

Origin & Development of Punjabi Tappa & Its Performing style

Debasmita Mukherjee

Abstract :-

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Besides pure classical, there are also several semi-classical forms such as ‘Thumrī’ and ‘Ṭappā’. ‘Ṭappā’ is one of the important styles of singing in the musical tradition of India. Ṭappā is a particular type of Gītabandha (composition for vocal music), which was created by ‘Qabbāl’ singers of Punjab. It is apprehended that Ṭappā was originated during the first half of 17th century. It is supposed that Ṭappā is originally a folk song of Camel- Drivers of Punjab – Sindh region, so the language of its lyrics is essentially Punjabi. It was generally sung by the male singers of Punjab. The other form of Ṭappā was sung by the female singers of Punjab as a wedding song. During Muslim rule in India, the name of ‘Ṭappā’ was ‘Ḍapā’, meaning fast motion . At the early stage, ‘Ḍapā’ was a romantic song and was exclusively a Punjabi regional song. ‘According to another opinion , its name is ‘Thapā’, meaning print / stamp etc. Some opine that it has been created with the influence of Punjabi Khayāl style. A third opinion is that, Ṭappā means jumping, bouncing etc. In reality Ṭappā songs are the literary version of ‘fiqrābandī’, a kind of Persian ornate of Khayāl .The fast movement of the song with Alamkāras (ornates) is unavoidable in Ṭappā and hence its name ‘Ḍapā’ is also justified. Later, Ṭappā began to be sung by the Punjabi Qabbāl exponents or the singers of ‘Qabbāl Bacce’ Gharānā who created it by incorporating ‘Fiqrābandīs’ of Khayāl in this compositions. Therefore, the fast movement with Alamkāras is unavoidable in this form of Ṭappā. There are two lyrical stanzas in this form, i.e., ‘Sthāyī’ and ‘Antarā’. Its ‘Vistāra’ or elaboration is done in ‘Madhya – Druta ’ laya (medium-fast tempo), in the pattern of ‘Joḍ’ or the final stage of Ālāpa in medium tempo . Punjabi, Addhā, Sidharkhani, Jat etc. Tālas are set in Ṭappā. The Ṭappā of the 17th century transferred into a beautiful manner due to musical talent of Śorī Miyā , i.e., Ghulām Nabi , the court singer of Nawāb Asafadullāh of Lucknow, in 18th century. Key Words :-Qabbāl, Ḍapā, Thapā, Fiqrābandī, Alamkāra, Qabbāl Bacce, Sthāyī, Antarā, Joḍ, Vistāra, Ālāpa etc

Introduction :-

Throughout the ages, human being has tried to express his feelings through the medium of art. The evolution of poetry, painting and other visual arts has been preserved on stone, leaves and paper but no such evidence exists for music. In spite of such a variety of cultural interactions, our music has remained essentially melodic in nature. It is generally believed that the music of whole India was more or less uniform before the 13th century. Later it divided into the two musical systems. The two main traditions of classical music is Karnatic Music, found predominantly in the peninsular regions and Hindusthānī Music, found in the northern and central parts. Both traditions claim Vedic origin. History indicates that the two traditions diverged from a common musical root since circa 13th century. Hindusthānī music is an Indian classical music tradition that goes back to Vedic times (around 1000 BC), and further developed circa the 13th and 14th centuries AD with Persian influences and from existing religious and folk music. Besides pure classical, there are also several semi-classical forms such as ‘Thumrī’ and ‘Ṭappā’. ‘Ṭappā’ is one of the important styles of singing in the musical tradition of India. Now, we will discuss the origin and development of Punjabi Ṭappā with the opinions of different musical experts and its performing style.

Punjabi Ṭappā –

It's Origin & Development:- Ṭappā is a ‘particular type of Gītabandha (composition for vocal music), which was created by ‘Qabbāl’ singers of Punjab. It is apprehended that Ṭappā was originated during the first half of 17th century’.¹ It is supposed that Ṭappā is originally a folk song of Camel Drivers of Punjab – Sindh region, so the language of its lyrics is essentially Punjabi. It was generally sung by the male singers of Punjab. The other form of Ṭappā was sung by the female singers of Punjab as a wedding song . It is pure and simple love song ’.² There are different opinions regarding its real name . From Abul Fazal's ‘Āin - i - Akbarī ’ , we come to know that during Muslim rule in India, the name of ‘Ṭappā’ was ‘ Ḍappā ’ , meaning fast motion . At the early stage, ‘Ḍappā’ was a romantic song and was exclusively a Punjabi regional song. “According to another opinion , its name

is ‘Thapā’, meaning print / stamp etc. Some opine that it has been created with the influence of Punjabi Khayāl style. A third opinion is that, Ṭappā means jumping, bouncing etc. In reality Ṭappā songs are the literary version of ‘Fiqrābandī’, a kind of Persian ornate of Khayāl . Ofcourse, during Aūraṅjeb’s (1668 – 1707 A.D.) time Ṭappā became a distinguished regional song where Punjabi folk style was mixed with a few light Rāgas Rāginīs and it became much more popular than other urban songs of North India. Because of the applications of the Punjabi ornates like Zamzamā, Khaḍḍā, Murak, Rerak etc. and the concerning subjects of rural romance, advices etc. in the literary composition, the name Ṭappā is meaningful and appropriate. The fast movement of the song with Alamkāras (ornates) is unavoidable in Ṭappā and hence its name ‘Ḍapā’ is also justified”. 3 Later, Ṭappā began to be sung by the Punjabi Qabbāl exponents or the singers of ‘Qabbāl Bacce’ Gharānā who created it by incorporating ‘Fiqrābandīs’ of Khayāl in this compositions. Therefore, the fast movement with Alamkāras is unavoidable in this form of Ṭappā. They developed Ṭappā into a very sophisticated form of Hindusthānī light classical music. “Rāgas applied in Ṭappā are light in nature which are called ‘Dhun’, like Khamāj, Kāfi, Bhairavī, Jhinhoti etc. its ‘AmśaSvara’ or ‘Vādī-Svara’ is more than one and indefinite in course of elaboration. There are two lyrical stanzas in this form, i.e., ‘Sthāyī’ and ‘Antarā’. Its ‘Vistāra’ or elaboration is done in ‘ Madhya – Druta ’ laya (medium-fast tempo), in the pattern of ‘Joḍ’ or the final stage of Ālāpa in medium tempo . Punjabi, Addhā, Sidharkhani, Jat etc. Tālas are set in Ṭappā. The Ṭappā of the 17th century transferred into a beautiful manner due to musical talent of Śorī Miyā , i.e, Ghul ām Nabi , the court singer of Nawāb Asafadullāḥ of Lucknow, in 18th century. He was an outstanding Khayāl and Ṭappā singer who classified the Ṭappā into four distinguished styles, such as, Khaḍḍādar Ṭappā, Phandādar Ṭappā, Guthāodar Ṭappā and Laidar Ṭappā”. 4 From the 18th century, Ṭappā became so much popular that in every corner of North India, the classical singers or musicians began to learn Ṭappā at large.

Opinions of Different Musical Experts on Ṭappā:-

PDT. VIṢṆU NĀRĀYANA BHĀTKHANDE :-

According to Pdt. Viṣṇu Nārāyana Bhātkhande “ Ṭappā is a Hindi word. It is more concised in form than Khayāl and Dhrupad type of Classical songs. Ṭappā consists of two lyrical parts only, i.e. , Sthāyī and Antarā . Tālas used in Khayāl are also used in Ṭappā (Of course it is not true). Sṛṅgār Rasa is always applied in Ṭappā. Rāgas like Kāfī, Jhinjhoti, Pilu, Khamāj etc. are used in this form of light classical song. Dhrupad singers rarely use these Rāgas in their recitals . Śorī Miyā (Originally a Punjabi) first introduced the Ṭappā in the civilized urban society. The maximum words used in the composition of Ṭappā are Punjabi language, so it was apprehended that Ṭappā was originated in Punjab. The singing style of Ṭappā is totally different from Dhrupad and Khayāl . In this style of singing, Tāna is not very long in size but very faster in movement than Khayāl style. According to some scholars Ṭappā was originated from the ancient ‘Besarā’ Gīti. At that time, there were different Gharānās for these three singing styles – Khayāl , Dhrupad and Ṭappā, because they had to prepare themselves differently. It is difficult for a classical singer to sing the light songs. Everybody agrees it. But now-a-days a singer is always be prepared for singing Dhrupad, Khayāl, Ṭappā, Ṭhumrī and Ghazal etc. So the different Gharānās of different singing styles become almost obsolete now-a-days”.

GOPESVARA BANDOPĀDHYĀYA :-

According to Saṅgītāchārya Gopesvara Bandopādhyāya “Ṭappā means a precised form of a Rāga-based composition at Punjab. Punjabi language is used in it. Generally, it is genuine and simple love song. The Tānas (a type of ornate) and Vistāras (elaborations) of Ṭappā is different from Khayāl style and is delicately soft or flexible. Ṭappā is composed mostly in Bhairavī, Khamāj, Sindhu, Kāfī, Jhinjhoti, Pilu, Baruā etc Rāgas and in Madhyamāna Tāla. According to him, Śorī and Ghulām Nabi were the greatest exponent of this style”.

KR̥ṢṢṢADHAN BANDOPĀDHYĀYA :-

According to Srī Kṛṣṇadhan Bandopādhyāya “ Ṭappā is a Hindi word, its primary meaning is jumping and the conventional meaning is abridgement. With this meaning it is used in the song, i.e., the song which is more precised than Dhrupad and Khayāl is called Ṭappā. It has two stanzas : Āsthāyī and Antarā. Almost every Tāla used in Khayāl are used in Ṭappā, but Rāgas used in Ṭappā are different from Khayāl . Ṭappā is composed in some ancient Rāginīs like, Bhairavī, Khamāj, Caitāgouri, Kalaṅgrā, Deśa and Sindhu. Semi Classical Ṭappā was originated during the 17th century A.D. and for its precise nature Kāfī, Jhinjhoti, Pilu, Bar uā , Mājh Imani and Lum, this type of modern Rāgas are used in It. Ṭappā is a different style of singing, any song can be composed in this style. According to Sri Kṛṣṇadhan Bandopādhyāya, now-a-days Bramha – Gīta is composed in the tune of Ṭappā which is very irrelevant and unreasonable. The nature of Ṭappā – Tune creates a light emotion in the mind of a listener. It never creates a devotional mood. According to Captain Willard, Ṭappā was a national song of the Camel – Drivers of Punjabregion. Famous singer Śorī Miyā made it more beautiful by using different types of ornates. It may be true, because the language of Śorī Miyā’s Ṭappā was also Punjabi. In those days Ṭappā was not allowed in the civilized society, but Sori made it more refined and polished, by which Ṭappā got an honourable place in the cultured society. Only Sori’sṬappā was called original Ṭappā by the Ustads. Other forms of Ṭappā was called Ṭhumrī by them. Ṭappāof Śorī Miyā had a different style which was shown in the Tāna, Kampana, Giṭkāri etc. Khamāj, Lum, Bhairavī, Sindhu, Jhinjhoti etc. Rāgas and Madhyamāna Tālas are generally applicable in Śorī Miyā’s Ṭappā. Khamāj, Bhairavī and Sindhu are too melodious Rāgas and used in Ṭappā, for which Khayāl or Qabbāl singers left these Rāgas by showing their disregard. From those days the songs of these Rāgas were not used as Khayāl according to the Qabbāl – Khayāl singers. During the past there was a tradition among the Hindusthānī singers that according to profession and habit, a singer could sing only one type of song among Dhrupad, Khayāl and Ṭappā styles. There was a different styles for these three types of song. All over the India it is Observed that Ṭappā is much more entertaining and acceptable to the common urban listeners”

PERFORMING STYLE (GAYAKI) OF “ṬAPPĀ” :-

There is no convention for performing ‘Ālāpa’ before starting the song. From ‘ Sthāyī’, the composition starts. After completing ‘ Sthāyī’, ‘sam’ is exhibited and then ‘Antarā’ is started. After completing the two ‘Tuks’(stanzas), ‘Vistāra’ or elaboration with ‘Alamkāra’ or ornates begins. There is no rigid rules of ‘Vistāra’ in the case of old ‘Ṭappā’ style. The normal rule is to use mixed ‘Fiqrābandī’ or ‘Bol-Vistāra’ in ‘Madhya’ and ‘Drut’ laya with the ornates like ‘murak’, ‘rerak’ etc. according to the meaning or sentiment of the song. In Śorī Miyā’s ‘Ṭappā’ the rule is to perform ‘Vistāra’ according to the ‘Ban’. The speciality of this ‘Ṭappā’ is to exhibit short ‘Vistāra’ with a few words of the song, like Khayāl , then suddenly performing a ‘Tāna’, and come back to the beginning of the song. There is a special feature of ‘Tāna’ in Ṭappā. There are three main styles of ‘Ṭappā’ singing – ‘Ṭappā’ of Lucknow Gharānā, Benaras Gharānā and Rampur Gharānā. There are a few structural differences such as use of ‘Tāla’ and style of improvisation, but the fundamental principles are the same.

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