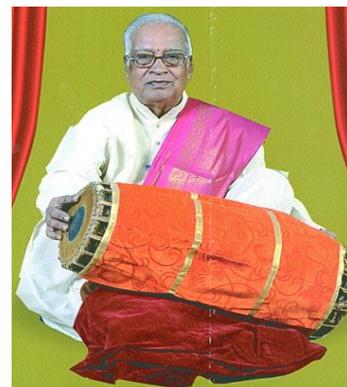
Krishna makes Realise to Arjuna by showing Viswaroopa Darshan

information. Yet, neither a mechanical teaching method nor a fee is used to provide spiritual edification to the student. When the disciple grows in humility and the Guru is satisfied with the disciple's attitude of service, it is shown in the disciple's heart by the Guru's grace.

MODERN SYSTEM OF GURU – SHISHYA PARAMPARA IN CARNATIC CLASSICAL MUSIC (MRIDANGAM)

GURU SRI VANKAYALA NARASIMHAM GARU (1931-2016)

When I was ten years old, Mridanga Vidwan "Sri Sripada Sanyasi Rao garu of Vizianagaram began teaching me the mridangam in the Gurukula tradition. At the time he was the Vijayarama Gana pathasala's Mridangam lecturer (the first music college of south India). I was taught the fundamentals of playing the mridangam in the Carnatic style by him, and he was gracious enough to treat me as if I were his son. He not only taught me how to play mridangam but also how to sing. My teacher was an outstanding harikatha bhagavathar and one of Sri Ajjada Adibhatla Narayana Dasu's preferred pupils. He enthralled Dasu garu by doing his harikathas in front of him. Because of his exceptional talent, he notated and penned the "Siva Panchamukhi" composition and performance by Sri Adibhatla Narayana Dasu. I pursued music in the Gurukula system while also pursuing my academics up till my master's passed away.



Under the guidance of Sanyasiraj, Narasimham gave his first performance at the age of ten. In 1948, while he was performing on Krishnashtami, a very special event took place. 'Pumbhava Saraswati' and 'Harikatha Pitamaha' came to the house of Srimadagnadadibhatla Narayana Das for bhajans. At that time, no mridangam virtuosos were present. Seeing young Narasimham, Das asked, "Will you play, Tata?" At that tender age, he replied, "Yes." Das sang a short kirtan, made the boy play the mridangam, and then blessed him, saying, "Will you work, Tata?" Even at the age of 85, Narasimham credited those blessings as a key reason why his instrument never showed signs of age until his passing.

Sometime later, Sripada Sanyasiraj personally entrusted his disciple to 'Mridangakesari' Sri Mullapudi Lakshmana Rao. It takes a truly generous heart to send one's own disciple to another scholar. Lakshmana Rao was a lifelong ascetic and a master of mathematics. He was not bound by fixed timings for lessons—on some occasions, he would teach even at midnight. Narasimham was fondly nicknamed Buchi.

In 1953, after receiving my degree, I started working as a science teacher while continuing my performance. My Guru introduced me to Sri Mullapudi Lakshmana Rao, a great friend, and "Mridanga Kesari" from Vizianagaram, after one of my performances. After getting his approval, he instructed me to study with him as well. As a result, I had the exceptional chance to serve as the two prominent vidwans' chosen disciples. I feel blessed and lucky to have done so and to have received their love and blessings.



Guru Sri Vankayala Narasimham garu and Sri D. Anantha Rao

Conclusion

The essence of Guru- Shishya Parampara (Tradition of Guru & Disciple) is based on the bond which you develop over a continuous period. There is never an end to this. For example: - If your new dress cloth needs to be stitched we need to go to a tailor who knows to stitch. Because he learned from a Guru. The tradition is following. There is never ending process. In the same way, we learn music from a Guru who learned from his Guru. From the aspects of the ancient system of Gurukula system,

we can learn that respect towards Guru, the attitude of a human being, concentration towards the teachings of the Guru, duty and devotion towards the Guru, mutual understanding between the Guru and Shishya.

Coming back to the modern Gurukula system in Cernatic system in Carnatic Music specialization to Mridangam. There are two styles in mridangam in ancient times, thanjavure style and pudukottai style. Senior artist Palani Subramania Pillai learned Pudukkottai styls from Malli-kkotai Panchapakesha Pillai. T.K. Murthy who learned the Thanjavur style from Thanjavur Vaidyanatha Iyer had a great time with him learning many aspects of the mridangam. Sri Vankayala Narasimham learned from Sripada Sanyasi Rao who had great affection for his student and treated the student as his son.

References

The Hindu Speaks on Music Pg. No: - 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243,

Life of Swami Vivekananda by his Eastern and Western Disciples

3. Mridanga Kovida [Vankayala Narasimhan Interview, April 2011]
4. Mani, Karaikudi R Indian Rhythm. Chennai: Sruti Laya Seva Trust. Pp. 42-44
5. Sathya sai balavikas 1 by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Pg. 6
6. Sambamurthy, P. (1973). South Indian Music Book II. Madras: The Indian Music Publishing House. pp. 101.
7. The Indian musical drums SRI CV RAMAN, Kt., F.R.S., N.L.
8. Vikas 2 by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Pg. 41, 42
9. Deva, B Chaitanya (1993, 1st Ed 1977) Musical Instruments. New Delhi: National Book Trust. pp. 122
10. Stories for Children written by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Pg. No: 50, 51, 52