

## Institutionalization of Hindustani Classical Vocal Music in West Bengal Higher Education

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### ABSTRACT

At the end of the British rule, Vishnu Digambar Paluskarji and Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhandeji were pioneers in introducing institutional music education system in India. On the other hand in Bengal (West Bengal), Sir Shourindra Mohan Tagore with the help of Kshetramohan Goswami founded a music school by the name of ' Bangasangeet Vidyalaya' in 1871. Later in 1897, ' Ramsharan Music School' begins his journey followed by Bishnupur Gharana. In 1901, ' Brahmacharyashram' was established by Rabindranath Tagore in Bolpur, West Bengal, which later took the form of Visva-Bharati University in 1921 and music became a subject in higher education. After independence, in 1959, the west bengal government took the initiative to established a university in the name of Rabindranath at Jorasanko Thakurbari on the occasion of Rabindranath's birth centenary. As a result, Rabindra Bharati University was established on January 10, 1962 which opened another New horizon in the institutional music education of West Bengal higher education. In the latter case, the music education system of other Universities and affiliated colleges in West Bengal have created the field of research and the educational system to follow Visva-Bharti and Rabindra Bharati University. In this research paper I want to show how Hindustani classical vocal music takes place in several higher education institutions in West Bengal.

**Key words:** Hindustani classical vocal music, Higher Education, Institutionalization, Higher educational institutions.

### INTRODUCTION

A look at the history of Music practice in Bengal shows that, this musical genre divided into ancient, middle and modern eras. From the 9th century to 15th century AD can we said to be the ancient period of the creation of Bengali songs. In Bengal, from the Mauryan period to the Gupta period, cultural practices were conducted fairly well, all eras and like, raga music and native music (Desi Sangeet) were practiced simultaneously in this era. During the Sultanate period and the Mughal period, classical music flourished mainly under the patronage of kings. Later on,

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during the British rule, classical music has spread in our country through the Gharana system, there has not been much pattern of institution- based music education. Although the education of music under the institutions is about 1870 in almost 'Sourendra Mohan Tagore had consequently, but the real form of the era of institutional education of music is Rabindranath Tagore was done in the year of 1901. "After independence, the widespread progress of music has been done in the country and the classical music is open to achieve higher education in both Theoretical and Practical, both sides. Music in colleges and universities got appropriate importance and place as well as music not only a fine art, but also as a subject." As a result, the music was also rare to listen to the normal person, he got the opportunity to learn and understand the music. This is attracted to large learner-class music. According to a topic of music, the recognition increased as a subject, it became substantial conditions for higher education. Today, there are musical research in almost all top universities of the country, students are being given high-level titles like graduate, postgraduate, doctoral and is being educated at the broader level. There is no lack of books published on any subject related to music. Scholar musicians and music- 'Shastra' are available as a guru in colleges & Universities libraries. Flourishing for an excellent and systematic institutional education system it can be said here that it is full of features like prescribed course, prescribed presentation, prescribed duration, prescribed degree, prescribed examination system, examination, result, etc. It is called the institutional education system.

### **Research questions**

The following accepted questionnaires were accepted in the given research work:

- A. What is the history of the beginning of music in formal higher education?
- B. What is the structural nature of traditional music education in institutional higher education?

### **Objectives of the study**

- A. Clarification of the beginnings of music in institutional higher education.
- B. Structural analysis of traditional music education in institutional higher education.

### **Significance of the study**

History of institutional education of music in higher education, classical vocal music education is the main theme of the proposed research paper. Thus, how classical vocal music has become a subject along with other subjects in various higher education institutions in West Bengal, especially universities and colleges under them. It is necessary to determine the acceptance of classical music among the members associated with the educational world.

### **Methodology of the study**

The overall research work is increasingly historical in historical context (Historical method).

## Discussion

Institutional music education is provided by two types of Higher education institutions which are described as follows:

### Type 1.Only music education institutions

#### **i) Ramsharan music college**

Acharya Ramshankar Bhattacharya (1761-1853 AD) was the creator of the Bishnupur Gharana and a prominent personality of that era. He was fond of music and possessed a good voice since his childhood. Bishnupur Raja Chaitanya Singh's royal court used to entertain many musicians from different states and later Ram Shankar was appointed as a member of this royal court. As a result, his repertoire was gradually filled with the music of renowned virtuosos like Tansen, Vilas Khan, Nayak Gopal, Baiju Baora etc. In this way, the music of the music masters of different states came together in this genre and slowly the repertoire of classical music of Bishnupur started to get rich. However, the Bishnupur Gharana with its own characteristics was actually born out of Ramashankar Banerjee's single-minded effort and after long pursuits. Around the beginning of the second decade of the nineteenth century, he emerged with great potential in the music field of the entire Bengal. In the context of the creation of this genre, ancient classical music education gave him considerable inspiration. Among his disciples were the renowned Jadu Bhatta, Kshetramohan Goswami, Ramkesab Bhattacharya, Anant Lal Banerjee and others. Anant Lal Banerjee's sincere efforts in promoting and spreading Bishnupur Gharana are unparalleled. This great artist was always relentless in music practice, music performance and teaching. Among his illustrious disciples were Radhikaprasad Goswami, his sons Ramaprasanna and Gopeshwar Bandyopadhyay. Anantalal's eldest son, Sangeetacharya Ramaprasanna Bandyopadhyay, was a noted classical artist and outstanding surabhar and sitar player. And his first musical education was from his father, Anant Lal Banerjee. A few years before his father's death, he returned to Bishnupur from Calcutta and accepted the post of acharya of the music school established by Ananta Lal Bandyopadhyay as 'Ananta Sangeet Vidyalaya'. Later Paresh Chandra, the eldest son of Ramprasanna Bandyopadhyay, was appointed as the Acharya of the 'Bishnupur Music School'. Another of Anantalal Bandyopadhyay's Son Sangeetacharya Gopeshwar Banerjee possessed an extraordinary talent in vocal and instrumental music and received musical education from his father from childhood. This great artist was subsequently appointed as the first Principal of 'Bishnupur Ramsharan Music College'. Surendranath Bandyopadhyay, the third son of Ananta Lal Bandyopadhyay, was engaged as a singer in Maharaja Jatindramohan's sangeet in Calcutta, Adi Brahms Samaj and Pramoda Devi Chaudhurani's 'Sangeet Sammilani' and himself initiated Sangeet Bharti in Calcutta. Established a music school. During his tenure as Principal of Bishnupur Music College, he produced many accomplished students in both vocal and instrumental music. During this period, Mallarajas' strong passion for Marga music led to the extensive practice of high music in the royal court, and those who played a key role in the proper performance and practice of

Dhrupad and other high music have at various times combined other genres with their own singing styles. This is how this gharana has been enriched with new melodies. For centuries, the music of Bishnupur gharana has been performed in Bengal and in the whole of North India by the master of the Bandopadhyay family and the disciples of Acharya Ramshankar Bandyopadhyay. The artistes of this lineage have left a lot of contributions in the practice of music as well as in the promotion and proper appreciation of music. The contribution of these musicians in the preservation of the ancient classical music of Bishnupur Gharana will be eternally shining to the music lovers of the entire country. The 'Ramsaran Sangeet Mahavidyalaya' established in this Bishnupur region of West Bengal's Bankura district dates back to ancient times. Glowing from This music institution was established in 1885 under the supervision of music guru Ram Sharan Mukhopadhyay. The institution claims antiquity as the oldest institution in India. In fact, it was a music school that began its journey as a college in 1943. At present 150 students study music and there are two courses running one, 4-year certificate course and two, 2-year diploma courses. Apart from the classical music of Bishnupur genre, Rabindra Sangeet, Nazrul Geeti along with Pakhwaj, Tabla, Esraj, various musical instruments are taught in this college.

## ii) Bengal Music College

On 10th August 1940 Bengal Music College started from Muralidhar Girls' School with only eight students with the help of Music Acharya Nanigopal Bandyopadhyay, Dr. Snehmoy Dutta, late Kshitish Chandra Bandyopadhyay and renowned musician Manindra Chandra Chakraborty. Although the institution was named Music College and the 'Bengal Music College Society' was formed in 1961 under the College Registration Act. Indeed a leading local education centre for performing arts where drawing dance and various musical instruments are taught alongside music. After a long journey of 75 years, the college entered a glorious centenary and in these 7 decades the name of the institution has been associated with many eminent personalities like Sumitra Sen, Suchitra Sen, Purba Dam etc. Apart from this, Hemant Mukherjee, Chinmoy Chatterjee, Puravi Dutta, Akhil Bandhu Ghosh and prominent masters were seated as gurus in this institution. Among the colleges under Calcutta University where music is taught as a subject, only the Bengal Music College offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses and only the vocal department of music is taught in this institution. BMC was founded in 1948 by Ustad Ali Akbar Khan and Ali Akbar Khan Sangeet College. The college started as a small institution with only five students. Gradually became one of the premier music colleges in India and was renamed Bengal Music College in 2001.

## Type 2.1. Institutions or University teaching music with other subjects

### i) Visva-Bharati university

In 1863, the poet's father, Maharshi, Debendranath Tagore, built a small rear extension for meditation on a seven-acre plot at the site of the present institution, and in 1888 he dedicated the

land and buildings to establish a 'Brahmaavidalaya'. Maharshi Devendranath Tagore was a prominent figure in the field of educational reforms of that time. Partly in fulfilment of his father's wish, Kabiguru formally established a school named 'Brahmacharyashram' in 22 December 1901 with only five students. Kabiguru initially wanted to realize the values inherent in ancient Indian education and consciously rejected the educational system introduced in India by the British rulers at that time. As a result, the school and its curriculum were quite different from the rest of the country's education and teaching methods. Founded in 1921 by Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore, Visva-Bharati was declared a Central University and an Institution of National Importance by an Act of Parliament in 1951. In 1919, the one-storey music building of Dwarik was demolished. At that time, artists of music and painting used to practice in this place. In 1924, the music department moved from this place to 'Shamindra Cottage'. In 1925, the music department was again shifted to a few-room shed called Nutan Bari at the eastern end of Santiniketan. In 1919, when Nandan and a few adjoining houses were built, the music and painting departments met again there. In 1929, the first separate name of the music department was named Sangeet Bhavan. Then in 1935 Sangeet Bhavan was shifted to the house called Purvatani at the western end of the present China Bhavan. The present Sangeet Bhavan house was built in 1939 with the financial assistance of the Maharaja of Tripura and the zamindar of Awagarh and since then the Sangeet Bhavan has been in this house. There are two academic departments in Sangeet Bhavan.- 1) Department of Indian Classical Music: Voice and Instrument 2) Department of Rabindra Sangeet, Dance and Drama.

## ii) Rabindra Bharati university

Rabindranath Tagore's ancestral home is Jorasanko Thakurbari. In this house he was not only born but spent a significant part of his life till his last days. The house was also the residence of Gaganendranath and Abanindranath Tagore, known as the founders of the 'Bengal School of Art'. In 1784, Neelmani Thakur left his father's house and built a new residential house on a land on the east side of Chitpur Road, Jorasanko. Later, Kabiguru's grandfather Dwarkanath Tagore named this existing family house 'Bhadrasan Bari'. Today the house is known as 'Maharshi Bhavana' and Rabindra Bharati Museum. Then in 1823 Dwarkanath constructed another building adjacent to this house and named it 'Baithakkhana Bari' to entertain his European guests. Later perhaps due to the demolition of this house in 1943, a glorious episode in the history of Bengal and an invaluable built tradition was lost forever. The name of the Jorasanko Tagore family is closely associated with the renaissance of Bengal. In 1784 Prince Dwarkanath Tagore's grandfather Neelmani Tagore moved to Jorasanko region to live. Where Jorasanko Thakurbari and Rabindra Bharati University currently stands. As the privileged son of Maharishi Devendranath, poet Rabindranath Tagore turned Jorasanko Thakurbari into a cultural retreat. The name of this house is inextricably linked from the birth of the poet to his last journey. It is proposed to set up an academy of music, dance and drama education in this Thakurbari in a joint initiative of the West Bengal State Government and the Rabindra Bharati Society. As a result of which the West Bengal State Academy of Dance, Drama, Music and Fine Arts was established in

1955. In 1959, the West Bengal government took the initiative to establish a university named after Rabindranath at Jorasanko Thakurbari on the occasion of Rabindra's birth centenary. After negotiations with the poet's son Rathindranath Tagore, the entire Tagore House was taken over and Bichitra Bhavan and the Emerald Kunj built in the 1820s were also converted into an educational campus of the university. The Rabindra Bharati University Act passed by the West Bengal Legislative Assembly on January 10, 1962 received the assent of the President, but its journey began on 25th Baisakh of the same year. Rabindra Bharati University is dedicated to spreading its thoughts and ideas through humanities, social sciences, arts and culture. There are three main faculties Arts, Fine Arts and Visual Arts. Rabindra Bharati University is a unique educational institution of higher education which admits students from remote areas and backward strata of society in West Bengal.

### Type 2.1. List of Institutions or Affiliated Colleges teaching music with other subject

University	Affiliated colleges	Year of Estd.
Burdwan university	Rampurhat College	1950
	Hoogly Mahila Mahavidyalaya	1949
	Tarakeswar Degree College	1986
	Memari College	1986
	Netaji Mahavidyalaya	1957
	Purnidevi Choudhury Mahila Mahavidyalaya	2004
Bankura University	BZSM Mahavidyapith	1973
	Ramananda College	1945
	Khatra Adibasi Mahavidyalaya	1979
Sidho-Kanho-Birsa University	Nistarini College	1957
	Raghunathpur College	1961
	Kashipur Michael Madhusudan College	2000
Vidyasagar University	Mukherberia Gangadhar Mahavidyalaya	1964
	Mahishadal Girls College	1969
	Prabhat Kumar College	1926
	Maharaja Nandakumar Mahavidyalaya	2007

	Belda College	1963
	Panshkura Banamali College	1960
	Raja N L Khan Womens College	1957
West Bengal State University	Hiralal Majumdar Memorial Mahila Mahavidyalaya	1959
	Nahata Jogindranath Mandal Smriti Mahavidyalaya	1985
	Gobordanga Hindu College	1947
	Netaji Shatabarshiki Mahavidyalaya	1997

## CONCLUSION :

As a result, Rabindra Bharati University was established on January 10, 1962 which opened another New horizon in the institutional music education of West Bengal higher education. In the letter case, the music education system of other universities and affiliated colleges in West Bengal have created the field of research and the educational system to follow Visva-Bharati and Rabindra Bharati University. Numerous facts and studies in it also prove how music entered the institutional education system. As a result of the entry of music in the institutional education system, various institutions have sprung up and great musicians have brought music on par with other subjects through their untiring efforts. It is true that there is adequate opportunity to get higher education in music today.

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