Jairazbhoy, Nazir. Excerpts pp 3-15, 32-45 of The Rāgs of North Indian Music: Their Structure and Evolution. Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1995 [First Edition London: Faber & Faber, 1971.]

Preface

There is a remarkable uniformity in the performance of classical music in North India, an area comprising various geographical regions, which, in this context, includes Pakistan and extends southward into the Deccan. There are, of course, differences in detail—in the interpretation of various *rāg*s, in style of performance and in the types and texts of compositions—but on the whole these are only minor differences. The overall uniformity is especially remarkable in view of the fact that these regions contain a heterogeneous population—both racially and culturally—who speak a variety of languages and differ widely in their religious beliefs. North Indian classical music cuts across the usual barriers imposed by differences of language and religion, much as does classical music in the West. Nevertheless, many classical songs have religious texts, both Hindu and Muslim. But religious content is not an essential requisite of the music, for some songs are concerned with mundane subjects and some are even composed of meaningless syllables. Just as in Western classical music where great religious works written specifically for the Roman Catholic Church can be appreciated as works of art by those of all religious beliefs, so too in Indian music religious themes often serve as vehicles for artistic expression.

Classical music is not the music of the masses but is largely confined to the urban areas of North India. It is performed either in concert halls or in private homes. Its *raison d'être* lies in its purely musical content and it is basically on melody and rhythm that its quality is assessed. While a study of the cultural background of the people is essential for a social and historical perspective of this music, its appreciation depends largely on comprehension of the musical idiom, and it is to this end that the present work is dedicated. It had its origin in a series of lectures given at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, to university students who had no previous knowledge of the subject. At an equivalent age level in India, students would have had several years of musical study at High Schools in both theory and practice, and this would have been supplemented by many hours of listening to both radio broadcasts and recitals. Some of the Western students had not even heard North Indian classical music until they attended the lectures at the School. Thus it was necessary to adopt a completely different approach to the subject from that which is usual in Indian universities. To the Western students Indian music was only incidental to their main course of study and therefore the amount of time which they could devote to it was severely limited. In view of this, it was necessary to concentrate on broad principles and outlines rather than on the details which are the main concern in Indian music colleges.

Preface

The critical attitude of the Western student provided a stimulus for the formulation of many of the ideas expressed in this work. With his training in and experience of Western music he has contributed new ideas and interpretations; and by his reluctance to accept traditional Indian explanations, frequently lacking coherence, he has also provoked further enquiry into many topics. The question 'why' has been uppermost in his mind. 'Why does Indian music have its present form? Why are only certain scales used in Indian music?' To these and other similar questions the traditional reply—'because it was performed in this way by my teacher'—has been unsatisfactory. To a large extent this work has been motivated by such questions and attempts to provide some of the answers. In this respect, it is an exploration into certain aspects of Indian music which have not hitherto received sufficient attention. It is hoped that the reader will be stimulated to further enquiry.

Note on Transliteration and Pronunciation

Since this book is concerned primarily with present-day Indian music, terms are generally given in their modern Hindi forms in preference to the classical Sanskrit forms. Exception is made in the following instances: (1) the Sanskrit form is used when referring to Sanskrit treatises, their authors and the musical theory described by them; (2) the common English spelling is used when referring to well-known place names and personalities, for example, *Delhi* rather than the Hindi *Dillī* or the Urdu *Dehlī*—this follows the procedure adopted by Vincent Smith in the *Oxford History of India* (Oxford 1958); (3) Muslim names, other than those in common use in English, are transliterated according to the system used in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.*

The Devnāgrī (Devanāgarī) script is syllabic and all consonants carry the inherent vowel *a* unless otherwise indicated. The principal difference between modern Hindi and the classical Sanskrit forms is the omission in Hindi of this inherent *a* when in final position (e.g. *rāga* in Sanskrit and *rāg* in Hindi) and frequently in medial position (e.g. *Māravā* in Sanskrit and *Mārvā* in Hindi).

		Transliteration	*Approximate guide to pronunciation* (based on Received Standard English pronunciation)
Vowels			
short	अ	a	as in *shut*
	इ	i	,, ,, *bit*
	उ	u	,, ,, *put*
	ऋ	ṛi	a Sanskrit vowel, in Hindi treated as a consonant *r* + vowel *i* and pronounced as in *rip* (with rolled *r*)
long	आ	ā	as in *bath*
	ई	ī	,, ,, *seed*
	ऊ	ū	,, ,, *boot*
	ए	e	,, ,, *gate*
	ऐ	ai	in Hindi approximately as in *bear* (in Sanskrit as in *isle*)
	ओ	o	as in *boat*
	औ	au	Hindi as in *saw* (Sanskrit as in *cow*)
Consonants (without inherent *a*)			In English the difference between aspirate and non-aspirate forms is not generally recognised whereas in Hindi and Sanskrit the majority of the consonants have both forms.

unaspirated			The English examples in this group are accompanied by a certain measure of aspiration which should be eliminated for a more accurate representation of the unaspirated Indian consonants.
	क	k	approximately as in *baker*
	क़	q	derived from Arabic, it is a 'k' sound produced as far back as possible, i.e. uvular as against the velar *k*. It has no aspirated form. In Hindi, often replaced by *k*.
	ग	g	as in *get*
	च	c	,, ,, *chat*
	ज	j	,, ,, *jab*
	ट	ṭ[1]	,, ,, *toe* but with tongue curled back
	ड	ḍ	,, ,, *do* ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
	ड़	ṛ	not found in Sanskrit. An 'r' sound produced by drawing the tongue back and flapping it forward
	त	t	as in *toe* but with tongue against the teeth.
	द	d	,, ,, *do* ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
	प	p	,, ,, *pot*
	ब	b	,, ,, *bat*
aspirated			These can be approximated by exaggerating the aspiration in the examples given above. They can also be illustrated by the fusion of certain words as below.
	ख	kh	as in *ba/ck hand*
	घ	gh	,, ,, *sla/g heap*
	छ	ch	,, ,, *mu/ch hope*
	झ	jh	,, ,, *bri/dge hand*
	ठ	ṭh	,, ,, *car/t horse* with tongue curled back
	ढ	ḍh	,, ,, *roa/d house* ,, ,, ,, ,,
	ढ़	ṛh	not found in Sanskrit. The aspirated form of *ṛ*
	थ	th	as in *coa/t hanger* but with tongue against teeth.
	ध	dh	,, ,, *roa/d house* but with tongue against teeth.
	फ	ph	,, ,, *lea/p high*
	भ	bh	,, ,, *ru/b hard*
	ह	h	,, ,, *perhaps*, a voiced *h*

[1] *ṭ* and *ḍ*, their corresponding aspirates, *ṭh* and *ḍh*, and the corresponding nasal *ṇ*, are retroflex or cerebral sounds produced with the tongue curled back and pressed against the hard palate. The English *t* and *d* are mid-way between these and the Indian dental *t* and *d*. The Indian *ṭh* and *th* should never be pronounced as in English *thick*, *this*; nor should the Indian *ph* be pronounced as in English *physic*.

Nasals			
	ङ	ṅ	as in *sing*
	ञ	ñ	,, ,, *ni* in *onion*
	ण	ṇ	,, ,, *running* but with tongue curled back for the *n*
	न	n	,, ,, *now*
	म	m	,, ,, *man*
Semi-vowels			Traditionally classified as a group, but in Hindi the *r* and *l* are treated as consonants.
	य	y	as in *yet*
	र	r	the *r* is rolled as in the Scottish pronunciation of *road*
	ल	l	as in *light*
	व	v	generally mid-way between the English *v* and *w* and less emphatic than in *never*
Fricatives	श	ś	as in *show*
	ष	ṣ	in Hindi generally pronounced as above (in Sanskrit with tongue curled back)
	स	s	as in *sit*
	ख	kh	of Persian and Arabic origin, pronounced as in the Scottish *loch* (approximately). In common Hindi replaced by *kh*.
	ग़	gh	also of Persian and Arabic origin and is the voiced equivalent of *kh*. In Hindi often replaced by *gh*.
	ज़	z	as in *zoo*. Persian–Arabic origin. In common Hindi often replaced by *j*.
	फ़	f	as in *father*. Persian–Arabic origin. In Hindi often replaced by *ph*.
Others	अः	ḥ	voiceless *h*, occurring in Sanskrit and Sanskrit loan-words in Hindi
	अं	ṃ	a nasal, which may represent one of the nasal consonants, in which case it is transliterated by the appropriate consonant. Where it occurs before a sibilant or a semi-vowel it is transliterated as indicated (ṃ).
	अँ	ã	nasalisation of a vowel

For a fuller discussion of pronunciation see T. Grahame Bailey, *Teach Yourself Urdu*, English Universities Press Ltd., London 1956.

II

Basic Elements of Theory

A *rāg* does not exist in any precise form in the sense that a symphony can be said to exist in score, but is a complex of latent melodic possibilities. Although this seems to suggest an amorphous quality, each *rāg* is an independent musical entity with an ethos of its own, which becomes manifest through recognisable melodic patterns. In the course of time a corpus of technical terms has been evolved by theorists and musicians in order to convey some idea of the nature of *rāg*s. Since these technical terms are used primarily to supplement musical practice they are not always precise enough for purposes of analytical study. Therefore, in the following pages, as we consider the salient features of *rāg*s, it will be necessary to discuss not only the pertinent technical terms but also to extend the discussion to related musical principles.

NOTES

SVAR In North Indian musical theory seven notes (*svar*) are recognised. In their Hindi form, the names of these notes are *Ṣaḍj* (or *Khaḍj*), *Riṣabh*, *Gāndhār* (or *Gandhār*), *Madhyam*, *Pañcam*, *Dhaivat* and *Niṣād* (or *Nikhād*); or in the commonly used abbreviated form, Sa, Re (or Ri), Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha and Ni. It is these abbreviations that are used throughout this work, with the occasional addition, for the convenience of the Western reader, of the note's scale degree in brackets. The Indian nomenclature is comparable to that of Western tonic-solfa: there is no absolute or fixed pitch attached to the notes, and the ground-note (the note which serves as the point of reference of the scale) is called Sa, irrespective of its pitch. Once the pitch of the ground-note has been established, however, it remains unchanged throughout the performance of a *rāg* as there is no modulation in Indian music.

ACAL Of these seven notes, Sa and Pa (I and V) are 'immovable notes' (*acal svar*)—they have no flat or sharp positions and Pa is always a perfect fifth above the Sa. The remaining five notes are 'movable notes' (*cal svar*). These each have two possible positions, a semitone apart. One of these is

CAL

ŚUDDH called *śuddh* (pure) which is comparable to the 'natural' of the West. In the *śuddh* scale, *Bilāval*, composed of Sa, Pa and the five movable notes in their *śuddh* position, the distribution of tones and semitones corresponds to that in the Western major scale.[1]

When the movable notes are not in the *śuddh* position, they are called

VIKṚIT *vikṛit*—altered. In the case of Re, Ga, Dha and Ni (II, III, VI and VII) they are a semitone lower than their *śuddh* counterparts and are called

KOMAL *komal*—soft, tender. The altered Ma (IV), however, is a semitone above

TĪVR the *śuddh* position, and is called *tīvr*—strong, intense.

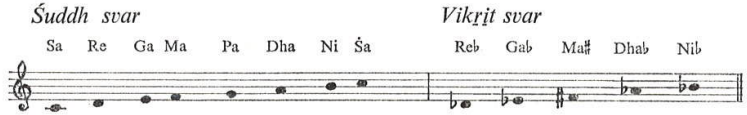
The terms *komal* and *tīvr* are not exactly comparable to their Western counterparts, flat and sharp, as they apply only to specific *vikṛit* notes, whereas in the West every note has a flat and a sharp form. The Sa and Pa, being immovable, cannot have either *komal* or *tīvr* forms; nor can a *komal* note be referred to as the *tīvr* of the note below, which in the Western use of flat and sharp is common practice. (The semitone above C may be called either C♯ or D♭, depending on the circumstances, but in Indian music Re *komal* is not referred to as Sa *tīvr*.) Notwithstanding this difference, in this work we are using the symbol ♭ to indicate *komal* and ♯ to indicate *tīvr*, and, where necessary to avoid confusion, ♮ to indicate *śuddh*.

The full series of intervals in the gamut are set out below:

Śuddh svar	Sa		Re	Ga	Ma	Pa	Dha	Ni	(Sa)
Vikṛit svar		Re♭	Ga♭		Ma♯	Dha♭	Ni♭		

These are represented in Western staff notation as follows, the Sa being arbitrarily equated with the C but not implying its absolute pitch:

Ex. 4.



This system of nomenclature has wide acceptance in India, and is generally used by Bhātkhaṇḍe (though he uses different symbols to represent *komal* and *tīvr*).[2]

[1] In its present-day application the *śuddh* concept does not entail the idea of parent scale from which other scales are derived, but serves only as a standard for comparison.

[2] Another system of nomenclature is also sometimes used in India, and is referred to by Bhātkhaṇḍe (*K.P.M.* II, p. 12) as being used primarily by vocalists. In this tradition, the higher position of the movable notes is referred to as *tīvr* and the lower position as *komal*. Here the term *tīvr* should be translated as the upper of two alternative notes, not as sharp, and *komal* as the lower rather than as flat. A considerable amount of confusion is caused by the co-existence of these two systems. Of the many examples which could be quoted, those from record sleeves are the most obvious. For instance, on H.M.V. ALP 2312, the *rāg Jaijaivantī* is described as having all seven sharp notes in ascent. This is completely misleading and may even suggest to the Western reader that the ground-note can be made sharp in certain *rāg*s. The writer has evidently equated the *śuddh* of Bhātkhaṇḍe's system with *tīvr* of the other. This is only justified in application to Re, Ga, Dha and Ni. In fact, the ascending line of *rāg Jaijaivantī* has 'natural' intervals.

REGISTERS

STHĀN SAPTAK MADHY TĀR MANDR

North Indian classical music is not, of course, limited to one octave, and the same names apply to the notes in the other octave registers above and below. There are three registers (*sthān*—position; or *saptak*—aggregate of seven) generally recognised, each extending from Sa to the Ni above: middle (*madhy*); high (*tār*) which is here indicated by a dot above the note name, e.g. Ṡa (İ); and low (*mandr*) which is indicated by a dot below the note name, e.g. Ṇi (ṾII). Although musical theory usually acknowledges only these three registers which are based on the natural limitations in the range of the voice and most Indian instruments, the very low register (*atimandr*), indicated by two dots below the note name, is sometimes used by players of stringed instruments, especially the *sitār* and the *surbahār*. The very high register (*atitār*) is rarely heard.

ATI-MANDR ATITĀR

INTONATION

While the present-day North Indian gamut is comparable to the twelve-semitone octave of the West, some discussion on the subject of intonation is necessary. In the classical music of North India there is no need for equal temperament, since the factors which lead to this—changing harmonies and the system of keys—do not apply. Moreover, the technique of tempering notes by the use of beats is generally unknown, and since it is uncommon to find a number of melody instruments playing together, no objective standard of tuning is in general use. The only Indian instrument with fixed intonation is the harmonium which is often used for accompanying singers, but even here the precise tuning varies with each instrument. In general, intonation is governed by the individual musician's feeling for intervals. Except for the simple consonances of the ground-note, octave, fifth and fourth, these only approximate to a twelve semitone standard. Electronic analysis has confirmed that there is variation in intonation from one musician to another, as well as for a single musician during the course of a performance.[1]

Apart from this unconscious variation in intonation, there are musical traditions in North India which consciously recognise that in a few particular *rāg*s one or two notes are flatter or sharper than that which they conceive of as the standard in the *rāg*s as a whole. Bhātkhaṇḍe refers to these traditions on a number of occasions; for instance, when discussing the *rāg Āsāvrī* he says, 'Some say that the Dha (VI) of *Āsāvrī* is flatter than

[1] For further discussion on intonation see N. A. Jairazbhoy and A. W. Stone, 'Intonation in present-day North Indian classical music', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. XXVI, Part 1, 1963, pp. 119–32.

that of the *rāg Bhairvī*'. However, he does not appear to give much credence to this and prefers not to go further into the matter.[1]

ĀNDOLAN GAMAK

There is, however, one special case where subtle distinctions in intonation are particularly noticeable. This occurs when a note is subjected to a slow shake or an exaggerated vibrato (*āndolan* or *gamak*), either as a decoration or as a functional feature in certain *rāg*s.[2] It is in this context that certain musicians use the term *śruti* to indicate the subtle intervals produced as a result of this oscillation in pitch. They do, however, maintain that these microtonal deviations from the 'standard' intonation may only be used in oscillation and may not be sustained as a steady note.[3]

ŚRUTI

In the introductory chapter we have already suggested that the *śruti*, which was the basis of distinction between the two parent scales in ancient India, had certainly lost its original significance by the 17th century. In modern times certain musicologists and musicians still attempt to apply the old twenty-two *śruti* system to present-day music, while others go so far as to assert that the present-day gamut can only be explained in terms of forty-nine or even sixty-six different intervals. The fact remains that *śruti*s are no longer functional, that is they are not a primary basis of distinction between *rāg*s.

Bhātkhaṇḍe attempted in his early works to relate the twelve semitones to the ancient *śruti*s as follows: [4]

Śuddhsvar	Sa				Re			Ga		Ma				Pa					Dha			Ni
Śruti	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Vikṛitsvar			Re♭				Ga♭					Ma♯				Dha♭				Ni♭		

The twelve-semitone system, however, is clearly at odds with the twenty-two *śruti* system since some of the semitones are composed of one *śruti* and others of two *śruti*s.[5] In his later writings Bhātkhaṇḍe contradicts this earlier opinion when he says, 'To distinguish between two *rāg*s on the basis of the difference of only one *śruti* would not be acceptable to any present-day vocalist or instrumentalist'.[6] If this statement is applied to the

[1] *H.S.P.* IV, p. 428. He continues, 'But I can see no reason why we should get involved in these minute intervals. In current practice, the [following] rule always obtains: "*svarasaṃgatyadhīnāni svarasthānāni nityaśaḥ*" [The position of notes depends upon the notes they are combined with].' Elsewhere, *H.S.P.* IV, p. 584, he is more explicit: 'When a note is connected with lower notes, then it is noticed to be lower [in pitch], and when with higher notes then it is seen to be raised. This difference is noticed only by people with acute perception. That is why wise people do not like to exert themselves unduly with the trouble of trying to ascertain the minute intervals.' We shall be discussing this question of intonation in Chapter VIII.

[2] An example of this can be heard in the *rāg Darbārī* on the accompanying record.

[3] This view has been stated by Baṛe Ġẖulām 'Alī Khan. For further discussion see Chapter VIII.

[4] *K.P.M.* II, pp. 10–11.

[5] It is sometimes stated that the octave contains twenty-four *śruti*s, presumably so that each semitone can have two *śruti*s.

[6] *K.P.M.* VI, p. 21. This remark is reminiscent of that made by Puṇḍarika Viṭṭhala more than 350 years ago which has been referred to earlier (see p. 21).

above scheme representing the semitones in terms of *śruti*s, it would mean that musicians could not distinguish between *rāg*s having a minor third (Ga♭) and a major third (Ga♮) or a minor seventh (Ni♭) and a major seventh (Ni♮), for the difference between these is only one *śruti*. Obviously this is not so. Bhātkhaṇḍe goes on to say that there is no absolute measure of *śruti* available to him and that he recognises that the position (intonation) of a note in any one *rāg* fluctuates with the changing context in which it occurs.[1]

The gamut is a conceptual standard and, though it is derived from musical practice, it cannot take into account all the minute deviations from the norm, many of which are quite unconscious. Thus we are obliged to accept the twelve semitone standard, while making allowances for minor variations, conscious as well as unconscious.

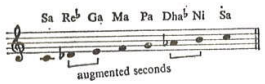
ALTERNATIVE NOTES

The *śuddh* and *vikṛit* varieties of each of the five movable notes are alternatives and do not normally occur as consecutive steps in a melodic sequence. Thus, in principle, the complete musical series will consist of the two immovable notes, Sa and Pa, and one of each pair of alternatives, Re♮ or Re♭, Ga♮ or Ga♭, Ma♮ or Ma♯, Dha♮ or Dha♭, and Ni♮ or Ni♭. In general, Indian music can be described as 'diatonic' in the sense that the successive steps of a scale are different degrees, rather than as 'chromatic' where the steps could include both alternatives of any note.[2] But many *rāg*s are quite complex and have both forms of one or more movable notes. These usually occur each in their own particular melodic context from which the other is excluded. It sometimes happens that a skilful musician will merge the two contexts so that the two forms of a note may be heard in succession. This generally requires some preparation of ground, as in the

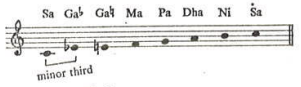
[1] *K.P.M., ibid.* This was written during the latter part of Bhātkhaṇḍe's life by which time he had obviously modified his earlier views on *śruti*s.

[2] In this work the terms diatonic and chromatic are used in this rather specialised sense. Here diatonic does not refer necessarily to scales whose steps are only wholetones and semitones. When applied to a heptatonic scale, chromatic indicates the use of both alternatives of a note as scalar steps and implies the corresponding omission of one of the other degrees, usually that just preceding or just following the alternatives. Thus in the following illustration scale A would be diatonic, in spite of its augmented-second intervals, while scale B would be chromatic because both alternatives of Ga are used and Re, the second note, is omitted. The fact that scale B has an interval of a minor third—virtually the same as augmented second—has no bearing on the subject.

A

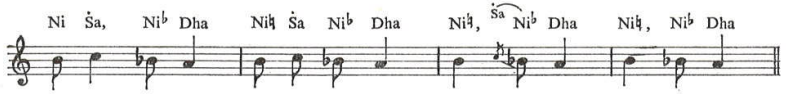


B



following example illustrating the successive use of both forms of Ni (VII):[1]

Ex. 5.



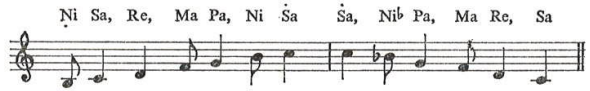
There is, however, a major exception to the scheme of alternative notes as outlined above. This is provided particularly by the *Lalit* group of *rāg*s in which both forms of the fourth, Ma♮ and Ma♯, commonly occur as consecutive steps. These will be discussed in greater detail in a later chapter. We may note here that it is primarily the two Ma's which sometimes provide exceptions to the rule that the *śuddh* and *vikṛit* positions of a note are alternatives.

SCALE SPECIES

While many *rāg*s have both forms of one or more of the five movable notes, there are some from which one or two notes are omitted entirely—the Sa alone by definition cannot be omitted. Such *rāg*s are described as transilient. In North Indian theory *rāg*s are sometimes classified according to the number of notes they contain, the classes thus obtained being known as *jāti*s (species): *rāg*s with all of the seven notes are called *sampūrṇ* (complete), those with six, *ṣāḍav* (or *khāḍav*) and those with five, *auḍav*. These terms are equivalent to the Western hepta-, hexa- and pentatonic. It should be noted that alternatives do not count here as separate notes: in a heptatonic *rāg* any or all alternatives may be used as accidentals; similarly, in a pentatonic *rāg* any alternatives of the five notes of the *rāg* may be used as accidentals. The *rāg Vṛindāvnī* (*Bṛindābnī*) *Sāraṅg*, for instance, is classified as pentatonic although both alternatives of Ni (VII) are used:[2]

JĀTI
SAMPŪRṆ
ṢĀḌAV
AUḌAV

Ex. 6. rāg Vṛindāvnī Sāraṅg



[1] This is often an oversimplification of what actually occurs in practice. The circumstances are complicated by the fact that musicians have been preparing the ground for this sort of movement in certain *rāg*s perhaps for several generations. Consequently, there are instances when the preparation of the ground is taken as read. Some musicians avoid this apparent chromaticism entirely, but probably for the majority this is something which can be done in a few specific instances, and then only with nicety.

[2] *K.P.M.* III, p. 496. Bhātkhaṇḍe does not explain the exact significance of commas in his notations of *rāg*s. The commas are not used in his notations of *cīz* where the duration values are regulated by the *tāl*. In the *ālāp*-type of phrases of the *svarvistār*, the *āroh–avroh* and *pakaṛ*, which are

ṬHĀṬ

The most important system of classifying *rāg*s is, however, in terms of heptatonic scales, *ṭhāṭ* (*thāṭ*), which are discussed in some detail in the next chapter.

MELODIC MOVEMENT

It is not enough to define a *rāg* in terms of mode or scale alone, as a number of *rāg*s have the same notes, yet each maintains its own musical identity. When we examine different performances of the same *rāg* we find that, allowing for divergence of tradition and the possibility of experimentation, not only are the same notes consistently used, but also particular figurations or patterns of notes occur frequently. The most characteristic

PAKAṚ

pattern of notes in a *rāg* is described as *pakaṛ*, a 'catch' phrase by which the *rāg* can be easily recognised. This is inevitably a subjective concept as *rāg*s are not generally limited to just one pattern and the 'catch' phrase of a *rāg* varies, to some extent at least, with the interpretation of the

SVAR-VISTĀR

musician. A more complete delineation of a *rāg* is obtained in the *svarvistār* —a series of phrases devised to show the various note-patterns which are permissible in, and characteristic of, the *rāg*. These, too, are subject to varying interpretations.

These patterns of notes can be described in terms of their melodic

VARṆ

movement, *varṇ*. Sanskrit treatises have recognised four types: *sthāyī*—

STHĀYĪ

steady, unchangeable; *āroh* (*ārohī*)—ascending; *avroh* (*avrohī*)—descending;

ĀROH

AVROH

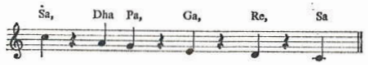
and *sañcārī*—wandering, i.e. a mixture of ascent and descent. Only the terms *āroh* and *avroh* are now commonly used in the description of *rāg*s

SAÑCĀRĪ

and refer to the most characteristic ascending and descending lines of a *rāg*, whether step by step or including irregular movements (*sañcārī varṇ*) if these are essential functional features of the *rāg*. For instance, in the *rāg Des* (*Deś*) the common *āroh* (ascent) is a step by step pentatonic movement

not regulated by *tāl*, a comma could indicate either a pause or the lengthening of the preceding note. The former seems highly improbable in view of the frequent occurrence of the comma which, if interpreted as a pause, would disjoint the melodic line, as can be seen in the following typical example (*K.P.M.* III, p. 23):

rāg Bhūpālī

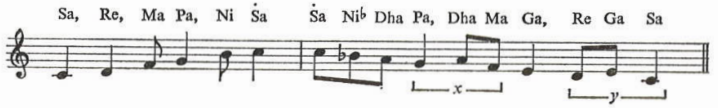


Thus it would seem more reasonable to interpret it as extending the time value of the preceding note. There are no specific breathing indications except, by implication, at the end of variations in the *svarvistār* which are marked by bar lines, and we presume that breath may be taken as required.

In this work the notes preceding the comma have been given double the time value of the other notes; however, there is no evidence that Bhātkhaṇḍe intended such precise values and our notation system has been adopted for the convenience of the reader.

—which can be described as directional transilience—while the common *avroh* (descent) is heptatonic and has two irregular turns at *x* and *y*:

Ex. 7. rāg Des



These turns, which are characteristic features of certain *rāg*s, are

VAKR

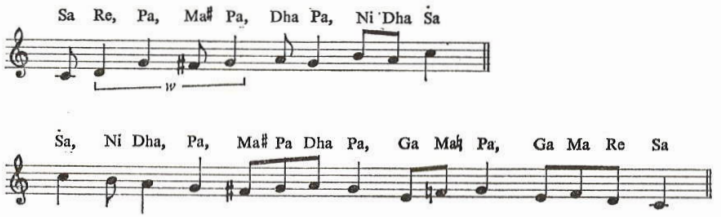
designated by the term *vakr* (crooked or oblique), and the note from which this oblique movement begins, i.e. Pa and Re in the example above,

VAKRSVAR

is called *vakrsvar*[1] (oblique note).

On the basis of the given *āroh* and *avroh*, the *rāg Des* could be described as having a pentatonic ascent in which the Ga (III) and Dha (VI) are omitted, and a heptatonic descent in which Pa (V) and Re (II) are *vakrsvar* and Ni♭ (VII♭) replaces Ni♮ (VII♮). The terms *āroh* and *avroh* do not always refer to the typical ascending and descending lines in a *rāg*, but are sometimes used to indicate specific upward or downward movement. The dual implications of these terms occasionally create confusion. For instance, in describing the *rāg Kāmod*, Bhātkhaṇḍe states that the Ma♯ (IV♯) is used only in the *āroh*, and yet when he gives the typical *āroh* and *avroh* of the *rāg*, the Ma♯ occurs in both the lines:[2]

Ex. 8. rāg Kāmod



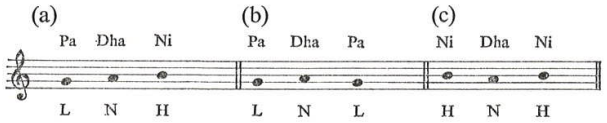
There is a further complication in the description of this *rāg*, for although the Ga (III) is omitted in the typical *āroh* line, it occurs in the ascending phrase Ga Ma♮ Pa (III IV♮ V) which is in the typical *avroh* line, and Bhātkhaṇḍe describes this *rāg* as being heptatonic in both *āroh* and *avroh*. It thus becomes necessary to distinguish clearly between the use of the terms to indicate the typical ascending and descending lines (which

[1] According to Bhātkhaṇḍe, only Re is *vakr* in the *rāg Des* (*K.P.M.* III, p. 521). However, in the *svarvistār* of this *rāg* (pp. 760–1) the Pa is frequently *vakr*, as in the example above.
[2] *K.P.M.* IV, p. 92.

may involve oblique movement), and the use of the terms to indicate the function of each individual note appearing in an ascending or descending context within a *rāg*. It is the latter which we must now discuss in greater detail.

There are two aspects to a note which belongs in a simple ascending movement: that it is approached from a lower note, and that the note following is higher. When these two conditions are fulfilled, it can be said that the note is clearly an ascending note. However, in certain *rāg*s it is permissible to approach a note from below, but the following note may not be a higher one. Here only one condition is fulfilled and it is a matter of interpretation whether this note should be considered as ascending or not. In fact, in both Indian musical theory and practice, it would not be considered an ascending note, as it leads downwards. This is commonly taken for granted in the system, and a note prohibited in ascent may generally be approached from below but must be followed by a lower note. The descending line in *rāg Des* provides a good illustration of this, where, although the Dha (VI) and Ga (III) are prohibited in ascent (except in certain phrases to be discussed later), the descending line has turns leading upwards to these notes (see *x* and *y*, Ex. 7). On the other hand, if a note may not be approached from below, but the following note is a higher one, that note is commonly thought to be in an ascending line; for instance, in the *rāg Kāmod* the Ma♯ (IV♯) can only be approached from above and is always followed by a higher note (see Ex. 8, *w*). These three possibilities are shown in the following examples, where L stands for a lower note, H for a higher note, and the note under consideration is represented by N:

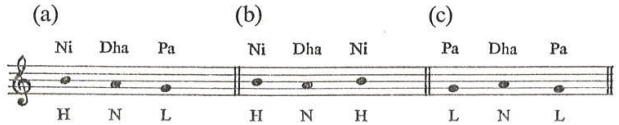
Ex. 9.



(a) N is clearly a direct ascending note.
(b) N is not an ascending note.
(c) N is an incomplete ascending note, and since it can only be approached by a turn from above (as in Ex. 8, *w*) it can also be referred to as an oblique (*vakr*) ascending note.

These same three possibilities also occur in relation to descent:

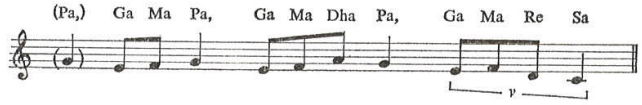
Ex. 10.



(a) N is a direct descending note.
(b) N is not a descending note (cf. Ex. 9c).
(c) N is an oblique descending note (cf. Ex. 9b).

There still remains one further distinction to be made. In some *rāg*s a note which is generally omitted in the ascending line may nevertheless occur as an ascending note in certain characteristic figures: for instance, in the *rāg Kāmod* (Ex. 8), where the Ga (III) is normally omitted in the ascending line but may be used as an ascending note in a melodic figure usually found in the descending line:

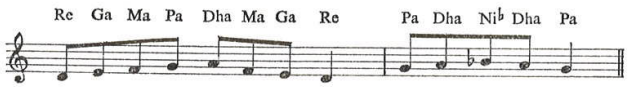
Ex. 11. rāg Kāmod



Here the use of the Ga as an ascending note limits the possibilities which may follow. In step by step movement the Dha (VI) may not be exceeded and the phrase is only felt to be completed by the cadential fragment *v*. A determining feature of this movement is that it does not extend into the next octave but turns back on itself. Thus Ga in *Kāmod* is an oblique ascending note (as it can only be approached from above) which occurs only in a discontinuous ascending figure, and can be described as a discontinuous, oblique ascending note. The Ma♮ (IV♮) in this *rāg* is not usually used in ascent, but occurs as a discontinuous, direct ascending note in the above example.

Similarly, in the *rāg Des*, both Ga (III) and Dha (VI), while omitted in the continuous, direct ascending line (see Ex. 4), may be used as discontinuous direct ascending notes, the former in melodic figures beginning and ending on the Re (II), the latter on the Pa (V):

Ex. 12. rāg Des



Bhātkhaṇḍe describes *Des* as heptatonic in both ascent and descent, with the qualification that the Ga and Dha are generally omitted in ascent,[1] but in fact, the continuous ascent of *Des* is pentatonic, the Ga and Dha being used only occasionally as discontinuous direct ascending notes.

[1] *K.P.M.* III, pp. 250–1. These discontinuous direct ascending notes can be heard in the *rāg Des* on the accompanying record.

IMPORTANT NOTES

VĀDĪ
SAṂVĀDĪ

In every *rāg* two notes, in theory, are given greater importance than the others. These notes are called *vādī*—sonant, and *saṃvādī*—consonant. According to Bhātkhaṇḍe the prime character of a *rāg* appears in the *vādī*.[1] The *vādī* is that note which is sounded clearly again and again, a note which is superabundant in a *rāg*.[2] The *saṃvādī* is described as being a note used less than the *vādī* but more than the other notes in the *rāg*. The *saṃvādī* should not be near the *vādī* as it will tend to detract from the importance of the *vādī*. Ideally it should be a perfect fifth away or, if that note is not present in the *rāg*, it should be one of the adjacent notes, the fourth or the sixth, preferably the former.[3] These definitions of *vādī* and *saṃvādī* appear to relate primarily to frequency of occurrence, but statistics applied to Bhātkhaṇḍe's own notations reveal irreconcilable inconsistencies.[4] Obviously much depends on the interpretation of the key phrase 'sounded clearly again and again', which Bhātkhaṇḍe does not clarify. He seems aware of the inadequacy of his definition and quotes a divergent view from the *Gīta Sūtra Sāra* by K. Banarjī (Bannerjee) in which the author questions the validity of these terms.[5]

VIŚRĀNTI SVAR

Much of this difficulty seems to arise from the fact that *rāg*s have different facets which are successively developed in the course of a performance. In this connection Bhātkhaṇḍe equates *vādī* with *viśrānti svar* (or *maqām sthān*), terminal or resting notes, when he states that singers choose different notes on which to end their melodic phrases, momentarily presenting each of these notes as *vādī*, finally returning to the prescribed *vādī* without detriment to the *rāg*.[6] Thus in a particular *rāg* there are several important notes which may be emphasised either by frequency of occurrence or by their use as terminal notes. In theory the *vādī* is chosen because it is the most important note in the characteristic phrase (*pakaṛ*) of that *rāg*. There are, however, further qualifications. In all *rāg*s, the Sa (I) is a vitally important note, both as a frame of reference and as a melodic terminal. Yet the Sa is not a good candidate for the position of *vādī* because it is a feature common to all *rāg*s and gives no indication of the

[1] *H.S.P.* I, p. 20.
[2] *K.P.M.* II, p. 14 and *K.P.M.* VI, p. 23.
[3] *H.S.P.* I, p. 22.
[4] In the *svarvistār* of *rāg Yaman*, as set out in *K.P.M.* II, pp. 487–8, there are 62 Sa, 83 Re, 70 Ga, 54 Ma, 74 Pa, 47 Dha and 45 Ni. On a statistical basis, Re should be *vādī* and Pa *saṃvādī*. Bhātkhaṇḍe, however, gives Ga as *vādī* and Ni as *saṃvādī*. In the other *rāg*s examined there is also a similar deviation between the most often used notes and Bhātkhaṇḍe's given *vādī* and *saṃvādī*. This is discussed further by A. N. Sanyal, *Ragas and Raginis*, Calcutta 1959, p. 20.
[5] *H.S.P.* I, pp. 79, 80. Banarjī gives an example of the *rāg Yaman* in which some say Pa is *vādī*, others Ga or even Re and Ni, suggesting that, in the hands of an expert, there may be even greater latitude. The important notes of this *rāg* are discussed in Appendix B on p. 205.
[6] *K.P.M.* V, p. 49.

TIME THEORY
PŪRVĀṄG
UTTRĀṄG

character of a particular one. The same applies, although to a lesser extent, to the Pa (V). Further, Bhātkhaṇḍe's choice of *vādī* is often influenced by his time theory which is an attempt to relate the musical characteristics of a *rāg* to its hour of performance.[1] In this connection, he divides the octave into two parts, *pūrvāṅg*, first portion, the lower tetrachord Sa to Ma (I to IV) or the pentachord Sa to Pa (I to V); and *uttrāṅg*, second portion, the upper tetrachord Pa to Ṡa (V to İ), or the pentachord from Ma to Ṡa (IV to İ). According to his theory, in the *rāg*s performed between noon and midnight the *pūrvāṅg* is emphasised, i.e. the *vādī* is in the lower tetrachord; while in the *rāg*s performed between midnight and noon the *uttrāṅg* is prominent, i.e. the *vādī* is in the upper tetrachord.

This theory tends to influence the choice of *vādī* in Bhātkhaṇḍe's system. For instance, in the *rāg Tilak Kāmod* the Ni (VII) is very prominent and is considered the *vādī* by a number of musicians. Bhātkhaṇḍe fully recognises the importance of this note in *Tilak Kāmod* when he says that the quality of the Ni in this *rāg* is so spectacular that nearly everyone recognises it from the (particular) way this note is used.[2] *Tilak Kāmod* is, however, sung at night and according to Bhātkhaṇḍe's theory should have its *vādī* in the lower tetrachord. In *K.P.M.* Bhātkhaṇḍe gives the *vādī* as Re (II) and the *saṃvādī* as Pa (V),[3] but in the *H.S.P.* he says that, according to experts, the Re is weak in descent[4] and gives the *vādī* as Sa (I).[5]

From the foregoing discussion it is apparent that the concept of *vādī* and *saṃvādī* is not quite consistent with present-day musical practice. The terms have been used in the musical treatises since the *Nāṭyaśāstra* where *vādī*—sonant, *saṃvādī*—consonant, *vivādī*—dissonant and *anuvādī*—assonant (i.e. neutral) represent a general theory of consonance which is now either forgotten or has at least lost its earlier significance as Fox Strangways has pointed out.[6] The terms, however, have persisted to the present time. The original concept appears to have been quite reasonable. Only perfect fourths and fifths were recognised as consonant, while the semitone and/or perhaps the major seventh was recognised as dissonant. The other intervals were considered assonant. These terms were thus

[1] Bhātkhaṇḍe's time theory has been described in *Rāgas and Rāginīs*, by O. C. Gangoly, Bombay, reprinted 1948, pp. 90–2. The time theory of *rāg*s is a controversial subject and there are several different attitudes which may briefly be expressed here. There are some who will not tolerate a *rāg* at any but the prescribed time. Bhātkhaṇḍe is not so dogmatic, but states that a particular *rāg* sounds especially beautiful at a particular time. Some musicians look at this matter in an entirely different light; they feel that if a particular *rāg* is performed well it will create an atmosphere of a particular time of day or night. Finally, there are those who believe that the time theory has no application to present-day practice and Banarjī, quoted in *H.S.P.* I, p. 75, says that the tradition of performing *rāg*s at particular times of the day and night is 'purely imaginary'.
[2] *H.S.P.* I, p. 243.
[3] *K.P.M.* III, p. 297.
[4] *H.S.P.* I, p. 250.
[5] *H.S.P.* I, p. 243.
[6] Fox Strangways, *The Music of Hindostan*, p. 114.

intended to express the phenomena of consonance and dissonance as conceived in that period. Obviously consonance and dissonance were particularly significant in relation to the important notes in a mode (*jāti*).

AṂŚA These important notes were designated by the term *aṃśa*. Bharata, the author of *Nāṭyaśāstra*, says, 'That note which is the *aṃśa*, that note is *vādī*',[1] indicating that the *aṃśa* is the sonant note whose consonance and dissonance are particularly important, not that *vādī* is a synonym of *aṃśa*. But later writers have equated the two terms, and so *vādī* has come to mean important note and the term *aṃśa* has now become redundant.

This has led to some confusion. Whereas in Bharata's time modes frequently had several important notes (*aṃśas*), and indeed there was one, *Ṣaḍjamadhyamā*, in which all the seven notes were considered important, the present-day *rāg*s can have designated only one *vādī* and one secondary important note, *saṃvādī*. The ancient *saṃvādī*s comprised the consonant fourth and fifth, while the present *saṃvādī* refers to the second most important note in a *rāg*, which, to preserve the importance of the *vādī*, is removed from it by generally a fifth or fourth, not necessarily perfect intervals,[2] or perhaps by a sixth.[3]

VIVĀDĪ ANUVĀDĪ The terms *vivādī* (dissonant) and *anuvādī* (assonant) are also occasionally used at the present time, especially by theoreticians. *Vivādī* as 'disputing' is particularly meaningless in the present context in which the minor second and the major seventh have a very prominent place in the system. Bhātkhaṇḍe explains *vivādī* as that note which, when used in a *rāg*, would damage it, and refers to it as *varjitsvar*—omitted note. He concedes that the *vivādī* may, however, be used by expert singers and players without detriment to the *rāg*.[4] Here again the precise meaning of the term remains unclear. Are all the omitted notes called *vivādī*, or just those notes which may occasionally be used by experts, but are not essential to the *rāg*? In discussing the *rāg Kāmod*,[5] he says that sometimes Ni♭ (VII♭) may be used in descent as a *vivādī* note, indicating that it is the latter meaning

VARJIT-SVAR

[1] *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 'Kāshi Sanskrit Series' (No. 60), prose following śl. 20, chapter 28.

[2] *K.P.M.* III, p. 612. In *rāg Pīlū*, for example, the *vādī* is given as Ga♭ and the *saṃvādī* as Ni♮—an augmented fifth. The same applies to the *rāg Mārvā* where *vādī* and *saṃvādī* are given as Re♭ and Dha♮. Some musicologists are disturbed by the fact that these two do not form a perfect interval and give Dha♮ and Ga♮ as its *vādī* and *saṃvādī*. V. N. Paṭvardhan in *Rāg Vijñān*, Vol. II, p. 1, discussing *rāg Mārvā*, says, 'Re♭ is prominent in its lower tetrachord (*pūrvāṅg*), Dha in its upper tetrachord (*uttrāṅg*). . . . Sometimes one also pauses on Ga, because Ga makes a consonant (*saṃvādī*) relationship with Dha. But if this is done often it gives the appearance of the *rāg Pūriyā*. . . . It is customary to give Re♭ and Dha as *vādī* and *saṃvādī* of *Mārvā*, but seen from the point of view of the *śāstras* (treatises) it is not possible for Re♭ and Dha♮ to be *saṃvādī* (i.e. consonant) to each other. For this reason, in our opinion it is proper to accept Dha as *vādī* and Ga as *saṃvādī*.' These comments reflect the confusion which prevails among musicologists regarding the interpretation of these terms. A further discussion of the *rāg Mārvā* will be found in Appendix B on p. 202.

[3] Some musicians also accept the third as *saṃvādī*.

[4] *K.P.M.* II, p. 14.

[5] *K.P.M.* IV, p. 92.

that he has in mind. When this *vivādī* or accidental is used with sensitivity, it is considered particularly beautiful—a far cry from its original meaning of dissonant. The term *anuvādī* still refers to the notes in a *rāg* other than *vādī*, *saṃvādī* and *vivādī*, though these may, in the present period, include the perfect fourth or fifth of the *vādī*.

To summarise, Bhātkhaṇḍe's choice of *vādī* for a *rāg* is influenced by three factors:

1. It should be an important note in the characteristic phrase of the *rāg*.
2. It should belong to the correct part of the octave in relation to his time theory.
3. Sa (I), and to a lesser degree Pa (V), are less meaningful as *vādī* than the other notes because they give little indication of the character of the *rāg* and so become *vādī* only when there is no other reasonable possibility to fit his time theory. It will be seen that much depends on the validity of the time theory. This is difficult to assess, but the fact that the theory is widely accepted in India suggests that it is reconcilable, at least to some extent, with the time of day at which *rāg*s are traditionally performed.[1] We shall have more to say about the time theory in the chapter following.

SUMMARY

This discussion of technical terms can be concluded with a summary of the principal features by which a *rāg* may be distinguished from others:

1. Basic notes used (*ṭhāṭ*).
2. Transilience (*sampūrṇ*, *ṣāḍav*, *auḍav*).
3. Emphasised notes (*vādī*, *saṃvādī*).
4. Ascending and descending lines (*āroh*, *avroh*):
   (a) alternative notes used as accidentals (*vivādī*?);
   (b) directional transilience;
   (c) oblique movement (*vakr*).
5. Register of emphasis (*sthān–mandr*, *madhy*, *tār*).
6. Shakes (*āndolan*) and intonation (*śruti*).

These factors will be discussed in the following pages.

[1] There are, of course, differing traditions regarding the time at which *rāg*s should be performed and no time theory can satisfy all of these.