Tradition and Innovation in the *Bānsurī* Performance Style of Pannalal Ghosh

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The twentieth century in India was a time of dramatic change, and Indian classical music reflected this on many levels. Socio-economic transformations, the growth of mass media, independence from British rule, and many other factors contributed to a major restructuring of the Indian musical landscape. An important outcome was the introduction onto the classical stage of musical instruments not previously featured as prominent solo voices, such as *bānsurī*, *sārangī*, *shahnāī*, and *santūr*. Nonetheless, audiences retained a certain level of conservatism, and continued to demand that classical music remain firmly rooted in tradition. Thus, exponents of these instruments looked to established vocal and instrumental models of performance, while simultaneously creating styles suited to their particular instruments.

The music of Pannalal Ghosh (1911–1960), who is generally credited with the popularization of the bamboo flute, or *bānsurī*, in modern Hindustani classical music, exemplifies this balance of tradition and originality. While the transverse flute had a long history in the music of India and had been revived in South Indian classical music in the late nineteenth century, there does not seem to have been any extant tradition of Hindustani classical *bānsurī* playing in the 1930s and 1940s when Ghosh was adapting the instrument for the North Indian classical stage. While he ultimately came to be affiliated with the Maihar *gharānā*, an important school of Hindustani classical musicians, through the teaching of its founder, Allauddin Khan, Ghosh drew from a variety of sources to create a style suitable for *bānsurī*.

Commonalities between Ghosh's style and preexisting vocal and instrumental styles are revealed through an analysis of his musical style at various levels. These levels include repertoire, consisting of classical *khyāl*, light classical *ṭhumrī*, and folk songs; form of an entire *rāg* performance, usually including both the slow and free-flowing *barā* (large) *khyāl*, and the fast, rhythmic *chhoṭa* (small) *khyāl* sections; form and structure of sections of a performance, including compositions, *ālāp*-, *joṛ* -, and *jhālā*-derived sections, and *tān* development; and individual phrases and their embellishments. A primary analytical concern is the degree to which Ghosh made use of elements from vocal (*gāyaki*) approaches, plucked string-instrumental (*tantrakari*) approaches, and elements idiomatically suited to the *bānsurī*. Also of interest is his use of aspects of *dhrupad*, a genre commonly considered to be more traditional and authoritative than *khyāl*. Other topics of analysis include his choices of *rāg* (modality), *tāl* (rhythmic cycle), *lay* (tempo), articulation, range, structural elements, and proportions. The intent of this article is to demonstrate commonalities between characteristics of Ghosh's style and traits of preexisting vocal and instrumental genres and styles, though it will be seen that no single model provided him with a complete template for his performances. His choices reveal much about his own inclinations, but also reflect the shifting musical landscape in which he was living.

REPERTOIRE

The broadest level to be considered here is repertoire. Table 1 lists all thirty-four of Ghosh's performances available to me,[1] indicating the genre, the *rāg* (plus total length of the performance and source of the recording), the length of the *ālāp*, and the *tāls* (rhythmic cycles) (including the

[1] These recordings were given to me by Nityanand Haldipur, who collected them over the years and transferred them to MP3 format. The original sources of these recordings are provided in Table 1, and further details can be found in Clements (2010). In some cases, the source is not known, and I have made my best guess based on the type, length, and quality of the recording.

length of the performance of each *tāl*). The genres considered are *khyāl*, *ṭhumrī*, and folk. Within each of these broad genres, there are many possible variations in terms of tempo and types of compositions used. When "*barā-chhoṭa*" is indicated, the first composition (*barā khyāl*) is in a very slow, or *ati vilambit tāl*, and the second composition is usually in fast (*drut*) *tīntāl*. Otherwise, the first composition is performed in the tempo (*lay*) indicated, and if there is a second composition, it is in *drut tīntāl*. The *ṭhumrī* and folk performances are listed by genre, with details in the other columns of the table. The *rāg* indicated remains the same throughout a given performance, the duration of the total *rāg* performance is provided in parentheses, and the source of the recording is given. The *ālāp* is always a short (*auchar*) rubato introduction without *tablā*. Its duration is provided in the next column. The *tāl* (rhythmic cycle) is given with its most common name along with the duration that each *tāl* is played. If there are two successive *tāls*, they are indicated under the headings of ***Tāl* 1** and ***Tāl* 2**. In the *ṭhumrī* (and *kajrī*) performances, *laggī* featuring accelerated tempo and *tablā* improvisations is usually included as indicated under the *Tāl* heading. The duration of the *laggī* is given and a question mark is added when the *laggī* is suggested in the performance but not distinctly played.

For tempo ranges I have used Martin Clayton's (2000, 86) approximations as a rough guide. He estimates vocal tempo ranges as follows: *vilambit* = 10–60 bpm (beats per minute), *madhya lay* = 40–175 bpm, *drut lay* = 170–500 bpm. He estimates instrumental ranges differently: *vilambit lay* = 30–105 bpm, *madhya lay* = 85–190 bpm, *drut lay* = 230–740 bpm. He states that "anything more precise, or involving the possible seven bands [to additionally include *ati vilambit*, *madhya vilambit*, *madhya drut* , and *ati drut*]…would exaggerate the consistency with which these terms are used." I have nonetheless chosen to use the terms "*ati vilambit*" and "*ati drut*" to indicate the lower range of *vilambit* and the upper range of *drut*, respectively, as these

Table 1. Recorded performances by Pannalal Ghosh.

Genre	*Rāg*	*Ālāp*	*Tāl* 1	*Tāl* 2
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Bāgeshrī* (36:01) (radio broadcast?)	2:35	*Ati vilambit Ektāl* (12:30)	*Drut tīntāl* (10:56)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Darbārī* (37:17) (HMV EALP 1367)	2:02	*Ati vilambit Jhūmrā* (20:40)	*Drut tīntāl* (14:35)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Dīpavālī* (29:02) (HMV EALP 1354)	1:17	*Ati vilambit Ektāl* (19:17)	*Drut tīntāl* (8:28)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Desh* (66:43+) (live recording)	?	*Ati vilambit Tilwādā* (25:38?)	*Drut tīntāl* (41:05)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Lalit* (30:24) (live recording)	1:50	*Ati vilambit Ektāl* (16:25?)	*Madhya lay tīntāl* (11:51)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Mārwā* (13:24) (HMV 7EPE 1226)	0:44	*Ati vilambit Jhūmrā* (6:10)	*Drut tīntāl* (6:30)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Miyān Malhār* (56:15) (live recording, 1956)	0:53	*Ati vilambit Jhūmrā* (29:32)	*Drut tīntāl* (25:50)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Puriyā* (45:00) (radio broadcast?)	2:18	*Ati vilambit Jhūmrā* (31:21)	*Drut tīntāl* (11:21)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Puriyā Dhanashrī* (66:54) (live recording?)	2:50	*Ati vilambit Jhūmrā* (38:52)	*Drut tīntāl* (25:12)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Puriyā Kalyān* (75:17) (live recording, 1956)	1:53	*Ati vilambit Jhūmrā* (45:33)	*Drut tīntāl* (27:51)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Shankarā* (26:50+) (live recording?)	1:40	*Ati vilambit Ektāl* (25:10)	*Drut tīntāl* (?)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Shrī* (18:17) (HMV EALP 1252)	2:11	*Ati vilambit Tilwādā* (13:40)	*Drut tīntāl* (2:26)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Todī* (28:49) (radio broadcast?)	1:22	*Ati vilambit Jhūmrā* (21:17)	*Drut tīntāl* (6:10)
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	*Yaman*(18:28) (HMV EALP 1252)	2:10	*Ati vilambit Jhūmrā* (11:35)	*Drut tīntāl* (4:43)
Khyāl (drut lay only)	*Basant* (16:23) (radio broadcast?)	0:20	*Drut Ektāl* (16:03)	
Khyāl (*madhya lay*)	*Basant Mukhārī* (3:14) (HMV EALP 1354)	0:40	*Madhya lay Jhaptāl* (2:34)	
Khyāl (*madhya lay*)	*Bhupāl Todī* (3:13) (HMV EALP 1354)	0:29	*Madhya lay tīntāl* (2:44)	
Khyāl (*madhya lay*)	*Brindāvanī Sārang* (6:14) (HMV 7EPE 1240)	0:46	*Drut tīntāl* (5:28)	
Khyāl (*madhya lay*)	*Chāndramoulī* (6:23) (HMV EALP 1354)	0:32	*Madhya lay Jhaptāl* (2:49)	*Drut tīntāl* (3:02)
Khyāl (*madhya lay*)	*Hansa Narāyanī* (3:19) (HMV EALP 1354)	1:06	*Madhya lay tīntāl* (2:13)	
Khyāl (*madhya lay*)	*Hansadhwanī* (3:11) (HMV EALP 1354)	0:20	*Madhya lay tīntāl* (2:51)	

Table 1 (cont'd).

Khyāl (madhya lay)	*Kedār* (36:38) (Live recording, 1956)	0:38	*Madhya lay tīntāl* (17:40)	*Drut tīntāl* (18:20)
Khyāl (madhya lay)	*Shuddh Bhairavī* (6:35) (HMV 7EPE 1240)	1:26	*Madhya lay Jhaptāl* (5:08)	
Ṭhumrī	*Bhairavī Ṭhumrī* (6:31) (HMV EALP 1367)	0:18	*Dādrā* (6:13), *laggī* to end	
Ṭhumrī	*Kāfī Dādrā* (3:24) (HMV EALP 1354)	0:09	*Dādrā* (3:15), *laggī* to end	
Ṭhumrī	*Mishra Pilū* (29:10) (radio broadcast?)	1:06	*Dīpchandī* (16 *matra*) (19:06)	*Madhya lay tīntāl* (2:24) *Kaharwā* (6:34) tempo incr at 24:32, 27:15. *laggī* from 25:57?
Ṭhumrī	*Pilū* (14:17) (radio broadcast?)	1:20	*Addha tāl* (11:20)	*Kaharwā* (1:37), *laggī*?
Ṭhumrī	*Ṭhumrī Bhairavī* (9:08) (radio broadcast?)	0:28	*Dādrā* (6:52) *laggī* (0:50), return to *Dādrā* (0:58)	
Ṭhumrī	*Ṭhumrī Khamāj* (3:23) (HMV EALP 1354)	0:08	*Dīpchandī* (16 *matra*) (2:40)	*Kaharwā* (0:35) as *laggī*
Ṭhumrī	*Ṭhumrī Pilū* (3:28) (HMV EALP 1367)	0:06	*Dīpchandī* (16 *matra*) (2:27)	*Kaharwā* (0:55) as *laggī*
Ṭhumrī	*Pahādī* (10:02+) (Live recording, 1956)	?	*Kaharwā* (10:02+) (no *laggī*)	
Folk	*Bhātiāli* 1 (6:30) (HMV 7EPE 1233)	0:15	*Kaharwā* (6:15) (no *laggī*)	
Folk	*Bhātiāli* 2 (9:02) (radio broadcast?)	0:15	*Kaharwā* (8:47) (no *laggī*)	
Folk	*Kajrī* (3:36) (HMV EALP 1354)	0:06	*Kaharwā* (3:08) – *Laggīs* at (2:00–17) and (3:08–27)	

terms help me to discuss stylistic differences based on tempo. Ghosh typically played *ati vilambit* at approximately 20 bpm, and *ati drut* could be as fast as 480 bpm.

Table 2 gives the percentages of each genre of performance in relation to the total number of recordings, and the percentage of each genre of performance in relation to the total performance time. In terms of genre, Ghosh most often played *khyāl* in the form of an *ati vilambit barā khyāl*

Table 2. Percentages of recordings and performance time.

Genre	% of Recordings	% of Performance Time
Khyāl (*barā-chhoṭa*)	41	75
Khyāl (other)	26	12
Ṭhumrī	24	11
Folk	9	3

followed by a *drut tīntāl chhoṭa khyāl* (about 41% of the time). These were also his longest performances. To a lesser extent, he performed *khyāl* using various *madhya* (medium) *lay* and *drut tāls* (about 26% of the recordings), which would sometimes conclude with a section in *drut tīntāl*. Ghosh also performed *ṭhumrī* (about 24% of the recordings) and folk songs (about 9% of the recordings) as light classical items. In terms of total performance time, about 75% of Ghosh's recorded output was *barā-chhoṭa khyāl*, while about 12% was other *khyāl*, about 11% was *ṭhumrī*, and about 3% was folk music.

At the time that Ghosh was developing his style, he had many options from which to choose, both vocal and instrumental. While *dhrupad* was a strong part of his background, and played an important role in his musical sensibility, this genre had become somewhat marginalized by the early twentieth century. His choice of *khyāl* as his predominant overarching model was a fairly natural one due to the prominence of *khyāl* at this time and the vocal character of the *bānsurī*. While a great many possibilities existed within this genre, Nityanand Haldipur states that Ghosh was most inspired by the Kirana *gharānā* for its expressiveness, and the Patiala *gharānā* for its musical acrobatics (pers. comm.). The format most characteristic of (but not unique to) the Kirana *gharānā*, and most used by Ghosh, features extremely slow *ati vilambit tāls* in the *khyāl*

portion of the performance, which seem to have provided him with a kind of compromise between *dhrupad* and *khyāl*; followed by a composition in *drut tīntāl* with various forms of improvised melodic and rhythmic development. This will be the format analyzed here in the most depth, as it is indicative of his preferred mode of performance, and best illustrates the range of stylistic models from which he derived his own approach to *bānsurī* playing.

BROAD FORMAL STRUCTURE OF PANNALAL GHOSH'S FULL *KHYĀL* PERFORMANCES

Ghosh's affiliation with the Kirana *gharānā* at the broadest formal level is apparent in most of his full-length classical performances. This style of Hindustani classical vocal performance generally consists of *barā khyāl* and a *chhota khyāl* sections. The *barā khyāl* section features extensive and systematic melodic development over an *ati vilambit tāl*. The *chhota khyāl* that follows consists of a fast composition leading to *tāns*, which are essentially improvised runs that are interspersed between statements of a portion of the first section, or *sthāī*, of the *chhota khyāl* composition. Virtually every full-length classical performance by Ghosh follows this style of sectional division, although his *ṭhumrī* and folk music performances, as well as some of his shorter classical items, follow different patterns. Bonnie Wade writes: "the Kirana style is expected to display slow, expressive singing—the slowest of all the *gharanas*, according to V. H. Deshpande" (1984, 198). Ghosh clearly adheres to this aspect of *khyāl*, as each *tāl* cycle in his *barā khyāl* performances typically lasts up to a minute or more. And in live performance, Ghosh would often perform the *ati vilambit* portion of his performances for at least a half hour, with slow and systematic development. Ghosh consistently followed his *barā khyāl* performances with a *chhota khyāl* section featuring a composition in *tintāl*. Most often this would be in *drut lay*, though in a few instances the tempo is closer to *madhya lay*.

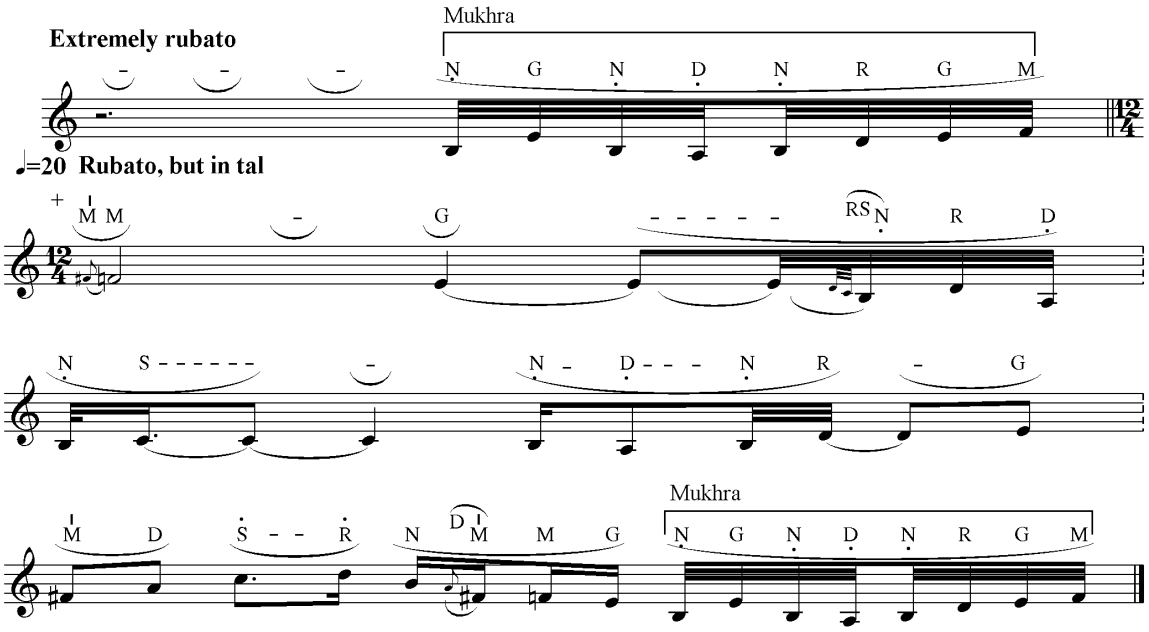
As is typical of Kirana stylists, he would normally begin a *rāg* performance with an *auchar ālāp* then proceed to an *ati vilambit* composition. He would further develop *ālāp*-style *barhat* (development) over the slow, sparse *tāl*, with increasing intensity. After this gradual and systematic development he would proceed to a fast sixteen-beat, or *drut tīntāl*, composition—either a traditional *bandish* (composition) or one of his own. In keeping with common practice for both vocalists and instrumentalists, he would then use the first portion of the *sthāī* as a point of return between improvised passages, increasing the tempo in stages to ultimately conclude the performance at its peak. Some of the intricacies of Ghosh's improvisations will be discussed later, but an understanding of this basic structure will suffice to indicate the parallel between his full-length classical performances and those typical of the Kirana *gharānā* at the broadest level of form.

FORM AND STRUCTURE OF *BARĀ KHYĀL* COMPOSITIONS

At the level of the composition, the form and structure begin to show the diversity of Ghosh's sources, and analysis of his *bandishes* provides a valuable glimpse into his musical approach. While such *bandishes* constitute a relatively small percentage of an entire musical presentation, they encapsulate the character of the performance and provide the material for recurring focal points within his improvisations. The *barā khyāl* portion of his performances made use of compositions that are very much in the character of Kirana *gharānā*. Even in his original *ati vilambit* compositions he closely emulated traditional vocal models. This enabled him to bring out the rich, lyrical quality of his *bānsurī*, making use of typically vocal phrases and techniques in his systematic development of a *dhrupad*-style *ālāp*. Example 1 is an *ati vilambit* composition by Ghosh in *rāg Dīpavālī*, a *rāg* of his own design. The rhythmic cycle, tempo,

Example 1(a). *Ati Vilambit Bandish* in *Rāg Dīpavālī* without embellishments.

Composer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Dīpavālī
Tāl: ati vilambit ektāl Source: HMV EALP 1354



rubato presentation, cyclic returns to the composition fragment known as the *mukhra*, and the lyrical flow and style of embellishment are all characteristic of Kirana *gharānā*.

Example 1(a) shows the composition in its skeletal form.[2] The pick-up notes plus the first note of the second measure constitute the *mukhra*, the introductory and final phrase of the composition to which the performer periodically returns at the end of each portion of the *ālāp*-style *barhat*. The remainder of the second measure is essentially a descending line dipping below the tonic, Sa, and resolving to Sa on the second note of the third measure. The remainder of the

[2] The examples used here are a combination of Western staff notation and Indian *sargam* notation. "+" indicates *sam*, the beginning of the cycle; "o" indicates *khali*, at which the *tablā* stroke is without bass resonance; and the numbers indicate standard subdivisions of the cycle. S, R, G, M, P, D, and N are *sargam* indications of the pitch, roughly equivalent to Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, and Ti in Western solfège.

Example 1(b). *Ati Vilambit Bandish* in *Rāg Dīpavālī* with embellishments.

Composer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Dīpavālī
Tāl: ati vilambit ektāl Source: HMV EALP 1354

Click to Hear Example 1(b)

composition consists of an ascent to the upper tonic followed by a descent back to the first note of the *mukhra*. The melodic motion is much like an extremely truncated *ālāp* in that it first develops the *mandra saptak* (lower register), then ascends to just above the tonic in the *tār saptak* (upper register), and finally descends back to the *mukhra*. This compositional structure encapsulates the style and structure that Ghosh later follows in his subsequent *ālāp*-style *barhat*.

Example 1(b) includes more details of how Ghosh actually played the melody, including embellishments and elaborations typical of vocal performance. His approach here is very vocal and contrasts markedly with such typical plucked-string instrumental styles as the Masītkhānī *gat*, which relies heavily on repeated notes and plucking patterns known as *bols*. Slawek (1987,

17) notes the connection of the Masītkhānī *gat* to *khyāl* vocal styles, particularly in the extensive use of *mīnḍ* (portamento) and *gamak* (embellishment). Miner (1993, 181) also suggests a possible vocal derivation of the Masītkhānī *gat*, noting that "popular tradition sometimes says that they are based on the rhythm of a *bhajan* or a *kirtan* of the time, Hindu devotional song genres, which Masīt Khān had heard." However, Slawek (1987, 17) also states that the basis of the compositions was a fixed plucking pattern, using the wire plectrum known as *mizrāb*. Many of the *vilambit gats* commonly used by *sitār* players in the twentieth century are derived from the Masītkhānī *gat* and follow the same structural form that uses a standardized *mizrāb bol* as its foundation. Slawek (1987, 55) details this *bol*-based structure as follows (adapted to my standard notation):

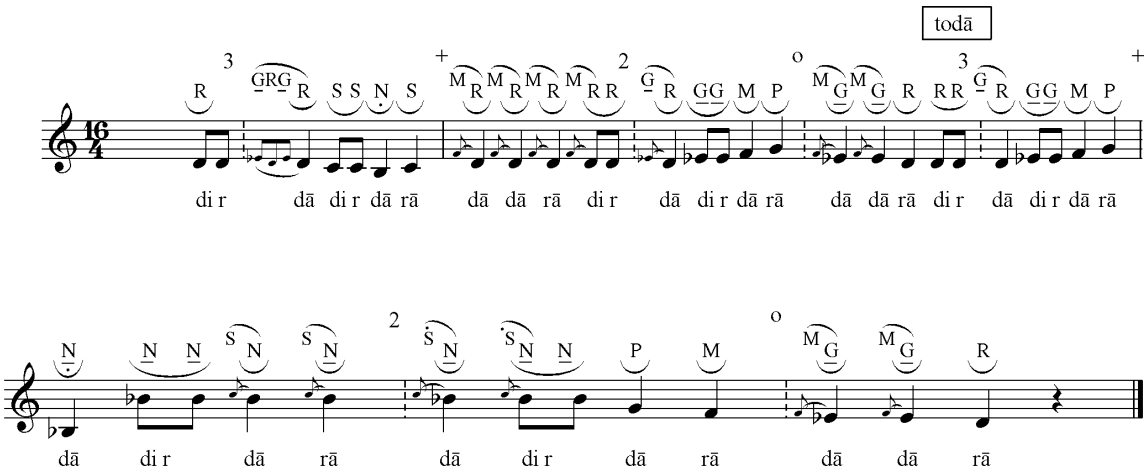
```
                                                    3
                                              12 13 14 15 16
                                              dir dā dir dā rā

+                    2                   o
 1  2   3   4   5   6   7   8  9  10 11
dā dā rā dir dā dir dā rā dā dā rā
```

The syllables refer to specific plucking patterns, the numbers immediately above the syllables indicate the beat, or *matra*, and the numbers and syllables above the *matras* indicate the subdivisions of the *tāl*. As indicated, the Masītkhānī *gat* begins with the *mukhra* on beat 12, which resolves on the first beat of the *tāl* cycle.

Example 2 displays Miner's (1993, 184) example (adapted to my standard notation) of a Masītkhānī *gat* in Khās Mallār derived from Rahim Beg's book *Naghmah-i sitār* (1876, 132). *Mīnḍ* plays a large role in this composition, which Miner suggests gives it a *dhrupad* quality. However, the Masītkhānī *gat* differs from the Ghosh composition above in significant ways. As

Example 2. Masītkhānī *gat* in *Rāg Khās Mallār*

Composer: Bahadur Khan Rāg: Khās Mallār
Tāl: vilambit tīntāl Source: adapted from Miner 1993, Ex. 4



the example shows, the primary impetus of the Masītkhānī *gat* derives from the *bol* pattern, as mentioned above. Generally speaking, the Masītkhānī *gat*, despite the slow tempo of its performance (often approximately 40 bpm), maintains a kind of rhythmic pulse through note repetition. The Ghosh composition, on the other hand, studiously avoids note repetition, is performed at about half the tempo of a typical performance of a Masītkhānī *gat* performance, and the notes flow in an *ālāp*-like manner. As will be demonstrated later, Ghosh's approach to composition is highly reflective of his overall performance style in *barā khyāl*.

FORM AND STRUCTURE OF *CHHOṬA KHYĀL* COMPOSITIONS

Unlike his vocal-derived *barā khyāl* compositions, Ghosh's fast compositions for the *chhota khyāl* portion are often highly evocative of plucked-string instrument styles. These compositions set the tone for flights of improvisation that capitalized both on the lyrical quality of the flute and the virtuosic technical possibilities of his instrument. There are certain features that tend to

define Ghosh's style and that make use of the *bānsurī's* particular strengths. These features may be roughly divided into vocal traits, plucked-string instrumental traits, and traits suited more particularly for the *bānsurī*. It is of course impossible to rigidly separate these characteristics, as there is a fair amount of stylistic continuity between vocal and instrumental styles. Nonetheless, certain features dominate in each of the different branches. Vocal elements of Ghosh's style include the use of sustain, which enables slow, extended portamento, or *mīnd*, and long legato phrases, and the avoidance of repeated notes and the *bols* of *sitār* and *sarod*. Features in common with plucked-stringed instruments include the frequent use of rhythmic play (*laykari*) and melodic leaps. Stylistic traits oriented more specifically toward Ghosh's *bānsurī* include rapid runs of notes, phrases that freely cross registers over a range from the lower register *tīvra* Ma (sharp fourth scale degree) up to the upper register Pa (fifth scale degree), and *mīnd* placed to avoid the break of the flute.

Example 3, a composition by Ghosh in *rāg Yaman*, is typical of his compositional style**.** One of the most striking features of this composition is the use of rhythmic groupings that are phrased in a pattern of three-beat units against the four-beat substructure of the *tāl*, as seen at the beginning of the composition. That is, the phrasing is 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 4 whereas the *tāl* structure is 4 + 4 + 4 + 4. By Ghosh's time, the use of this rhythmic grouping seems to have been fairly common among *sarod* players. George Ruckert cites the *sarod* compositions displayed in Examples 4 and 5 by Abdullah Khan[3] and Ali Akbar Khan,[4] both of which feature this pattern (Ruckert 1991, 45–46).

These examples both seem to derive from the Firozkhani style of plucked-string instrument composition, which according to Miner (1993, 95) has been associated with *sarod* and *sitār* since

[3] Derived by Ruckert from Miner (1981, 430) and adapted to my standard notation.
[4] Transcribed by Ruckert and adapted to my standard notation.

Example 3. *Drut Tīntāl Bandish* in *Rāg Yaman*.

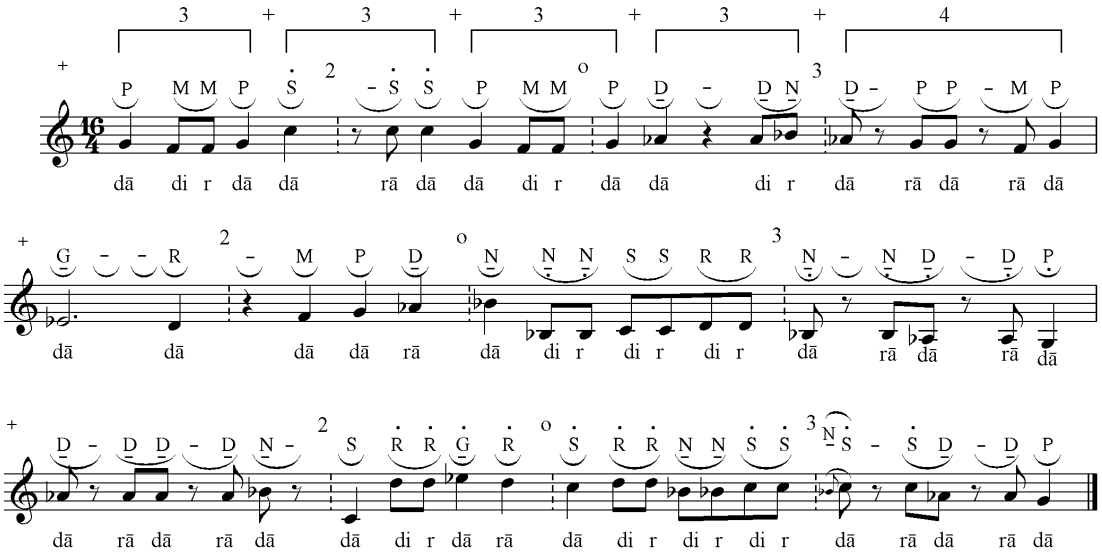
Composer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Yaman
Tāl: drut tīntāl Source: HMV EALP 1252

Click to Hear Example 3

the nineteenth century. Ruckert (1991, 41) suggests that Ghosh's teacher—Ali Akbar Khan's father—Allauddin Khan may have encountered this style in his earlier years while studying *sarod* with Fida Hussain. But while such compositions may have provided a model for Ghosh's use of a 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 4 rhythmic pattern in his *drut tīntāl* composition in *rāg Yaman*, Ghosh also adapts the pattern in terms of its melodic structure to make it better suited to the *bānsurī*. His phrases differ from the Abdullah Khan and Ali Akbar Khan compositions in that they are more melodically active, avoid *bol*s and repeated notes, and employ vocal-style *mīnḍ* between adjacent note pairs in the three-note pattern. While *mīnḍ* are not overly difficult to execute on

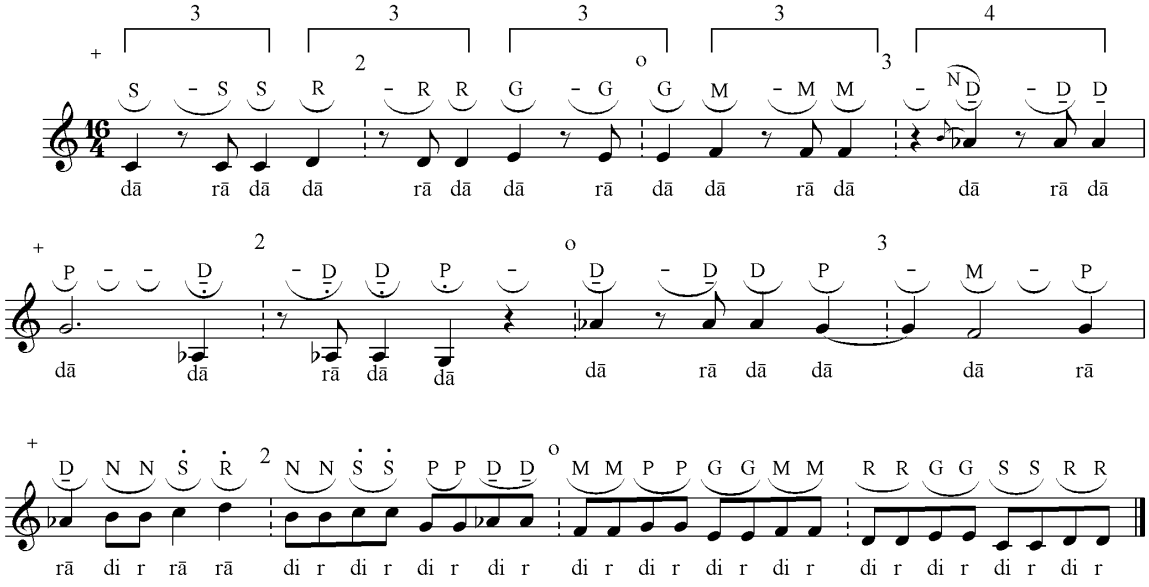
Example 4. Firozkhānī *Gat* in *Rāg Jaunpurī* by Abdullah Khan.

Composer: Abdullah Khan Rāg: Jaunpurī
Tāl: vilambit tīntāl Source: adapted from Ruckert 1994, Ex. 2-5



Example 5. *Drut Tīntāl Gat* in *Rāg* Nāt Bhairav by Ali Akbar Khan.

Composer: Ali Akbar Khan Rāg: Nāt Bhairav
Tāl: drut tīntāl Source: adapted from Ruckert 1994, Ex. 2-6



plucked-string instruments like *sitār* and *sarod*, the use of *bols* compensates for the lack of sustain on these instruments. Generally speaking, Ghosh does not make use of *bol* patterns in his compositions, although they could have easily been imitated through tonguing (and as will be discussed later, he did employ such a technique in *jhālā*-derived development). His compositions also tend to avoid repeated notes and often make use of long melismatic phrases. In these ways, despite the possible *sarod* derivation of some of his phrasing, his compositions are distinct from plucked-string instrument *gats* and more aligned with vocal music in terms of articulation. The vocal genre known as *tarāna* is likely part of Ghosh's inspiration here, as this type of composition typically adapted aspects of plucked-string instrument styles for vocal performance. Beyond the vocal and *sarod* derivations of Ghosh's compositional devices, the initial melodic pattern in the *rāg Yaman* composition caters specifically to the *bānsurī* in its use of *mīnḍ* that do not cross the break on the instrument.[5]

The opening section of Ghosh's composition in *rāg Yaman* also employs leaps of a fourth and a fifth between segments of the rhythmic pattern. While these are logical outcomes of the structure of the melodic pattern he is using, they suggest a further affiliation with compositions for *sarod*. Allyn Miner (1993, 205) notes that the Firozkhani *gat* commonly featured wide intervallic jumps that were idiomatic for the early *sarod*. The Abdullah Khan composition features many large intervallic leaps, with intervals of a fourth in the first line, an interval of an octave in the second line, and an interval of a ninth in the third line. Ali Akbar Khan's composition similarly employs large intervals, such as the seventh and flat ninth in the second line. Ghosh's use of leaps here is less drastic and sudden than those employed by Abdullah Khan

[5] The break is the point at which a flute player must shift to the first overtone in order to play in the next higher octave. Due to this shift in overtones, it is impossible to have a completely fluid transition across the break. The seventh hole on Ghosh's *bānsurī* allowed options for avoiding the break in some musical passages.

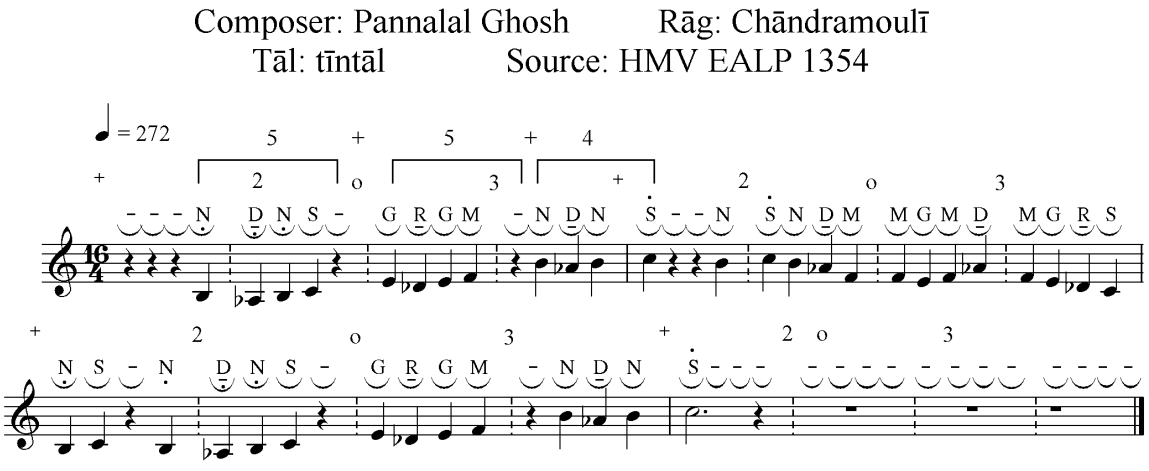
and Ali Akbar Khan, but they nonetheless suggest a possible compositional affiliation with the approach used for *sarod*. Ghosh's use of more extreme melodic leaps in *tāns* is discussed below.

In terms of register, Ghosh's composition in *rāg Yaman* seems to be constructed with the *bānsurī* specifically in mind. The second line of the composition outlines the comfortable range of the *bānsurī*, covering just over two octaves from *tīvra* Ma (the sharp fourth scale degree) in the *mandra saptak* up to Pa in the *tār saptak*. The rapid change of register, while possibly a bit of a strain for voice and other instruments, is quite comfortable on the *bānsurī*. The emphasis on the *tār saptak*, which projects very strongly on the *bānsurī*, helps to accentuate the melodic peak of the line. The rapid descending scalar run at the end of the *sthāī* takes advantage of the *bānsurī*'s ease of note execution across registers, and is more suitable for *bānsurī* than for either vocal or stringed instruments.

A quick look at another of Ghosh's compositions reveals a continuity of style. Example 6 is a composition by Ghosh in a *rāg* of his own creation, *Chandramoulī*. As with the *rāg Yaman* composition, Ghosh again begins with a cross-rhythmic phrase and an intervallically shifting pattern. The *laykari* pattern is different from his *rāg Yaman* composition, though, and can be thought of as a rhythmic *tihāi* ending at the beginning of the second *āvartan* (cycle) of the *tāl*.[6] This rhythmic pattern begins on the fourth beat of the first *āvartan* with a five-beat phrase that repeats two more times such that the fourth beat of the final portion of the pattern lands on the first beat of the second *āvartan.* Such *tīhais*, like the other examples of *laykari* so far discussed, are typical of stringed-instrument compositions. Again, though, Ghosh retains a vocal character by using a melodically active pattern and mostly avoiding *bols* and repeated notes.

[6] A *tīhai* is a form of *laykari* defined by Clayton (2000, 169) as "a rhythmic phrase played a total of three times, constructed so as to end on or just before a structurally important point in the *tāl* cycle (usually on *sam* or just before the *mukhra*)."

Example 6. *Drut Tīntāl Bandish* in *Rāg Chandramoulī* by Pannalal Ghosh.

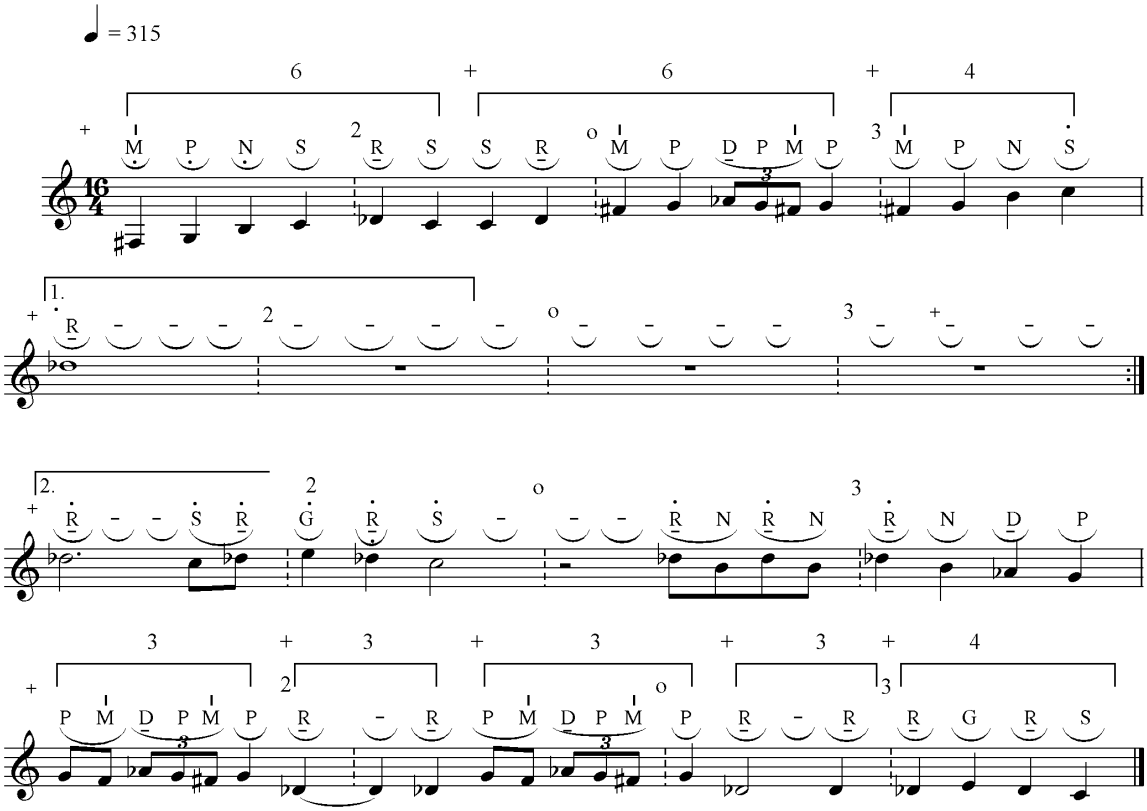


Click to Hear Example 6

The final composition to be discussed here is Ghosh's composition in *rāg Shrī*, shown in Example 7. The *laykari* pattern that begins this composition is similar to the 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 4 pattern that begins his composition in *rāg Yaman*, though the feeling is more suggestive of 6 + 6 + 4. The units of the melodic pattern here (the bracketed six-note groupings) are more closely connected intervallically than they were in the previous two Ghosh compositions, avoiding melodic leaps wider than a third. The second part of the composition, starting from the double bar line in the second line, features the familiar 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 4 pattern and the wider leap of a raised fourth. Beyond the extensive use of *laykari* and the intervallic leaps, this composition further resembles stringed-instrument compositions in its use of repeated notes. The second measure features a repetition of Sa, though this is a result of the melodic pattern being used. The 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 4 *laykari* pattern from measure 13, however, almost has the feeling of an adaptation of a *bol* pattern, as each unit of the pattern can be further subdivided into a single note repeated in a 2 + 1 pattern in terms of note duration. Rather than emphasize the *bol*-like aspect of

Example 7. *Drut Tīntāl Bandish* in *Rāg Shrī* by Pannalal Ghosh.

Composer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Shrī
Tāl: drut tīntāl Source: HMV EALP 1252



Click to hear Example 7

this pattern, however, Ghosh partially disguises the note repetition with a *muṛkī*, or turn, embellishment in the two higher pattern units that start on the *madhya saptak* Pa. Nonetheless, the lower unit of the pattern repeats the *madhya saptak* Re (second scale degree), without embellishment. Thus, while this is an original *bānsurī* composition by Ghosh, this portion has the feeling of an adapted plucked-string instrument composition. The overall feeling of the *bandish*, nonetheless, is quite characteristic of Ghosh's compositional style.

APPROACH TO *ĀLĀP*-STYLE *BARHAT* DEVELOPMENT

Elements of Ghosh's improvisatory style also show parallels with the various models from which he drew to create his own style. As is typical with Kirana *gharānā* vocalists, Ghosh normally devoted the greatest percentage of his full-length classical performances to emulation within an *ati vilambit tāl* of the unmetered *rāg* development known as *ālāp*, in which the character of the *rāg* is gradually revealed. Ghosh, like the Kirana singers, typically began his *barā khyāl* performances with an *auchar ālāp*, and then presented a much more developed and extended *ālāp*-style *barhat* over the *ati vilambit tāl* immediately following the composition. While presentation of *ālāp* within *tāl* differs from the *dhrupad* model, the effect, structure, and purpose here is akin to that of a full unaccompanied *ālāp* in the use of a very loose sense of time and systematic *rāg* development. Widdess (1994, 65) points out *dhrupad* singer Ritwik Sanyal's assertion "that there is always a pulse in his mind throughout *ālāp*, and that this is regular and consistent apart from a gradual acceleration." Clayton (2000, 103) notes that "several other modern musicians, including Pandit Ravi Shankar, have played *joṛ* in a strict 8-beat *tāl*-like pattern, accompanied by a *pakhāvaj* or a *kharaj* (bass) *tablā*: this is said to be a traditional practice." He also calls attention to the fact that "some *dhrupad* singers also adopt this practice, while *bīn* (stick zither) players sometimes have their *pakhāvaj* (barrel-drum) accompanist play the 12-*matra cautal* during the *joṛ* section." Thus, the presence of an *ati vilambit tāl* does not seem to violate the spirit of *dhrupad ālāp*.

While *ālāp* is common to many Indian musical genres, it is especially featured in many *dhrupad* styles, which predate, and are considered more traditional than *khyāl*.[7] Even within *dhrupad*, though, there are varying modes of *ālāp* presentation ranging from a meticulous note-

[7] Some modern musicians who have extensively studied *dhrupad-ang ālāp*, such as those trained by Allauddin Khan, can nonetheless rival *dhrupad* musicians in the depth of their *ālāp*.

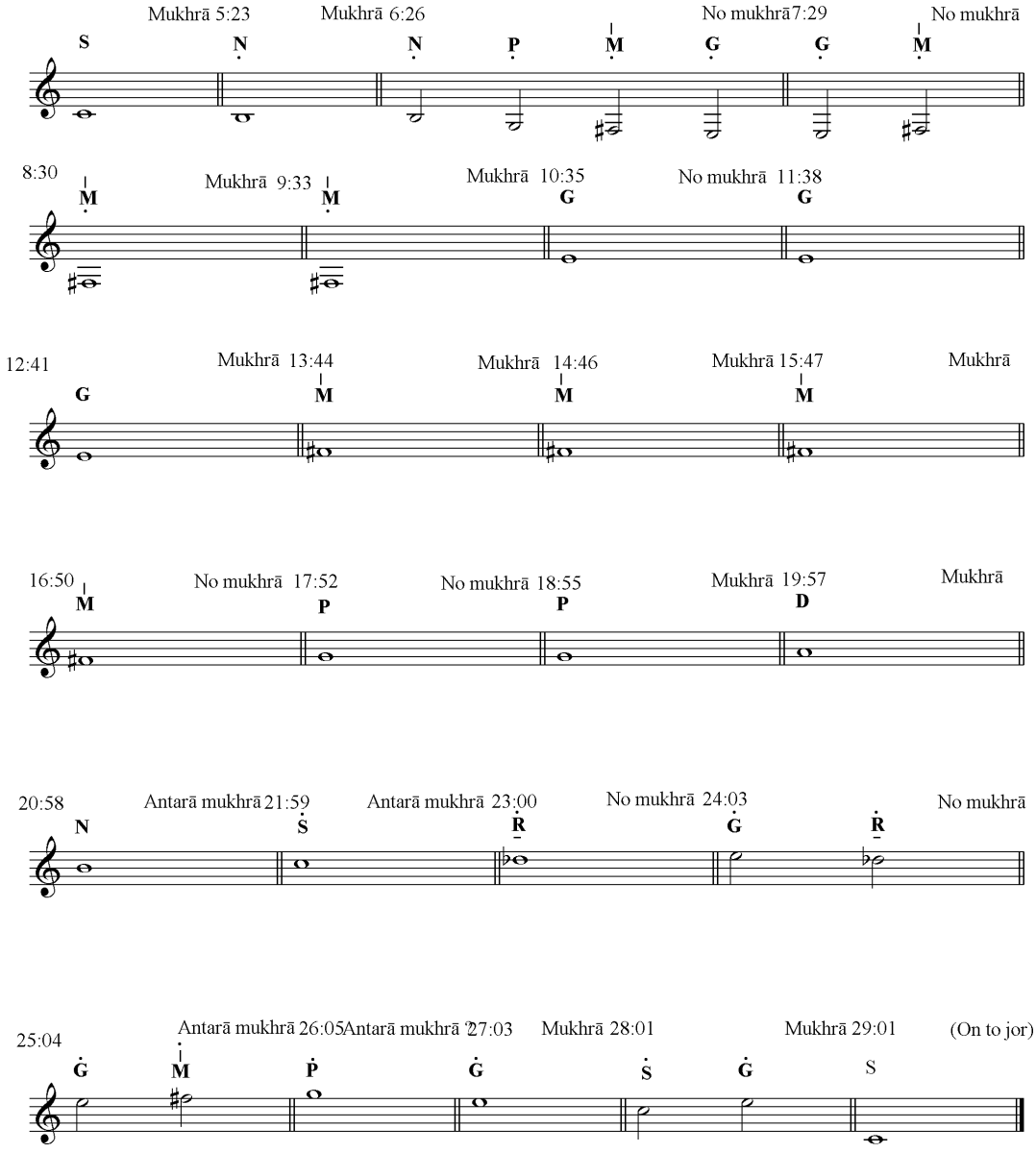
by-note development to a presentation of typical phrases of the *rāg* with a gradually increasing range. Sanyal and Widdess (2004, 147) observe that musicians of the Dagar *gharānā* of *dhrupad* normally present *ālāp* using a note-by-note method of melodic expansion more clearly and consistently than some of the other *gharānās*. He suggests that this practice may derive in part from the fact that members of the Dagar *gharānā* were well versed in Sanskrit and musical theory, as the thirteenth-century musical text *Sangītaratnākara* outlines a similar approach to *ālāp*.

Sanyal and Widdess (2004, 105–6) also point out that *dhrupad ālāp* development was passed on to some *gharānās* of *khyāl*, who then maintained many of these *ālāp* characteristics while playing loosely over the *tablā* accompaniment. The Dagar-affiliated *bīn* player Bande Ali Khan is said to have passed his knowledge on to the Kirana and Gwalior *gharānās*. Since Ghosh is known to have particularly favored the Kirana *gharānā*, his practice of playing *ālāp*-style *barhat* over *ati vilambit* time cycles is most likely derived from this source. But while Kirana singers did not always adhere to the strict note-by-note development favored by the Dagar *gharānā*, Ghosh seems to have favored such an approach when it was appropriate for the *rāg* and he had sufficient time for a full *ālāp*-style *barhat* development. According to Nityanand Haldipur, Ghosh had different methodologies of *ālāp*-style development depending on the time available for its presentation (pers. comm.). He would also tailor his development to the type of *rāg* being performed. For example, he would use the model of *rāg ālāp*, following the contour of the *rāg* in *Miyān Malhār*, but he would employ the model of *swar ālāp*, featuring note-by-note development, in a *rāg* like *Pūriyā Kalyān*. Regardless of length or *rāg*-type, Ghosh's *ālāp*-style *barhat* almost always adhered to the practice of first developing the *mandra saptak*, then the *madhya saptak*, and finally the *tār saptak* followed by a descent back to Sa.

In the recordings of performances in which Ghosh had time for full *ālāp*-style *barhat*, he would often establish a note-by-note structure akin to that used by the Dagar *gharānā* of *dhrupad*. This is illustrated in Examples 8(a) and (b), which display two successive reductions of

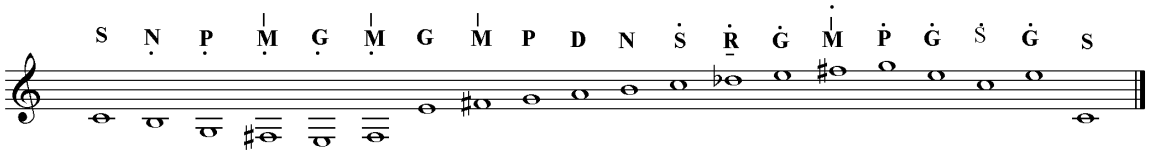
Example 8(a). Reduction 1 of Pannalal Ghosh's *ālāp*-style *barhat* in *Rāg Pūriyā Kalyān*

Composer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Pūriyā Kalyān
Tāl: jhūmrā Source: live concert recording, 1956



Example 8(b). Final reduction of Pannalal Ghosh's *ālāp*-style *barhat* in *Rāg Pūriyā Kalyān*

Composer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Pūriyā Kalyān
Tāl: jhūmrā Source: live concert recording, 1956



his performance of *Pūriyā Kalyān*. Example 8(a) is a reduction of Ghosh's performance showing the notes of emphasis of the *ālāp* notated within the time frame of the *tāl.* Each double bar indicates the start of a new *tāl* cycle, with the timing on the recording indicated above. Whole notes are used to indicate the note of primary emphasis within a given time cycle, and half notes are used when multiple notes of emphasis occur within a cycle. The *mukhra* is the final portion of the composition, which occurs in roughly the last one-and-a-half beats of the cycle. Its presence indicates the completion of an *ālāp* segment. The *antara mukhra* indicates that the cycle ended on the upper register tonic rather than the initial tonic an octave lower. The presence or absence of a *mukhra* provides an indication as to the duration of time over which a single segment of the *ālāp* was presented.

Example 8(b) dispenses with all indications of duration to show the succession of notes of emphasis in a single line. This reduction clearly shows that Ghosh first introduces each important note of the *rāg* successively downward until the third, Ga, just below the sharp fourth scale degree, *tīvra* Ma, which defines the upper tetrachord of the *rāg* in the *mandra saptak*. Once the *mandra saptak* is sufficiently developed, Ghosh skips up to Ga an octave higher, which is the first note of the *rāg* above Sa that should receive strong emphasis. After this, the notes reveal a

clear systematic ascent through the *madhya saptak* up to high Sa, and then further upward into the *tār saptak* to the fifth, Pa, just above the *tīvra* Ma that serves as the boundary of the lower tetrachord in the upper register. The final Sa is reached by a rapid descent of a tenth within a single *āvartan*.

After this initial presentation of note-by-note *ālāp* development, Ghosh continues to follow a typically *dhrupad* mode of *ālāp* development in his emulation of *joṛ*, or *madhya ālāp*, which features a rhythmic presentation of the *rāg*.[8] A comparison of the beginning of Ghosh's *joṛ* in *Pūriyā Kalyān* with the beginning of Dagar's *joṛ* in Marwa, which are displayed in Examples 9(a) and 9(b), respectively, shows a very clear parallel between the two. Ghosh performs his *joṛ*-derived development over *ati vilambit Jhūmrā Tāl* (hence the density of the notation), but the effect is the same as Dagar's *joṛ* without *tāl*. Ghosh's *joṛ*-derived development essentially begins on the second note of the second line in the transcription. He plays four even statements of Sa, then descends to four even statements of the seventh scale degree, Ni (with the sixth scale degree, Dha, functioning as a lower neighbor) before touching *komal* (flat) Re briefly and returning to Sa. Similarly, Dagar begins with three even statements of Sa, then descends to Dha (with Ni as an upper neighbor) followed by two statements of Ni before touching *komal* Re and returning to Sa. This pattern of repeating Sa followed by a brief descent below Sa is a typical introductory phrase in *joṛ*, and there is little doubt that Ghosh and Dagar derived their approach from the same basic source in *dhrupad*.

[8] I am using the term *joṛ* here instead of *madhya ālāp* because Nityanand Haldipur, probably the most prominent living exponent of the Pannalal Ghosh legacy, refers to it as *joṛ*. While Ghosh's *joṛ*-style development lacks the strokes of the *chikārī* strings typical of plucked-string instrumental *joṛ*, it shares many other characteristics, as discussed below. Also, he seems to have learned the proper presentation of *joṛ* from Allauddin Khan, who had extensively studied *dhrupad bīn*-style playing, including *joṛ*. However, since *joṛ*, as part of *ālāp*, is traditionally performed without *tāl*, I qualify my use of the term when used in *tāl* as "*joṛ*-like," "*joṛ*-derived," or "an emulation of *joṛ*."

Example 9(a). First *Āvartan* of *Joṛ*-Derived Development by Pannalal Ghosh.

Composer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Pūriyā Kalyān
Tāl: jhūmrā Source: live concert recording, 1956

Example 9(b). Beginning of Z. M. Dagar's *Joṛ* in *Rāg Mārwā.*

Performer: Z. M. Dagar Rāg: Mārwā
Source: Raga-222

While melodic development continues to be important in this stage of *ālāp*, much of the progression that takes place in *joṛ* is through an increase in rhythmic density. Ghosh draws from a common practice of *laykari* used in *dhrupad*, in which the initial pulse is doubled, tripled, quadrupled, or is subject to some other multiplicative transformation. In Ghosh's *joṛ*-derived development in *rāg Pūriyā Kalyān*, he employs three successive rhythmic levels, as shown in

Example 10. In the first *āvartan* of the *tāl*, the dominant subdivision is four pulses per beat. During the second *āvartan*, the dominant subdivision doubles to eight pulses per beat. From the fourth to twelfth *āvartans* the initial pulse is quadrupled so that there are sixteen pulses per beat. In *āvartans* thirteen through eighteen Ghosh shifts to a triplet feel with twelve pulses per beat. While the change from sixteen to twelve pulses per beat is a decrease in rhythmic density, it

Example 10. Rhythmic levels of Pannalal Ghosh's *joṛ*-derived development in *Pūriyā Kalyān*.

Āvartan	Time	Pulses per beat
1	29:02	4
2	30:01	8
3	30:58	16
4	31:55	16
5	32:49	16
6	33:44	16
7	34:36	16
8	35:26	16
9	36:16	16
10	37:06	16
11	37:56	16
12	38:45	16
13	39:33	12
14	40:20	12
15	41:07	12
16	41:56	12
17	42:44	12 (with *gamaks*)
18	43:32	12 (with *gamaks*)
19	44:18	16
20	45:08	32
21	45:57	32
22	46:45	32

increases in intensity due to the breaking from an even division of the beat. Ghosh returns to one *āvartan* of sixteen pulses per beat before shifting to thirty-two pulses per beat in cycles twenty through twenty-two. After the twenty-second *āvartan*, Ghosh goes straight into the *chhoṭa khyāl* composition without pause.

Ghosh's tendency toward systematic, *dhrupad*-inspired *ālāp* development is likely derived from a number of different sources. *Dhrupad* had a strong presence in Bengal, where Ghosh lived for the first twenty-nine years of his life. The Vishnupur *gharānā* of *dhrupad* was an inspiration to many great Bengalis, including Rabindranath Tagore. One of Ghosh's primary goals was to elevate the status of the *bānsurī* to that of a respected Hindustani classical instrument. The movement in the early twentieth century to "legitimize" Hindustani classical music placed a high value on music that adhered to some degree to the authority of the Sanskrit texts. As mentioned above, the use of systematic note-by-note development in *dhrupad ālāp* suggests a link to the *Sangītaratnākara*, and Ghosh would likely have been attracted to this authoritatively traditional approach.

Whatever his motivation, Ghosh had significant exposure to *dhrupad* performance, both directly and indirectly. He studied with Girija Shankar Chakravarti and was very attracted to the playing of the celebrated *bīn* player Dabir Khan, the grandson of Wazir Khan. As a student of Allauddin Khan, Ghosh later had the opportunity to learn directly in the lineage of Wazir Khan. While Ghosh learned a *dhrupad* approach to *ālāp* from both a vocalist and an instrumentalist, his *ālāp* retains a predominantly vocal character. Ghosh seems to have chosen this approach due to the vocal qualities of the *bānsurī*, as the instrument has a sustain limited only by one's lung capacity and a fluency of *mīṇḍ* nearly equal to that of the voice. When repeating a note multiple times in his *ālāp* and *ālāp*-style *barhat*, Ghosh normally uses a vocal-style *gamak* (here an upper

or lower neighbor), rather than the *bol* patterns typical of plucked-string instrumentals. Ghosh could have easily imitated such *bol* patterns through tonguing, but instead chose to emulate the voice.

As Haldipur suggests, it also seems that Ghosh's studies with Allauddin Khan focused primarily on *dhrupad*-style *ālāp* development (pers. comm.). As a student of the great *bīn* player Wazir Khan, Allauddin Khan had developed a very deep knowledge of *dhrupad bīn* playing, and had studied *dhrupad* vocal music as well (Ruckert 1991, 109). Ghosh's nephew Dhruba emphasizes that the *bīn* retained a very vocal quality. He contrasts the restraint imposed by the *bīn* with the facility of the *sitār*, and the profundity of sound of the *bīn* with the thinner sound of the *sitār*. He suggests that these tendencies tend to make the *bīn* more introverted and the *sitār* more extroverted (pers. comm.). In technical terms, this suggests that the *sitār* tends to favor the rhythmic activity derived from *bol* patterns, whereas the *bīn*, more closely following a *dhrupad* vocal model, leans toward a more melismatic approach. In any case, it is clear that Ghosh chose to apply Allauddin Khan's teachings in a distinctly vocal manner (except in some aspects of his *joṛ*- and *jhālā*-derived development, which as discussed, borrow from a plucked-string instrument approach).

It should be mentioned, however, that Ghosh was not trying to maintain a pristine *dhrupad* character in his *ālāp*-style development. Stephen Slawek (1991, 172) discusses an exclusion principle that relates to Ravi Shankar's description of the "fine line between *dhrupad* and *khayāl*," noting that "certain embellishments characteristic of *khayāl* singing are to be avoided in the traditional *bīnkār ālāp*." This can also be extended to vocal *dhrupad ālāp*, which similarly avoids much of the embellishment characteristic of *khyāl*. Ghosh is clearly playing in *khyāl* while incorporating some very traditional aspects of *dhrupad*.

One further level of development in *ālāp*, known as *jhālā* in instrumental music and simply *drut ālāp* in vocal *dhrupad*, commonly follows *joṛ*. Ghosh does not generally progress to this level after his *joṛ*-derived development, but sometimes include a *jhālā*-like section later in the development of his improvisations in the *chhoṭa khyāl* section. As Martin Clayton (2000, 97) notes, "in instrumental *jhālā*, melody notes are typically interspersed with strokes on the high drone or punctuating strings (*cikārī*), and in *drut ālāp* in *dhrupad*, melody notes are usually repeated several times each." Ghosh seems to draw from both models in his own *jhālā*. While he often simply uses repeated notes in his phrases, he sometimes rearticulates a single fixed note as a point of return, interspersing it with more fluid moving lines. Such a pattern is much like the plucked-string instrument model in structure, with repeated notes functioning like the high drone strings. Example 11 shows Ghosh's use of a compound line with a descending lower voice alternating with a fixed pitch upper voice, and a rhythmic grouping of 3 + 3 + 2. This rhythmic grouping is suggestive of, though not exclusive to, the *bol* patterns of the *sitār* and *sarod*. Slawek (1987, 43) provides a list of permutations and combinations of *bols*, two of which are reflective of the above 3 + 3 + 2 rhythmic grouping:

dā rā dā dā rā dā dā rā

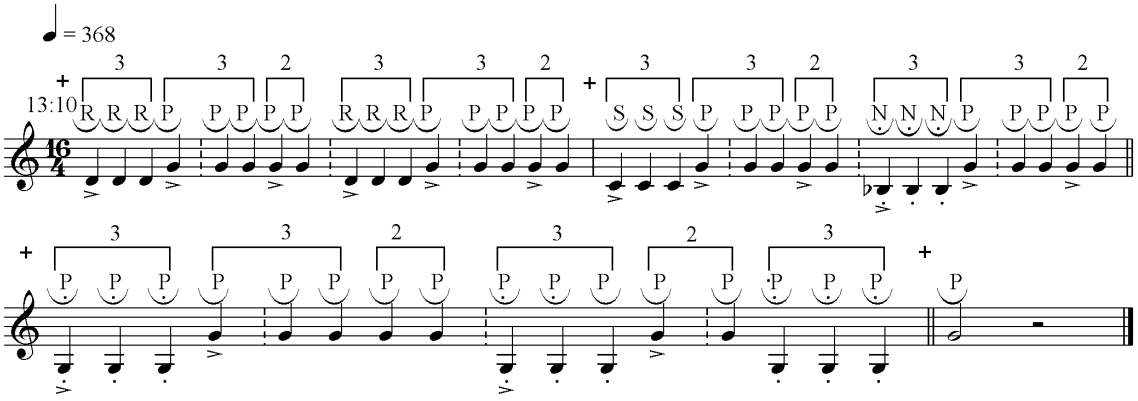
dā rā dā dā rā dā rā dā.

Ghosh's tonguing here is suggestive of the use of a plectrum with stringed instruments, though the distinction between upstrokes and downstrokes does not literally apply.

The use of melodic leaps, which can be seen in the excerpt from Dagar's *joṛ-jhālā* in *rāg Mārwā* (Example 12), is also somewhat characteristic of an instrumental approach. In a vocal performance of *rāg Miyān Malhār* by the Dagar brothers, the melodic motion in their *joṛ-jhālā* is almost entirely stepwise according to the *rāg*. Example 13 shows Ghosh's use of rearticulated

Example 11. Pannalal Ghosh's *jhālā*-derived development, excerpt 1.

Performer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Miyān Malhār
Tāl: ati drut tīntāl Source: live recording, 1956



Click to Hear Example 11

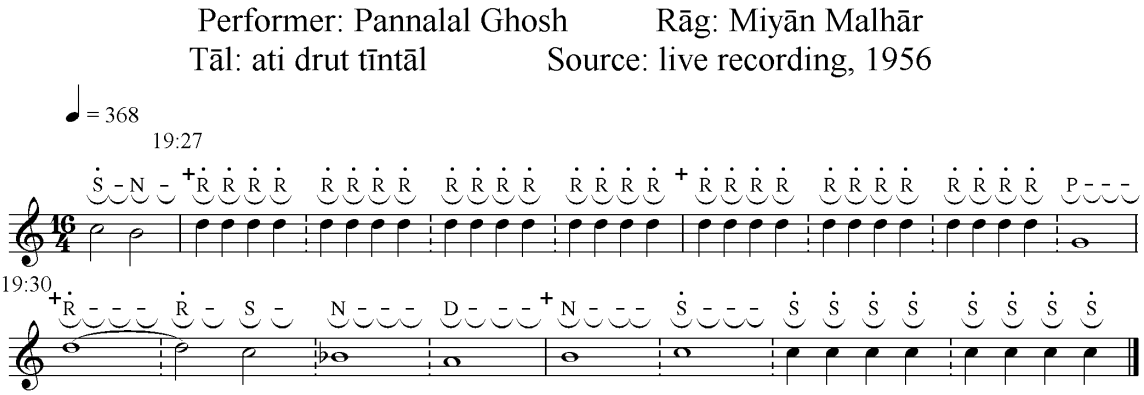
Example 12. Melodic leaps in Z. M. Dagar's *joṛ-jhālā* in *Rāg Mārwā*.

Performer: Z. M. Dagar Rāg: Mārwā
Source: Raga-222

Click to Hear Example 12

notes alternating with more fluid moving lines. This seems to be primarily derived from an instrumental model. Having studied both the vocal and *bīn* approaches to *dhrupad*, Ghosh presumably sought to fully capitalize on the potential of the *bānsurī* by incorporating the best of both worlds.

Example 13. Pannalal Ghosh *jhālā*-derived development, excerpt 2.



Click to Hear Example 13

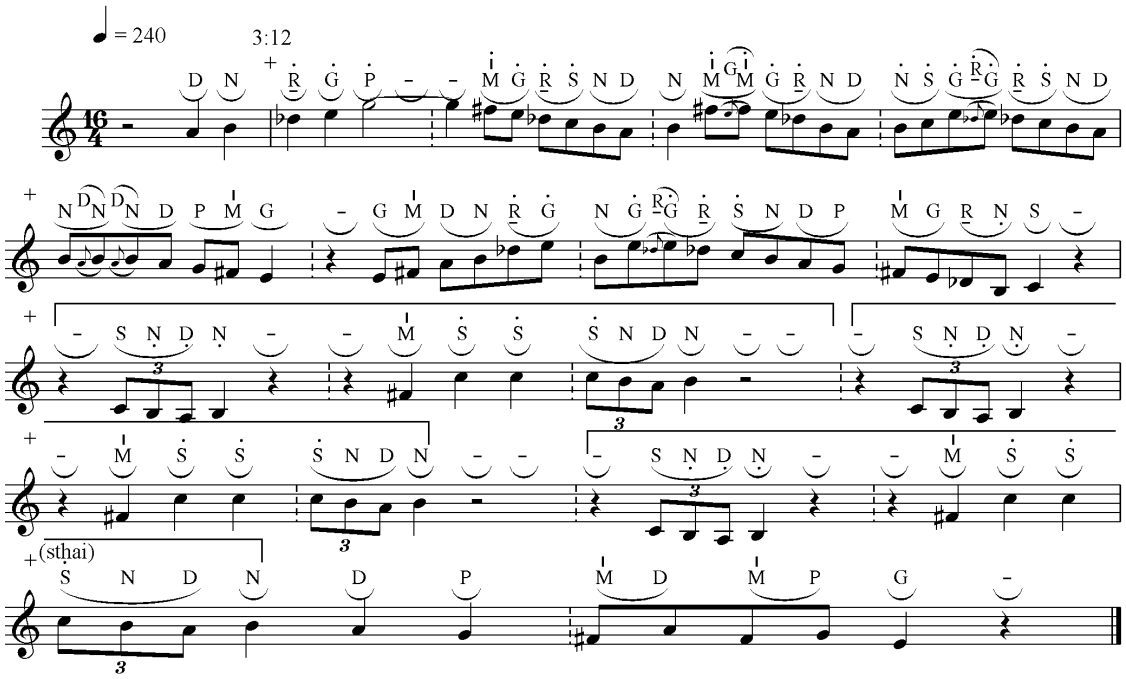
TĀNS

Apart from *ālāp*, another important improvisational aspect of Ghosh's performances is his use of *tans*, which tend to be the most virtuosic element of a *khyāl* performance. In order to take full advantage of his technical capabilities on the *bānsurī*, Ghosh again appears to have drawn from a diversity of stylistic models. When he first begins playing *tāns*, it is often in the form of *vistar*, a freely phrased elaboration of the *rāg*. The fluidity of his approach here, plus his extensive use of *mīṇḍ* is predominantly vocal in character. His use of *gamaks* rather than rearticulating notes is also more closely aligned with vocal music.

The aspect of his *tāns* that is perhaps most suggestive of a plucked-string instrument derivation is his use of *laykari*. Ghosh often employs *tihāi* at the beginning of the second *āvartan*, as seen in the third line of Example 14. This is a reasonably elaborate *tihāi*, as each of its units is twelve beats long, displacing itself within the *tāl* by four beats each *āvartan*, and ending with the ninth beat of the *tihāi* unit coinciding with the first phrase of the composition. *Tihāis* in general are far more typical of plucked-string instrumental *khyāl* than of vocal *khyāl*.

Example 14. *Tān* 1 in *Rāg Pūriyā Kalyān* by Pannalal Ghosh.

Composer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Pūriyā Kalyān
Tāl: ati drut tīntāl Source: live recording, 1956



Click to Hear Example 14

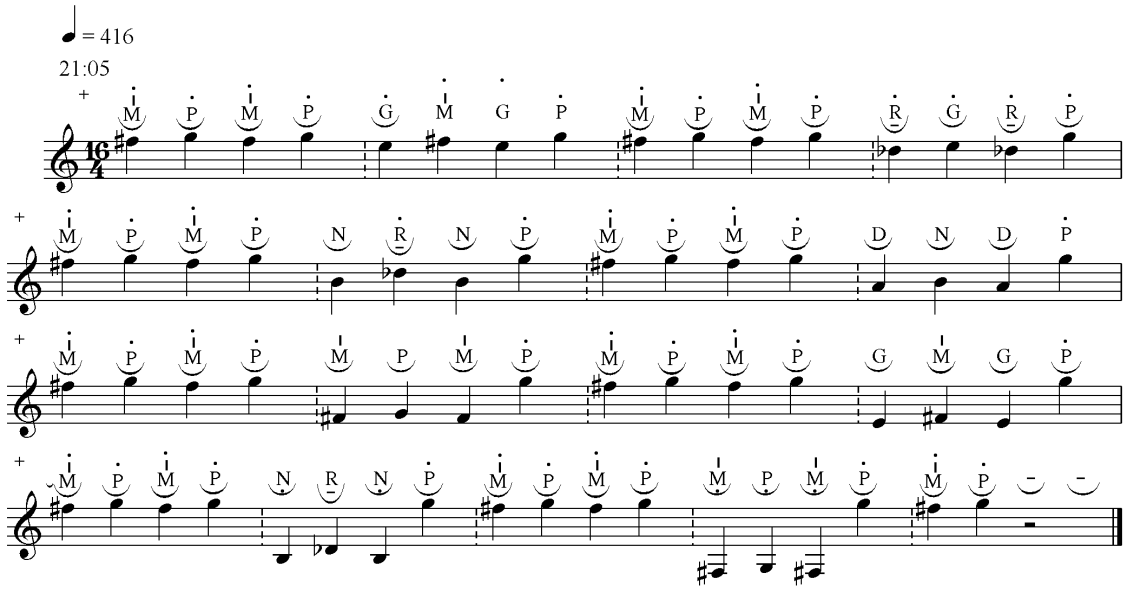
Furthermore, a *tān* of this length and intricacy suggests a particularly strong orientation toward the approach typical of *sitār* and *sarod*.

Ghosh also exploits the strengths of the *bānsurī* in his *tāns* by employing wide melodic leaps and very fast runs covering a broad melodic range. As discussed earlier, leaps are somewhat characteristic of plucked-string instrument composition and performance. The extreme leaps up to two octaves and a flat second shown in Example 15, however, are particularly idiomatic for the *bānsurī*.

Another distinct advantage of the *bānsurī* is the ability to play extremely fast melodic runs. While vocalists and string instrument players can potentially execute such high-speed *tāns*, Ghosh incorporates such runs as an integral part of his style to an extent not typically employed

Example 15. *Tān* 2 in *Rāg Pūriyā Kalyān* by Pannalal Ghosh.

Composer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Pūriyā Kalyān
Tāl: ati drut tīntāl Source: live recording, 1956



Click to Hear Example 15

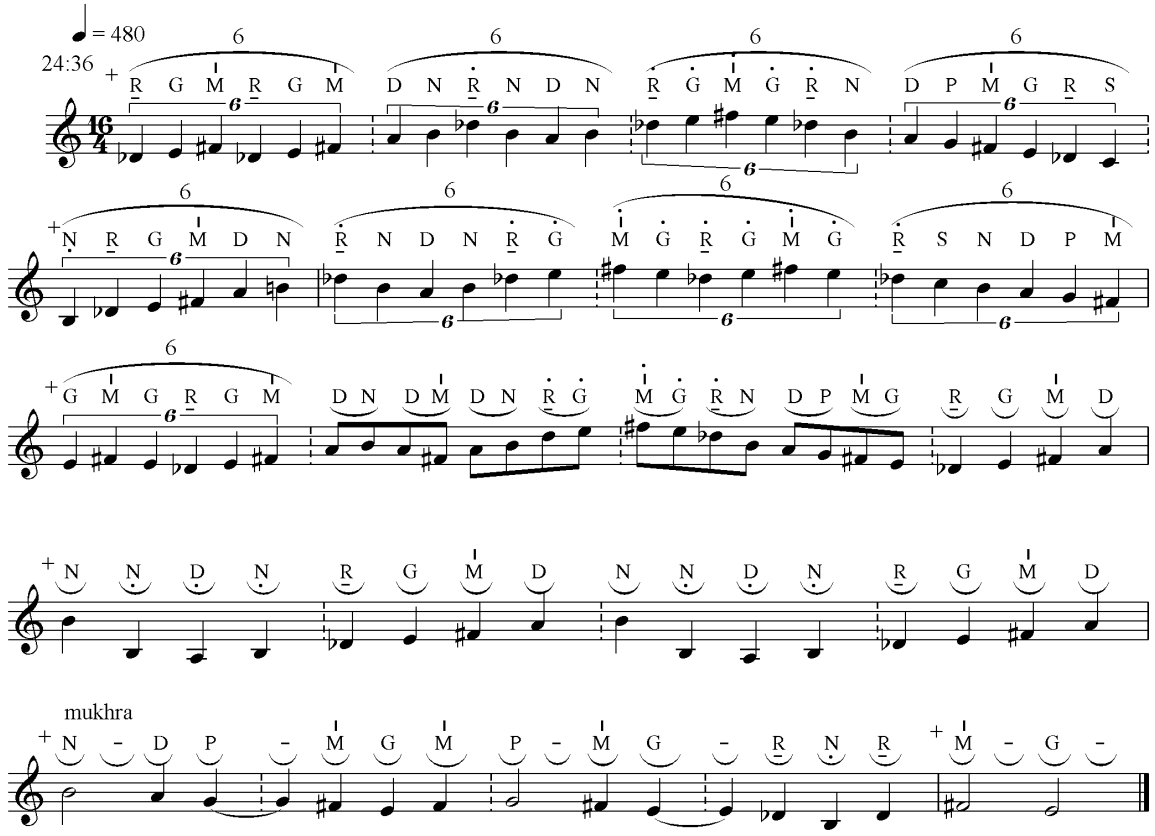
by other instrumentalists and vocalists. In Example 16, Ghosh plays sextuplets and eighth notes at a tempo of approximately 480 bpm. He also concludes this *tān* with a *tihāi* intersecting with the beginning of the composition.

CONTRAST WITH OTHER INSTRUMENTAL STYLES

While the stylistic approach adopted by Ghosh seems like a very natural one, it was in fact a carefully chosen conglomeration of many available models. Ghosh was at the forefront of many of the musical developments in twentieth-century North India. His introduction of the *bānsurī* into Hindustani classical music, while a major contribution in itself, also put him in the vanguard of introducing musical instruments not previously featured as prominent solo voices onto the classical stage. His ability to synthesize a variety of styles was a key factor in his success. Nayan

Example 16. *Tān* 3 in *Rāg Pūriyā Kalyān* by Pannalal Ghosh.

Composer: Pannalal Ghosh Rāg: Pūriyā Kalyān
Tāl: ati drut tīntāl Source: live recording, 1956



Click to Hear Example 16

Ghosh emphasizes that Ghosh's music "covered a vast area on flute. Perhaps he had covered all that was possible in Indian music" (pers. comm.). He points out that it is a distortion of facts when other popular flutists of the present day claim that Ghosh played the *gāyaki ang*, while they play the instrumental, or *tantrakari ang*. The noted *bānsurī* player Hariprasad Chaurasia stated that he has "great admiration for Pannalal Ghoseji's flute," but claims that "his was the *Khyāl* type. I play in *Dhrupadia* style" (*The Tribune*, December 20, 1998). Perhaps Chaurasia meant that when he performs full *ālāp*, he presents it before the introduction of *tāl*, or as a separate

item. However, as has been demonstrated above, it is an oversimplification to say that Ghosh's style was simply *gāyaki* or simply *khyāl* (or that Chaurasia's style is simply *dhrupad*). His *ālāp*-style *barhat* could often be as fully and systematically developed as an unaccompanied *ālāp*, and was based on the teachings of Allauddin Khan.

Although the *gāyaki* model was very important to Ghosh's approach, his playing was clearly informed by a diversity of approaches. "[H]is playing of *gats*, his grasp over folk music, all kinds of music—Bengali music, U.P. folk music, *ṭhumrī*, *chaiti*, *dadra*, was very deep because he had traveled so much, he had heard so many musicians, so much music, that he absorbed everything" (Nayan Ghosh, pers. comm.). While he most often chose to develop his *ālāp* within the structure of an *ati vilambit tāl*, the *dhrupad* model learned from Allauddin Khan and other sources was clearly guiding many of his most important musical decisions. And despite the predominance of a vocal approach in Ghosh's mature style, Nayan Ghosh claims that Ghosh had delved deeply into instrumental music "long before even he met Allauddin Khan" (pers. comm.). When Ghosh was in his late twenties, he played on a three-minute recording with *sitārist* Kabir Khan. This duet recording featured a *sitār gat* in *rāg Pilū* that Nayan Ghosh recognized as one he learned from his father (Ghosh's brother), Nikhil Ghosh, and Ghosh also played *jhālā*. Nayan Ghosh states that "Pannababu covered *tantrakari ang* before he bought into *gāyaki ang* [which] came much later, in Pannababu's music, because as a child he heard *sitār*. So he translated the *sitār* music into flute" (pers. comm.). He notes that Ghosh was thus playing *tantrakari ang* on flute before other musicians taking credit for this were even born, and emphasizes that Ghosh's music covered *dhrupad ālāp* learned from Allauddin Khan, *joṛ*, and *jhālā* featuring tonguing to emulate a plucked-string instrumental approach.

Ghosh's accomplishment was very possibly an important inspiration for other artists in their own efforts to popularize such instruments as *sarāngi*, *shahnāī*, and *santūr,* and helped them gain acceptance as solo Hindustani classical instruments. Like Ghosh, exponents of these instruments looked to established vocal and instrumental models of performance, while simultaneously creating styles suited to their particular instruments. While the music of Ghosh exemplifies this balance of tradition and originality, his stylistic choices were certainly not the only ones available to artists seeking to define a style for a new or readapted Hindustani classical instrument. The fact that each of the artists responsible for the popularization of these instruments in the twentieth century developed a distinct style is perhaps an indication of the range of stylistic possibilities that were available in the early- to mid-twentieth century. However, they also shared many stylistic elements, and Ghosh provided one of the earliest twentieth-century models for the creation of a hybrid approach to a new instrumental style.

The Shahnāī*: Bismillah Khan*

Bismillah Khan (1916–2006) is credited with the popularization of the *shahnāī* as a full-fledged Hindustani concert instrument. According to Reis Flora (1995, 69) he was trained first by his uncle, who was both a *shahnāī* player and a singer, and later by *khyāl* singer Mohammad Hussain. As suggested by his training, he took a very vocal approach to the *shahnāī* rather than following a plucked-string instrument model. Flora (1995, 71) notes three elements of *shahnāī* performance that are reflective of a vocal approach, which helped the instrument to gain acceptance in Hindustani classical music. First, performers present "relatively slow and restrained improvisation over a *vilambit tāl*, to emulate the *barā…khyāl*." This point seems more applicable to the playing of Flora's teacher, Anant Lal (discussed below), than Bismillah Khan,

who does not play in any *tāl* slower than around 100 bpm in the four CD volumes of the retrospective *Bismillah Khan: End of an Era*. However, Bismillah Khan does normally begin his improvisations in *madhya lay tāl* with slow, freely phrased *vistar*. Flora's second element is *tān*-style development reflective of the *chhoṭa khyāl* section of a *khyāl* performance. Third, *shahnāī* performers have developed "a certain sweetness of sound or tone quality."

Also like Ghosh, Bismillah Khan's *tān* development would often culminate with a *jhālā*-derived development reflective of a plucked-string instrumental model. This may well have been directly inspired by Ghosh, as Nayan Ghosh states:

> I clearly remember once, in Dadar, Bismillah Khan telling my father, offstage, that the *jhālā* technique that he played was due to his inspiration from Pannababu's flute. I was witness, I was thirteen years old when Bismillah Khan said this. I don't know whether he would do it so very publicly, or to everyone—I am doubtful about that. But he was telling my father that Pannababu was—"His *jhālā* is what inspired me to play *jhālā* also." (pers. comm.)

Example 17 features an excerpt from Bismillah Khan's 1974 performance of *rāg Gunkālī* in which he plays a *jhālā*-derived development in a manner very similar to Ghosh. A comparison of this with the excerpts from Ghosh's *jhālā* shown in Examples 10 and 12 reveals a strong similarity, as each features rapid passages of repeated notes with staccato tonguing alternating with a different single note. Whether or not Bismillah Khan was inspired by Ghosh to approach *jhālā* in this way, it is likely that both were emulating a plucked-string instrumental model.

But while Bismillah Khan's emulation of *gāyaki ang* and his use of *jhālā* parallel the practice of Ghosh, their approaches were distinct in several ways. Bismillah Khan's choice of broad formal structure differed from Ghosh's in that he generally played an *auchar alāp* followed by a *madhya lay tīntāl* composition on which he would improvise *vistār* and *tāns* over progressively faster tempos. Rebecca Stewart (1974, 384) suggests that the *shahnāī-naqqara naubat* had a tradition of "short thematic gat and a series of varied improvisations" that may have contributed

Example 17. Bismillah Khan *jhālā*-derived development.

Performer: Bismillah Khan Rāg: Gunkālī
Tāl: drut tīntāl: Source: CDNF 150688

to the development of the instrumental *gat*. Bismillah Khan's decision to use *madhya lay tīntāl* compositions rather than *ati vilambit* compositions might possibly suggest a link to the *naubat* tradition. However, this structure does not lend itself to the kind of extended and systematic *ālāp*-style development employed by Ghosh, suggesting that Bismillah Khan did not prioritize *dhrupad*-style *ālāp* to the degree that Ghosh did.

Bismillah Khan also retains a connection to the *shahnāī*'s origins in the *naubat* ensemble—traditionally an outdoor ceremonial ensemble (Flora 1995, 54)—through his use of the *khurdak*, "a small earthenware kettledrum played with the fingers" (57) for percussion accompaniment. Flora (60) suggests that Bismillah Khan's musical background did not include *naubat* connections, but notes that "a definite link [to *naubat*] appears to be present in the use of the *khurdak* or *dukkar* in the Benaras tradition." While Qureshi, et al. state that use of the *shahnāī* as

a featured instrument in Hindustani classical performance was derived from its use in North Indian temples, it seems likely that the *naubat* ensemble was the original source of the use of *khurdak* with *shahnāī*.

Anant Lal

Although Bismillah Khan is considered to be the individual most responsible for bringing recognition to the *shahnāī* as a solo Hindustani classical instrument, at least one other person seems to have preceded his contributions. Flora (1995) refers to a *shahnāī* player by the name of Nandlal, who was apparently performing Hindustani classical music in the early twentieth century. While Flora does not give the birthdate of Nandlal, he states that he was the maternal grandfather of *shahnāī* player Anant Lal, who was born in 1927. Flora writes that Nandlal studied vocal music from his father, then from Chote Khan, and then learned *khyāl* and *ṭhumrī* from Hussain Khan and *dhrupad* from Harinarayan Mukherjee and Sri Panubabu (69). Anant Lal carried on the tradition of playing *shahnāī*, and the publicity for a set of *shahnāī* duets with his son (Daya Shankar) claims that the lineage of *shahnāī* playing in his family goes back over 250 years.[9] According to N. Banerjee of Hindustan Records, who made a recording of Nandlal in 1935 (Flora 1995, 70), his style was *dhrupad*-based.

Anant Lal also pursued a *gāyaki* approach on the *shahnāī*, and studied with a *ṭhumrī*, *dhrupad*, *dhamar*, and *khyāl* singer named Mahadev Prasad Mishra. Like Ghosh, he used *ati vilambit tāls* for his *barā khyāl* development in the manner of the Kirana *gharānā* (e.g. his use of *ati vilambit Ektāl* in his recording of *Pūriyā Kalyān* on the *Melody for Harmony* (n.d.)). Given that Ghosh was firmly established as a Hindustani classical performer by the time Anant Lal would have been developing his style, it seems reasonable that Ghosh could have been one of his

[9] See http://mumpress.com/p_l75-82.html (accessed September 12, 2010).

models. Regardless, the correlation between their styles and their backgrounds is probably not coincidental. Both are Hindu, trained in *dhrupad*, and sought greater recognition in Hindustani classical music for an instrument with many voice-like qualities. The use of *ati vilambit tāls* provided them with a structure on which they could patiently develop *dhrupad*-derived *ālāp*.

The Sārangī

Due to the *sārangī*'s long-time role accompanying vocalists, one might think that the adoption of the *sārangī* as a solo Hindustani classical instrument would have happened very naturally. There were long-established *gharānās* of the instrument, the instrument was fully capable of emulating virtually every nuance (besides words) of the voice, and it seemed to have been well situated within the courts. Indeed, in the hands of Haider Baksh in the first half of the nineteenth century the *sārangī* received a fair amount of (grudging) respect (Bor 1986–87, 121–122). Prominent accompanists acquired immense knowledge of vocal styles as a result of performing with the great masters. But the *sārangī* never managed to shake off its association with the singing and dancing of courtesans, whose status declined precipitously from the mid-1900s. According to Qureshi (1997, 6), "the story that dominates the *sārangī* happens at the side of the 'nautch girl,' in the hands of her teacher/accompanist/manager who supports her amorous song melody as well as her dazzling *kathak* footwork. Hence, the *sārangī* is inexorably linked to the licentious and immoral social space where a woman offers her art and, by implication, herself."

Overcoming the negative image of the *sārangī* has thus been the principal challenge in bringing wider acceptance to the *sārangī* in Hindustani classical music. The instrument, stylistic traditions, and association with the music of the courts were all firmly established well before the

twentieth century. And as Qureshi observes, "the *sārangī* is also linked to music as feudal entertainment, as an artful language used to express and cultivate emotion, rasa." The ingredients for a successful Hindustani classical *sārangī* style have long been in place; the positive associations, however, have been largely overshadowed by the negative ones.

Bundu Khan

The *sārangī* gained some recognition as a solo instrument through the efforts of Bundu Khan (1880–1955), who managed to make some headway in the performance of solo *sārangī* in the early twentieth century. Bor (1986–87, 130) writes that although Bundu Khan's uncle and teacher Mamman Khan "paved the way for the *sārangī* to be accepted as a solo instrument… [and] was perhaps the first artist to play *khayal* or *gayaki ang* on the *sārangī*… [Bundu Khan] finally raised the status of the *sārangī* to a solo instrument." Bor claims that Bundu Khan should be regarded as one of the greatest musicians of this [twentieth] century. Ghosh's nephew, *sārangī* player Dhruba Ghosh, states that he was "one of the giants…[who] took a very big leap ahead" (Qureshi 2007, 145). Despite the enormity of his contribution, however, it seems that the status of the *sārangī* continued to suffer from its negative connotations, perhaps because he was still living in an environment supported by the patronage of the courts rather than of the middle class. According to Qureshi (146), he was working under the patronage of the Maharaja of Gwalior. The transition of the *sārangī* from the courts to middle-class patronage was to come later, most prominently with Ram Narayan (discussed below). It is interesting to note, though, that even in 1997, Qureshi could refer to the *sārangī* as "the only classical instrument which remains entirely in the hands of hereditary professional musicians" (1).

In a sense, the problem of gaining acceptance for the *sārangī* as a solo Hindustani classical instrument was the opposite of the problem of achieving the same end for the *bānsurī*. While the *sārangī* was held in disrepute through its association with courtesans, the *bānsurī* was revered for its association with Krishna. On the other hand, while the *sārangī* had a long established tradition of emulating vocal music, the *bānsurī* apparently had no established tradition for Hindustani classical performance. From a purely musical perspective, the *sārangī* might have seemed to provide a likely model for Ghosh in his quest for a style appropriate for *bānsurī*. In a sense it did, indirectly, as the Kirana vocal *gharānā* arose out of a *sārangī* lineage. Given the fact that *sārangī* styles were so strongly derived from vocal styles, it is not surprising that Ghosh chose to look to a *gayaki* source. Bundu Khan, however, had incorporated elements of *tantrakari* into his solo *sārangī* style as Ghosh did later. Bor (1986–87, 133) notes that Azim Baksh and Mamman Khan had adopted elements of *bīn* and *sitār* playing, and that "Bundu Khan's music, particularly his *jhālā*, was also influenced by these instruments." Ghosh would almost certainly have been familiar with Bundu Khan's music, and perhaps the *sārangī* player's approach helped to inspire him in his blending of vocal and plucked-string instrument approaches.

Ram Narayan

Ram Narayan is widely credited with bringing greater recognition to the *sārangī* as a solo Hindustani classical instrument. Given its previous history, it seems safe to say that Narayan's accomplishment was not at the same level as that of Ghosh, since he did not have to start from scratch as Ghosh did with the *bānsurī*. His achievements also came somewhat later than those of Ghosh, as he was born in 1927, about sixteen years his junior. Nonetheless, his contribution remains important. Bor (1986–87, 148) asserts, "in his hands, the *sārangī* has become a truly

emancipated solo instrument, released from its confined environment…. [It was Ram Narayan] who made the *sārangī* known to the world at large."

Like Ghosh, Narayan takes a very vocal approach to his instrument. This is certainly not surprising given the *sārangī's* history in vocal accompaniment. He states that he worked as an accompanist for A.I.R. in Lahore from 1944, and in that capacity he had to understand different styles, schools, and approaches (pers. comm.). It was not until 1956 that he became a solo concert artist, and sometime later he gave up accompaniment altogether (Sorrell 1980, 110). He first met Ghosh while recording music for the 1951 film *Malhar*, and often visited Ghosh at his home in Malad. He says that he and Ghosh shared a common goal of making their respective instruments appreciated as solo instruments on the Hindustani classical stage.

Despite the vocal character of his playing, Narayan has typically employed a broad formal scheme that closely resembles a *sitār* or *sarod* approach. After an initial, sometimes fairly extended (around ten minutes) *ālāp*, he generally plays a composition in *vilambit* or *madhya lay tīntāl* over which he develops *vistār* and *ālāp*. Narayan's (1991) performance of *rāg Mārwā* is representative of his approach. The *barā khyāl* composition that he performs here is structured like a Masītkhānī *gat* in that the *mukhra* begins on *matra* 12 of the cycle, and the first three beats of the cycle following the *mukhra* consist of a single note repeated on *matras* 1, 2, and 3. He retains a vocal character by avoiding the percussive feeling of the string-instrument *bols* that normally help define a Masītkhānī *gat*. The sectional proportions of the performance are shown in Table 3. This contrasts with Ghosh, who performed his *ālāp*-style *barhat* over much slower *ati vilambit tāls* with long cycles that allowed for full development of *ālāp* phrases. Ram Narayan does not seem to have regularly employed a formal approach to *joṛ*- or *jhālā*-style development in the *bandish* portion of his performances, though a few of his recordings (e.g. his 1989 Puriyā

Table 3. Proportions of sections of Ram Narayan's *Rāg Mārwā* performance.

Ālāp	10:45	36%
Vilambit tīntāl composition and slow *vistār*	8:10	27%
Fast *tāns* over *vilambit tīntāl*	7:10	24%
Drut Ektāl composition and fast *tāns*	3:40	12%

Kalyān) feature "*ālāp-joṛ-jhālā*" before the *bandish*. Neil Sorrell (1980, 160), however, states that "Ram Narayan does not play *jhālā*; his earlier experiments, some of them incorporating ideas from Bundu Khan's *jhālā*, have been abandoned since he believes that the *sārangī* is not a suitable instrument for this kind of music." Sorrell suggests that when he did play "*jhālā*," Narayan's lines were perhaps closer to *tāns* than to *jhālā*. Thus, it is apparent that Narayan, like Ghosh, made a conscious decision to orient his style specifically to his instrument rather than following any single traditional model.

Other Musicians

While the use of *ati vilambit tāls* became quite popular among vocalists of the next generation and up to the present day, few instrumentalists have adopted this model. *Santūr* pioneer Shiv Kumar Sharma (b. 1938) uses a variety of *tāls* in various *lay*, as does the noted *bānsurī* player Hariprasad Chaurasia (b. 1938), but neither is known for performing in *ati vilambit tāls*.[10] As is appropriate to their instruments, Sharma inevitably takes a more percussive

[10] While it is not his usual mode of performance, Chaurasia has performed *barā khyāl* with *ati vilambit tāls* on occasion. Catherine Potter (1993, 74) refers to Chaurasia (1986), a recording in which Chaurasia presents *rāg* Yaman with *rāg* development over an *ati vilambit Ektāl* composition. Potter points out that Patrick Moutal's liner

approach in his playing, whereas Chaurasia's style is more vocal. Chaurasia tends to make more extensive use of tonguing than did Ghosh, probably emulating a plucked-string instrument model.[11] Anant Lal, *sarāngi* player Sultan Khan (b. 1940), as well as *bānsurī* players inspired by Ghosh such as Vijay Ragav Rao, G. S. Sachdev, and Nityanand Haldipur are among the few instrumentalists who commonly use *ati vilambit tāls*.

CONCLUSION

From this relatively small sample of Ghosh's work, one can begin to comprehend the process by which he created an original style for the *bānsurī* that situated his playing within the context of some of the most highly respected music of his time. He drew from instrumental and vocal models of both *dhrupad* and *khyāl* to develop an innovative stylistic synthesis that emphasized the strengths of the *bānsurī*. Among his many contributions to Hindustani classical *bānsurī* playing, Ghosh redesigned the *bānsurī* to better execute the requirements of Hindustani classical music. He trained himself through intensive practice to have complete facility on the instrument, spent his lifetime seeking deeper knowledge of music, and contemplated for many years what would be the best musical structure in which to present his instrument in a manner suited to his temperament. His performance style was an important component in the innovation required to bring the *bānsurī* to the foreground in North India's classical music.

notes indicate that this was not his usual practice, and that Moutal specifically requested Chaurasia to play in *khyāl* style (82).

[11] Potter (1993, 50) writes about Chaurasia: "While he adheres to an instrumental approach to raga presentation, he maintains that he has come closer to the vocal *dhrupad* than have the stringed instrumentalists of his *gharānā* due to the idiomatic characteristics of the *bānsurī*."

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