

UNIT 1 RAGA

Structure

1.1 Introduction

Objectives

1.2 Ragas in Hindustani Music

1.3 Brief Description of the Following Ragas:

- a) Yaman, b) Bihag, c) Bhairav, d) Brindavani Sarang, e) Des, f) Bhupali, g) Durga, h) Khamaj, i) Bhairvi.

1.4 Summary

1.5 Self Assessment Questions

1.6 Answers

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Raga is the main element of Indian music. Raga can be called a combination of the swaras which follow a specific melodic pattern. Raga continued to be elaborated with feeling and devotion. The combination should follow certain aesthetic laws that establish the form of a raga.

Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- know about the essential qualities of prescribed raga.
- explain things related to raga.

1.2 RAGAS IN HINDUSTANI MUSIC

Hindustani ragas are very different in their flavour from the ragas of Karnatak music. It is a matter of wonder that these two styles of music, though they have the same swaras, appear so different to the ear. There are several ragas in both styles which have individual swaras but which sound very different. A study of the two styles indicates that the basic difference is in the articulation of the gamakas or graces. In Carnatic music the oscillation of notes are much faster than in Hindustani music.

In the North, despite the constant invasions and disturbances created by the foreign invaders music still retained its ancient flavour and did not eschew its old quality. The steady emphasis on the aesthetic aspect placed the accent on the erotic or shringara side of raga. The raga was ascribed to various moods all of which were erotic or a result of erotic involvement. Each raga was associated with a particular bhava, an elaborate nayak-nayika bheda as evolved, and particular ragas were associated with particular nayak-nayika bhedas. This continued upto the beginning of the 20 century so far as Hindustani music is concerned.

Modern scholars have approached the raga classification in different ways.

The classification of raga was in vogue in the ancient music. In ancient grantha six ragas were classified as males having their counterpart ragini as their wives. They were further classified under their family names as sons and daughters.

Thus the six main ragas were raga Bhairav, Raga Malkauns, Raga Hindol, Raga Deepak, Raga Shree, and Raga Megh. Each raga had its ragini and putras.

In later years, the scholars developed a scientific approach and classified the ragas under Thats which were called as parental scales or Janaka Mela. Thus Pandit Bhatkhande accepted ten thats as the parent scales for the classification of ragas.

The ten thats are –

1. Kalyan, 2. Bilawal, 3. Khamaj, 4. Bhairav, 5. Poorvi, 6. Marva, 7. Kafi, 8. Bhairvi, 9. Asavari, 10. Todi.

For the purpose of identifying a particular that, it is named after an important raga which comes under its banner. Scholars and musicians adhered to the principle of assigning times of the day or night for singing different ragas right from the ancient period. The whole cycle of 24 hours in a day was divided into two series of ragas that were sung either at sunrise or sunset, the period of which is taken as between 4 am to 7 am and 4 pm to 7 pm came under the second category.

Aroh- Avroh and Pakad

The upward trend of swaras is aroh, the downward trend is avroh. In the act of singing or playing an instrument, an artist cannot stay at one swara for a very long duration, he moves upward or downward. It is known as aroh and avroh in the language of music.

Aroh- sa, re, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni, sa.

Avroh- sa, ni, dha, pa, ma, ga, re, sa.

A small group of swaras denoting distinct form of raga is called pakad. The word itself signifies the way of catching or recognising a raga. It is used again and again at the time of singing for it is the most important group of swaras in a raga. The pakad of each raga is different. For example, in Yaman raga pakad follows- pa re, ga re, ni re sa.

1.3 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FOLLOWING RAGAS

a) Yaman

Raga Yaman is originated from Kalyan that. In it madhyama is tivra. Rest of swaras used in this raga are shudh. In its aroh- avroh all seven swaras are used so its jati is sampoorna. Its vadi swara is gandhar and samvadi swara is nishad. Its gayan samay is in first phase at night.

Aroh- ṇi re ga mā pa dha ni śa.

Avroh- śa ni dha pa ma ga re sa.

Pakad- pa re, ga re, ṇi re sa.

b) Bihag

Raga Bihag is originated from Kalyan that. In it madhyama is tivra. Rest of swaras used in this raga are shudh. In its aroh re dha are verjit and in avroh all seven swaras are used so its jati is audav- sampoorna. Its vadi swara is gandhar and samvadi swara is nishad. Its gayan- samay is in first phase at night.

Aroh- ṇi sa ga ma pa ni śa.

Avroh –sa ni dha pa ma pa ga ma ga re sa.

Pakad- ni sa ga ma pa ma pa, ga ma ga re sa.

c) Bhairav

Raga Bhairav is originated from Bhairav that. In it rishabh and dhaivat are komal swaras. Rest of swaras used in this raga are shudh. In its aroh- avroh all seven swaras are used so its jati is sampoorana. Its vadi swara is dhaivat and samvadi swara is rishabh. Its gayan samay is in morning 4 a.m.to 7 a.m.

Aroh- sa re ga ma pa dha ni sa.

Avroh- sa ni dha pa ma ga re sa.

Pakad- ga ma dha pa , ga ma re sa.

d) Vrindavani Sarang

Raga Vrindavani Sarang is originated from Kafi that. It has shudh ni in aroh and komal ni in avroh. Rest of swaras used in this raga are shudh. In its aroh- avroh gandhar and dhaivat are verjit swaras so its jati is audav- audav. Its vadi swara is rishabh and samvadi swara is pancham. Its gayan samay is in afternoon. Rest of swaras used in this raga are shudh.

Aroh- ni sa re ma pa ni sa.

Avroh- sa ni pa ma re sa.

Pakad- ni sa re, ma re, pa ma re ni sa.

e) Bhairvi

Raga Bhairvi is originated from Bhairvi that. In it re, ga, dha, ni are komal swaras. Rest of swaras used in this raga are shudh. In its aroh- avroh all seven swaras are used so its jati is sampoorana. Its vadi swara is madhyama and samvadi swara is shadaja. Its gayan samay is in morning.

Aroh- sa, re, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni, sa.

Avroh- sa, ni, dha, pa, ma, ga, re, sa.

Pakad- ma ga sa re sa, dha ni sa.

f) Des

Raga Des is originated from Khamaj that. In its aroh shudh ni and in its avroh komal ni is used. Rest of swaras used in this raga are shudh. In its aroh gandhar and dhaivat are verjit swaras and in avroh all seven swaras are used so its jati is audav- sampoorana. Its vadi swara is rishabh and samvadi swara is pancham. Its gayan samay is in first phase at night.

Aroh- ni sa re ma pa ni sa.

Avroh –sa ni dha pa, dha ma ga re, ga ni sa.

Pakad- ma pa dha ma ga, re ga ni sa.

g) Bhupali

Raga Bhupali is originated from Kalyan that. The swaras used in this raga are shudha. In its aroh and avroh ma and ni are verjit swaras so its jati is audav- audav. Its vadi swara is gandhar and samvadi swara is dhaivat. Its gayan samay is in first phase at night.

Aroh- sa re ga pa dha sa.

Avroh – sa dha pa ga re sa.

Pakad – pa ga re ga, sa re dha sa.

h) Durga

Raga Durga is originated from Bilawal that. The swaras used in this raga are shudh. In its aroh and avroh ga ni are verjit swaras so its jati is audav-audav. Its vadi swara is dhaivat and samvadi swara is rishabh. Its gayan samay is in first phase at night.

Aroh- sa re ma pa dha sa.

Avroh- sa dha pa ma re sa.

Pakad- dha ma re pa, pa dha ma re, sa re dha sa.

i) Khamaj

Raga Khamaj is originated from Khamaj that. In its aroh shudh ni and in avroh komal ni is used. Rest of swars used in this raga are shudh. In its aroh re is verjit and in avroh all seven swras are used so its jati is shadav- sampoorana. Its vadi swara is gandhara and samvadi swara is nishada. Its gayan samay is in second phase at night.

Aroh- sa ga ma pa dha ni sa.

Avroh- sa ni dha pa ma ga re sa.

Pakad- ni dha, ma pa dha ma ga, pa ma ga re sa.

1.4 SUMMARY

In the previous units we have learnt about the historical evolution of music, basic principles and definitions regarding Hindustani music. But with the knowledge of theory, practical aspect is also very important. In this unit, the student will get proper knowledge about the practical aspects of prescribed ragas.

1.5 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Self Assessment Questions

1. Fill in the blank spaces with the appropriate words given below:

(nayaka- nayika-bheda, theka, raga, shirngara, bhava, Pakad, twelve, kheyal, gayaki, bandish)

- In Hindustani music _____ in a raga is significant.
- In Hindustani music emphasis is placed on the _____ side of raga.
- Each raga is associated with a particular _____ and an elaborate _____.

- d) _____ is the way of catching a raga.
- e) In _____ the first important thing is the composition or _____ according to the rasa bhava of raga.

State True or False:

2. Raga Bihag is originated from Khamaj that.
3. In ancient grantha six ragas were classified as males having their counterpart ragini as their wives.
4. Bandish or composition well depicts a raga format.
5. The jati of raga Durga is audav.

Terminal Questions

1. Explain the 'That-Raga Padhiti' and name out ten that's.
2. Give a brief description of any 'Ashraya Raga'.
3. Light upon the important contents of a raga.

1.6 ANSWERS

1. a) kheyal
b) shirngara
c) bhava, nayaka- nayika-bheda
d) Pakad
e) raga, bandish
2. F
3. T
4. T
5. T

Terminal Questions

1. The classification of raga was in vogue in the ancient music. In later years, the scholars developed a scientific approach and classified the ragas under That's which were called as parental scales or Janaka Mela. Thus Pandit Bhatkhande accepted ten that's as the parent scales for the classification of ragas.

The ten that's are –

1. Kalyan 2. Bilawal 3. Khamaj 4. Bhairav 5. Poorvi 6. Marva 7. Kafi 8. Bhairvi 9. Asavari 10. Todi
2. Raga Bhairav is originated from Bhairav that. So it is the good example of 'Ashraya Raga'. In it rishabh and dhaivat are komal swaras. Rest of swaras used in this raga are shudh. In its aroh- avroh all seven swaras are used so its jati is sampurna. Its vadi swara is dhaivat and samvadi swara is rishabh. Its gayan samay is in morning 4 a.m. to 7 a.m.
3. Each raga is associated with a particular bhava an elaborate nayak-nayika bheda as evolved. The origin of every raga is attributed to some that. A raga may have at least five and at the most seven swaras. Each raga has its definite that, vadi-samvadi, jati, aroh-avroh, gayan samay, chalan and swaras to be used.