



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Music

AN ANALYSIS OF SOME ASPECTS OF RABINDRA SANGEET

KEY WORDS:

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ABSTRACT

Following a short biography of Rabindranath Tagore, I present, in this article, some details of Thaats, Ragas and Taals used in Rabindra Sangeet. In addition, Tagore's compositions in two special styles of Bengal, viz. Baul and Kirtan, are highlighted. Tagore's compositions in Carnataka and Western Styles as well as some miscellaneous styles are also mentioned for completeness. Some relevant comments are made at the end.

I. INTRODUCTION

I have always been fond of listening to Hindustani Classical Music, from my College days. I do not understand the intricacies of notations of the various ragas, but long exposure by listening to such music, particularly aided by two similar senior persons, I can, on most occasions, identify a basic and often used raga in a piece of music. Being a Bengali, I grew up in an atmosphere of Rabindra Sangeet, and as such, I love to listen to Rabindra Sangeet, but find it difficult to identify the raga base of a particular song, because in Rabindra Sangeet, the wordings are as important as the raga base. It is this reason that I undertook the present study to find out the classical base of Rabindra Sangeet in terms of the Thaats, Ragas, and Taals. The present article gives some details of such attributes and some others in which Rabindranath composed songs. The data used in this article is mostly based on the website [1] with some supplements from the Gita Bitan [2] by Rabindranath himself.

The article is organized as follows. Section II gives a short biography of Rabindranath; Section III is a short account of Rabindranath's musical training and his interactions with famous musicians of his time. Section IV deals with the List of the 10 Thaats in Hindustani Classical Music and the number of songs in Rabindra Sangeet belonging to them; this list appears in Table 1. The list of Ragas and the number of songs belonging to them in each Thaat are given in Tables 2 to 11, in Section V. An example of a song from the Raga/Style to which belongs the highest number of songs, is given under each Table, marked with a star (*). Section VI deals with the other regional styles which, though belonging to one the Thaats, have the regional influence dominating them. Section VII contains a discussion on Rabindranath's favourite Thaats and Ragas. Section VIII gives the details of Taals used in Rabindra Sangeet. Comments and discussions are given in each Section. Some additional comments are given in Section IX. Section X concludes this article. A Section on Acknowledgments is followed by References and Bibliography in Sections XI and XII, respectively.

II. A Short Biography Of Rabindranath Tagore



Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was the youngest son of Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, a leader of the Brahmo Samaj, which was a new religious sect in nineteenth-century Bengal based on the principles of the *Upanishads*. He was educated at home because he used to get suffocated by the four walls of a conventional School (this was why he established an experimental open School at Santiniketan later). At seventeen, he was sent to England for formal schooling, but he did not complete his studies there. In his mature years, in addition to his many-sided literary activities, he managed the family estates at Silaidaha in East Bengal, which brought him into close contact with the poor and the underprivileged (this created his interest in social reforms and also the establishment of Sriniketan, which facilitated poor people to be self dependent). Off and on, he participated in the Indian nationalist movement, but in his own visionary way; and Mahatma Gandhi, the political father of modern India, was his devoted friend (Tagore honoured Gandhiji with the title of 'Mahatma' and Gandhiji in turn called him 'Gurudev'[3]). Tagore was knighted by the ruling British Government in 1915, but within a few years, he resigned the honour as a protest against the British atrocities in Jalinwalabagh.

Tagore had early success as a writer in Bengal, but with his translations of some of his poems, he became rapidly known throughout India and in the West. This facilitated his tours across continents giving lectures, and making friends with the luminaries in the literature and some other fields.

Although Tagore wrote successfully in all branches of literature, he was basically a poet. He published a large number of poetry collections, but it was *Gitanjali*, whose English translation by the poet himself won him the Nobel Prize in literature. In addition, he wrote several volumes of short stories, a number of novels, musical dramas, dance dramas, essays of all types, travel diaries, and two autobiographies, one in his middle years and the other shortly before his death in 1941. Tagore also left numerous drawings and paintings, and of course, songs for which he wrote the music himself. It is his music that we are concerned with here.

III. Musical Training And Interaction With Salwars In Music

To understand the musical interests of Rabindranath, and why all songs he composed, except those which were dominated by regional practices, were all classical based, it is important to know that at his very young age, he was trained in Dhrupad and Khayal from stalwarts like Bishnu Chakraborty, Jadu Bhatta, Radhika Goswami, and Srikantha Singha of the Bishnupur Gharana [4],[5]. His elder brother, Jyotirindranath who himself was an expert in Dhrupad and Khayal, encouraged him to compose verses to match raga-based melodies, innovated by Jyotirindranath. This was how 'Rabindrasangeet' took its early form, the early compositions being 'shuddh', i.e. true to the raga and taal systems of Dhrupad, Dhamar, Tappa and Sadra. Much like Dhrupad, the

verses and mood of his songs during this phase dealt with prayer and devotion. All Rabindra Sangeets, directly derived from well established Dhrupad songs, are usually called 'Bhanga Gaan'. The details of all such songs are beautifully presented in [5].

Later, Rabindranath introduced novelty and improvisations, still within the structure of traditional Hindustani music. Consider, for example, Raga Malhar. In his songs devoted to monsoon and rainy season, he extensively used various types of Malhars, namely, Desh-Malhar, Nat-Malhar, Surath-Malhar, Mian-Malhar, Megh-Malhar, Gaud-Malhar, Surdasi Malhar etc. and also created over fifty different variations of Malhar alone, each one being unique and distinct in its mood and expression. Further, he employed other ragas like Yaman, Kedar, Piloo, Barwa to express the varied moods of rainy season. This exemplifies his creativity and innovation even in a traditional system.

Rabindranath also experimented with tunes from other systems, like Carnatic music, but he did not wish to create new ragas but to create melodies that did justice to the expressiveness of his poetry. On some occasions, his music did influence the Ustads of his time. It is said that after listening to a Tagore song, Ustad Alauddin Khan was inspired to compose his favourite raga 'Hemant'.

Tagore used to listen to legendary Ustads of his time whenever opportunity arose [6],[7]. In 1934, Rabindranath inaugurated the first All-Bengal Music Conference in Calcutta, where Ustad Faiyaz Khan and Ustad Alauddin Khan gave performances.

In 1924 at Dilip Kumar Ray's house in Lucknow, Rabindranath listened to Ustad Abdul Karim Khan singing Anand-Bhairavi and a few other compositions. Rabindranath was listening sitting upright, as was his habit, with closed eyes, as if in a trance. In the same city in 1935, Rabindranath listened to Pandit Srikrishna Ratanjankar who presented Khayal in Chayanat, Jaijwanti and Paraj. That evening, Rabindranath was running a fever of 102 degrees but that did not deter him from listening till the very end, and then discussing the questions on aesthetics and music that arose in his mind, till mid-night with leading musicians and critics present there.

As mentioned earlier, Rabindranath used to spend a few months in East Bengal (now Bangladesh), on his favourite boat on River Padma. Here he heard a lot of Bhatiyali songs, the songs by boatmen, Baul compositions, Kirtans, the folk tunes and their simplicity and depth moved him. He used these folk tunes in his music and gave them a new meaning, with Hindustani music dissolving with ease into Bhatiyali and Baul songs, but more than that, it had become his very own music, Rabindrasangeet.

IV. Thaats Used In Rabindrasangeet

Thaat is a theoretical concept that helps to group ragas of similar sur and nature. In its basic form, Raga is a sequence of sur or swaras of Hindustani classical music, and provides a loose framework for weaving an emotional experience for the audience. A Thaat consists of seven notes; it has an "aaroha" but is never sung. A Raga may consist of five to seven notes, and has both an "aaroha" and an "abaroha".

Hindustani Classical Music has a very large number of Ragas, and it is very difficult to memorize and play them. In the early twentieth century, Pandit Bishnu Narayan Bhatkande – one of the most influential authorities in Indian Classical music history, studied ragas of all the gharanas and classified them into 32 groups called Thaats. Over time these were further condensed to 10 Thaats. Thaat is characterized by the aaroh that feature in the ragas of that particular thaat.

Rabindranath wrote approximately 2232 songs distributed

over every Thaat, more in some and less in others. A graded list is given in Table 1. In this and all other Tables in this article, the number of songs are given in descending order. The names of all Ragas are as per Wikipedia, to maintain uniformity.

Table 1: Thaats used in Rabindra Sangeet and the Number of Songs under them

Thaat	Number of Songs	Thaat	Number of Songs
Asavari	482	Khamaj	255
Bhairav	482	Bilawal	069
Kafi	482	Purvi	058
Kalyan	469	Todi	023
Bhairavi	257	Marwa	019

V. Constituent Ragas Under Various Thaats

We next explore the constituent ragas and the number of songs belonging to them in each Thaat. These are given in Tables 2 to 11.

In continuation of the character of Raga in the last Section, I remember that a raga was defined by Pandit Ravishankar in his lecture series on Hindustani Classical Music as “Ranjayati Iti Raga”, which literally means something which colours the mind. While this is in abstract terms, more concretely, each Raga is a melodic framework for improvisation, and is a unique and central feature of the classical Indian music tradition.

Table 2: Details of Ragas and the Number of Songs under the Asavari Thaat (482)

Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs
Asavari-Bhairavi*	16	Ananda Bhairavi	01	Kanada-Khamaj	01
Asavari	09	Dev Gandhar	01	Kanada-Pilu-Khamaj-Bhimpalasi	01
Kanada	09	Asavari-Bhairav	01	Khat-Bhairavi	01
Khat	07	Bhairavi	01	Misra Khat	01
Mishra Kanara	06	Asavari Khamaj	01	Asavari Tappa	01
Misra Asavari	03	Asavari-Ramkali	01	Kanada Kirtan	01
Darbari Kanada	02	Asavari-Todi	01		

*Example: Tomar Sur Shunaye Je

Notice that the number of songs in the above Table do not add upto the total mentioned in Table 2. Apparently, the rest belong to Kirtan, Baul, Carnatic Style, Western Style and others. They have a relation with the Thaat under which they are listed, but they have dominant influence of the regional styles and others. These other Styles will be discussed in Section IV. This phenomenon about the discrepancy between the number mentioned in Table 2 and the total number of the constituent ragas is valid in other Thaats in Tables 3-11 also, with the exception of a few.

Table 3: Details of Ragas and the Number of Songs under the Bhairav Thaat (482)

Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs
Ramkali*	46	Misra Jogia	02	Jogia-Lalit	01
Kalingra	33	Misra Bhairav	02	Jogia-Ramkali	01
Bhairav	22	Misra Kalingra	02	Ramkali-Iman	01
Ramkali-Bhairavi	09	Gunakali	01	Ramkali-Bhairavi-Todi	01

Misra Ramkali	05	Bhairav-Bhairavi	01	Ramkali-Kalingra	01
Kalingra Baul	05	Kalingra Sohini	01	Misra Jogia-Lalit	01
Kalingra Bhairav	05	Kalingra/Bhairavi	01	Mishra Bhairav-	01
Jogia	04	Kalingra-Bahar-Piloo-Multani	01	Ramkali Kirtan	01
				Jogia Baul	01

*Example: Tumi Nabo Nabo Rupe

Table 4: Details of Ragas and Number of Songs under the Kafi Thaata (482)

Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs
Piloo*	90	Misra Bahar	05	Sindhu-Bhairavi	01
Kafi	70	Sindhu-Khamaj	04	Piloo Kirtan	01
Sahana	47	Piloo-Khamaj	04	Kafi Tappa	01
Bahar	39	Brindabani Sarang	03	Kafi Kirtan	01
Piloo-Barwa	21	Basant Bahar	03	Bahar Kirtan	01
Barwa-Tappa	19	Nat-Malhar	03	Misra Kafi	01
Malhar	18	Bhimpalasi Kirtan	03	Misra Sahana	01
Adana	08	Misra Piloo	03	Bahar Baul	01
Megh-Malhar	08	Kafi-Khamaj	03	Mishra Kafi	01
Piloo-Baul	08	Jaijawanti	03	Piloo-Multani	02
Misra Malhar	08	Basant	02	Miyani Ki Malhar	01
Bhimpalasi-	06	Megh	01	Rajbijoy	01
Bhimpalasi	06	Basant-Pancham	01	Sindhu	01
Bageshri	05	Kafi-Sindhu	01	Bageshri-Bahar	01
Bahar-Bageshri	01	Basant-Pancham	01	Piloo Bhimpalasi-Baul	01
Bahar-Bhairav	01	Kafi-Sindhura	01	Misra Kafi-Sindhu	01
Bahar-Khamaj	01	Malhar-Piloo-Iman Kalyan-Khamaj-Hameer	01	Misra Megh-Malhar	01
Bahar-Pancham	01	Sahana Kirtan	01	Misra Bhimpalasi	01
Bahar-Sohini	01	Piloo Tappa	01	Misra Basant Bahar	01
Basant-Bahar-Khamaj	01	Piloo-Khamaj-Baul	01	Misra Kafi-Sindhu	01
Misra Bageshri-Malhar	01	Misra Barwa	01	Piloo-Desh-Multani	01
Mishra Rajbijoy	01	Misra Bageshri	01	Piloo-Desh	01
Misra Barwa-Piloo	01	Piloo Malhar	01	Piloo-Brindabani Sarang	01

Piloo-Bhairav	01	Suha Kanada	01	Brindavani Sarang-Arana	01
Piloo-Barwa Thumri	01	Kafi-Misra Malhar	01		
Piloo-Ramkali	01	05	Kafi-Sindhu		

*Example: Amar Hiyar Majhe Lukiye

Table 5: Details of Ragas and No. Of Songs under the Kalyan Thaata (469)

Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs
Behag*	97	Behag-Khamaj	12	Iman-Baul	05
Iman Kalyan	60	Iman-Purvi	10	Misra Bhupali	04
Iman	38	Misra Behag	09	Chhayanaat-Kedar	03
Misra Kedar	32	Behag-Kirtan	09	Hameer-Kedar	03
Chhayanaat	31	Gaud Sarang	08	Gaud*	02
Kedar	25	Behag-Baul	08	Kedar-Chhayanaat	02
Hameer	19	Misra Chhayanaat	07	Shyam Kalyan	02
Bhupali	14	Iman-Kirtan	07	Mishra Gour Sarang	02
Iman-Bhupali	14	Misra Sankara	05	Misra Iman	02
Misra Hameer-Kirtan	02	Iman-Bilawal	01	Kedar-Hameer	01
Behag-Iman	01	Iman Kalyan-Kedar	01	Shankara/Khamaj	01
Behag-Paraj (Tune Altered)	01	Iman Kalyan-Purvi	01	Misra Behag-Purvi-Kafi	01
Gaud Sarang-Iman	01	Kedar-Behag	01	Misra Iman Kalyan	01
Misra Hameer	01	Misra Hameer-Ramkali	01	Misra Kedar-Khamaj	01
Misra Khamaj Kirtan	01	Behag-Tappa	01	Gaud Sarang-Baul	01
Gaud Sarang-Kirtan	01	Hameer-Baul	01	Iman-Bhupali-Kirtan	01
Iman-Kalingra-Baul	01	Misra Behag-Baul	01	Misra Behag-Kirtan	01
				Chhayanaat-Baul 01	01

*Example: Aj Jyotsnate Sobai

Table 6: Details of Ragas and Number of Songs under the Bhairavi Thaata (257)

Raga	No. of Songs
Bhairavi*	197

*Example: Amader Jatra Holo Shuru

*Example: Lajja Chi Chi Lajja

Table 7: Details of Ragas and Number of Songs under the Khambaj Style (255)

Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs
Khamaj*	84	Desh-KirtaZn	03	Desh-Kedar	01
Desh	53			Desh-Sindhu	01
Desh-Malhar	17	Jhinjhoti Kirtan	02	Jhinjhoti -Behag	01
Khamaj-Baul	14	Jhinjhoti-Khambaj	02	Gaud Malhar-Kedar	01
Gaud Malhar	12	Jhinjhoti Jhijhit-Baul	02	Khamaj-Bahar	01
Khamaj-Kirtan	10	Desh-Piloo	02	Khamaj-Kirtan	01
Malhar-Desh	08	Barhams Sarang	01	Khamaj-Piloo	01
Jhinjhoti	07	Gara	01	Khamaj-Piloo-Bahar	01
Misra Khamaj	07	Surat	01	Misra Jhinjhoti -Khamaj	01
Tilak Kamod	06	Desh/Malhar	01	Desh/Hameer	01
Misra Jhinjhoti	04	Desh-Khamaj	01	Misra Jhinjhoti -Baul	01
Khamaj-Tappa	04	Desh (tune altered)	01	Misra Jhinjhoti -Kirtan	01
Desh-Baul	03	Desh/Behag	01	Tilak Kamod-Baul	01

*Example: Ami Tomay Jato Shuniyechilem

Table 8: Details of Ragas and Number of Songs under the Bilawal Thaata (69)

Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs
Bibhas-Baul*	18	Behagra	01	Nayaki Kanada	01
Alahia Bilawal	08	Deshkar	01	Nat-Hameer	01
Bibhas	07	Durga	01	Nat-Narayan	01
Bilawal	06	Kukubh Bilawal	01	Shukla Bilawal	01
Bibhas-Kirtan	05	Lachari Bilawal	01	Bibhas-Kalingra	01
Sarpada	03	Nat-Bhupali (tune altered)	01	Misra Alahia	01
Dev giri Bilawal	02	Nat-Bilawal	01	Misra Bibhas	01
Misra Bilawal	02	Nat-Khamaj	01	Misra Alahia/Misra Kedar	01
		Bilawal-Kirtan	01		

*Example: Aji Bangladesher Hridoy

Table 9: Details of Ragas and Number of Songs under the Purvi Thaata (58)

Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs
Paraj*	15	Siri Raga	03	Paraj-Ramkali	01
Purvi	13	Gauri-Purvi	01	Paraj-Sohini	01
Paraj-Basant	08	Maru-Kedar	01	Misra Lalit/Ramkali	01
Misra Purvi	07	Lalit-Kalingra	01	Misra Gauri	01
Lalit	04	Paraj-Bhairavi	01		

*Example: Gobhir Rajoni Namilo

Table 10: Details of Ragas and Number of Songs under the Todi Thaata (23)

Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs
Multani*	10	Todi	03	Desi Todi	01
Multani-Bhimpalasi	05	Gujjari Todi	02	Todi-Bhairavi	01
		Mishra Todi	01		

*Example: Shesh Ganeri Resh Niye

Kirtan	151	Western	20	Carnatic	13
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The details of Ragas/Styles and the number of songs under these styles are given in Tables 13-17.

Table 11: Details of Ragas and Number of Songs under the Marwa Thaata (19)

Ragas	No. of Songs	Ragas	No. of Songs
Sohini*	08	Pancham-Kalingra-Piloo-Desh	01
Pancham	03	Misra Pancham/ Sohini	01
Misra Sohini	02	Paraj-Basant	01
Sohini-Paraj	01	Pancham Baul	01

Vi. Rabindrasangeet In Other Styles

As mentioned in the previous Section, the total number of songs in any Thaata, mentioned in Table 2, does not agree with the total number under its constituent ragas because some of the songs listed in other styles (Table 12) also belong to those Thaatas, but they are influenced by regional practices. For example, Baul, Kirtan, many of the Tappas, and Ramprosadi tunes, Sarigan and most of the Dhoons under Miscellaneous Styles belong to Bengal. The famous musician Sachin Dev Burman imported some Sarigan style and some Dhoons in Hindi music, particularly in Films.

Table 12: Details of Specific Styles and Number of Songs under Other Styles

Style	No. of Songs	Style	No. of Songs	Style	No. of Songs
Baul	187	Miscellaneous	20	Tappa	14

Table 13: Details of Ragas and Number of Songs under the Baul Style (187)

Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs
Baul sur*	04	Behag-Khamaj-Baul	03	Jogia-Baul	01
Bibhas-Baul	18	Desh-Baul	03	Misra Behag-Baul	01
Khamaj-Baul	15	Bahar-Baul	02	Misra Jhinjhoti-Baul	01
Bhairavi-Baul	13	Jhinjhoti -Baul	02	Misra Pancham-Baul	01
Behag-Baul	08	Chhayanat-Baul	01	Misra Bhimpalasi-Baul	01
Piloo-Baul	08	Gaud Sarang-Baul	01	Misra Khamaj-Baul	01
Iman-Baul	05	Hameer-Baul	01	Tilak Kamod-Baul	01
Kalingra-Baul	05	Iman-Kalingra-Baul			

*Example :Pagla Hawar Badoldine

Table 14: Details of Ragas and Number of Songs under the Kirtan Style (187)

Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs	Raga	No. of Songs
Kirtan*	91	Jhinjhoti-Kirtan	02	Misra Behag-Kirtan	01
Behag-Kirtan	09	Kafi-Kirtan	02	Mishra Jhinjhoti - Kirtan	01
Khamaj-Kirtan	08	Kirtan-Tappa	02	Misra Jogia-Kirtan	01
Iman- Kirtan	07	Misra Hameer-Kirtan	02	Misra Kalingra-Paraj- Kirtan	01
Bibhas-Kirtan	05	Piloo-Kirtan	02	Ramkali-Kirtan	01
Piloo-Bhimpalasi-Kirtan	03	Bilawal-Kirtan	01	Sahana-Kirtan	01
Bahar-Kirtan	02	Gaud Sarang-Kirtan	01		
Bhairav-Kirtan	02	Iman-Bhupali-Kirtan	01		
Desh-Kirtan	02	Kanada-Kirtan	01		

*Example :Purano Janiya Cheyo Na

Table 15: Details of Styles and Number of Songs under the Western Style (20)

Style	No. of Songs	Style	No. of Songs	Style	No. of Songs
Western*	06	Auld Lang Syne	02	The British Grenadiers	01
Go Where Glory Waits Thee	04	Nancy-Lee	01	The Vicar Of Bray	01
Drink To Me only	03	Robin Adair	01	Ye Banks And Braes	01

*Example:Tomar Holo Suru Amar

Table 16 : Details of Styles/Ragas and Number of Songs under the Miscellaneous Styles (20)

The background of each Style is given in the notes below the Table.

Style/Raga	Style/Raga	Style/Raga	Style/Raga
Tarana ¹ *	06	Prabhati-(Gujarati) ³	04
Ramprasadi Tune ²	05	Saarigaan ⁴	02
		Dhoon ⁶	01

*Example:Aho Aspordha Eki

Notes:

- 1) Tarana is an improvisation that is presented at the end of a Khayal, and is in drut tempo (Laya). It is composed with illegible words like 'Dim', 'Tara', 'Tom', 'Dara' etc. and exhibits complicated maneuvers in terms of composition and pronunciation skills.
- 2) Ramprosad Sen, an eighteenth century poet of Bengal, and an worshipper of the Goddess Kali, had written and composed numerous devotional songs., known as Shyama Sangeet. His songs were in a style that was unique in terms of tune. They are simple and yet do not conform to Hindustani Raags. Rabindranath Tagore had composed a few songs which adopted this style.
- 3) Narsing Mehta, a fifteenth century poet of Gujarat had written more than twenty two thousand padas in three categories, one of which is named Prabhati. Rabindranath was exposed to this music during his brief stays in Gujarat in his younger age, and adopted the style in a few songs.

- 4) Because of his stays in Silaidaha in East Bengal, where he used to live in a boat, he developed a liking of the boatmen's (majhis, in Bengali) songs, known as Saarigaan. These songs remind one of the rhythmic movements of the oars. The songs often have double meaning. Rabindranath composed a few songs in this style.
- 5) Each item pertaining to Classical Instrumental music (mainly Sitar) has a basic song (bandish) known as the Gat. Gats are based on certain raags. The songs mentioned here are based on Ragas Desh and Gaud-Malhar .
- 6) Dhoon is a composition where a Folk tune is converted into Classical style. It is usually sung or played at the end of a concert.

Table 17 : Details of Ragas and No. of Songs under the Tappa Style(14)

Some of them correspond to the Punjabi variant.

Raga/Style	No. of Songs	Raga/Style	No. of Songs	Raga/Style	No. of Songs
Khamaj-Tappa*	04	Kafi-Tappa	03	Asavari-Tappa	01
Bhairavi Tappa	03	Kirtan-Tappa	02	Behag-Tappa	01

*Example:Sokhi Andhare Ekela

Table 18 : Details of Ragas and Number of Songs under the Carnatic Style. (13)

Raga/Style	No. of Songs	Raga/Style	No. of Songs	Raga/Style	No. of Songs
Bhajan*	03	Bhairavi-Malkauns	01	Khambaj	01
Sankaravaran	03	Jhinjhoti-Bhajan	01	Purna Shadaj Ragini	01
Asavari	01	Jhinjhoti	01	Simhendra madhym	01

*Example:Basonti He Bhubonomohini

VII. Rabindranath's Favourite Thaats And Ragas

Table 1 shows that the most favourite Thaats of Rabindranath are Asavari, Bhairav, Kafi and Kalyan in the first tier, and Bhairavi and Khamaj in the second tier. On a careful examination of the Tables 2 to 11, we find that the most favourite of his Ragas are Bhairavi (197; Bhairavi Thaata), Behag (97; Kalyan Thaata), Piloo (90; Kafi Thaata), Khamaj (84; Khamaj Thaata) and Kafi (70; Kafi Thaata). Notice that none of these come under Asavari or Bhairav which are the top two favourite Thaats of Rabindranath. Also, in this list, there are no raga combinations.

In the List of Specific Other Styles, given in Table 12, the top favourites are Baul (187) and Kirtan (151). Indeed, these Styles are also reflected in specific raga/style given in Tables 13 and 14, where Baul Sur accounts for 94 songs and Kirtan accounts for 91 songs. Notice that no raga combination figures in these favourite lists.

VIII. Taals Used In Rabindrasangeet

Taal is a rhythmic pattern, used in the accompanying instrument of the drum type (Tabla or Khol) of a song. Rabindranath Tagore used mostly conventional Taals and some unconventional and rarely used Taals in his songs. He also created quite a number of variations in order to match the Poetical Meter of his verse; these are Ardhha Jhap, Jhampak, Sasthi, Rupakra, Nabataal, Ekadoshi and Nabapancha. Did Rabindranath compose so many variations of Taals just for the sake of experiment ? Or, was it an example of his ideological symbolism to express his fascination for the perpetual rhythm?

A closer examination of Rabindranath's use of Taals shows that he used traditional Taals, like Choutaal, Jhaptaal, Dhamaar etc in his younger age and gradually switched over to shorter and lighter patterns like Dadra and Kaharwa at a later age. He experimented with newer Taals around sixty years of his age. It is worth mentioning that none of the Patterns composed by Rabindranath Tagore has 'Khali' in them.

All the Taals and Rhythm patterns that are used in Rabindra Sangeet are listed below.

Table 19: Details of Taals used in Rabindrasangeet and the number of songs using them

Taal	No. of Songs	Taal	No. of Songs	Taal	No. of Songs
Dadra	643	Taal Pherta	15	Sat Matra 3/4	01
Ektaal	280	Surphaktaal	14	Nabataal (3/6 and 5/4)	01
Tritaal	172	Rupakra	10	Nabataal (6/3 and	01
Jhaptaal	111	Ar Khemta	09	Nabataal (9 Matras)	01
Teyora	99	Chaturmatrik Ektaal	05	Dosh Matra (3/2/3/2)	01
Sasthi	48	Choy Matra	05	Dosh Matra (5/5)	01
Jhampak	43	Jot (8 Matra)	05	Ekadoshi (3/2/2/4)	01
Choutaal	42	Kkashmiri Khemta	03	Ekadoshi (3/4/4)	01
Ara Theka	34	Rupak	03	Ektaal Bilambit	01
Khemta	27	Ara Choutal	03	Baro Matra (2/4/2/4)	01
Boitalik	22	Jot (14 Matras)	03	Pancham Sawari	01
2/2 Matra	20	Bilambit Tritaal	03	Jot (16 matra)	01
Madhyamam	17	Nabatal ((3/2/2/2)	02	Nabapancha	01
Dhamar	16	Charmatra	01		
Ardha Jhaptaal	15	Sasthi 4/2	01		

It may be relevant to mention here that Rabindranth used Dhamaar Taal and Ektaal with divisions different from the standard ones: e.g. 3/2/2/3/4 instead of 5/2/3/4 (Dhamaar), and 3/3/3/3 instead of 2/2/2/2/2/2 (Ektaal).

IX. Some Additional Comments

Rabindranath composed many songs in Raga combinations. While combination of two Ragas is not uncommon in Hiindustani Classical Music, more than two ragas in a single piece of music is rather rare. In some songs, Tagore even used five Raga combinations, e.g. Malhar-Piloo-Iman Kalyan-Khamaj-Hameer. However, it is difficult to imagine that Tagore designed the song with such a combination. It is more probable that he just gave a tune to a song, and the expert (prominently Dinedranath Thakur) who identified, analysed and recorded its Raga base found a touch of all these Ragas in the song and recorded as such. There are some prominent Ragas in which there is no song, either singly or in combination. Examples are Abhogi, Deshkar, Dhani, Gorakh Kalyan, Hamsadhvani, Jog, Madhuwanti, Rageshri etc. On the other hand, Tagore composed songs in some rarely used Ragas like Gaud ('extinct', says the internet), Behagra, Pancham, Sarpada, Rajbijoy, Surat, etc.

In traditional concerts, the accompanying stringed instrument used for Rabindrasangeet invariably is the Esraj, even today, a prominent Esraj player being Shubhau Sen Majumdar. In all other forms of music, Sarangi is used in place of Esraj.

In modern days, all kinds of instruments are used in Rabindra Sangeet, as in a fusion concert, and most of the times, the background music drowns the main singer's voice.

A disturbing trend in Rabindrasangeet sung by some modern singers is that they distort the language, pronunciation and sometimes the tune. This is observed prominently in classical khayal singers, and the so-called Adhunik Bangla gan singers. The logic given is that the copyright is over. Does that mean that one can take any liberty? This author grew up with 'Aji bijono ghorey, nishitho raate' while some modern singers use 'bijan' and 'nishith'. From the YouTube, I listened to a number of singers singing this song, and found that older generation singers like Nilima Sen, Hemanta Mukhopadhyay, Rezwana Banya Chowdhury, Chinmoy Chatterjee, Kalim Sharafi, etc., particularly those trained at Santiniketan, sang 'bijono' and 'nishitho', but the modern generation singers like Indrani Sen, Iman Chakraborty, Shreya Guhathakurta, etc. sang 'bijan' and 'nishith'. Rupankar Bagchi is an exception; although belonging to the new generation, he sang 'bijono' and 'nishitho'. Should we live with this change or try to retain the original form of the music?

As mentioned in the Introduction, in contrast to a classical piece of music, which gives supreme importance to sur (melody) it is difficult to identify the raga base of a Rabindra Sangeet, because the *katha* (poetry) is as important as the *sur*. Rabindranath's music bridged this gap and reached perfection in combining 'sur'(melody) and 'katha' (poetry) into an inseparable new entity, which became 'sangeet' (music). Also, because most songs have a spiritual content, the mind gets deeply influenced by the wordings. Another difficulty is that a majority of the songs are based on a mixture of two or more ragas. Traditional Hindustani khayal music gives supreme importance to melody, lyrics play a secondary role. It is rather evident in case of instrumental music where melody is the sole medium of expression. Rabindranath's music bridged this gap. His music reached perfection in combining 'sur'(melody) and 'katha' (poetry) into an inseparable new entity, which became 'sangeet' (music).

There are quite a few Rabindra Sangeets which are popular, not only in Bengali but also in other languages. The most popular is of course our national anthem 'Janagana Mana Adhinayaka' (Iman). The Bangladesh national anthem is also a Rabindra Sangeet, namely, 'Amar Sonar Bangla'(Baul-Sur). Another popular tune is 'Jodi Tor Dak Shune Keu Na Ashe'(Baul-Sur), which was a favourite of Mahatma Gandhi, because it conveyed his political beliefs. Incidentally, as I learnt from a 25th Baisakh lecture of Soumendranath Thakur at the Jorasanko Thakurbari, this song was composed immediately after Rabindranath heard the Baul song 'Harinam Diye Jagat Matale, Amar Ekla Nitai Re', from a Baul at Silaidaha, who came to pay his respects to 'Babathakur', as the local people used to call Rabindranath. The song 'Anandaloke Mangalaloke'(Jhinjhoti- Mahisuri Bhajan) is often sung in chorus at inaugural functions in Bengal. Other popular songs are: 'Kar Banshi Nishibhore'(Asavari), Tumi Kon Bhanganer Pathey Ele'(Kafi Kanada), 'Chirosokha He Cheron'(Behag-Tappa), Majhe Majhe Tobo Dekha Pai'(Kafi-Kirtan), 'Anandadhara Bohiche Bhivane'(Misra Malkauns), etc. Many other songs, particularly Baul-Surs, have been popularised by instrumental musicians. For example, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan often plays the tune of 'Bhenge Mor Ghorer Chabi Niye Jabe Ke Amare'(Baul-Sur) as the last item of a concert. Also, Pandit Nikhil Banerjee's rendering of a Baul song in the record containing Malkauns, Hema Behag and a Dhoon, is superb. Pandit Ravishankar, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan and in fact almost all performers of the Myhar Gharana, that I have listened to, invariably use Folk Music Tunes of Bengal in their last item, Dhoon or Raga Malika, in a concert. The background music given by Pandit Ravishankar in Satyajit Ray movies are also based on such styles of music.

X. CONCLUSIONS

In this article, I have given some statistics about the Thaats, Ragas and Taals used in Rabindra Sangeet, and have tried to clarify his favourite ones. I have also tried to highlight the influence of Baul, Kirtan and Dhoons, which form Lokageeti (Folk Music) in Bengal. I have made some comments about the modern trend in Rabindra Sangeet, many of which are debatable. I close this article with the hope that it will be of some use to students and researchers of Rabindra Sangeet, and also to connoisseurs of music, in general. I also appeal to all concerned to take all steps to preserve the rich traditions built by Tagore in the songs he composed, and not take liberties with them.

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