

THE RECORD NEWS

THE JOURNAL OF
THE SOCIETY OF INDIAN RECORD COLLECTORS

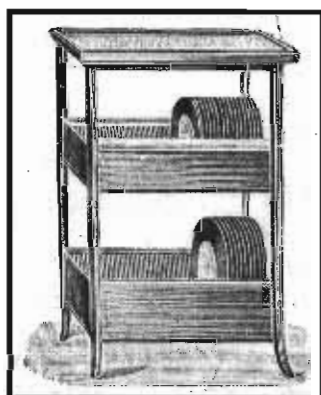
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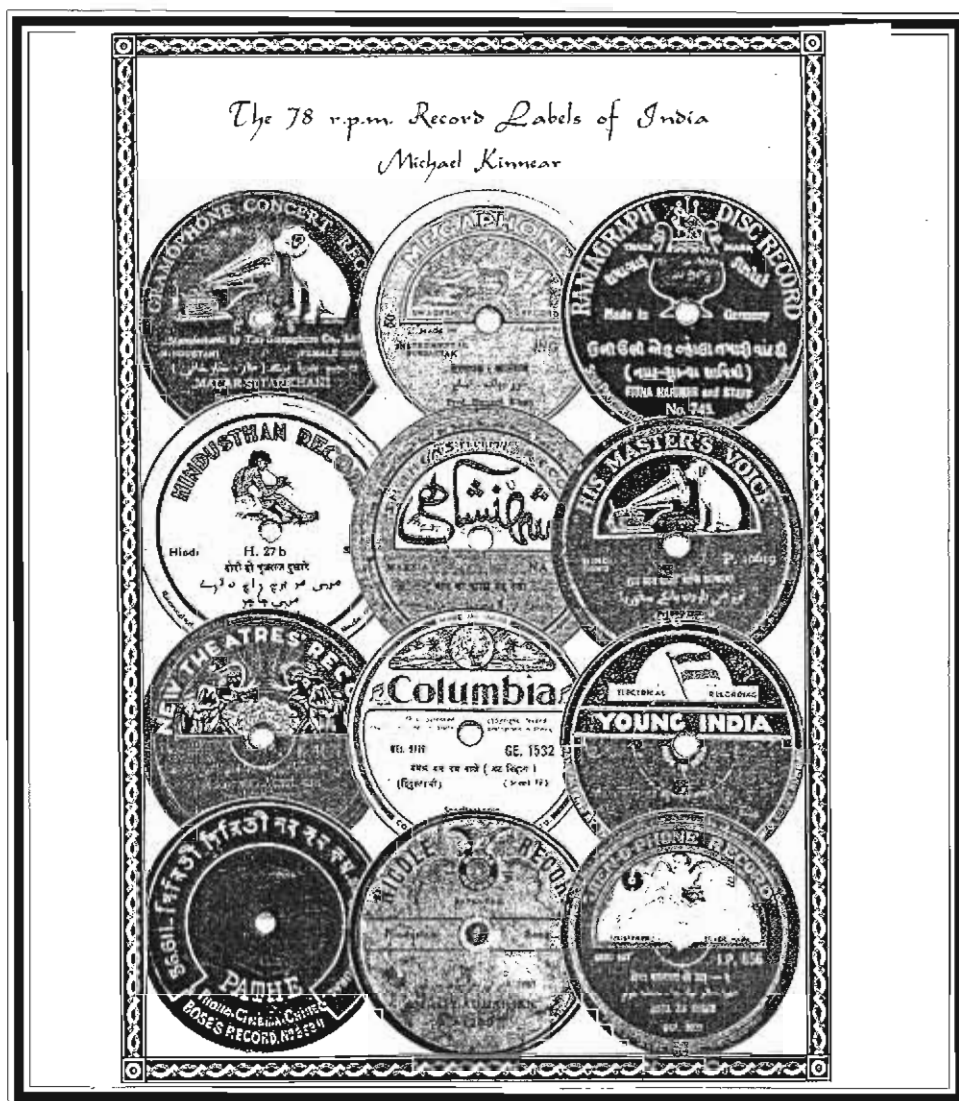
TRN 2003



S.I.R.C.

{Branches}

- MUMBAI
- PUNE
- Amravati
- NANDED
- SOLAPUR
- TULJAPUR
- BARODA
- CALCUTTA



Discography

ROTATING DISCS

The Society of Indian Record Collectors

110 Parashara T.I.F.R. Housing Colony Homi Bhaba Road, Navy Nagar Mumbai, India, 400 005

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From the Editor -

I am pleased to present this belated annual issue – 'TRN-2003' to all the members, well wishers and friends of 'Society of Indian Record Collectors' [SIRC]. Amravati (in Maharashtra State) chapter of SIRC has been added this year. Record collectors at small and remote places are doing very well.

With the advent of technology, it has become simpler to store large amount of data in compact size media like CD's and MP3 discs. As a result, there is a danger of an end to the records format. SIRC members therefore have the responsibility to store and preserve the original records for posterity. These will also be useful for the forthcoming technological developments, as the original formats are always required.

In pace with modern time, I have tried to make an electronic version of TRN-2003 and it will be soon sent to our members to get the feedback. Any suggestions, comments and help in this regard are most welcome.

- Suresh Chandvankar
- Editor

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Front page picture: Photocopy of the cover of Michael Kinnear's book:
'An encyclopaedia of 78 rpm record labels of India'

SIRC NEWS FROM MUMBAI

1] November 2002 – A radio program: 'My name is Gauhar Jan' was broadcast from AIR Bombay to celebrate 100 years of her records. Suresh Chandvankar wrote the script (in Marathi). CD of the program is available with me.

2] February/March 2003 – We participated in a cultural event "Alamkara" organized by Mr. Siddhartha Kak of 'Surbhi' group. This four-day festival had number of exhibits on variety of subjects. SIRC put up an exhibition displaying over 1000 gramophone records, record sleeves and gramophone machines. The response was tremendous.

3] December 2003 – Records and gramophones exhibits were displayed in the "Mood Indigo" of I.I.T. Bombay (Powai) premises. Students and visitors visited in large numbers and liked our efforts.

4] April 2004 – To celebrate birth centenary of K. L. Saigal an illustrative talk by Dr. Ashok Ranjane was organized jointly by SIRC and P. L. Deshpande Kala Academy. Over 300 persons attended the lecture. One-hour radio program was broadcast on April 11 (on AIR Mumbai) and Suresh Chandvankar wrote the script (in Marathi). Other SIRC units also presented programs on Saigal's records.

- Suresh Chandvankar

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The Rotating Discs

A set of articles written in Marathi by Suresh Chandvankar, for 'RangTarang' supplement of Marathi daily newspaper Loksatta in 2001.

Translated in English by Dr. G. B. Nadkarni, life member, SIRC, Mumbai
This series of articles appeared in 'Screen' weekly of express group in Bombay during April 2003 – June 2004.

1

The rotating/moving discs

The art of preserving sound is now over 125 years old and the first Indian voice was recorded at London in 1899. First record was cut at Calcutta in October/November 1902. One hundred years is but a small segment in the vast time frame. However, this has given rise to a 'New World' of sound. A disc rotating around a vertical axis called a record, plate or a gramophone record has now taken a modern garb of a compact disc (CD) towards the end of the twentieth century. Music lovers from various countries all over the world, researchers, music professionals and many others literally grabbed the vast treasures of musical sound and these are engraved in the 'grooves' of records. Millions of persons are connected with this medium in one way or the other.

In this series of articles, it is intended to browse through this expansive world of records. Several ways, directions and landmarks are in sight. To mention a few, it would be interesting to have a fresh look at the invention and history, the art of sound recording, the success and failure stories, the number of sound recording companies in India and their outputs, the experiences of record collectors and their organizations, their attempts to collect and preserve records for posterity, future of these invaluable collections and so on.

Cinematography, particularly "talkie", is comparatively a much younger art. Today, Indian music is essentially identified with film songs. The success of a film largely depends on the songs and the music it contains. This is true not only for Hindi films but also for regional films. These songs have reached our homes through records or the radio in which these records are played. The technology of recording from the days of silent movies to the present day talkie films has undergone a sea change. It is intended to touch upon some of these aspects of improved recording techniques.

The world of recording is so vast, yet no scientific study has been conducted, nor the precise historic account is available. Of course, there have been some sporadic attempts from which inferences have been drawn. It is difficult to ascertain the number of silent films and talkies produced in last 100 years. Hindi

talkies could be roughly estimated to be around 10,000. The films in regional languages could be approximately in the ratio 1:3. Among these, the films in four South Indian languages viz. Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam have been in maximum number say around 15,000. Thus the films in all Indian languages put together can be estimated to be around 30-35,000. If we assume an average of 8 songs per film, then the total number of film songs in last 70 years is around 3 lakh. Most of these have been recorded in the form of either 78 rpm records or on EP/LP, audio and videocassettes and now on Compact Discs. This process will continue in future as the new films are produced. In addition to film songs, devotional music, light and pure classical music [both vocal and instrumental. North and South Indian], folk music has been recorded. So, if all these forms are included, then the total number of songs recorded in last 100 and odd years adds to about half million. [5 lakh]. This vast domain includes variety of recording companies, composers and artists, recording engineers/experts and technicians, distributors and consumers etc. It is indeed a stupendous to cover the entire field.

2

The art of storing sound

In 19th century, several attempts were made in Europe and in U.S.A. to arrest, store and preserve the sound and also moving images/pictures. However, the success started coming in towards last quarter of that century. The credit of discoveries and inventions obviously goes to Mr. Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931), although several others have also contributed substantially around same time. In 1877, he was successful in recording the famous Nursery Rhyme, 'Mary had a little lamb' in his own voice onto a hollow tin cylinder. Later in 1893, he developed a 'Kinetoscope' which was a primitive version of a cine-projector attached to a phonograph. He thus showed the feasibility of a 'talkie' though lasting for one minute only. He did not realize the importance of these inventions then and had shelved the further work in this area. He turned his attention to other discoveries. However he predicted, "these gadgets will be useful to experience the events of the past".

Several other individuals worked towards bringing Edison's discovery to perfection. Emilie Berliner (1851-1929), a German settled down in the U.S.A. tinkered with the sound machine in his spare time and replaced the cylinder with a flat disc for recording sound. Because of his success in this endeavor, he chose it to be his main activity in later years around 1888. Within the next decade, realizing the potentials of this technology and observing the responses in the flourishing American industry, he sent his agent William Barry Owen and the recording expert Mr. Frederick William Gaisberg to London. He also sent his brother Joseph Berliner to Hanover in Germany to establish a record pressing factory.

Around 1895, two years after the invention of 'moving pictures', Lumiere brothers in France started a world wide campaign to exhibit their silent movies. They even visited Bombay with their shows on the terrace of the 'Watson Hotel', a building still standing proudly near Kala Ghoda complex in South Bombay. All these developments made Edison wake up. He started the production of phonographs, records and cine-projectors. He was not only involved with the manufacture but also in distribution / sales, patents and had to face conflicts and litigation with the competitors. He advertised that to avoid purchase of duplicate fake products, the customers should buy only products bearing his signature. However until his death in 1931 (i.e. the beginning of talkie films in India), he disliked and discouraged the format of flat discs and advocated the cylinder recordings strongly. He manufactured cylinders that could play 1.5 to 4 minutes. He did not want these to be used for entertainment but only to be used by the steno-typists for taking down dictations in offices as 'dictaphones'.

3

Recording expeditions

Although Edison never wanted to use his invention for entertainment, there was something totally different in store forming a base for a multimillionaire industry in sound recording and reproduction. In year 1898, Gramophone Company was established in Cecil Hotel in London. Gramophones were assembled in England from the spare parts imported from USA, but the recordings were made wherever the artists and agents were located. The records meant for sale were pressed at Hanover in Germany. In 1899, voices of some Indians who were residing in England at that time were recorded. These included Mr. Ahmed, Dr. Harnaamdass, Captain Bholanath and Mr. Hazrat. Forty-three, 7" diameter single sided records were produced and contained songs from Ramayan, Aayats from Quran, Ghalib's lyrics, Guru Nanak's Shabds etc. Unfortunately, none of these records are available today, except the catalogues mentioning them.

Realizing the scope of this industry in the East, particularly in Asia, Russia and in Africa, the Gramophone Company established their office at Calcutta in 1901. By this time, Edison and Pathe Company cylinder machines had already made their way into the houses of well-to-do elite in Calcutta. Within the next year or so, recording experts under the leadership of Mr. F. W. Gaisberg arrived in India on their recording expeditions.

After the first successful campaign / expedition of recordings in 1902, the Gramophone Company undertook two more expeditions within next six years and recorded over 10,000 songs until about 1908. The first recording expedition was mainly restricted to Calcutta, whereas subsequent ones included other cities like Allahabad, Lucknow, Delhi, Bombay, Hyderabad and Madras. Songs recorded were in various languages. In addition to theater music, other light classical varieties were also recorded. In addition, records of instrumental music

were also produced. The instruments recorded were Sarod, Sitar, Esraj, Sarangi, Shehanai, Been, Flute, Pungi, and orchestral ensembles. Initially the disc diameter was just 7" giving a limited recording time of about 90 seconds. This was slowly changed to 10 and 12" sizes thereby increasing play-time to 3 and 5 minutes respectively. Technology was developed to record songs on both sides, rather than on single side. The speed at which the discs rotated varied between 75 to 100 revolutions per minute (rpm). In the beginning, gramophone company had Lambert Typewrites as a side line and hence early record labels had a picture of a recording angel below which following matter was printed – "Manufactured by The Gramophone and Typewriter Company Ltd. and Sister Companies." (G & T label). Soon, the sale of the gramophone records was far more than the typewriters and company closed down their typewriter business. HMV label of dog listening to His Master's Voice came much later in 1916. Material used for pressing the records was shellac, which is a mixture of lac mixed with slate dust. The production of the lac is maximum even today in Bihar and Bengal and was a major export item to USA and Europe. Due to the abundance of lac in nearby states, Gramophone Company decided to build a record pressing factory at Sealdah near Calcutta. In 1908, this factory was inaugurated by Fred Gaisberg who had led the first recording expedition in 1902. Although the head office was located at Calcutta, soon recording studios were established in Madras and in Bombay. The master wax copies of the records were sent to head office for further processing. A strong network of agents, dealers, shops and distributors spread throughout India contributed to company's success tremendously. Even before film music hitting the market, the scope and the activities of the Gramophone Company had expanded considerably. As a result, in 1928, another factory was built at Dum Dum near the airport, where HMV is still continuing their activities. The present Sealdah railway station is built very close to first factory of the Gramophone Company.

4

Gramophone Celebrity

In 1903, Mr. Thomas Addis, Calcutta agent of the Gramophone Company wrote to the head office in London, "Our stocks of Bengali records are insufficient. The public eagerly awaits the arrival of new records and they do not trust our assurances. Last week, three hundred records of Mr. Lal Chand Boral were sold out within half an hour after the shop was opened, completely depleting our stocks. In India within 300 miles, there are changes in the dialect, language, province and culture. Therefore there is an unlimited scope for this industry. The population of this country is over 30 crores with about 150 spoken languages".

The company took note of these remarks for planning the recording sessions and organized them with number of records per language as – Bengali (300), Hindustani (500), Gujrathi (300), Marathi (150), Tamil (300), Telugu (250), Kannada (200), Sinhali, Bhutani, Nepali & Tibeti (150 each), Sanskrit and rsian

(120 each), Baluchi (60). This helped in spreading the business and reputation of the company across the sub-continent.

Over 500 artists were recorded during first decade and Michael Kinnear, an Australian discographer has given complete account in his two books titled – 'The Gramophone Company's first Indian recordings (1899-1908), Popular Books, Bombay (1994), and The Gramophone Company's *Indian* recordings 1908 to 10, Bajakhana Publications, Australia. Some of the artists that recorded prolifically are – Miss Gauhar Jan of Calcutta, Malka Jan of Agra, Peara Saheb, Jankibai of Allahabad alias Chhappan Churiwali, Moujuddin Khan, Lal Chand Boral, and Zohrabai Agrewali. They presented a role model to several other Gramophone Singers in recording songs for one minute to three minutes.

Most of the stalwart musicians of that time simply refused to record. They thought that arresting their voice in records could adversely affect the attendance to their concerts. Hence we do not have recorded voice of Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, Bhaskarboa Bakhale, Balkrishnaboa Ichalkaranjkar, Alladiya Khan and many others, but have only stories. However there were few exceptions. Prof. Abdul Karim Khan recorded over 25 songs in 1905 (these were reissued again in 1994 under 'Chairman's Choice'). He recorded classical ragas for 60-90 and 150 seconds only, yet giving full justice to the compositions. Inayat Khan R. Pathan (1882-1927), great Sufi Saint and a musician recorded 30 songs in 1910 [reissued in 1994 on two CD set]. Barkatullah Khan recorded a sitar record and these are the collector's items now!

Apart from these exceptions, most of the recordings belong to Baijis and Kothewali genre. In Bombay too several Goan lady singers like Miss Kashi Karwarkarin, Ganga Malpekarin, Chanda Karwarkarin, Neerabai Bhandodkarin recorded songs. However, undoubtedly the true representative of the era was Miss Gauharjan of Calcutta (1870-1930). She recorded over 600 songs in 20 Indian languages and made an announcement at the end of the record in a melodious voice – "My name is Gauhar Jan". This was for the convenience of the technicians at Hanover in Germany who would make correct record label after listening to the announcement. These records were popular throughout India and several Marathi drama songs were based on her recorded songs. She spent most of her life at Calcutta and Bombay and died in 1930 while in the services of Maharaja of Mysore State. She was a 'Gramophone Celebrity' and company had issued her photograph standing near gramophone as a publicity material. Fortunately, some of her records are available with collectors.

5

Indian businessmen in sound recording - I

The person who first thought and planned record making in India, considering its importance, was a son of Bengal, H. Bose, the full name was Hemendra Mohan

Bose. He was so popular in his multiple business interests as described in one of his product advertisements,

‘Use Kuntaline in hair, Dilkush in kerchief fair
Take Tambulin in paan, Long live H. Bose, the man’

This is Professor H. Bose. He was a famous perfumer. He was wealthy with lot of varied interest and had fair goodwill in the society. He was closely associated with the great poet and society leader Rabindranath Tagore. Only such man of taste will start a factory for the production of records! He managed to get model C 116 phonograph machine directly from Edison and started the H. Bose records. Only the other day, the house at 61 Bow Bazaar, which was a rented show room, had the inscription at the gate “Bose Records”. Today, a metro railway station stands on this place.

The phonograph machine of H. Bose which recorded several pieces of Rabindranath Tagore, is now lost to history along with the songs. March 1906 catalogue of H. Bose records, published by The Talking Machine Hall, lists a large number of songs sung by Rabindranath Tagore. In addition, some songs were taken in cylinders. Before these could be marketed, the police under British administration ransacked the house of Hemendra Bose at Shibnarayan Das lane.

During those days of partition of Bengal, movement for freedom struggle, the British lion felt defeated. In the arrogance of power many invaluable wax records were destroyed. Along with it was lost the unknown chapters of Bengali culture. In 1898, the 37 years old Rabindranath recorded cylinders of song ‘Bande Mataram’ with his own tune and recitation of poems from Sonar Tari (Golden boat). Later H. Bose converted these into disc form in collaboration with French Pathephone Record Mfg. Company and sold these discs in the market. Double sided 11” diameter records were sold for Rs. three a piece. H. Bose made a business contract with Pathe. His cylinder records were sent to France for printing in disc form. Initially discs used to play only one side, but later both sides recordings were available for playing. These were playing at 100 rpm and always center start, playing from inside out.

The Pathe records catalogue published around 1908 had the following information- “ Pathephone – Pathe double sided Bengali record of songs sung by distinguished singers – each Rs.3. It is a good fortune for us that we have been able to record the voice of Rabindranath Tagore permanently. Who will not like to hear his voice sitting at home? We have two records for the first time –

33669 Sonar Tari (Golden Boat), 36250 Bande mataram

* Life elevating lyric from Bankimchandra Chatterjee, the glory of Bengal. In addition Rabibabu is the singer.

But everything turned topsy-turvy after 1908. Hemenbabu had sent a large number of records to France for pressing. These were about 40 recordings of Rabindranath. All of a sudden, Pathe decided to wind up their business of records and entered into the business of cinema machinery. In this opportune time, the Gramophone Company nicely established their business and thus some invaluable records were lost for ever. Fortunately, 'Bande Mataram' song survived and is available.

6

Indian businessmen in sound recording - II

Mr. Valabhdas Runchordas (1875-1945) was born in Ahmedabad and by 1898 he went into a partnership with Laxmidas Rowjee Tairsee for importing business. By 1902, they had a firm in Fort, Mumbai and imported Edison, Columbia and Pathe Co. phonograph machines along with blank cylinders for recording. Thus they introduced these machines to elite in Bombay along with cycles, soaps, hardware, medicines, cars etc. They renamed their firm to Valabhdas, Laxmidas & Co. Bombay to include both partners, and produced fine records until about 1915, when Valabhdas broke away and moved his machinery to Mahim. Valabhdas started his records distribution network under the name – 'Talking Machine & Indian Record Co. Fort-Bombay', with branches opened at Delhi, Calcutta and in Madras. The master copies of the recordings were sent to Germany for pressing. In 1915, the new factory at Mahim started producing records under the name of 'Viel-o-phone' and later on 'Phon-o-phone' labels. They recorded Mr. Himat, Balgandharva, Master Mohan, Sorabji R. Dhondi, Miss Malka Jan, Talim Hussein (Shehanai) and even Vialtu (maternal uncle and guru of Shehanai Nawaz Bismillah Khan) & Sadik Ali. Unfortunately very few records have survived for research and for posterity. Valabhdas Runchordas was a very famous personality and the square opposite J. J. School of Arts was named after him until recently.

Another German Company made entry with 'Odeon' labels and closed down after few years of brisk business, only to return again during 1930-40. In 1904, British experts had initiated sales of 'Nicole' records made on one side of brown cardboards. In Kalbadevi area, 'Singer' and 'James Opera' records were made in a small room using a hand press. There were other players too in Bombay market. Thus, Mr. F. B. Thanawala produced 'Sun Disc' records using British technology. Mr. T. S. Ramchunder and brothers made 'Ram-O-Phone' records again with German collaboration and gave a tough competition to the Gramophone Company until about 1940, operating from Kalbadevi area. However the Gramophone Company filed a suit against them claiming that their trade name viz. 'Ram-O-Phone' resembles to already registered Gram-O-Phone. As a result, Ramchunder renamed his record labels to Ram-A-Graph, later established as Ramagraph records. They too produced fine records from the stage artists of early Gujrathi and Urdu theatre, and the records were quite popular.

Kalbadevi was the center of record manufacture, sales and distribution until about 1930. 'Dadaphone talking Machines Co.' was established in 1881 and are still in the business with the board proudly displayed outside their shop even today. Heirs of Mr. T. S. Ramchunder have a shop of music instruments on same Kalbadevi road named Ramchunder & Co. Just around the same corner lived Prof. Abdul Karim Khan in the then famous Popatwadi. The square opposite Parsi Agyari on the Metro-Girgaon road is named after Abdul karim Khan and has a stone plate on the corner.

In Calcutta, along with H. Bose, Mukherjee & Mukherji company advertised indigenous records titled 'Kamala', 'Binapani' and 'Royal' records, but none of the examples / records of these 'Swadeshi' records have been located so far. Thus, by 1910-12, about one dozen record companies were operating in India, making recordings on wax masters, sending these to Germany for pressing and bringing back the copies for sale through India. The prices were quite high – Rs. 4-5 per record, and the machines were available from Rs. 60-150, with a box of needles and handful of records as an incentive. Due to heavy competition, some of these companies began to sell their records at almost half the price than the records of the Gramophone Company. As mentioned earlier, Gramophone Company began record pressing at Calcutta and came out with a cheaper record for just Rs. 2/- only under Zonophone label. Thus, they were successful in slowly eliminating some of the competition in the market and soon had a monopoly. Ramagraph, Singer and Sun disc records survived for some more time and gave a real tough competition until about 1930-35. What was really recorded by so many record Companies ?

7

Early recordings - Calcutta

Although Miss Gauhar Jan and others were 'Gramophone Celebrities', this 'Tawaif' or 'Nautch' Girl type dance music had no appeal or acceptance to large section of the society. Even to see a silent film was not widely accepted. Slowly there was a change in the attitudes and this was brought about by the theater plays containing social and mythological plots. With the songs and the music, this form was accepted as a family entertainment. Various drama troupes presenting plays in Bengali, Gujrathi, Parsi, Urdu, Hindi and Marathi were responsible for this change. No wonder then that the Gramophone Companies jumped in recording dialogues, songs and orchestral pieces from popular plays.

In fact very first 7" records no. E 1001 / 1002 are sung by Miss Soshi Mukhai and Fani Bala of Classic theater founded by Mr. Amrendranath Dutt (1876-1916). He had a band associated with his drama company and some 25 compositions of band music were also recorded. He then founded Minerva, Star, Kohinoor theaters and staged number of plays. Some of the well known plays were – Khun-e-nahak, Phisana Ajayab, Dil Pharosh, Alibaba, Aladin, Bhakata Vitthal,

Sonar Swapana, Bilwa Mangal, Nand Bidai, Pandavir Adnyatvasa, Hiral Phool, Pramod Ranjan, Chandraval etc. The stage artists who recorded are – Hari Moti, Susheela, Miss Acheriya, Babu Hiralal, Chattopadhyay, Atindranath Chatopadhyay, Mr. Pistanji, Miss Subhashi, Mr. N. C. Bose, nanilal banerjee, Miss Kiron, Miss Bhuvaneshwari and many others. Some of the records in A. N. Dutt's voice are lost to history.

Jamshedji Framji Madan (1857-1923) was a businessman from Bombay but was best known for his chain of Madan Theaters and cinema halls in India and upto Burma. He founded Correnthian drama company and staged number of plays in Hindi Gujrathi and Urdu. Some of the best known plays were – Indrasabha, Vikram Charitra, Bhul Bhulaiyya, Harishchandra, Dil Pharosh (adaptation of Merchant of Venice), Shakuntala, Khuda Dost and the artists that made records were – Miss Mohataal, Master Chhagan, Shankar , Narayan, Niren, Miss Gafroon, Miss Nooriya, Miss Arasiwala, Mr. Bholaji, Mr. Naroji, Mr. Jamboola, Mr. Pestanji.

Like Hiralal Sen and A. N. Dutt, Mr. Madan also realised the potential of cinema and gramophone machines. He acquired agency for 'Pathe' cine machines and made silent movies of some scenes from his popular plays. Thus his plays from Correnthian theater were recorded on film strips and songs and dialogues on gramophone records. In 1907, he constructed Elphinston picture palace at Choranglee in Calcutta and the name was derived from the famous Bombay based drama company where he began his career in 1870. He died in 1923 but his business continued further and strengthened further by his five sons.

Around the same time lots of activities on Parsi, Gujrathi, Hindi and Marathi stage were taking place in Bombay and competing gramophone companies were watching them very closely in view of their market interests.

8

Early recordings - Bombay

Parsi theater – In 1853, first Bombay – Thane railway was introduced and around same time few drama theaters were constructed in Grant Road area. Built around 1760, 'Bombay Amateur's Theater' was the one hundred years old theater near Horniman Circle, and staged mainly English plays for Europeans. Dr. Bhau Daji Lad, Framji Kavasji and Jagannath Shankar Shet used to attend plays. They took initiative and built 'Royal Theater' at Girgaon in 1846. This theater was also known as 'Badshahi Theater' or 'Shankar Shetki Juni Natyashala'. This theater staged English plays in the beginning but as the population of Hindu and Parsi community grew, plays in other languages were needed. In 1853, 'Raja Gopichand' and 'Jaldhar' were staged and these were the translations of Marathi plays of Mr. Vishnudas Bhawe who wrote and presented

first Marathi drama in 1843. Soon Royal theater began to stage plays in Marathi, Gujrathi, Sanskrit, English and Urdu.

Soon students of Bombay University and Elphinston College founded 'Parsi Elphinston Dramatic Society' and they began to stage Parsi drama. In 1871, under the able leadership of Mr. Kavasji Palanji Khatau, 'Alfred Theater' was founded. He was from a poor Parsi family and lived in Sankari Lane opposite Dukkan Bazaar near Dhobi Talao. Mr. Amrutlal Keshav Nayak was the Director of this company and they staged number of plays including – Murad, Gorakh Dhand, Mahabharat, Asir-e-Hirs, Abhimanyu, Chandraval, Raja Harishchandra etc. This company witnessed many ups and downs, changed their ownership with Nanabhai Rustomji Rana, Mohammad Ibrahim, Manekji Master and again returned to Mr. Khatau. He renamed it to 'New Alfred Natak Mandali' and produced several plays. After his death, his son Jehangir took over and the company was operative until about 1931. Several other Parsi drama companies were also established and all of them were doing very well and toured in North India and beyond up to Rangoon in Burma.

Around 1905, Bombay based record companies like Beka, Sun Disc, James Opera, and Ramograph recorded songs from these plays. Some of the famous actors who recorded are – Mr. Sorabji. R. Dhondi, Master Mohan, Bhagoo, Dayashankar Vasanji, Sorabji Katrak, Ibrahim, Meer Himat Kalu alias Master Himat, Muradali, Phirozshah Mistry. Ladies played female roles in Bengali and Parsi drama from very beginning. Thus, Miss Mary Fanton, Miss Fitna, Mehtaab, Gafooran, Miss Gohar Mamajiwala and Mrs. Deenbai Mistry (wife of Phirozshah Mistry) acted in Parsi plays and they have recorded Parsi stage songs, Social songs, Lagana (marriage) Geete and Sevan Geete that can be listened to even today on old shellac records.

Songs recorded from Parsi theater generally contain light comedy items (depicting the attitude of the community towards social life) although some of the songs are based on Gazal, Dadra, Jhinjhoti, Kalingda, Thumri etc. Sohrab Rustamji Dhondi (seen in the photo above) recorded over 100 songs including sounds of birds and animals, skits like 'Railway station', 'Rang Bhang Ka Lota' and the songs were quite popular among music lovers. His most famous record was – 'Dhuve Ki Gaadi' describing steam engine and railway and the record was reissued until about 1940 and was among the best seller.

9

Gujrathi theater - Bombay

Around 1900, Parsi's were largely involved in drama and theater and hence the Hindi, Gujrathi and Urdu stage activities were known jointly as 'Parsi-Urdu', 'Parsi-Gujrathi' and 'Parsi-Hindi'. Parsi came from Iran and settled in 'Sanjan' near Gujrath and in North Konkan. They took active part in the trade and set up

several industries and mixed with the social life. They learnt and spoke Hindi and Gujarathi very well. Due to this command over languages, they had a long lasting control on stage activities in Bombay.

Gujrathi stage consisted of eminent personalities from Saurashtra, North Gujarath and of course from Bombay. They belonged to variety of religions and groups. Thus, Jayshankar B. Bhojak (Sundari), Amrut Keshav Nayak, Wadilal Shivram Nayak, Master Shanti and Master Trikam came from Bhojak community whereas actor singers Himmat Ram Meer, Kasam Bhai Meer, Lallobhai Meer belonged to Meer community. Among Parsi, Sorabji Kerawala, Sorabji Katrak, Faredoon Irani were very popular. Among Muslims, Master Ashraf Khan (known as Saigal of Gujarathi stage), Master Alladin, Master Kumar acted in Gujarathi plays and Master Chailla, Mohan Marwadi, Master Govardhan belonged to Marwadi community. Among Brahmins, Moolji and Waghji, Asaram Ojha, Manishankar Bhatt, Trimbak Raval, Anandji Pandya (Kabutar) were quite active whereas in later part Master Krishnarao Chonkar and Miss Vijaya Deshmukh (Sandhya) and Saraswati Devi (Vidya Vajpayee) contributed to 'Bhangwadi' theater in Girgaon substantially. Thus, Gujarathi stage was rich with actor singers belonging to almost all sections of the cosmopolitan nature of Bombay City.

Around 1871, Gujarathi drama companies began their activities and continued till 1930 before 'talkie' films took over. These groups also traveled as far as Calcutta and Burma and staged number of popular Gujarathi plays like – Uday Bhan, Vina-Veli, Ashrumati, Sati Draupadi, Sulochana, Swayamvar, Mohini Chandra in which Master Himmat Ram Meer (seen in the photo along with this article) played female roles. His voice was very sweet and he was popularly known as Bal Gandharva of Gujarathi stage. Abdul Karim Khan liked his songs. Considering his popularity, Beka, Zonophone, Ramaphone and Gramophone Company recorded over 50 songs and they were among the best sellers for many years.

Another famous actor-singer playing female roles was Mr. Jayshankar B. Bhojak. He played roles in Barrister, Vikram Charitra, Vasant Prabha, Navalsha Hirji etc. Due to popularity of his role of 'Sundari' in most popular drama, 'Saubhagya Sundari', he was better known as 'Jayshankar Sundari'. In 1910, Ramaphone Company recorded his songs on four records. He was very close to Bal Gandharva and both helped and appreciated each other's plays and exchanged musical ideas. He was quite active until 1961 and like Bal Gandharva (Bal Gandharva Rang Mandir, Pune), after his death, a drama theater was built at Ahemadabad and named after him. Today all these plays, artists and their great contributions to early Gujarathi Theater have become part of history. However, voices of some of them are inscribed in the grooves of old gramophone records and preserved carefully by few record collectors. It is absolutely necessary to acquire these valuable recordings and transfer them into modern CD format since this forms part of our Oral history and a good source for future researchers and academicians.

10

Marathi theater - Bombay

– Although Vishnudas Bhave's first Marathi drama was staged at Sangli in 1843, Annasaheb Kirloskar's 'Sangeet Shakuntal' played at Pune in 1880 is considered to be the beginning of Marathi theater. Then the glorious activities continued till 1930 with a 'golden' period between 1910-1925. Several Marathi plays were more popular for the music and stage songs (Natya Geete) they contained and these songs were based on firm foundation of pure and light classical music. Great pioneers and musicians of high repute who contributed to this music were Balkrishnaboa Ichalkaranjkar, Pandurang Gurav Yewateshwar, Bhaskarboa Bakhale, Govindrao Tembe and Ramkrishnaboa Vaze.

Early Marathi musical plays had large number of songs e.g. 'Shakuntal' had 183 songs whereas 'Veertanay' had 88 songs and the show would go on whole night. Miss Kali Tara of Bombay recorded 'Bahut Chaliyale Natha' song from drama 'Saubhadra'. Miss Kashi Kolwarkar recorded two songs from 'Shakuntal'. Prof. S. S. Manohar recorded 25 songs from Veertanay, Sharada and Shap Sambhram. Nothing much is known about these three artists. In 1907 catalogue of Ramagraph records we find 77 Gujrathi, 124 Parsi-Urdu and 10 Marathi drama songs sung by Mr. Purshottam and one Mr. D. A. Bapat. During 1908-10 some songs in the voice of Mr. Keshav Rao Bhosle and Krishnarao Gore were recorded. Most prolific recordings are found in the voice of Mr. Narayan Shreepad rajhans alias Bal gandharva (1888-1967) – a title conferred by Lokmanya Bal gangadhar Tilak in 1898. He recorded over 400 songs on various labels till about 1935. His first records were made by Beka record manufacturing company of Bombay. Out of 24 Beka records, five are in Gujrathi, and rest nineteen in Marathi. Among Gujrathi songs he has sung Bhairvi, Thumri, and Garba too. In the beginning, record company name is announced, followed by a song with a very feeble drum (tabla) accompaniment and song ends with the announcements like 'Once More' or 'Ramram Mandali'. His records became so popular that some singers not only started imitating him but also began to use his name. Thus, in Bombay Mr. Anant Narayan (A. N.) Barodekar cut 60 drama songs for Sun Disc records with nick name as – 'Balgandharwa' [with changing word 'V' to 'W' in the spelling]. This was indeed a big fraud and papers relating to confession of this act were found in 1994 at EMI archives in London. Out of these 60 songs at least 20 are available with record collectors and they were not willing to accept the voice of Bal gandharva as indicated on the record label. Thus the puzzle was solved almost 90 years after the recordings were issued first in about 1910. This was perhaps the early version of re-mix which is now rampant in the field of music.

Later on, several other great persons on Marathi stage like Master Krishnarao Phulambrikar (Master Krishna), Prof. Vinayakrao Patwardhan, Pune, Mr. Bapurao Pendharkar, Master Deenanath Mangeshkar founded their own drama

companies and staged number of plays on social and mythological themes. They recorded prolifically for number of record companies then operating in Bombay and this continued till 1935-40, producing over 500 records. These records were very popular in record buying public. These were played in homes and at public functions for entertainment. It was quite prestigious to have a cabinet type gramophone and a box full of records that could be played either at home or in public places. Even these were played during the intervals as an advertisement material for the forthcoming plays of the company. Some songs were reissued on audio tapes in 1996, in a four cassette pack titled – 'Shakuntal To Kulvadhu' under the banner of 'Natya Geet Ganga'

Later on all these personalities dabbled with the film industry, produced films during 1935-40 and got their fingers burnt. We can see them acting on film strips and listen to their voice on film sound track and on record. Thus, during 1902-10, Gramophone Company along with the competing companies recorded around 5000 songs, of which about 2000 songs contain music from Bengali, Parsi, Hindi, Gujrathi, Urdu and Marathi stage songs. Along with vocal recordings, the company recorded and issued large number of instrumental recordings too.

11

Wonderful world of instrumental records

Number of instrumental recordings taken in early period is not very large, but they do represent the era of solo and orchestral presentations. As mentioned earlier, Classic and Correnthian Theater at Calcutta had their own concert bands and many records were made using their compositions set for the plays they staged. Several Northern and Southern states had their own bands and the states sponsored the recording tours, hiring services of experts from the Gramophone Company. Thus we have records from Amritsar's Jehangir band, Bhavnagar State band, Surat State band, Jhalavar state band, Razak Surat band, Baba Allaudin's Khan's Maihar State band, Tanjore State band, Mysore State band, Taj Gulshan Pushto band and Regimental band of 17th infantry. They recorded 3 minutes pieces on 78-rpm records.

Next to band, Shehanai has been recorded prolifically and it is listed as bagpipe in old catalogues. Fajulal Pandit, Shaikh Munna, Hyderabad Pipers, Talim Hussain had cut several records of pure and light classical music on Indian bagpipe or Shehanai. Talim Hussain also recorded in the name of 'Ali Bux' who was the maternal uncle (Mamu) and Guru of Bismillah Khan. Shehanai is also called 'Roshan Chowki' and the players were appointed to play at the entrance of temples or at the gates and in the houses of wealthy citizens in North India. Short shehanai is called 'Naffiri' and the accompanying drum instrument is called 'Nakkara'. Some of the record labels mention Naffiri and Nakkara. Al-Javya, Padmabhan and Ramaswami Pillay from South have cut few instrumental records. Heera and Vishnunath record Nagaswaram. Mr. Rahim Baksh from

Panji has recorded Been or Pungi. M. N. Chatterjee of Calcutta has recorded Veena whereas N. M. Chakravarty has played Esraj and Bramharshi T. Appadurai Iyengar has recorded Jaltarang in 1905. Recording experts named Sarod as 'Banjo' and Chhunu Khan and Afdulla Kokubhkhhan have recorded short pieces. Violin players like Muneer Khan, Shashi Bhushan Adhikari and Narayanswami Iyer are listed and several harmonium recordings of Mohammad Hussain, Hashmat Ali, K. Parthasarathi Iyengar, Kishorilal, Mohammad Arif, Mausaram, Mehta Brahma Das, P. S. Ramlu and Saina Ditta were taken.

Gramophone Company's early catalogues mention recordings of Indian guitar and it is also mentioned on record labels. These are actually Sitar recordings. Single record of great maestro Barkatulla Khan contains raga Pilu and Bhoop Kalyan. He used to play quite forcefully and while listening to Bhoop Kalyan side of the record, one can listen slipping of the recording needle. Mehboob and Aga Mehmood Hussain also recorded sitar. Bhavnagar State King invited recording experts to his court to record sitar playing of his daughter Menka Kumari when she was just taking lessons. No wonder then that the rendering was very elementary. However during the services of Mysore State, sponsored records of Ustad Imdad Khan (father of Ustad Enayet Khan and grandfather of Ustad Vilayat Khan) were taken in 1908. These treasured recordings were again reissued by HMV in 1994 under their 'Chairman's Choice' series (CMC 882507-08)

Today these recordings are useful not only as reference source for academicians and researchers but also give an idea of kind of tradition that existed just at the turn of the century in rendering the well known compositions on instruments.

12

Music therapy and records

Manna Dey has sung in one of his songs, "Sangeet Manko Pankh Lagaye, Suronki Rimjhim Rut Barsaye!" Music can not only give solace to mind and soul but can also be used as a therapy and several individuals and institutions all over the world are working very hard to use this therapy. However it is interesting to note one such effort done in the first decade and that too in Bombay! Here is an interesting story of Columbia double disc records made in America in 1910 to heal patients using music therapy. [Ref. – An article: "Columbia Double Disc" – An unusual Indian series: By Mr. Michael kinnear].

Dr. U. L. Desai (born 1869, in Surat, Gujrat) studied abroad in England and in America. He returned after obtaining degrees in medicine and surgery. He practiced in Fort area in Bombay for some time. He had his dispensary 'Medico-Electric' at Fort with branch at Mazgaon and his residence was at Walkeshwar. In 1905, he married to Satyabala Devi (born 1892, in Bihar in a Jamindar family). She had learnt many languages and music and was an expert in playing Vichitra Veena and Violin. Soon after the marriage, the couple shifted to Vallod, a native

place of Dr. Desai and opened a dispensary for poor. In this dispensary, Satyabala Devi also began to experiment upon music therapy. She also offered this therapy to King of Reva State. Due to positive results, Reva Naresh began to believe in this therapy and sponsored a trip of Dr. and Mrs. Desai to United States of America for more experiments and for propagating the therapy.

Satyabala Devi's Veena was believed to be from the court of King Akbar and over 600 years old and produced melodious sound. One of the objectives of the tour was to record her Veena recitals on gramophone records. Desai couple stayed in America for three years during 1910 –13, toured extensively presenting lecture/demonstrations. Satyabala Devi recorded over 50 records of her Veena recital with white/blue color label that shows her photograph (shown above). These records were sold in New York, America in 1910 for \$ 2.5 each. It is not known who marketed these records in India although these are found in flea markets even today. Besides recording in New York, Desai's were constantly engaged in lecture demonstrations of their medical and musical techniques. Europeans, Chinese, and Japanese invited them as well as American institutes during their world tour.

Dr. and Mrs. Desai returned to India in 1913 and Dr. U. L. Desai took up the position of personal physician to the Maharaja of Rampur in Central India. Nothing is known further regarding their experiments and therapy. However due to patronage of Reva King, at least Satyabala Devi's music was recorded on Columbia double discs. After returning to India, Satyabala Devi does not appear to have continued her career as a recording artist with any other recording company in India or abroad. Upon listening to these records one wonders what the Maharaja of Reva had hoped to achieve in sponsoring these recordings.

Columbia Company was manufacturing gramophones and blank cylinders when Gramophone Company was recording in India in 1910. Columbia Company entered in Indian market much later in 1931, but Indian music was recorded in America in 1910. Some of these records are found with some record collectors and they only can tell us whether they are useful in music therapy or not!

13

Records of Karim Khan

Khan Saheb Abdul Karim Khan (1873-1937) was a legendary Indian vocalist of 20th century. Born at village 'Kairana', in North India, Abdul Karim Khan learnt from his father Kale Khan in Gohar/Gomanbani. He left his native place in 1890 and never returned. He spent his entire life in Maharashtra. Initially he served in Baroda State. He fell in love with his disciple Tarabai Mane who belonged to Royal family and hence had to leave Baroda State. He then settled at Miraj in Maharashtra and established Music schools (Sangeet Vidyalayas) at Belgaum, Miraj, Pune and Bombay. He also pioneered in organizing ticketed shows of

classical music that were mainly for collecting funds in aid of the schools that he had established. He also served in Mysore State where he was honored with the title - 'Sangeet Ratna'.

Mr. Michael Kinnear from Australia has published a book recently, "**Khan Abdul Karim Khan – A Bio-Discography**", (2003), 290 pages. ISBN 0 957735553 Paperback 22.5x16 cm. Price Australian \$ 65 plus postage. This book traces back the life sketch of Karim Khan and his efforts in teaching, popularizing and research in Indian music. Half the book is devoted to his musical as well as personal life. His wife Tarabai Mane left him in 1922 and worked hard in setting up career of her five talented children viz. Abdul Rehman (Sureshbabu Mane), Champakali alias Champutai (Heerabai Barodekar), Gulab (Kamalabai Barodekar), Sakina alias Chottutai (Saraswati Mane {Rane}) and Abdul Hamid alias Papa (Krishnarao Mane). This was a big jolt to Karim Khan and although he continued his career, his music changed totally with pathos and became full of sorrow. He then married his disciple Bannubi Latkar (alias Saraswatibai Mirajkar) and settled in Miraj. He passed away on a railway platform in 1937 while returning from a concert tour from South India.

Other half of the book describes his gramophone records (discography). Khansaheb made recordings in two sessions – first in 1905 in Bombay at S. Rose & Co. – a place next to Rhythm House, opposite Jehangir Art Gallery in Fort area, Bombay. He cut 32 songs for 90-150 seconds duration each and this singing is quite forceful and exhibits his skills at very young age. [About 22 songs were reissued by HMV in 1994 under 'Chairman's Choice' series]. He then refused all the offers from number of gramophone companies and did not record for almost 30 years. During this time his children (Barodekar's and Mane) and niece Roshan Ara Begum made several records and were quite popular and best sellers. In 1932, Bai Sunderabai persuaded him to cut records for German Odeon Company that was recording in Bombay. So, during 1932-36 he recorded over 25 songs of 4-5 minutes duration each. These included Classical, light Classical, Marathi Drama songs, Bhajans and Canarese songs and also Been playing records. Micahel Kinnear gives a detailed and scientific account of the records (discography) along with the photographs of the labels. Labels of the test records that were sent to Karim Khan for his approval have also been published. The book is lavishly decorated with large number of black and white photographs and maps and a nice portrait of Karim Khan on cover. The back page contains Karim Khan in recording session for 'Odeon'. In 1937, while celebrating his birth centenary Mr. Balkrishnaboa Kapileshwari had published a 900-page book in Marathi. An English translation was also published subsequently. However there was no book issued on his life, music and focussed on records. Khan Saheb's several records have been issued on LP's audiocassettes and on compact discs. This book will provide the listeners with the life story of Karim Khan and thus will add to their listening pleasure.

14

Novel Advertisements

In the first decade, 'The Gramophone' was the 'status symbol' among upper middle class and rich families. It facilitated listening to any item of choice and for any number of times. Nevertheless, there was an ever-increasing demand for the machines and records. This was reflected in the catalogues and advertisements. Novel ideas and methods were employed for this purpose.

Recognizing the psychology and the religious bent of mind of the Indian consumers, the company introduced 'Saraswati', the goddess of learning and 'Durga', the goddess of strength in their advertisements. There was a painting of 'Gramophone Saraswati' made by Mr. G. N. Mukherjee which appeared in 1906 catalogue of Gramophone Company. It was suggested that the gramophone was a 'God'-sent. Devi Saraswati is holding Veena and sitting on a large lotus flower and on another lotus is kept 'The Gramophone'. There is a third lotus flower under her feet. Her left hand supports Veena while the right hand being used to place the sound box on the record. The petals of the flower are used to keep the stacks of records. The sound coming out of the horn of the machine has made animals spell-bound. The animals depicted in the picture include frogs, crocodiles, tortoises, snakes, fish and a swan. Saraswati also represents a river in North India. This advertisement was perhaps meant for buyers from North India. [This picture can be seen in detail by visiting - www.bajakhana.com.au]

To please Bengali customers, the company brought out another advertisement in 1907 depicting the goddess 'Durga'. She has a snake in her hand. A tiger and a lion are sitting on either side and a deer is standing away at some distance. All these creatures are enjoying the music coming out of a gramophone. To please Muslim customers, Jehangir's Darbar (Court) is shown in another advertisement in which gramophone is being played in the court.

In another picture from a catalogue, a typical drawing room of a well-to-do Bengali family is shown. All the inmates of this flourishing household have assembled to listen to gramophone records. The hall is filled with both western and traditional items suggesting the class of the family. At the center of the picture is a table on which a gramophone is kept. On one side is the head of the family sitting and moving his hand in appreciation of the song. On the other side is his wife standing. On the left are children of which boy is appreciating the sound by bending forward. On the right the grandfather of the house along with some friends and relatives are listening intently to the music. There is another black man without a shirt sitting on floor with his back towards the viewer (possibly he is the servant of the house). An interesting thing about this picture is a dog sitting under the table where records are kept. All inmates of the household, in all age groups along with the servant have thus come together to enjoy the music coming out of the talking machine (gramophone). This was the

magic of an inanimate machine that brought about 'democracy' in the Indian house. This was perhaps the beginning of such magic at the beginning of the twentieth century, which later could also be said about cinema, radio, and of course television!

15

The Dog and the Horn

This is indeed an interesting story! There was a man called Mark Barraud in Bristol, in England. In 1884, he found a small delicate pup that he nurtured carefully. The pup was in the habit of playing with the calf muscle of any visitor and used to 'nip' a bit, and hence Mark named the pup as 'Nipper'. Unfortunately Mark died in 1887 and his younger brother Francis who was artist/painter, took charge of Nipper and moved to Liverpool. The growing dog was becoming more and more restless and ferocious. It started fights with other dogs and indulged in hunting other animals like cats, rats and doves. However, Nipper could be calmed down when Mark's voice from cylinder recordings was played. Francis would play the cylinder and the dog would sit in front and listen intently to the sound coming out of the horn attached to the phonograph. This doggy quality of loyalty to the master appealed to Francis and he made a painting of Nipper looking into the horn and listening to 'His Master's Voice'.

Nipper died in 1895 at the age of eleven. Francis improved his painting and registered it under the title 'Dog looking at & listening to phonograph'. He took it to Edison-Bell Co. that was selling cylinder phonograph machines at that time to find out if they want to buy it. However the proposal was dismissed outright with a comment "Our phonographs are not meant for dogs!" Francis still pursued his efforts to sell his painting by giving it a new title, 'His Master's Voice'. In 1899, Mr. William Barry Owen, Manager of the newly established Gramophone Company showed interest in buying this painting. He suggested that the 'phonograph' be replaced by a 'gramophone' with a brass horn. Francis borrowed few models of the gramophone from the company and revised his painting as suggested.

In September 1899, the painting was bought for 50 pounds with additional 50 pounds for the copyright. The painting was used in the Gramophone Company's advertisement in 1900 and this logo even appeared on the letter-pads of the company in 1907. The logo was registered as a trademark in 1910 and began to appear on record labels and other publicity material. Francis made 24 more paintings for the company before his death in 1924. Since then the 'Dog and the Horn' symbol has become synonymous with the gramophone company. Other companies during this period displayed labels showing other birds like eagles, herons, bulbuls, etc. or some other animals and elaborate designs. Gramophone and Zonophone record labels were showing 'Recording Angels'. In India, the record labels with this logo appeared around 1915 and has since continued to this day for last 80-90 years.

The original painting of Francis Barraud is now kept at the entrance of EMI Archives in England. On careful examination of this painting under a specific illumination, one can see the original cylinder phonograph over which Francis painted the gramophone. It is worth noting that a picture of the dog has brought name and fame to the company. Before the end of 20th century, this 'Dog & Horn' trademark was chosen in the top 10 brands of the century.

16

Silent movies and the gramophone

About the time when the Gramophone Company adopted the new 'Dog & Horn' trademark, the record manufacturing activity was in full swing at Calcutta. The new premises at Sealdah were already established. This was also the time when the silent movie industry was making inroads. Silent films were shown in tents, empty garages, small halls or in open spaces at night. In large cities, these films were exhibited in theaters built for drama troupes. The projections were rudimentary and hand operated. Even in Europe the small cinema operators moved from place to place in caravans. Based on that era, famous Czech director Jerry menzel produced a film titled 'Those magnificent men with their cranking machines' and this film was screened in a recent MAMI film festival in Mumbai. In this film the silent films were tagged on to cylinder phonographs for songs and dialogues. It was quite interesting to see how the system operated in that period.

In India particularly in cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Delhi silent movies were becoming quite popular. In these films the 'Action' was the mainstay and contained lots of fights, horse riding, jumping and stunts. Whenever dialogues were very much in need, the clipping with printed matter and dialogues would appear. Gramophone records were used rampantly to provide sound effects. One person operated the hand-cranked projector and the other was involved in playing appropriate records on gramophone. Also there used to be a person in front of the screen narrating the story and the events in the film. In 1909, during the visit of British Emperor George V, big exhibition was organized in Madras in which a Crown Megaphone brought by a British Company happened to be a major attraction! In this machine, the projector and the gramophone were connected together so that the sound and the picture were seen & heard simultaneously. However synchronization of picture and sound could not be accomplished properly. This was particularly apparent during the dialogues and songs. A person named Raghupati Venkayya, a photographer by profession purchased all this machinery and started a cinema theater in a tent erected near Madras high court. Similar attempts were made by Hiralal Sen in Calcutta, Patwardhan, Divekar, Chitre and of course by Dadasaheb Phalke in Maharashtra. They used a theatrical model which was in vogue for dramas. In front of the screen, there used to be a pit to accommodate instrumentalists

playing sarangi, harmonium, violin, tabla etc. They used to play music as per the scene on screen. In horse riding and fighting scenes, some even used empty coconut shells to make the desired sound.

Foreign films were accompanied with the orchestrations. One of the musicians of that period, Mr. Francis Nazreth has recorded in his memoirs that they used to freely play the symphonies of Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, and others during these shows. Some of the British residents used to import notation books and the gramophone records. The instrumentalists used to sit in the wings of the hall or behind the screen and provided required music and sound effects. Mr. Nazreth himself was a violinist and a pianist.

Despite all these efforts, there was a growing realization that in order the required synchronization between sound and the picture, it is necessary to record on film strip along with the picture frame. Several persons were working and technology was very slowly developing to revolutionize the film industry!

17

Sound track on film strips

In 1930, Warner Brothers produced the first full length feature film with sound and the name of the film was 'Jazz Singer'. In this attempt, the music was recorded on film track itself and the dialogues appeared as titles. This was indeed a breakthrough in sound recording and considered a great achievement, since now the lip movements of the characters would synchronize with the sound. The sound was recorded on a narrow strip on one side of the film and termed as a 'sound track.' It required tremendous efforts to record sound as a sequence of black and white regions having variable density. The light beam used to project the image would also pass through the sound track and was captured by a 'photocell' placed on the other side of the film-strip. This photocell would convert light into electrical energy and then converted into sound using amplifiers and loudspeakers. This synchronization between sight and the sound was further improved by RCA (Radio Corporation of America) as the 'photophone system' and began to appear in the market.

Until about 1935, the light and the sound were recorded on different negatives. Microphones used were quite heavy and made from powdered carbon. The machinery used was bulky and required 'recording van'. In the beginning, sound adjustment in relation with movements in the film was becoming difficult. Each shot had to be tested in film processing laboratory before final selection and each studio had to be well equipped with this facility.

By this time Gramophone Company and its products were fairly well established in the field of entertainment. Electricity had also entered in almost every household in cities like Bombay, theater hall and street lights were replaced from

gas lights to electrical bulbs. Around 1925, some enterprising youngsters had started broadcasting (India State Broadcasting Service). This was indeed the foundation and the beginning of the All India Radio (Akashwani after independence). This made a kind of revolution by making home entertainment available at very little cost. In the beginning, it was designed for broadcasting music for few hours, but later on proved to be equally important for news and information, to the extent that the Ministry is now known as 'Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.'

This necessitated the improvements in sound recording and reproduction. Instead of using old 'Acoustic' system employing 'horn' microphone for recording and reproduction, an 'electrical' system evolved. This used the carbon microphones and gave relief to artists in that they were not required to 'shout' into the horn and this enriched the recording quality.

With the increasing popularity of the 'talking films' and the radio, the Gramophone Company had to change and modify its business strategy. It was obvious that both these new media would expand by providing a larger number of movie theaters and number of broadcasting stations.

18

[Documentation] – Record of records

The technology of capturing, preserving and reproducing sound was essentially developed in the U.S.A. However the actual utilization of this technology took place in Europe and particularly in England. Within first two decades the market was full of various machines, records and the accessories. Soon these products attracted several persons and they came together to form an organization like a 'fan club'. In 1919, they formed a society titled 'The city of London phonograph and gramophone Society Ltd.' in London. This society with such a long name is still functioning. As a means of communication with the members and record lovers, they launched a magazine/periodical named 'Hillandale News' meaning the news from grooves on record that contained 'the hills' and 'the dales'. This magazine is still published with its name changed to 'For the record' few years ago. Other activities of this society include listening sessions of old records, discussions and presentations and holding exhibitions and record fares for the benefit of members and general public. It is also actively engaged in publishing books and literature containing discography, biographies of artists catalogues and histories of various record labels. Mr. E. M. Gin who was essentially selling fish and meat, was so much engrossed with the gramophones and paraphernalia that a book giving account of his research has been published with a title – 'EMG story'. Among other publications of the society are 'Columbia 10 inch records', 'From tin-foil to stereo', 'Recordists of Berliner discs', 'Imperial records' etc.

Although 'Society of Indian Record Collectors (SIRC) was formed in 1990, publishing a magazine –'The Record News', it is interesting to note the efforts made in documentation of records in India before independence. By 1930-40's thousands of records were issued in Indian market and the response from record buying public was unimaginable. Gramophone Company was bringing out catalogues regularly with song text of most popular and best seller records. Some enthusiast also published books –1] Gramophone Master, by Mr. P. G. Lamman, Calcutta in June 1936. 2] Hindi Gramophone Records Music – Parts 1 & 2, by Mr. S. P. Jaini, Calcutta, (1935). Over 3000 song texts are given in these books along with record numbers. Few photographs of the popular artists are also given. These songs include gazals, bhajans, chaiti, kajri, hori, thumri and several other pure and light classical music forms canned in 3-3.5 minutes play time discs. Some of these were also based on episodes from Ramayana and Mahabharata that included dialogues too like e.g. 'Ravan Aur Seeta ka Samvaad', or 'Ravan Aur Hanuman ka Samvaad'.

This was in 1935-40, but some of the most popular film songs of later period could be found in these books - e.g. 'Ek Chatur Naar Karke Songar' by Mohammad Hussein (1915), 'Main Kya Karun ram Mujhe Buddha Mil Gaya' recorded by Miss Dulari in early 20's 'Sainyya Nikal Gaye Main Na Ladi Thi' sung by Jankibai of Allahabad in 1915, 'Inhi Logone Le Liya Dupatta Mera' recorded by Akhtar Jan in 1923. This list can be unending with so many traditional tunes picked up by our great music directors from folk and religious music. Today, very few copies of these three books and the HMV record catalogues survive for posterity.

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Early talkies and songs

Early talkies had the influence of theater. A film had a story interspersed with some songs. The film historians consider "Alam Ara" to be the first talkie that was produced in 1931 by Ardeshir Irani. He is also considered as the first director of Indian talkie film. Music for this film was composed by Phirozshah M. Mistry and B. Irani. The film had only seven songs sung by Zubeida and Zillo. Phirozshah himself was a well-known gramophone celebrity (singer) and theater personality. He was expert at converting a song elaborated for more than half an hour on stage into a three minutes gramophone record. The available time in the film and the number of songs must have been considered carefully by this experienced musician. However no records were cut from the songs of Alam Ara.

There were some unsuccessful attempts to produce talkie films before 1931 and these are now forgotten conveniently. According to a Marathi daily newspaper 'Lokmanya' Alam Ara was not the first Indian talkie film. Mr. Maneklal Patel of the Krishna Film Company produced 'Nakli Tansen' talkie in 1930 and it was exhibited in Realto cinema theater in Girgaon. Prof. B. R. Deodhar was the music

director and Yeshwantrao Kothare was the first recordist of Indian talkie. Charlie was the hero of 'Nakli Tansen'. Along with this film, a short film was produced for screening that featured orchestra of the students of Deodhar's school of music and a vocal recital of Kumari Amladi. This has been quoted by Mr. Madhukar Gupte in this paper 'Lokmanya' in a letter to the editor. Mr. Gupte was hero in silent films and early talkies of that era. (Ref. 'Chitrachi Goshta': a book in Marathi, Majestic Prakashan, Mumbai, 1995, Page 20). There is no mention of 'Nakli Tansen' in any published book/list of Hindi films. Later on Prof. B. R. Deodhar gave music to more than ten films and produced film 'Neela' in 1935 both in Hindi and Marathi. But this was a wild goose chase in which he failed miserably and abandoned film production and film line for ever.

As per the recorded history, the first gramophone record of film music was HMV N 5622 - from Hindi film 'Madhuri' sung by Prof. Vinayakrao Patwardhan in raga Tilang and Bahar. The next record HMV N 5623 was also sung by him in ragas Kafi and Malkuns. He was the disciple of Pandit Visnu Digambar Paluskar, acted only in one film and recorded four songs based on Hindustani classical music. This film was produced by Imperial Film Company and music director was Mr. Pransukh M. Nayak. These records with green label were sold in market in 1932 with credit given to Prof. Patwardhan on record label, probably because he was already a celebrated singer of gramophone company and had cut quite a few records of his stage song and classical music.

In 1931, the Indian Art production, Bombay produced a film titled 'Farebi Jaal' (Trapped) directed by M. Bhavanani. The name of the music director was not given but Master Vasant has been mentioned as the lyricist. His name does not appear in the list of actors. Out of the six songs in this film three were sung by Durga Khote and three by master Vasant. (Ref: Hindi film geet kosh, vol.1, [1931-40, by Harminder Singh Hamraaz, 1988 page 15]. Two records HMV P 13474 and P 13542 were brought out by gramophone company on black label in February 1931 and November 1931 respectively. The list of actors of this film consists of Waman talpade, Jal khambata, Baburao Sansare and Manohar Kapoor in male roles but Master Vasant Amrut of Surat is not mentioned. It is not clear on whom the songs sung by Master Vasant Amrut were picturized. But it appears that Master Vasant then could be the first playback singer of Hindi films and more research is needed to establish this aspect of history of Indian films.

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Films, songs and the records

Much before the beginning of talkies, the gramophone companies were well established in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Out of 24 talkie films produced in 1931, information of records of film songs of 'Trapped' is available. Among the films produced in 1932, there is not a single record that could be traced other than that from the film 'Madhuri'. In this film too, out of 16 songs four songs were

sung by Prof. Vinayakrao Patwardhan and as he was a gramophone celebrity his songs could have been recorded in company's studio. Other songs were filmed on Sulochana (Madhuri), Chandabai (Jankibai) and Hadi (Eknath) but no records were cut. In these two years although 850 songs from 85 Hindi films have been listed, only four songs (two 78 rpm records) were issued by HMV.

In 1933, about 75 films were produced with over 800 songs. Of these only 24 were issued on records and sung by Prof. Neelkanthbha Chikhalikar, Master Mohammad, Master Feroz Dastur, Master Aslam. Miss Leela, Miss Indubala, Zohra Jan, Ratanbai, and others who were already well known gramophone singers. Some promising artists also recorded including Devika Rani (Karma), K. C. Dey, and Mr. K. L. Saigal (Puran Bhagat, Yahoodiki Ladki). They recorded only 14 songs (7 records). Miss Leela (later Mrs. Bhalji Pendharkar) sang for Prabhat Film Co. 'Sairandhree' directed by V. Shantaram. He was at that time trying to make a colour film with German collaboration. The gramophone records of the songs from this film were made using technology of Telefunken Co. in Germany and using songs recorded on sound track of the film-strips. The records were sold in India under "Prabhat" label. The New Theater of Calcutta also began to produce records under their own specially designed labels (in place of HMV dog and horn label).

From 1934-40, average of 150 films were produced each year and contained over 1000 songs. Out of these, only popular songs were chosen for reproduction as gramophone records. In 1934-35, new voices that were recorded included Shantakumari, Rajkumari, Ratnaprabha, Kamla Jharia, Umraozia Begum, Noorjehan, Fakre-Alam Quawal, Maruti Pahilwan. Even then at the end of 1935, only about 50 records (100 songs) were cut.

A child artist of 1930's, Miss Vasanti recalls that recording vans of gramophone company used to visit Prabhat studio in Pune with the necessary equipment and staff for recording the songs. Each song was taken 4/5 times on wax plates to be sent to the Calcutta factory for pressing. When the finished sample used to arrive, these were again played to us in studio for approval and selection. Songs were recorded only after assessing their popularity after the release of the film. For this purpose, the artists, music directors, orchestra, chorus singers had to visit recording studios of HMV for recordings and rehearsals. Sometimes popular songs of the films released much earlier were also recorded. As a result, a record could have songs from two different films on two sides of a record. For example HMV N 5860 has a song from 'Amritmanthan' (1934) on one side while on the other side a song from 'Ayodhyecha Raja' (1932) has been released and the record was put in market in 1935.

After about 1935, since the Bombay talkies film 'Achut kanya', all the songs in the film got recorded. Some producers used to invite gramophone company crew during the shooting of a film and the recordings were taken soon after shooting

the song on film set. Thus in the first decade i.e. 1931-40, out of 10,000 songs only 750 songs were issued on about 380 records.

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First fifteen years [1930-45]

In the first fifteen years i.e. between 1930-45, over 100 music directors gave music to Hindi films. Among these were: Pandit Amarnath, Anil Biswas, Mr. Anna, S. D. Batish, Keshavrao Bhole, R. C. Boral, Bulu C. Rani, C. Ramchandra (Chitalkar), G. Chishti, K. Dutta (Korgaonkar), G. M. Durrani, Pannalal Ghosh, Ghulam Haider, Gyan Dutt, Khan Mastana, Khemchand Prakash, Master Madhavlal, Master Mohammad, Mir Sahib, Phirozshah Mistry, Pankaj Mullick, Naushad, Bhagwandas Nayak, Pransukh Nayak, S. K. Pal, Shyambabu Pathak, A. R. Qureshi (Alla Rakha), Saraswati Devi, Govindrao Tembe, Timir Baran, S. N. Tripathi, Brijlal Verma, Shankar Rao Vyas, Zande Khan, and many others. Some music directors like Rafique Gaznavi, Hafiz and Feroz Nizami migrated to Pakistan after partition.

All of them were great lovers and connoisseurs of Hindustani classical music and also familiar with folk music of their regions and provinces. Some of them were performing artists too. Thus R. C. Boral was a 'Tabla' player, Timir Baran was a 'Sarod' maestro (first disciple of Baba Allaudin Khan), Pankaj Mullick was a singer (Particularly of Rabindra Sangeet), Govindrao Tembe was a harmonium expert, musicologist and playwright. Also Master Krishnarao (Phulambrikar), a principal disciple of Bhaskarboa Bakhale was a singer, actor and composer, Keshavrao Bhole was an expert on piano, organ and in orchestration. They were also familiar with theater music and were aware of the records and gramophone companies. Some foreign experts were also helping them to get familiar with the cinematic and recording techniques.

In the beginning, musical accompanists had to be kept beyond the view of the camera, or hiding behind the property on sets. The character in the film had to sing while acting with certain movements. In such situations, the accompanists had to be accommodated on trolleys. In Prabhat Film Company's Marathi film 'Manoos', Hindi ['Aadmi'] it has been shown in humorous tone how a song was filmed. For filming a song of three minutes duration, several rehearsals were required and many songs were presented with close up shots of the actors. The main limitation was that most of the actors were very poor singers. It was indeed a great job to train them to sing in tune. Those who were acting on stage and singing song for hours, had to be trained to sing for just over three minutes. This limitation was imposed due to the technological limitation of 78-rpm records that could be played for 3-3.5 minutes. So, singing in a film was an ordeal for many. The debonair actor Late Mr. Jairaj started taking lessons in vocal music but could not cope up and had to abandon the attempts. On the other hand, Devikarani and Ashok Kumar learnt to sing after stupendous efforts. The music director of

Bombay Talkies, Saraswatidevi: a Parsi lady, [Khurshid Minocher Homjee (1912-1980)] took lot of efforts to train these artists. She was also the first female music director of Hindi films. She set the music in simple ragas like Mand, Kafi, Jhinjhoti, Pilu, with all the simplicity and melodious tunes with simple taans. These songs were well accepted by the audience at large.

Saraswatidevi has written about her efforts and has also acknowledged the trouble taken by these individuals for singing simple tunes. Each song required over 15-20 takes. If there was any error it needed retakes with microphones, flood lights and camera on and they used to perform again and again without any apparent tension on their faces. This was possible with only few accompanying instruments, simple tunes and simpler singing. The songs are still popular as evidenced by VJ [Video Jockey] of MTV singing "Main Ban Ka Panchi, Banke Ban Ban Dolun Re" – a song from Bombay Talkies film – 'Achut Kanya'.

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Recording technology and records

Around 1935, there were improvements in the recording techniques. Till then the picture and the sound was recorded on the same negative of the film. Now it became possible to record the picture and sound separately. This reduced the pressure on the artists and technicians. Earlier the singer was located in the middle with a huge microphone kept hanging over head or on a stand but out of the camera frame. A song was required to be recorded twice, once on the studio set and then again in the studio of Gramophone Company. The new technique of filmmaking introduced 'sound department' in the studio.

All the machinery was complicated and quite delicate requiring careful handling. The movement was possible only on trucks, wagons and trolleys. The huge big studios were busy round the clock filming during the day and recording songs at quiet nights. Soundproof studios did not exist at that time. Since there used to be a single microphone, its position was alternated between singers and accompanists. Those who have witnessed and lived that period are still among us. Naushadji entered the film industry as a pianist under Mir Saheb and in 1941 gave music to 'Prem Nagar'. He used to plan the positions of the singers and instrumentalists around the microphone and gave detailed instructions regarding the placements and distances to be observed by them. Anil Biswas used the equipment of Audio-Camax and Jenkins company. Their microphones weighed 5-6 pounds and had audio frequency response from 50-5000 Hertz. For optimum recordings this response has to be up to 15,000 Hertz. Therefore the quality of the sound recorded was not satisfactory. The camera used for shooting also added some hum and noise during recording. Later on, after lot of experimentation he insisted on having 2-3 camera located in such a way that these would not interfere with the placement of accompanists.

Gramophone records had limitation of recording duration of 3-3.5 minutes. Therefore duration of the sound track often differed from that of the record. For example, the famous song from 'Achut Kanya' – 'Main Banki Chidiyan...', lasted 2 minutes and 30 seconds on the sound track whereas the gramophone record needed orchestral filling to extend it to three minutes. Another instance is that of a song 'Hari Charan..' sung by K. C. Dey in Vidyapati (1937) which had to be curtailed by 23 seconds by cutting the repetitive phrases in the song. A film studio could accommodate a large number of instrumentalists while gramophone company studio could handle only limited number. Therefore there were variations in the music recorded at these two places. A song from film 'Prithvi Vallabh' (1938) had to be recorded on a 12" disc lasting five and half minutes. Songs formed an integral part of cinema right from the beginning. Wadia Movietone produced a film titled 'Naujawan' in 1937. Being a stunt film with lots of fight sequences, no songs were included. The cine enthusiast protested with the feeling that the producer has cheated public. Despite the popularity of film music, the gramophone companies looked at this market with suspicion. HMV, Odeon Broadcast, Ramagraph and Young India in Bombay, New Theaters and Maxitone in Calcutta and Jien-O-Phone in Lahore were already in market producing non-film music on variety of record labels. Film songs that had a definite sale potential were available on records. What were these so many companies mentioned above were recording during 1930-40?

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Odeon records

In early 40's, there were many changes in the recording industry. Until about 1930, the Gramophone Company had either grabbed smaller competing/rival companies under its fold or eliminated them from market. Still some companies such as Odeon and Ram-O-Graph started with German technology, Broadcast company (later Jay Bharat) with British collaboration and Young India with Japanese know-how gave tough competition to in the period 1930-45 and survived.

Odeon products were essentially manufactured in Germany. This company was established in 1903 in Berlin and entered the Indian market in 1906. Until 1914, the records were pressed in Germany and then pressed copies were brought back to India. In 1930's Odeon re-appeared on Indian scene. Ruby Records Company in Bombay and Saraswati stores in Madras were the sole agents for Odeon records. Odeon records and phonographs were in market till 1942. Since Germans were the enemies of the British during World War II, Odeon Company had to wind up and leave. Several popular songs recorded by Odeon were reissued later on Columbia label.

Odeon is a German deity symbolized by a dome. This symbol is displayed on the label of records. The records produced in South India showed two elephants on

either side of the dome. There were 'Odeon' theaters in Bombay, Calcutta and in Delhi with a dome on top of their buildings. Most of the records were in 10" size with 'Made in Germany' printed on labels. Only a few long playing 12" diameter records were made for prominent artists of that time. Out of few hundred records produced by the company, those brought out in the decade 1930-40 became famous and were sold in large numbers. The records manufactured using German technology were better in sound quality and clarity than those made with British and Japanese methods. Several stalwarts have sung on these electrically recorded discs. Khansaheb Abdul Karim Khan cut over 22 records for Odeon. They were so popular that they were played again and again in the only shop of gramophone records in a small taluka place Gadag in Karnataka. A little boy used to listen to them with rapt attention and concentration. He has now become a legend today and known as Pandit Bhimsen Joshi! The kith and kin of Abdul Karim Khan who have also given Odeon records include: Sureshbabu Mane, Hirabai Barodekar, Kamlabai Barodekar, Saraswati Mane (Rane) and niece Roshan Ara Begum. His second wife Saraswatibai Mirajkar (Banubai Latkar) also made Odeon records. Some of these were later reissued on Columbia labels after the closure of Odeon Company. In 1997, Gramophone Company reissued most of these records on audiotapes on their 'Classic Gold' and 'Heritage' titles.

Other well known artist that recorded for Odeon are: Omkarnath Thakur, Bai Sunderabai, Bai Azambai, G. M. Londhe, Dileepchandra Vedi, Shankar Rao Sarnaik (disciple of Abdul Karim Khan) and others. Along with classical music, the company also recorded light classical music like lavni, bhajan, abhang, powada etc. Small plays, dialogues, humorous skits, mimicry were also recorded. A musical skit 'Shambharavi Mulgi' (one hundredth daughter) was brought out as an album of six records. Skits titled 'Mrs.1900' and 'Mrs.1935' have been recorded in the voice of Smt. Durga Khote. Thus Odeon Company tried to satisfy all strata of society. South Indian stalwarts were not left out. Large number of instrumental records was also cut. Thus, K. Aswathamma cut 'Jana Gana Mana' song on Odeon record in 1938 in a typical Karnatic accent.

Odeon did not also ignore the film songs. It has produced records of the songs from films Lal-e-Yaman, Bag-e-Misar, Balajoban, Sansar Leela, Julmi Joban, Khun-e-Nahak, Nai Duniya, Bombay Mail, Pratibha etc. The singers were Master Feroz Dastur, Miss Padmavati Shaligram (Gokhale), Marutirao Pahelwan, Raj Kumari and many others.

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Ram-O-Graph records

Among the notable German recording companies was Adolf Leiban & Co., which was producing Lyrophone records in Bombay. Their recording experts were canvassing with the Indian musical instrument dealers to provide the artists who had some talent. That was the time when Beka record Co. of Vallabhdas

Ranchordas, James Opera and Singer records were trying to establish their business in Bombay. There was an outfit called Messers T. S. Ramchunder & brothers who were supplying musical instruments to various drama companies staging Parsi, Urdu, Gujrathi and Marathi plays. Their shop was located at the Bapu Khote Street near Pydhoni area. These three brothers were expert in playing various instruments like harmonium, organ, tabla, sarangi, dilruba etc. They had business with drama companies and had a cordial relationship with the artists. Lyrophone Record mfg. proposed to T. S. Ramchunder & Bros. that they would produce records in collaboration that could then be sold under T. S. R. Labels. One of the young members of the family designed the label as 'Ram-O-Phone Disc Records' with the name of the God 'Ram' on it. The label displayed a string instrument with bird 'Lyre' sitting on the strings and the letters T.S.R. inscribed at the bottom. In the lower semi-circle was printed T. S. Ramchunder & Brothers, sole proprietors. The German technicians were involved in taking the records for quiet some time. But later on one of the brothers learnt the art of recording. The wax master copies were sent to Germany for processing and printing till the company was in operation until about 1940. There was no compulsion of printing 'Made in Germany'.

Gramophone Company took objection to the logo 'Ram-O-Phone' because of the similarity in pronunciation. This involved litigation in the Girgaon court and ended up in the change of name to 'Ram-O-Graph' and later to 'Ramagraph'. This small outfit produced hundreds of records of ordinary quality. However the artists chosen for recordings were of high caliber. Some of the stars of Parsi/Gujrathi stage like Master Himmat, Murad Ali, Sorabji Dhondi, are some of the examples whose voices could still be heard on these records. In addition, the company also recorded instrumental music, Jain Stavan and even readings from Quran. Similarly songs in various languages such as Sindhi, Marwari, were also recorded.

Most of the catalogues of Ram-O-Phone/Ramagraph are now lost to history. But one printed in 1907 is available which shows a picture of the famous singer Chanda Karwarkarin along with the discography of her records. The catalogue also contains the list of records of Miss Achhan, Harmonimum Master Mohammad Hussein, Pransukh, Miss Manku, Miss Chhabil, Miss Fitna, Mr. Dayashankar, Miss Kashi and Ganga Malpekarin, Mr. Bhagu & Sorabji Katrak, Master Mohammad Ashraf, Mr. D. A. Bapat & so on.

Ramchunder brothers used to organize concerts of Peara Saheb, a famous singer from Calcutta, whenever he visited Bombay. In an advertisement of one such concert of 25th January 1925, a list of songs and program was given. He used to perform with Master Navrang at Lamington Road drama theaters. Among other artists who gave records to Ramagraph are Seth Shobhraj, Chimanlal and Mr. Tikamdas. The World War II ended the German collaboration and so the records enterprise of Mr. T. S. Ramchunder & Co. Though printing of the records was possible at Calcutta factory of Gramophone Company, Ramagraph did not

use this facility and instead chose for the closure of their company. They also ignored songs from the then budding 'film industry' and also stalwarts like Abdul Karim Khan who was in Bombay around that time and recording for Odeon records. The present generation of T. S. Ramchunder & Co. is now engaged in selling musical and band instruments that are used in Brass Bands. Their shop still exists in Kalbadevi area in Bombay where an oil painting of the founder T. S. Ramchunder is prominently displayed and the board proudly displays Ramchunder & Co. sign at the entrance.

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Broadcast, Lotus and Jay Bharat records

Mr. Jaysinglal and Mr. Kishorilal Mehta were members of a very prominent family of diamond and precious stone merchants and partners of the family business that had been established in 1895. Until about 1930, they had grown into a big business house with head office in Bombay and branches at Madras and at Antwerp in Belgium. The firm was leading supplier of industrial diamonds including diamond tips for cutting heads and lathes required in the recording industry. This is how probably they came in contact with British recording companies. Among two brothers, Jaysinglal was fond of classical music and had an idea of records manufacturing company. In about December 1933, they established "The Musical Products Ltd." in Madras with a capital of Rs.50,000. They began to record great stalwarts of that time using British technology in collaboration with their recording experts. The record labels had a picture of a diamond at the center with rays of brightness (light) emanating from it. The labels were produced in various colors – red, golden, blue, and yellow. The diameters of the records varied from seven inches to twelve inches. The company had developed a method to adjust the duration of play by changing the density of the grooves cut into the shellac records. The normal playtime of a standard ten-inch diameter 78-rpm record at that time was close to 3-3.5 minutes, while that of twelve-inch diameter record was 5-5.5 minutes. The records made by Broadcast Company could play from 3-8.5 minutes on each side. These were marked as 'The Long playing record' on the label. As the company was financially sound, it could attract great musicians by offering them handsome fees/remuneration.

It is estimated that during 1932-38, the company produced few hundred records. They recorded in Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and even in Colombo. Only a few records and record catalogues have survived and are in safe custody of record collectors scattered all over India and abroad. In South, M. S. Subbulaxmi and her mother recorded classical music. Among instrumentalists Rajmanickam Pillay and V. Chowdiah cut violin records. In North, several musicians of repute made records. These include: Sherif Khan of Gwalior, Master Vasant Amrut of Surat, Mehndi Raza, Peara Sahib, Mallikarjun Mansoor, Master Krishnarao (Phulambrikar), Damodar Purshottam, Miss Krishna Bai, Kamleshwari, Lalita Devi, Anwari Jan, Rasoolan Bai (Benares), Siddheshwari Devi, Gulab Bai,

Rajrani Durgabai, etc. who sang classical and light classical vocal music. In addition, the company brought out religious items like Buddha Mangal Shlokas and Ambastuti and instrumental records of Ustad Bundu Khan (Sarangi), Majid Khan (Sarangi), Balram Sing (harmonium). Mr. Bhulabhai Desai on two sides of a record that plays over 10 minutes gave a message to Indians. The catalogues used to contain small photograph of the artists along with a short note on the recordings. The sound quality of recordings was reasonably good.

Despite of all these wonderful recordings of great masters and upcoming artists of early 40's, the sales were not very great and Jaysinglal had to close down the Madras shop in about 1936. He came to Bombay and in 1937, started "Diamond Record Company" and issued records on 'Lotus' label. However this venture too failed. He then started another company named 'Jay Bharat Record Company' and began to issue records on chocolate color 'Jay Bharat' label. This new company essentially issued songs of his favorite singer Miss Susheela Tembe whom he married subsequently. This new company brought him some success. The chocolate color record has a flag on it. The songs were recorded at Bombay and record pressing was done probably at Dum Dum factory in Calcutta, since by this time the British collaboration had ended.

The sales of records were greatly influenced by the frequency with which they were played on radio. Marathi songs of Susheela Tembe were extremely popular. She also cut dozens of records of classical music. Some of her records were later reproduced on Columbia label. 'Jay Bharat' also recorded some prominent artists like Smt. Moghubai Kurdikar.

Thus Jaysinglal Mehta helped preserving music on Broadcast, Lotus and Jay Bharat record labels during 1932-45. It is not known how many records were cut and very few catalogues are available, but several eminent artists have recorded. He also made some Hindi and Tamil film songs. The great treasures left behind deserves to be preserved for posterity and reissued on tapes and on CD's.

26

Young India records

Mr. Dulerai Pandya was a flourishing businessman from Ahemadabad. From his early childhood, he was fond of records and songs. It was his obsession and dream that he should also produce records. During his college days at Ferguson College at Poona, he had developed a nationalistic attitude as was evident among the youth in that pre-independence period. He was touring all over world in connection with his trade. He discovered that his dream of producing records could be realized with the collaboration of companies in Japan. So, he bought the machinery and also invited an expert technician Mr. Kiyosha Kodaka. He founded 'The National Gramophone Record Manufacturing Company' in Bombay with factory located at Wadala in the compound of Laxmi Mills. This factory was

fully equipped with recording studios and record printing / pressing facility for 78 rpm records. V. Shantaram was one of the founders and Directors of the Company. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru whose "Message to the Countrymen" was recorded inaugurated the factory. The records displayed tricolor flag and the brand name 'Young India' was chosen for this product.

This outfit gave a real tough competition to the Gramophone Company during 1935-55. The company produced hundreds of records. Since the company owned its own record pressing facility, it was quite independent. It also established a network and a chain of sole agents and distributors for the sale of records throughout India. Soon the records from other countries like Iran, Iraq, Baharin, South Africa etc. were printed at the Wadala factory. This involved a big list of clients like Abdul Shahi records, Aftab-e-Islam, Blue Rhythm, Bombay Records, Ibrahimphone, Electrophone, Friends Records, H. G. M. Educational Records, Kalyan, Nirmaphone, Lotus, Royal, Rainbow, Salim Phone, Sanjeevan, Venus and so on. The small recording companies did not have to send materials for printing at Dum Dum factory at Calcutta, thus making a dent on the monopoly of the Gramophone Company

The Japanese technology was not satisfactory and the records got spoilt after repeated playing. Even then Pandya Seth received an encouragement for his ambitious indigenous (Swadeshi) efforts. During his Prabhat Film Company career at Pune, V. Shantaram encouraged the company by issuing the songs of Manoos/Adami, Shejari/Padosi, Saint Dnyaneshwar and Gopalkrishna films on Young India records. The design of the label was made attractive by printing a still photograph of the artists from the film. Names of the music directors, lyricists and singers etc. were printed on label with Prabhat emblem. He continued this practice even for the initial films of Rajkamal pictures when he moved to Bombay. Thus the songs of Shakuntala, Mali, Dr. Kotnis Ki Amar Kahani and other films were released on Young India label records.

Young India label design showed a wide variety and their catalogues also was attractively produced, perhaps due to the artistic involvement of V. Shantaram. A Gujarathi magazine 'Yuga Chitra' had brought out a special issue on gramophone records (C.1938) which gave relevant details about this company. Catalogues of Young India records printed in Gujarathi, Marathi and Urdu contained brief write up of the artists with a photograph and songs.

These records consisted of classical/light classical music both in vocal and instrumental category, folk music including Lavni, Powada, plays, talks, mimicry, devotional songs like Bhajans Kirtans, Punjabi religious songs like e.g. Asa-Di-Var in 26 parts were issued. Deenanath Mangeshkar gave exquisite four records (eight songs) in his last days of musical career. At that time there was another singer from Gujrath: Master Deenanath of Surat and hence Deenanath Mangeshkar's Young India record label mentions name of the place 'Sangli' below his name. Other famous artists of that time like Vatsala Kumthekar and

Indira Wadkar also gave records. A message from Subhash Chandra Bose was also recorded.

Cost of these records was between 1.5 to 3 rupees per record. This company had a healthy and cordial relationship with the Gramophone Company. During strike at Dum Dum factory in 1952-53, several film songs and records were processed and pressed at the Wadala factory in Bombay. After 1956, the Young India records pressing factory was closed down and now these records have become part of the history of Indian gramophone records.

27

Megaphone records

Megaphone Company was formed in 1910 at Calcutta to market a locally made harmonium known as 'Megafute' and imported talking machines. Janaki Nath (J. N.) Ghosh was the owner and soon became a dealer of products of - 'The Gramophone Co. Ltd. In 1929, he decided to launch his own record manufacturing company with a view to issue recordings of a number of important musicians whom he felt were being ignored by The Gramophone Company. He joined the 'private recorder' scheme of the company and the records were pressed at Dum Dum factory and released under - 'Megaphone' label.

The record labels were red, blue, purple, and orange with a picture of a standing deer that was replaced by sitting deer in about 1935. One record released on the occasion of 'Sree Sree Ramkrishna Paramhansa Centenary' features his photograph on the label. The record contains speech by Swami Abhedanandjee Maharaj, then the President of Ramkrishna Vandana Society. The first releases of Megaphone records consisted of sets of Bengali drama 'Dole Lila'. Until about 1934, company issued number of recordings in Bengali, Assamese, Oriya and Punjabi with a picture of standing deer and words 'Swadeshi Record' on the label.

In about 1937, the company also produced records for film songs of New Theaters under the label - "Megaphone Record - New Theaters". Between 1938 and 1941, the Megaphone Company released number of film songs featuring Miss Kanan Devi (1916-1992). Songs from films like Lagan (Hindi), Parichay (Bengali), Khamoshi, Abhinetri, Haar Jeet etc. were released on this label.

Other famous singers of Megaphone were Miss Kalyani, Miss Akhtari Bai (Fyzabadi) [later known as Begum Akhtar], Miss Kamla Jharia, and Miss Anis Khatun. Among classical musicians Ustad Enayet Khan and his son Vilayat Hussain Khan of Gauripur recorded Sitar and Surbahar prolifically. Ustad (Baba) Alludin Khan recorded Sarod and Violin. Srijit Jnanendra Prasad Goswami and Vismadev Chatterjee recorded classical vocal music.

In 1947, the Company produced a special 12" discs of 'Bande Mataram' [AHR-1] in collaboration/association with Calcutta newspaper Ananda Bazar & Hindustan Standard. This record was released with its own special 'Bande Mataram' label and contained both vocal and instrumental versions.

In 1958, J. N. Ghosh died and his nephews took over the business and have continued the business into modern times of tapes and CD's. Around 1960, with the introduction of microgroove recordings, both 78 rpm and 45 rpm records were pressed for some time. This continued until about 1970 when pressing of 78 rpm records came to halt. Some of the 78 rpm records of Miss Kanan Devi and Begum Akhtar were reissued on LP records by Gramophone Company. Later these were reissued again in the audio tape era and now in CD format. Recordings of Baba Allaudin Khan, Enayet Khan and Vilayat Hussain Khan are also reissued again in modern formats.

However there remains a wealth of classical music and popular recordings of historical importance dating back to early 1930's, that is yet to be transferred to modern formats and these are safe with private record collectors.

28

Hindusthan records

Chandi Charan Saha went to Europe and acquired recording machines to set up record manufacturing factory at Calcutta. He installed the equipment in 1932. He was persuaded by the managing director of Gramophone Company to utilize their record pressing facilities and not to set up another record pressing plant in same city. Among the first recordings taken were recitations of Rabindranath Tagore and Renuka Sen Gupta. These were issued under the 'Hindusthan Record' label. The studio (master) recordings were taken to Dum Dum factory for pressing under their 'private recorder' scheme.

In 1933, the release of first recordings 'Jhulana Jhulao' by the then unknown singer named Kundan Lal Saigal (labelled as Mr. Saigol on the disc) was a major success and he remained the 'star' recording artist throughout the span of Hindusthan Music Products & Varieties, Syndicate, Ltd.

Around the same time Mr. B. N. Sircar established a film production company named 'New Theaters' at Calcutta and the songs were released initially on Hindusthan label and later on a 'New Theaters Hindusthan Records'. In addition to film songs private songs of Timir Baran and Pahari Sanyal were also released. In 1934, the first record appeared on yet another label 'New Theaters Record'. Hindusthan record label contained shepherd boy playing flute. Early 'New Theaters Hindusthan Records' featured same boy playing flute in front of an elephant. Later, 'New Theaters Record' had variety of label designs in brown, red and blue color. The labels contained design of a rising sun, single elephant or

twin elephants. Several Bengali and Hindi film songs produced by New Theaters were released on these records.

In 1936, 'Hindusthan' company formed an alliance with the Star of Hindusthan Record Co. of Benares to launch 'Star Hindusthan Record'. Similar alliances at Delhi and Calcutta launched 'Nizam Records' and 'Kohinoor Records'. These efforts continued and new label records such as 'Azad Record', 'Mel-o-di-Disc' (featuring number of South Indian recordings) and 'Bharat Bani' began to appear in the market. 'Star Hindusthan record' released recordings of performers from Benares and Lucknow, including the very first 'shehanai' recordings of legendary Bismillah Khan, (labelled as Welaitu Bismillah & Party)

Hindusthan Music Products Ltd. continued to issue 78 rpm records until about 1969. The most popular recording artist was of course K. L. Saigal. The label also contains songs of Kumar Sachin Dev Burman, Pankaj Mulick and a large variety of rural and folk songs. First recordings of Pandit Deelip Chandra Vedi, Ustad Faiyaz Khan and Bade Ghulam Ali Khan are to be found on this label. Some important instrumental artists featured on the label are – Prof. Ali Bux and Ustad Saggiruddin Khan – Sarangi, Prof. Nazir Hussein – Shehanai, Radhika Mohan Moitra – Sarod and Sitar. Some of the popular quawali groups such as Iboo Quawal, Panna Quwal, Salimullah & Party are found on this label. Recordings of Bihari, Bhojpuri, Oriya, Nepali and Gorkhali songs and Baul songs of Purna Das are found on this label. In 1972, popular 78 rpm records were reissued on microgroove LP/EP formats and later on audio cassette tapes. Recently some of the recordings have been reissued on CD's and these are still popular after about 70 years. 'Hindusthan records' remained a major force in the sound recording industry in India and produced around 1000 titles.

29

Columbia records

Columbia Graphophone Manufacturing Company was an American company. In 1917, company established a branch in London to acquire European operations. Around 1930, they opened offices in India. In 1931, merger of Gramophone and Columbia Company affected the operations and two companies came under EMI [Electrical and Musical Industries Ltd.]. The Indian branch office controlled operations in Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Siam, Singapore and the Dutch East Indies. By 1934, company had four recording engineers based in Calcutta, to conduct recording expeditions in Asia and in India. Columbia had already formed network throughout India connecting Madras, Lahore, Bombay and Calcutta. In 1938, company introduced a cheap priced 'Regal' label for new recordings of less important and upcoming promising artists. Later it was also utilized for the reissue selections from the 'Odeon' catalogues.

During World War II, operations of German Company 'Odeon' came to halt and several popular titles from Odeon catalogues were reissued on 'Columbia' and 'Regal' labels. Thus records of Omkarnath Thakur, Abdul karim Khan, Heerabai Barodekar, Vilayat Husein Khan and many others from western India could also be found on Columbia label records. In 1935, a special series of 'Music Lessons' by Prof. Vinayakboia Patwardhan and Prof. N. S. Ratanjanlar was released. Eastern Indian operations of Columbia Company continued during 1932-1945. Violet label record series contained transfers from Odeon and reissues of New theater label records. Thus, one finds records of K. L. Saigal, Pankaj Mullick and many others on Columbia violet label. Saraswati Stores, Madras were the sole agents of Columbia products in South India. During 1931-1945, large number of South Indian recordings were released that includes great artists such as Chembai Bagavathar, Subramanian Pillai, D. K. Pattamal, K. Ashwathamma, [singing Jana Gana Mana], S. G. Kittappa. North Indian repertoire consists of recordings in Punjabi, Hindusthani and Pushto and the operations were controlled mainly from Lahore.

Apart from the regular series, Company also produced 'special' records like – 'Indian National Congress' – (Golden) Jubilee record, held in 1935, and Indian pressings of recordings made by Mahatma Gandhi and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in London, issued in LBE series. These records contain Indian flag or a spinning wheel (Charkha) replacing usual 'tiger' mark. Company also produced special records for Government of Bombay and Government of Orissa and 'Dehat Sudhar Records' on special order.

From 1934, original 'tiger/palm' label style was replaced by the new 'tiger' trademark, and in 1951, blue label with new 'tiger/magic notes' was introduced. In 1950, a series of 'Kid Kord' label containing Nursery recordings for children was introduced. Columbia catalogue runs into almost 100,000 recordings. The label remained in production (as a 78-rpm) through 1970 and was carried forward for LP/EP formats until about 1980.

Today Columbia records and catalogues are hard to find, but they contain our musical wealth and it still remains to be transferred into modern formats like CD's and MP3's. Some of the rare items include – private early songs of Lata Mangeshkar, Kishore Kumar, Hemant Kumar, Manna Dey, Classical and light classical songs by Bai Inayat Bai, Iqbal Bamoo, Harindranath Chattopadhyay, Heerabai Barodekar, Susheela Tembe, Moghubai Kurdikar, Panditrao Nagarkar, Ramnath Mathkar, Bai Rasoolanbai.

30

The Twin records

The Twin Record Co. Ltd. was established in 1927 as a subsidiary of the Gramophone Co. Ltd. as though it was a separate company. The label was

launched in direct competition with the 'Ramagraph' and 'Viel-O-Phone' labels that had recently been manufactured by Viel-O-Phone record pressing plant at Mahim in Bombay. The first releases were pressed at Sealdah factory in Calcutta in the red label T series and were exact duplicates – song for song for the rival releases on Ramagraph and Viel-O-Phone, and especially by the same artists.

Some of the first releases were simply reissues of previously released 'His Master's Voice' titles using alias's, e.g. Agha Faiz became Master Jamal and Pearu Quawal became Hafiz Quawal. By December 1928, Dum Dum factory became operational and 'The Twin' label became yellow in color and the budget (low) price label of the Gramophone Company. During 1934-35, recordings in South India and western part were undertaken and some of the film song recordings were released on blue labels instead of usual yellow label. Some Hindustani, Gujrathi and Marathi recordings were also issued on 8" diameter records. In 1935, the label style was changed by dropping the word "TWIN" from the printed labels leaving only the trademark of the twin cupids as the label name of "The Twin".

The Twin records were issued up to about 1955 in all vernacular languages and in all music styles. 'The Twin Dramatic Party' was very famous and they released several albums/box sets of skits and drama/plays. In 1957, many film songs and version (re-mix) recordings were issued. By late 1962, 'The Twin' label was being phased out although they were available in market. It is not known (and not yet compiled) as to how many twin records were marketed. An estimate of over 30,000 titles has been drawn up. They were priced at Rs. 1.5 each, almost half the price of HMV P or N series record. 'Twin' catalogue published in 1952 shows listing of Marathi, Hindusthani, Islami, Marwari Kannad records and instrumental records. Some of the then upcoming and promising artists who recorded on 'The Twin' label are-

Marathi records - Shahir Advilkar & Party: recording over 12 records on skits, Shahir Ganpatrao Sumbhe, Nanivdekar, Gavankar, Patkar, Narayan Chavan & Party, **Hindusthani** records – Abdul Rehman Kanchwala, Abdul Razaq Quawal, Kallan Khan Quawal, Master Dhulia & Party, Babu Calcuttawala, Master Fida Hussein, Shanti Hiranand, Shekhlal Quawal, **Instrumental** music records - Master Ibrahim (Clarinet), Govindrao Tembe (Harmonium), Baburao Devlankar, Miskin Khan (Sani), Bichhunath (Lehara Been), **Kannada** records – V. R. Karadi, Smt. Gangubai Maniketti and Gangubai Yedravi, Mallikarjun Mansoor, Mehboob Jan of Solapur and many others. The Twin records and cheap priced record players were very popular among masses and used to be played in public performances. Thus, 1930-40 appears to be the golden period for the gramophones and records with number of Companies flooding the market with variety of recordings and the public had a wider choice. 'Private recorder' scheme introduced by the Gramophone Company was quite useful for 'small' players in the market. HMV label was catering needs of record buying public in almost every field and had still a stronghold on market with their business

strategies and slowly these small companies either merged with Gramophone Company or disappeared.

31

E. M. I. Ltd.

During 1930-35, the film music was still in its infancy and the radio was just in the process of emergence. In the period of great depression of 1929-30, the sales of records had dwindled all over, particularly in Europe and in America. Most of the gramophones and record manufacturing companies were running into losses. [However, Gramophone Company was doing very well in Asia and in India]. In this difficult situation, they decided to collaborate with one another rather than compete and finish. In this venture, the American Columbia Company joined hands with the British Gramophone Company to form a new outfit called Electrical & Musical Instruments Ltd. (EMI) which was actually founded on 20th April 1931. Soon after this merger, the German 'Odeon' company and the French 'Pathe' Company also joined this group of Companies. Thus "EMI" in 1931 onwards became the largest company in the world.

Though major companies had merged together, they still continued to retain their brand labels to make it appear that they were the competing outfits. Most of the records were pressed at the Dum Dum factory in Calcutta that had by then grown considerably in size and capacity. Various labels that continued were HMV, The Twin, Zonophone, Odeon and Columbia with variations in prices. In addition, 'private recorders' were also taken over by EMI. The enlarged company had spread its tentacles to other parts in Asia as well, such as Burma, Siam, Malaya, Singapore and Dutch west Indies (now Indonesia). The master recordings made in these places were brought to Calcutta factory for pressing.

As mentioned earlier, there was again a semblance of competition with Hindusthan, Megaphone, Senola in Calcutta, Ram-O-Graph, Broadcast, Young India, Viel-O-Phone in Bombay and Hutchins, (Saraswati Stores) in Madras that were manufacturing / distributing their own records. This was also the time when independence movement in India was in full swing. There were public meetings, morchas, number of social and public ceremonies and functions and rallies, religious festivals such as Ganesh Utsav and Durga and Kali Pooja. In these events large number of people used to assemble together. Gramophone records were used at these places to entertain and hold people together.

Records of classical / light classical music, stage and devotional songs etc. were becoming monotonous and the people were looking forward for something new to happen. Gramophone Company started recruiting new staff in Calcutta and in Bombay. Among these was a young lawyer Mr. G. N. Joshi, B. A. LL. B. (later, these degrees were printed on all his record labels.) who was deeply interested and involved in music. He was a singer himself and used to sing Marathi poems of popular poets of that time. Mr. G. N. Joshi produced records in full gusto of

classical and light classical music, Bhavgeet and many other varieties. He himself made over 100 records and invited other rising singers such as Mr. J. L. Ranade of Ahmednagar and Mr. G. J. Watve of Poona to cut 'Bhavgeet' records that became popular instantly. There is a long list of over 150 artists (both male and female) whose Bhavgeet records were popular. This new 'Adhunika Gaan' style also reached in Calcutta and in South India and records in number of Indian languages began to appear in the market. Thus in the apparent turmoil of 1930-40's, the Gramophone Company of India Ltd. not only survived but also expanded its scope and activities through E.M.I. Ltd. The next decade was undoubtedly that of film music with borrowed voices that was to give enormous returns and dividends to the Company.

32

Playback in films

It has been presumed that the 'borrowed voice' in films was first employed in the New Theaters Hindi production 'Dhoop-Chaon' ('Bhagya-Chakra' in Bengali). This film was produced in 1935, and directed by Mr. Nitin Bose. The music was composed jointly by Mr. Raichand (R. C.) Boral and Pankaj Mullick. Mr. Pankaj Mullick has narrated an incidence in his book 'Gujara Huva Jamana' (cover of the book seen in photo above) describing the episode leading to the experimentation of borrowing voice.

One day Mr. Nitin Bose stopped at Pankaj Mullick's place on his way to studio. At that time, Pankaj was taking his bath and was singing aloud to synchronize with the English song that was being played on a gramophone at neighbor's house. The words were 'Come with me when the moon beams'. He was so much engrossed that Pankaj's father had to wake him up from the trance by thumping violently on the door to tell him that someone is waiting for him. He hurriedly dressed up and got into the car where Nitin Bose was waiting for him while smoking a cigarette. On the way, Bose asked the driver to stop the car near Chowringhee. He got down and went somewhere to return within ten minutes with a parcel of gramophone records. He was unusually silent till they reached the studio. Pankaj Mullick was feeling guilty for making him wait in his house.

After some time in the studio, Nitin Bose called Pankaj to his room. There was a gramophone and the records just purchased. He played 'Pagan love story' and asked him to sing along with it as he did in the bathroom in the morning. The expressions on the face of Nitin changed from thoughtful silence to one of satisfaction. He caught hold of Pankaj and started dancing to the tune of the song being played on the record. He said, 'I got what I wanted. When I heard you in the morning, I had a faint idea that has taken shape now'.

In fact, this was the beginning of the playback in films. This in future enabled many non-singing actors and actresses to perform without actually singing. Nitin

Bose put this idea into work as the song of Sakhi's with the voices of three singers viz. Suprova Ghosh (later Sircar), Parul Biswas (later Ghosh) and Umashashi. The Hindi version of the song 'Main Khush Hona Chahun' was composed by Pandit Sudershan. Among the three singers, only Umashashi acted in the film. This song was not however reproduced on a gramophone record. Of the ten songs from this film, only six came out on HMV/Hindusthan records. These were sung by K. C. Dey, Pahari sanyal, and Umashashi and they all acted in the film. In those days, only those who could sing acted in the films and hence using a borrowed voice was apparently considered below dignity. Among these records, HMV N 6541 was sold in large numbers for several years. This record had two songs sung by blind singer Mr. K. C. Dey and the words were 'Manaki Aankhe Khol Baba' and 'Teri Gatahrimen Laga Chor, Musaphir Jaag Jara'.

Similar experiments were tried elsewhere also around that time. Smt. Saraswati Devi used this technique in Bombay talkies film 'Jawani Ki Hava' (1935) in which she herself lent her voice to her sister Chandraprabha. Later on in film 'Achut Kanya' (1936) she used this method again. In Prabhat film 'Amrutmanthan' Shanta Apte used her own pre-recorded voice while acting in the film, as recounted by Mr. Vishram Bedekar in his autobiography. In South, borrowed voice was first utilized in AVM Productions 'Nandkumar' in 1938. Thus the idea of playback singing initiated in Calcutta caught up and was followed throughout India and soon became the norm in Film Industry.

33

Early film songs

In the decade 1931-40, over 9,000 songs were sung in about 930 Hindi films. However about 10% of these were released on gramophone records and marketed. In the next ten years i.e. 1941-50, the number of recorded songs increased to about 11,000 (from 1,236 films) and were released on number of record labels such as HMV, Columbia, Hindusthan, New Theaters, Megaphone, Gien-O-Phone, Young India, The Twin etc. Over 7000 records were released. One could listen to these songs almost everywhere, at home and at public places. In Poona, the municipality [Municipal Corporation], gave a contract to Mr. Balasaheb Apte [his records shop named 'Lalkaar' was very popular] to play records for half an hour or so in the famous Sambhaji Udyan. At Shreerampur in Ahemadnagar district, every morning and late at night two records are played from the public address system located at the terrace of public library and the whole locality begins and ends the day with wonderful recorded music. This practice continues even today.

During early period, several accomplished music directors gave excellent tunes to film songs and gained name and fame. Some of the well known names are – Dada Chandekar, Datta Korgaonkar, Sudheer Phadke, Pannalal Ghosh,

Madhulal Master, Govindram, Ashok Ghosh, Gulam Haider, Timir Baran, Harishchandra Bali, Vasantkumar Naidu, C. Balaji, S. K. Pal, Smt. Saraswatidevi, Zande Khan, Shreedhar Parsekar, Ninu Mujumdar, Sajjad Hussein, S. N. Tripathi and many others.

Over one hundred singers lent their voice and the list of the songs sung by them will run into several pages! Some of them also made their appearances on the silver screen. Some of the less known singers are – Ramdulari, Veenakumari, Kamla, Motibai, Charlie, Vatsala Kumthekar, Kamardid Khan, Shanta Hublikar, Kantilal, Ashok Kumar, Miss Rose, Parul Ghosh, Radharani, Shamshad Begum, Nalini Jaywant, Indira Wadkar, Shakuntala, Devaskar, Menaka, Sheela, Amirbai, Jahoor Raja, Rahamatbai, Kausalya, Gulbanoo, Anis khatoon, Anuradha, Ratanbai, Vasanti, Shamim, Ishwarlal, Veena, Surendra, Kajjan, Miss Kalyani, Gulshan Sufi, Fakir Mohammad, Alla Rakha, Lalita Parulkar, Kusum Mantri, Nasim Akhtar, Vanamala, Sunalinidevi, Joharabai, Jaddanbai, Dixit, Ghor, Shanti, Afzal Lahori, Arunkumar, Yeshwant Bhatt, Yousuf Effendi, Govind kurwalikar, Ramola, Kishore Sahu, Sadashiv Nevrekar, Saraswati Mane (Rane), Vasant Desai, Jayashree, Indu Damle, Malka Jan, Zeenat, Manju, S. D. Batish, G. M. Durrani, Molina, Baby Alka, Mohantara Talpade, Mumtaz Shanti, Manik Verma and several others. These names have gone into oblivion with the advent of time.

Along with these less known singers, Pankaj Mullick, K. L. Saigal, Suraiyya, Rajkumari, Kanan Devi and Noorjehan who were singing as well as acting in films, and gave a large number of records. It was possible for them to make appropriate lip movements along with their own pre-recorded voice while others had to learn the technique with lot of trouble and efforts. Most of the artists were on the pay rolls of the film companies. During the early period, the records did not contain their names on the labels. So was the case with the music directors and lyricists. All that was printed was the song text along with the name of the film producing company with their logo/trademarks and sometimes name of the character in the film who is using the borrowed voice. Out of the early playback singers, Smt. Saraswati Rane who sang for several Marathi and Hindi films like 'Sikandar', 'Ram Rajya' etc. stopped lending voice, since due credit on record label was not given. It was much later that the names of the playback singers, music directors and lyricists began to appear on the record labels.

34

Playback in 50's

In the five years from 1941-45, around 80-90 Hindi films were produced per year. In the following years viz. 1946-1950, this rate increased to around 150 films per year. The main centers of film production were located in Bombay, Poona, Calcutta and Madras. The playback singers who reigned the Hindi film world for over 40 years had given initial songs during the decade 1941-50. Mukesh sang in

film 'Nirdosh' (1941) and also acted in this film. His song 'Dil hi buza hua to' with music by Ashok Ghosh appeared on HMV N 25892. Heroine of this film - Miss Nalini Jaywant also sang and the songs were recorded and distributed by HMV and Orient records. Mohammad Rafi sang in 'Hamara Sansaar' (1945) under the music direction of Pandit Govindram and the song was released on Columbia record, 'Ai diye na tum tamanna'. Even before this, in 1944, Hemanat Kumar sang 'Aram se jo raten kate' under the direction of Pandit Amarnath in the film 'Irada'. These playback singers dominated for next 30-40 years.

Raj Kumari, Shamshad Begum, Khurshid, Suraiyya, Noorjehan, Geeta Roy (Dutt), were in the forefront of playback singing before Miss Lata Mangeshkar entered in this field by singing a thumri - 'Pa lagoo barjori' in the film 'Aapki Sevamen' (1947) on HMV N 26958. Before this, she had sung with Meenakshi in 'Badi Maa' (1946) and also in one chorus song. Later on in 1949, she insisted that her name be printed on the record label of famous song 'Aayega aanewala' from film 'Mahal'. So, one can come across two different versions of 78 rpm record of this song – one in which credit is given to 'Lata Mangeshkar' and the other in which name 'Kamini' – (the character in the film – 'Mahal') is printed on the record label. Later on, Lataji sang in films for over 50 years and has sung over 5500 Hindi film songs with due credit given to her on each record label. This practice continued for all others singers too who provided playback.

Another playback singer entered in the film world in 1948 and that was Smt. Asha Bhosle. She sang her first film song in film 'Bhakta Gopal Bhaiyya' under the music direction of Mr. Shankar Rao Vyas. However these songs were not cut on gramophone records. She has since then created a world record in playback singing with over 7500 Hindi film songs. Total number of songs sung by Ashaji, including all Indian languages has crossed 10,000! And she still sings with full vigor and spirit. Well-researched and documented books (Geet Kosh) on Lataji and Ashaji's Hindi (film) songs have been published now and these are the excellent reference sources for both critics and music lovers.

Thus, in the first 20 years of 'The Talkie', the sound entered in about 20,000 songs but around 8000 songs appeared on just about 4000 gramophone records. Majority of the remaining songs are either forgotten or lost to history since the film prints are not available. No one has cared to record these songs on audio formats from the reels rescued and no archives in the country wants to consider this aspect of storing songs that form the integral part of Indian cinema. The gramophone record collectors spread all over India and abroad have been able to obtain only around 1000 records of that era that are in good and playable condition. With the advent of time, they also find it difficult to store, since no one really cares and these collections again would be lost with time. Few months ago, several important nitrate based film reels got destroyed/burnt in the Pune Film Archives premises and one really does not know what valuables have we lost! Considering these possibilities of unfortunate incidences and accidents, it

has become necessary to take care and store these treasures on alternate media and formats like audio and video CD's and MP3's.

35

The Golden era of film songs

The period 1950-1965 is considered as the golden era of Hindi film music. The songs that came out during these years had such a long lasting popularity that even today, they are still heard, sung and played in music competitions and used in remix audio and video programs/presentations. During 1951-60, around 100-120 Hindi films were produced per year. Over 10,000 songs were sung in about 1160 films and most of these were released on 78-rpm gramophone records. These were played in cinema halls, radio stations, at public functions and of course in homes on record players and on radiograms. The quality of these electrically recorded discs was very good. Several radio stations were operative throughout India after independence. There were also hundreds of cinema halls spread all over country. These provided a sure base and guaranteed customers for the sale of records. The Gramophone Company started producing records on much larger scales in both Hindi and regional languages. This brought in a sizeable profit to the company. In fact, records of film songs became the main source of income and profit.

The credit for this so called 'Golden Age' should of course be given to the lyricists, music directors/composers and singers. List is very long, but lyricists and poets like Shakeel Badayuni, Shailendra, Pradeep, Sahir Ludhianvi, Majrooh Sultanpuri and many others wrote wonderful songs with simple and meaningful words. The music directors like Anil Biswas, Husnalal Bhagatram, Naushad, C. Ramchandra, Shankar-Jaikishan, Roshan, S. D. Burman, O. P. Naiyyar, Vasant Desai, Madan Mohan and others gave very catchy and yet easy to remember tunes. There were also teams like e.g. Shakeel Badayuni and Naushad, Shailendra and Shankar-Jaikishan, Sahir Ludhianvi and S. D. Burman and so on. This helped them in bringing out good melodies. Such a team work was also seen in the regional films, just to site one example in Marathi: the combination of Mr. G. D. Madgulkar (lyricist) and Mr. Sudheer Phadke (composer) brought out excellent songs that are still heard and remembered.

Other important music composers of the golden period are: K. Datta, Chitragupta, Avinash Vyas, Aziz Hindi, K. P. Sen, C. S. Ragi, C. Balaji, Indravadan Bhatta, Ram Panjawani, Jamal Sen, B. S. Kalla, Govindram, Kamaldas Gupta, Keshavrao Bhole, Bulu C. Rani, G. S. Chisti, Sonic-Giridhar, Hemant-Kedar, Motiram, Shantikumar, Satish Bhatiya, Chic Chocolate, Murari, M. D. Parthasarathi, Madhulal Master, Hanuman Prasad, Shyambabu Pathak, Robin chatterjee, Narayan, Dhaniram, Vasant Pawar, Bhola Shreshtha, S. Mohinder, Sardar Malick, Jaydeo, Khayyam, Sanmookh Babu, Ali Akbar Khan, Santosh Mukherjee, S. D. Batish, Snehal Bhatkar and several others.

Around 1950, among the singers Kundan Lal Saigal was no more and Noorjehan had migrated to Pakistan. Those who were still active and upcoming were: Suraiyya, Geeta Dutt (Roy), Rajkumari, Sudha Malhotra, Suman Kalyanpur, Shamshad Begum, Johrabai Ambalawali, Mubarak Begum, Meena Kapoor. Also emerged the voices of legendary Lata Mangeshkar and Asha Bhosle. Due to their talent and versatility, they ruled the music world for next 50 years. The male singers were not too many and film hero had a restricted choice among Mohammad Rafi, Mukesh, Talat Mohammad, Hemant Kumar, Manna Dey, Mahendra Kapoor and Kishore Kumar. There were also other male and female singers who lent their voices and disappeared from film music scene. All the same, the contribution of the gramophone records was indeed very substantial.

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Remix and version records

Film songs of the golden era reached far and wide in the houses of common music lovers through radio and the gramophone records. Most of these records were released on HMV label N series viz. N 36000-37000 (one thousand record) and N 50001-56031 (about six thousand records). Columbia records series: GE 8800-9000 and The Twin records also released film music. In addition, Bulbul Company produced records from songs from a few lesser known Hindi films such as: Son of Alibaba, Tanksaal, Indrasabha. These were yellow and red in color and made out of unbreakable plastic 10" records, but revolving at 78 rpm. The total number of songs that were released on these records during 1950 to 70 is about 20,000 songs on about 10,000 shellac records.

At least few songs of films during this period became popular. However there are some films whose almost all songs were great hit and even today just by mere name of the film, a true music lover recalls the melodies. These films include: Awara, Aah, Aan, Daag, Baiju Bawara, Anarkali, Patita, Hamdard, Nagin, Nastik, Azad, House No. 44, Mr. & Mrs. 55, Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baje, Shree 420, Munimji, Anari, Seema, Udan Khatola, C. I. D. Chhoo Mantar, Munimji, Kathaputli, Do Aankhe Barah Haath, Pyasa, naya Daur, Mughal-a-Azam, Nau Do Gyrah, Paying Guest, Guide, Tumsa Nahi Dekha, Chalatika Naam Gadi, Madhumati, Jis Deshmen Ganga Bahati Hai, Madhumati, Parvarish, Mother India, Phir Subah Hogi, Yahudi, Dhulka Phool, Gumrah, Dil Deke Dekho, Goonj Uthi Shahanai. Anuradha, Bambaika Babu, Chalia, Chaudavahi Ka Chand, Ganga Jamuna, Barsaat Ki Raat, Mamta, Hum Dono, kala Bazaar, Kohinoor, Taj Mahal, Dil Apna Aur Preet Parai, Talash, Johny Mera Naam, Aradhana, Kati Patang and several others. The list would be very long.

Among 20,000 songs very few songs are still popular and most of them are based on pure and light classical music, borrowed western tune or on folk music. Some of these songs are now used in advertisements, jingles and in remix songs. But even during the time when these were at the peak of their popularity,

other singers of that time were tempted to sing and record these songs again. These were called as "Version Songs" and were released mainly on Columbia and The Twin records. Over 100 such songs are available on 78-rpm records. Several Bengali singers have sung these songs translated in Bengali or tunes set to Bengali lyrics. However leading singers from Bombay also gave records. Some of the interesting examples are: Mohabbat Chume Jinke Haath (Film 'Aan', Hemant Kumar), Darde Ulfat Chupaun Kahan (Film 'Aurat', Manik Verma), Kisine Aapna Banake Mujhko (Film 'Patita', Madhubala Jhaveri), Kabhi Aar Kabhi Paar (Film 'Aarpar', Sudha Malhotra), Marna Teri Galimen (Film 'Shabab', Asha Bhosle), Panchi Banu Udate Phirun (Film 'Chori Chori', Geeta Dutt), Janewalese Mulakaat Na Hone Paye (Film 'Amar', Asha Bhosle). These cover versions themselves speak about the popularity of the original tunes and the songs. So, remixing and cover version is not a new trend but it made a deep impact on music lovers. Hence they keep reappearing again and again on different formats such as LP/EP records, audio/video tapes and CD's and in MP3 forms, and through different media like TV, satellite channels and through computers. This 'cover version' recordings continued until about 1970-75. Surinder Kohli, Anwar, Ambar Kumar, Pushpa Pagdhare, Krisna kalle, Hemalata gave these records and they sang songs from films such as – 'Johny Mera Naam' ['O Mere Raja', 'Babul Pyare', Nafarat Karnewalonke'] Sachha Jhutha ['Meri Pyari Bahaniya', 'Dilko Dekho'], Tere Mere Sapne, and The Train [Gulabi Aankhe Jo Teri Dekhi].

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Era of Tape Recorders

During 1941-1950, several changes took place including the end of World War II. Because of the war, many new technologies came into existence in the field of communications, radio, radar and so on. Efforts were also made to produce battery operated radio sets, record players and unbreakable long playing gramophone records for the entertainment of soldiers on the battlefield. A major breakthrough in these efforts was the development of an electromagnetic tape and tape recorders. Earlier long-playing shellac discs used in recording studios of radio resembled 'Frying Pans'. After 8-10 runs, these pans had to be discarded because of the deterioration of the sound quality. In this context, the tape recorders provided an alternative method to record, store and play the programs for 30-90 minutes duration. Since it was possible to wipe out unwanted programs and re-record/edit new ones, these machines found their way in almost all the stations of All India Radio.

Tape recorders were already in use in Europe and in U.S.A. Several rich and well-to-do households started buying these machines as a means to listen and enjoy good music concerts at home. This was the class in the society that was the main buyer of the records. Hence, the sale of records affected adversely, that resulted in cutting down the number of workers and also reduction of salaries of the remaining staff. In such a situation, many music composers left and joined

the film industry or radio stations. The film industry was also undergoing a major change. The great institutions like Prabhat, New Theaters, Bombay Talkies were getting closed down though some like V. Shantaram's 'Rakjamal Kalamandir', and Raj Kapoor's 'R. K. Studio' were still in operation. Black marketeers who had amassed huge wealth during war time, started becoming film producers. The earlier lyricists, music composers and singers that were on monthly payrolls began to freelancing and earned much more than the meager salaries. The music directors who were using handful of instruments, began to indulge in huge and heavy orchestration. They were considered big or small according to the size of the orchestration that they used.

In the earlier days, a song was recorded twice, once on the studio sets of the film during shooting and then in the studio of the Gramophone Company for cutting the master for shellac records. The Company had hired large number of instrument players for such recordings. With the advent of the tape recorders, the music directors started sending the pre-recorded music to the film producers. This also resulted in the reduction of accompanying instrumentalists in the recording studios of the Gramophone Company. The Company began to realize that the electro-magnetic tapes were replacing the breakable shellac disc records. At the same time they could not abandon the manufacture of records that had still a considerable market.

In these difficult situations, it was necessary to look into the new avenues and the product lines for the mere survival in the business. Managers began to put new ideas about products and improvements in the existing machines and records. This phase lasted for few months and Company began to manufacture the items that were totally new, novel but keeping pace with time and the changing life styles of the elite in the cosmopolitan cities of India.

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Novel HMV products

The Gramophone Company had faced several ups and downs right from the beginning during its years of existence. Therefore it had indulged in the manufacture and sale of variety of other items. As mentioned before, in 1898, the company had started the side business of typewriter machines. During those days, even the record labels mentioned 'Gramophone & Typewriters Ltd.' and such labels were popularly known as "G & T". Although the typewriter line was soon dropped, the company was producing all the accessories like talking machines, horns, wooden cabinets, needles and needle tin boxes, dusters; wooden boxes and shelves for storing record albums.

Around 1940-45, The Gramophone Company Ltd. entered into marketing of radio sets. Initially these were imported from Europe, especially from England and sold in India with HMV brand name and advertised vigorously along with records and gramophones. These were of course valve type radio sets, since transistors were

yet to arrive. Six/seven valve radio sets with four bands were produced, assuring the customers that these sets receive the transmissions from all over the world and with clear sound. The price of these sets ranged between Rs. 250-350.

Old catalogues of HMV also show advertisements for items like refrigerators with counter freezers for ice cream. These had storage capacity of thirty-two gallons of ice cream and frozen at $-10/20^{\circ}\text{C}$. There were also 'bottle coolers' suitable for canteens, clubs and hotels. The company was sure that these items would have a huge market in warm and tropical country like India. HMV brand electric irons were also produced and marketed to replace charcoal heated irons. The company perhaps imagined that people with well ironed clothes, drinking cold drinks or eating ice cream would relax in their drawing rooms, listening to radio programs or songs from the gramophone records!

Old type mechanical gramophones fixed in wooden cabinets became extinct and smaller machines of suitcase size came into market. The portability of these units was well accepted because these could be carried on short trips, and picnics. However, there were still limitations since the volume and sound could not be adjusted in old-fashioned sound box in the mechanical gramophones. The sound box was made of steel or brass and weighed 200-250gm that could cause deep scratches in the records affecting the sound quality. A cartridge containing magnetic pick up and a coil connecting the steel needle replaced this. This pick up was then connected to amplifier section of the radio set. The volume control in the radio set was used to control and adjust the loudness of the sound. This magnetic pick up weighed about ten gm and this was further reduced to about one gm when ceramic and diamond cartridges were developed and used in hi-fi sets. The sound quality was vastly improved.

Around same time, experiments to make non-breakable plastic/vinyl records were proving to be successful and hence new types of disc playing machines were required. Turn tables using electricity and electrical motors were developed so that the tedium of winding and unwinding of the gramophone with each record could be avoided. These turntables could also rotate at variety of speeds such as 78, 45, 16 and 33 r.p.m.). Record changers were very useful for stacking the records. These products were to some extent useful in competing the tape recorders. Other improved versions such as radiograms (combination of radio and gramophone), ampligrams (combination of amplifiers and gramophone) were soon developed.

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Long playing records

Since 1932-33, Columbia and RCA companies in America were intensely working on unbreakable and long-playing gramophone records. By using chemicals like vinyl chloride, the technicians had prepared discs of the required specifications. But the grooves of these were so wide that a song would end after

a short run time. In addition to this, the heavy sound box would scratch and peel off the chemical coatings on the disc making it sound as that of a lathe machine working in the industrial workshop. Therefore, a lightweight 'tone-arm' with a sharp stylus of sapphire or diamond point was developed. Also the efforts were made to reduce the size of the grooves on the record to enhance the playtime.

The time required for long-play record was worked out on the basis of the duration of western classical music concert. A standard concert would require four to six records of 10" diameter (78 rpm) that would last a total of 30-40 minutes. Therefore it was necessary that one side of the long playing disc should play for at least 18-20 minutes and the groove width reduced to 1/1000 of an inch. The technicians and engineers of Columbia Company had worked hard for over 15 years to develop the long-playing record of 10" diameter with speed at 33-1/3 rpm (revolutions per minute). The concerts of Mozart, Beethoven, Bach and others could be easily accommodated on these discs running for about 40 minutes. The Columbia Company decided to manufacture these LP records on large scale for commercial distribution. The task of manufacturing suitable turntables was given to other industries. The European companies such as the Gramophone Company Ltd. Decca, Parlophone, Pathe also joined these efforts. Along with these LP's rotating at 33-1/3 rpm, smaller size 7" diameter short play (S. P.) and extended play (E. P.) records were produced. These records rotated at 45 rpm and playtime ranged from 3-6 minutes per side. This brought in lot of profit to these companies.

In Europe and in America, millions of radio sets with pick-up arrangement were sold and these records could be heard at a desired volume using the amplifiers of these radio sets. The first LP record was demonstrated in about 1948 and soon the production units were established. In 1952, EMI marketed the first long play record. That was the time when rock-n-roll, Pop, and other forms of modern music were in vogue. In 1958, stereo records of 12" diameter came into the market. The companies for recordings specially invited popular artists such as Cliff Richards, The Beatles. In 1960, the last of the old type lac record of 78 rpm was sold by EMI that had two items – 'Rule Britannia and Royal Event'. By 1962, the production of these records was discontinued in Europe and the records were withdrawn from the market.

In India, the production of LP/EP records was undertaken at Dum Dum factory in Calcutta in 1958. Among these, EP record: 7EPE 1201 – Sarod recital by Ustad Ali Akbar Khan became quite popular. He played raga Darbari Kanada on one side and raga Kaushi Kanada on the reverse. Classical music of Smt. Kesarbai Kerkar, Pandit S. N. Ratanjankar, and Sitar recitals of Pandit Ravi Shankar (Raga: Megh and Nand) and Ustad Vilayat Khan, songs from Hindi film 'Shree 420' were sold like hot cakes during this period. The first LP record was recorded on Ravi Shankar's Sitar recital and thereafter within one year, over 125 LP records were issued. Some of these had included the speeches of the then prominent leaders. However a huge market for films songs was ahead and

company was to earn large profits by issuing the songs on LP/EP micro-groove records

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LP/EP records

In 1954, there was a strike in Dum Dum factory of Gramophone Company at Calcutta. During this idle period, the management decided to set up machinery and plant for the production of LP and EP records. The equipment was imported from London. In the beginning, 10" diameter vinyl LP's were produced and were looking similar to old 78 rpm shellac records. This was the practice in Europe too when LP records of western classical and pop music were produced. Each side of these records could be played well over 15 minutes.

Around 1940- 45, 'The plastic and Industrial Corporation' of Worli, Bombay had produced plastic records of film music on 'Bulbul' label, playing at 78rpm. In collaboration with a company named Music Masters Ltd, production of 10" LP's and 7" EP's was also attempted at that time. However this effort was abandoned due to some technical difficulties. In 1952-53, another company called 'King Solomon's Mines' also tried to produce similar records. The office was located in the building of Metro Cinema in South Bombay. This company produced yellow color - 'Happy Birthday' and Merry Christmas records and Nursery Rhymes records for children. They also released Pandit Nehruji's speech recorded from a meeting at Chowpaty. On 10" LP records, sitar recital by Ustad Vilayat Khan and sarangi recital by Pandit Ram Narayan was issued and the company was closed down. The labels of these two records show picture of sitar and sarangi instruments. Short biography of the artists was also printed on the record jackets. Today, these records have become valuable 'Collector's items'.

Although these small attempts of some private parties in Bombay were bringing out few records in the market, the Dum Dum factory had already modernized their plants and had begun to issue LP records in 10" formats. Thus classical vocal music of Pandit Omkarnath Thakur was issued with wonderful photograph of Panditji on the cover. Thumri's of Begum Akhtar and Bade Gulam Ali Khan from original 78-rpm records were reissued. Soon, 78-rpm flute recordings of Pannalal Ghosh were reissued on LP record. Also songs from following films were released on 10" LP records: Aashiq, Junglee, Hariyali Aur Rasta, April Phool, Himalayki Godmen, Taj Mahal, Chaudahvika Chand, Sahib Bibi Aur Gulam, Geet Gaya Pattharone, Suraj, Saranga, Aayi Milanki Bela, Doorki Awaz, Ganga Jamuna, Aayi Milanki Bela, China Town etc. These records had beautiful photographs on front and sleeve notes on reverse. These were for export and hence some of the song titles are translated in English.

In 1959, company set up the machinery for producing 12" diameter long playing records and the department was formally inaugurated by Pandit Ravi Shankar.

Within a year, over 125 vinyl LP/EP records were issued in the market. The LP record number ECLP 2302 contained the speeches by Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The master copy (or the mother shell) of this record was presented to the then President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan as a National treasure. The voices of Dr. Radhakrishnan, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Dr. Zakir Hussein were also recorded and preserved. The stereo 12" records were first marketed in about 1965. Music from several films was thus available on one record with attractive photographs on record jackets and covers. In a 12" LP record titled "Music of India", an elephant is shown with a raised trunk. This record contains six songs from film 'Nagin' on one side and six songs from film 'Anarkali' on other side. This record was intended for export for popularizing Indian music abroad and it was very well received in Europe and in United States of America. Thus in early 60's company was producing 10/12" LP records and 7" EP records, although production of 10" - 78 rpm shellac records was in full swing.

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Down melody lane

Mr. G. N. Joshi was the chief and important officer in the Bombay office of HMV from early 1930. He was a singer of repute, and had cut over 100 records in 78-rpm format. He had also recorded several great artists in the 'Universal building' studio of HMV at Fort, Mumbai. He has written wonderful incidences and anecdotes in his book 'Down Melody Lane' [published by Orient Longman Company in Mumbai]. This is a translation of his Marathi book – 'Swar Gangechya Teeri'. The period described is from 1940-70 and he had brought out several innovative and off beat records for preserving the voices and speeches of great personalities of that time. Thus, we can listen to the voices of then Chief minister of Maharashtra – Mr. Morarjibhai Desai speaking on 'Prohibition', minister Mr. Ganpatrao Tapase, Buddha Vandana and message by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, voices of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, Smt. Sarojini Naidu. He also recorded poetry recitations of Harindranath Chattopdhyay, D. R. Bendre, Sopandeo Chodhury, Kavi Yashwant, B. B. Borkar, and Kavi Girish. Records in the voice of Marathi dramatist Vaman Malhar Joshi and reformist Mr. Dhondo Keshav Karve were specially recorded. Mr. Bhonde from Pune has recorded mimicry / imitation of speech by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak that gives us an idea of how Mr. Tilak addressed in public meetings, since his recorded voice is not available. He also recorded the voice of famous astrologer Vasant Ladoba Mhapankar. Several old drama sets were planned and produced. He had ambitious plans for producing records for children and with the help of Mr. Baburao Joshi of Kolhapur, he had brought out a series titled 'Bal-Bodh-Ranjan'. However, due to poor sale and lack of support from the management he had to shelve the projects and thus we have lost several historical recordings.

Around the same time, he also experimented with the innovative ideas of records in classical music. Thus with his efforts, Prof. Vinayakboa Patwardhan of Pune

cut a set of 10 'Music Lessons' records introducing ragas to beginners. Similar records in the voices of Principal N. S. Ratanjankar and later Professor Narayanrao Vyas were made and marketed. Several great artists were not interested in cutting records with the fear that people won't attend concerts if records are freely available. But G. N. Joshi could convince them the importance of cutting records. Thus he could get the recordings of Bade Gulam Ali Khan, Amirkhan, Rasoolanbai, Siddheshwari Devi, Moghubai Kurdikar, Kesarbai Kerkar, Faiyaz Khan, Sawai Gandharva, Kumar Gandharva, Ustad Bundu Khan (Sarangi) and several others. Mr. G. N. Joshi has narrated very interesting stories of recording these great masters.

During LP/EP era too, he was quite active and promptly transferred some of the best 78-rpm records on these vinyl records. His most favorite artist was Pandit Bhimsen Joshi and he cut several records in early 70's. Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar died in 1955 after returning from China tour. Just before leaving for China he had cut 6 minutes record of Raga Shree and some recordings on a spool tape. Mr. Joshi experimented with these recordings and edited one full 20 minutes version of Raga Shree after Paluskarji passed away. This was issued on one LP record with his famous bhajans on other side taken from 78-rpm recordings. Later on he experimented with Jugalbandi (duet) records and brought out fine recordings of Shehanai-Violin, Shehanai-Sitar recordings played by Bismillah Khan, V. G. Jog and Ustad Vilayat Khan. A record by trio - Shivkumar Sharma (Santoor), Hariprasad Chaurasia (Flute), and Brij Bhushan Kabra (Guitar) became very popular with its wonderful sleeve notes. This record titled – "Call of the valley" was reissued after 30 years under the title – 'Return of the valley'!

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Records in 70's

During 1961-70, around 1000 Hindi films containing over 7000 songs were produced. Most of these were issued on 78-rpm format and few selected were also issued on LP/EP vinyl records. LP record of 'The Guide' had dialogues preceding the song and this practice continued for quite some time. Dialogues and songs of 'Mughal-E-Azam' film were issued in a set of three LP records.

During this period, over 200 music directors composed film music. Kishore Kumar entered the scene as a music composer in Jhumroo (1961) and new duo Laxmikant-Pyarelal appeared with 'Parasmani' (1965). Already established music composers such as Shankar-Jaikishan, Kalyanji-Anandji, Sachin and Rahul Dev Burman, Roshan, Vasant Desai, Khayyam, Jaideo, Madan Mohan, Chitragupta and S. N. Tripathi were quite active. List of less known music composers is a long one. Some of them are: S. Kishan, S. Mohinder, Jamal Sen, Harbans, P. Nageshwar Rao, Krishnakamal, N. Dutta, Suresh Talwar, Usha Khanna, Shardul Quatra, C. Arjun, Gunjan, Baldeonath Bali, Sushant Banerjee, Jayant Joshi,

Bharat Mehta, Arun Raghavan, Jimmy, Iqbal Qureshi, Lachhiram, Babul, Ram Ganguli, Ajit Merchant, D. Dileep, Robin Banerjee, Avinash Vyas, Jagphool Kaushik, S. D. Batish, G. S. Kohli, Raj Ratan, Vijay Honavar, Pandit Shivram, Bipin, Bhanu Thakur, Gandharva Ghantsala, Meghraj, Sureshkumar, Shyambabu, Prabhakar Jog, Ramesh Naidu, Vedlal, Lala-Asar-Sattar, Prem Dhavan, Sonik-Omi, Roy Frank, Momin, Kanu Roy, Sapan Jagmohan, Satish Bhatiya, Rajeshwar Rao, Bhushan, Ganesh, Chandan, Vijan Pal, Ram Kadam, Ratan Deep, Hemraj and many others.

Apart from the renowned and well known play back singers, following singers contributed substantially: Subir Sen, Sabita Banerjee, Sudha Malhotra, Mubarak Begum, Madhubala Jhaveri, Minoo Puroshottam, Balbir, Ismail Azad, Janibabu Quawal, S. Varlaxmi, Krishna Kalle, Usha Mangeshkar, Ranu Mukherjee, Kamal Barot, Purodhottam, Pinakin Shah, Jaywant kulkarni, Sulochana Chavan, Dwijen Mukherjee, S. Janki, P. B. Srinivas, Jagjit Kaur, Yousuf Azad, Meera Siraj, Khurshid Bawara, Moti Sagar, Surendra Kohli, Vinod Desai, Neela Hazare, Usha Balsavar, M. M. Khan, Kabban Mirza, Kamal Hanspal, Vijaya Mujumdar, Laxmi Shankar, Badrinath Pawar, Pradeep, Aarti Mukherjee, Shyamal Mitra, Shankar Shambhu Quawal, Sharada, Mahesh Chander, Manahar Udas, Mahesh Kumar, Usha Thimoti, and many others.

In this decade too, several version records appeared in the market. Among the prominent leading artists of the remix songs were: Surinder Kohli, Ambar Kumar, Anwar, Krishna Kalle, Hemlata and Pushpa Paghdhare. They sang remix/cover version songs from hit films such as 'Sachha Jhutha', 'The Train' and 'Johny Mera Naam'. These records were manufactured in the new factory at Kandivli in Mumbai and it was the Indian outfit of famous 'Polydor' Company. Later this company changed hands and became Music India Ltd. and is still in the business. Hindustan Musical Products Ltd. Calcutta was manufacturing 78-rpm records under Hindusthan labels. With the advent of LP/EP era, in 1977, they formed a company INRECO (INdian REcords manufacturing COmpany) and began to reissue their repertoire of old Saigal songs, poetry recitations of Rabindranath Tagore and famous songs of Sachin Dev Burman. They also issued new recordings such as classical music records of Mallikarjun Mansoor, Nirguni bhajans of Pandit Kumar Gandharva and even Marathi songs sung by famous Cricket player Mr. Sunil Gavaskar!

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Records in 80's

Although the production of 78-rpm records in London came to halt in 1962, Dum Dum factory was producing the shellac records until about early eighties. Thus, the songs from films such as Man Ka Aanchal, Pardeshi, Koi Gulam Nahi, Mastana, Sawan Bhadon, Naya Rasta, Pardeshi, Pavitra Papi, Safar etc. were available on all three (78/33 and 45 rpm) formats. During 1971-80, around 8000 songs were recorded for over 1400 films indicating about just six songs per film.

Among the veteran music composers, Naushad, Anil Biswas, O. P. Naiyyar and others had either retired or were on the verge of retirement. Several great music composers had left this world. Duo Shankar Jaikishan had already split and could not shine individually. This decade was ruled by Laxmikant Pyarelal, Kalyanji-Anandji, R. D. Burman, Bhappi Lahiri and several other upcoming musicians.

With 'Sholay' in 1975, Hindi film music took another important turn. The film script contained more aggressive plots with actions and fights, murders and revenges. Era of romantic and value based scripts was soon to disappear! Romantic hero was turning into 'He Man' and 'Angry Young Man'. With the success of 'Sholay', a set of LP/EP records containing dialogues and songs was issued. Soon such records for Deewar, Amar Akbar and Anthony etc. were issued with color pictures from films printed on playing vinyl surface of the records.

Yet, this was a transition period. Hence one could see upcoming Amitabh Bachchan as a Vijay in 'Jangeer' with not a single song and a full fledged singer in 'Abhiman' – both films released in same year 1972! Although the songs were becoming irrelevant in these modern movies, one long awaited film - "Pakeezah" was released in 1972. It was a big flop in first week but became super hit after the heroine Meena Kumari passed away. The music was by Late Ghulam Mohammad and Naushad completed the remaining songs and the background score. Due to the increasing popularity of the songs, one LP record of film songs with dialogues was released. The front cover contained Meena Kumari's photo wearing black hijab (face cover) and with worried face, and the backside showed her B & W photograph of early 50's, discussing shot with her husband Kamal Amrohi. The songs 'Chalte Chalte', 'Inhi Logone Le Leena Dupatta Mera', 'Chalo Dildaar Chalo', 'Thade Rahiyo O Banke Yaar' became instant hits. The film celebrated silver jubilee and was even popular in Matinee runs. Due to this, the Gramophone Company released another record titled "Pakeezah Rang Barang" which contained beautiful color pictures of Meena Kumari during the initial period of film making. This record contained songs recorded for but not included in the film. This LP contained beautiful numbers: Mohammad Rafi singing 'Ye Kiski Aankhoka Noor Ho Tum', Lata Mangeshkar singing "Peeke Chale Ye Chale Hum Hai Sharabi" and 'Chalo Diladar Chalo' in bit fast tempo and with the Dholak accompaniment.

Other films of this decade, with remarkable music are: Yadonki Barat, Kabhi Kabhi, Kinara, Umrao Jan, Anurag, Andaz, Hare Rama Hare Krishna, Mera Gaon Mera Desh, Dushman, Khillona, Geet Gata Chal, Kal Aaj Aur Kal, Jawani Diwani, Gambler, Hanste Jakhma, Khel Khel Mein, Seeta Aur Geeta and the list is really long. In this decade too remix / cover version songs were popular and were mostly released on Polydor records featuring Ambar Kumar, Krishna Kalle and Kishore Kumar. In 1978, a song less film 'Kasturi' was released and the back ground music was composed by now famous musician 'Uttam Singh'!

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End of 78 rpm records

After Pakeezah, there were few other films containing reasonably good music but the impact was not comparable. Perhaps the only exception could be that of 'Umrao Jan' in which Asha Bhosleji sang some exquisite gazals set to tune by Khayyam. After about 1980, the number of songs per film reduced to 5-7 and most of these were issued on EP/LP records.

There is always a curiosity to find out the last 78-rpm record issued by the Gramophone Company. Old catalogues of HMV records indicate that these last recordings should be from the series N 55000 to 56000. This series contains the records from films such as 'Ek Paheli', 'Bahurupiya', 'Purani Pehchan', 'Shree Krishna Yuddha', 'Bhavana' and three records (six songs) from film 'Aag Aur Daag' [music: N. Dutta].

In Calcutta, Prabhat Mukherjee and Kamayani Pictures produced few Hindi films and the songs were issued on 78-rpm records. Among these films, 'Shayar-e-Kashir Mahajur' (1971) had ten songs and music director was – Prem Dhavan. The records were issued on HMV N series. In 1973, songs of film 'Chimnika Dhuan' were released on Columbia GE series. In 1974, Lata Mangeshkar recorded four songs on HMV N 55967 and 55968 for the film 'Phir Kab Milogi' and the music was set by Rahul Dev Burman. These were probably the last Hindi film songs issued on 78-rpm formats.

Thus the long era of these records came to an end, although the production of 78's had stopped long ago in Europe and in USA. In India, over 2.5 lakh titles were produced by various recording companies in over 75 years. Depending on the popularity of a particular record, they were issued again and again. Among the old artists, Peara Sahib recorded prolifically for several record companies and his records were reissued until about 1942. Gauhar Jan of Calcutta and Jankibai of Allahabad also enjoyed the same popularity and were popular among record buying public. Later on, records of Bal Gandharva featuring Marathi Natya (stage songs) sangeet became top sellers. With the advent of films, Hindi and regional film songs were issued on records and served as the home entertainers and for the public performances and family/religious events.

Due to colonial regime, large number of records were printed for the entertainment of the Anglo-Indian and British community residing in India. These were played at dance clubs and in parties. Several Hindi film music composers derived 'inspiration' from these records and some musicians even lifted tunes. Around 1965, few 78's of 'The Beatles' were printed in India at Dum Dum factory in Calcutta, since the machinery at London was scrapped. Today these records are high priced 'collector's items' and most sought after all over the world.

Community of "The record collectors" came into existence in this important era of 78's records.

During 1940-60, several flea markets in major cities were flooded with the heaps and mountains of records and they were available cheap at throw-away prices. Chandni Chowk and Red Fort area of New Delhi and Parry's near Madras railway station were famous among record buying public. The infamous 'Chor-Bazaar' of Mumbai had number of record shops. In addition, on every Friday, peddlers in Mumbai would bring in the records and set up their stalls on road. Senior record collectors narrate very interesting stories about the records and they would spend hours hunting for the records of their choice. Soon with the advent of cassette tapes, the 78 rpm records disappeared from the market and were bought in bulk and used for making the boxes for audiocassette tapes.

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The cassette culture

Towards the end of the decade: 1970-80, the markets were flooded with the cassettes and cassettes tape recorders. The Japanese made Sony, Panasonic and National 'two-in-one' machines with radio and cassette player were smuggled in large numbers. These were available even with footpath vendors in cities like Bombay. It used to be indeed a prized possession of many who considered themselves as the music lovers.

Tape recorders were initially brought out as 'wire recorders' in which a steel wire was used for storing the sound magnetically. However there were limitations in this technique since the wire (or a thin steel tape) could not be used again if it was broken in the middle. Therefore these were discarded. Soon, plastic tapes using materials like cellulose acetate were developed and these tapes were coated with the magnetic materials like ferric oxide. Sound could be stored magnetically easily and the tapes could be joined easily if broken in the middle. These tapes were 6.5 mm wide and 0.01 mm thick. Sometimes another coating of cobalt oxide or chromium oxide was given to improve the magnetic properties of the tapes. Spools to hold these tapes were made out of harder plastic material with 5, 7 & 8 inch diameter. The loaded spool was fixed on one side and an empty spool on the other. The tape would move at a regulated speed of about 9.5 mm/sec to record or replay the sound for 45, 60 and 90 minutes respectively. On the other hand, a cassette tape contains two tiny reels; one loaded with similar tape of plastic material and other empty. Both these reels are enclosed in a rectangular [cassette] case. While playing or recording, the tape moves at a speed of 5 mm/sec giving sound for 60, 90 and 120 minutes. One can use the same cassette for recording while erasing the earlier sound recorded on it.

Around this time, most of the bulky radio sets were getting replaced with much smaller and compact transistor sets and the cassette recorders took the place of

spool tape recorders. There was a general trend of miniaturization. A new culture of 'cassettes' came in and around 90's, Peter Manuel wrote a book titled – 'Cassette Culture': Popular Music and Technology In North India (Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology Series). In *Cassette Culture*, the author tells how a new mass medium, the portable cassette player, caused a major upheaval in popular culture in the world's second-largest country. The advent of cassette technology in the 1980s transformed India's popular music industry from the virtual monopoly of a single multinational LP manufacturer (HMV) to a free-for-all among hundreds of local cassette producers. The result was a revolution in the quantity, quality, and variety of Indian popular music and its patterns of dissemination and consumption.

Peter Manuel also shows that the cassette revolution, however, has brought new contradictions and problems to Indian culture. While inexpensive cassettes revitalized local subcultures and community values throughout the subcontinent, they were also a vehicle for regional and political factionalism, new forms of commercial vulgarity, and, disturbingly, the most provocative sorts of hate-mongering and religious chauvinism. The book became best seller and is reprinted for Indians by Oxford Press and is really an interesting reading.

However, the record manufacturing also continued. Cassette magnum Gulshan Kumar's 'T-series' company brought out LP records in early 90's. This company also produced some of the fine recordings of Indian classical music and a set of audio-tapes of Bismillah Khan that includes some of his best early recordings from the archives of All India Radio.

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Last two decades

During 1970-80, cassettes and tape recorders slowly captured the market and LP/EP records began to disappear. T-series, Venus, Tips, Sony, Magnasound and several other smaller companies entered the tape industry in a big way. In the period 1981-2000, the rate of films produced per year increased but the number of songs recorded reduced considerably. Over 1800 films contained 10,000 songs and these were mostly issued on tapes or CD's, since not only 78 rpm's but also the production of LP and EP records came to complete halt in late 90. Machinery for pressing LP's is still kept at Dum Dum factory for very special records: one such record was released to celebrate the success of 'Dil To Pagal Hai'. This period also witnessed the emergence of fresh team of young singers and music composers. Rahul Dev Burman and Bappi Lahiri were already established and duos like Ram-Laxman, Jatin-Lalit, Nadeem-Sharavan, Anand-Milind made their way. Sardar Malick saw upcoming of his son Annu Malick. From South India, musicians like Ilaya Raja and A. R. Rahman gave music to Hindi films. Among singers, Amit Kumar and Nitin Mukesh were trying hard to establish. Kavita Krishnamurthy, Nazia Hasan, Sadhana Sargam, Udit Narayan,

Sonu Nigam, Alka Yajnik and many others were also making their appearance felt and soon became well known and successful singers. Daler Mehandi, Narula and Sukhvinder Singh brought in 'Punjabi' rang in the film music. This generation was brought up on the backdrop of glorious history of early film music based on pure classical, folk and western music. In addition, due to satellite TV, they were exposed to great performers such as Michael Jackson, Madonna and to variety of music styles viz. rock, jazz, metal etc. This all had the immediate and long lasting effect on the music they produced.

It is interesting to note the sale figures of just music cassette tapes of some of the most popular films produced in this period. Bazigar-one crore copies, Ye Dillagi – 45 lakhs, Hum Aapke Hai Kaun – 45 lakhs, Vijay Path – 40 lakhs, Dar – 35 lakhs, 1942, a love story-35 lakhs, Main Khiladi Tu Anadi-35 lakhs, Stuntman-32 lakhs, Roza-25 lakhs. [Ref. Chitrachi Goshta, a book in Marathi, by Babu Moshay, Rajhans Publications, Pune, C.1995]. So, even if the film failed on box office, and dejected by cine-goers, the producer could make up just by selling the music. The old timers who do not care much for the present day music are indeed surprised at the turnover involved in this business.

These two decades also witnessed the changing scenario in music, sound recording and reproduction - from analog to digital, and now from digital to optical. The stylus used to move into the 'grooves' of the gramophone record. Now a sharp and focussed laser beam reads the tracks on Compact Disc (CD). Most of the songs in this period have neither good lyrics nor melody. This is probably because the very concept of song has changed from individual rendering to group singing. They are required for group dancing resembling 'mass drills' in schools. They also require fast rhythms involving loud sound and heavy orchestration involving wagon of instruments. As defined, music involves singing, playing instruments and dancing. Probably modern Hindi film music qualifies for this true definition of music. Around 1990, cable and satellite TV channels entered in a big way in the homes making 24 hours entertainment available. In the beginning, there were few channels presenting programs such as BPL Oye, Videocon Hit Parade and Phillips Top ten, Antakshari etc. Today there are over one dozen channels playing music videos round the clock. Interestingly, young generation has a really much wider choice and exposure to the "World Music"

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Technology and music

In early 80's, Digital Audio Tapes (DAT), video tapes and mini discs, laser discs were quite popular for a short time. With the development of a tiny semiconductor laser, development of an audio Compact Disc (CD) took place rapidly. The signal could be written and read using a laser beam of about one micron diameter. The recording medium used was a thin aluminum film on glass/plastic base. The disc rotated at about 1600 r.p.m. (Revolutions per minute) to avoid burning of hole in

the film. With lot of experimentation and expenditure, EMI (London) released first commercial Compact Disc (CD) in 1986. Special CD players were required to play these disc that had play time of about 60 minutes. Soon it was possible to record video + audio signal on these discs and it gave birth to VCD's and DVD's. Again separate players were required to play these types of discs.

Around 1990, first Personal Computers (PC) appeared in big Indian offices. Soon the PC's were to be seen in homes and at public places. As a result, in about 1995, cyber cafe culture began to surface first in major metros. Due to globalization and advent of satellite TV, music was in plenty and in different styles and forms. Old film songs, remix and cover version videos were made and became popular and now they seem to have gone 'out of control'. Number of middle class families increased from 20 million (in 1975) to over 250 million. This class could afford luxurious life. Soon with 'walkman' and 'Discman' machines and now with pocket radios, audio component of the music became personal. Each member in a family could listen to Personal Music (PM) of his/her choice.

Towards the turn of the century, PC and Internet became a household commodity. Very young children soon learnt the art of handling and managing PC and became familiar with Internet surfing, browsing, chatting and downloading music. Large number of fan clubs and sites dedicated to the artists of their choice were launched. These were updated with audio/video clips and supplemented with song text given in Devnagari as well as in Roman script. Soon they mastered the art of creating and maintaining web and home pages.

At the turn of the century, CD players became an integral part of the PC machines, and it had a facility of 'burning' CD's. Development of MP3's provided the huge storage capacities. So, the music is now available at the tip of a finger, with the click of the mouse of a computer. Today, several music shops such as 'Grooves' and 'Planet M' in Mumbai are flooded with audiotapes and CD's and MP3's and often overcrowded with the customers. After few years there could be a world library of 'anything and everything' on Internet and you can just borrow/download items of your choice and may not require to have your own collection that occupies large space. The digital sound is clear, clean and as there is no physical contact between the laser stylus and the grooves, there is very little wear and tear of the recorded surface. Interestingly, many collectors and researchers had an idea of using the laser beam for reading grooves on old gramophone cylinders and on flat discs. This dream has now been realized and put into practice by US researcher Robert Stoddard of California State University. This was a project work for Robert and later the idea was taken up for the production of laser turntables. Mr. Sanju Chiba, Japan has been producing the machines against firm orders and has sold about ten machines so far. It costs between 12-15000 US dollars [5-6 lakh rupees]. Vishwabharati University at Shantiniketan in West Bengal has purchased one such machine. I had an opportunity to see the demonstration of this wonderful machine at an exhibition.

During such giant leaps in science and technology, what was the fate of our gramophone records!

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Fate of records!

In old days, when 78-rpm gramophone records were in circulation, many houses, especially from villages would preserve a piece of broken 'shellac' record. It was useful for the treatment on 'scorpion bite' and when used in a paste form, it had a medicinal value. During the rule of these breakable shellac records, flea markets in major cities were flooded with the heaps of used, discarded, unsold records. Die-hard record collectors would spend hours through these heaps and find the gems of wonderful records. Bachhubhai Recordwala would buy these records in bulk and put them in his shop in Fort near 'Janmabhoomi' paper press. Record lovers working in / visiting this area would drop in his shop during lunch hour and enjoy and buy the music. He would keep aside special records for his special customers. For several record collectors, the hobby turned into a passion and then the collections proved to be the invaluable reference sources.

These records were also put to other uses such as making decorative trays, base for cheap calendars with a picture pasted on flat side of a worn out record. These calendars and trays are found even today in Fort area or outside the church at Mahim or in Mount Mary fare. These were used as the base / canvas by painters and artists. Old record collectors and traders narrate a story: 'During the shortage of shellac material in early 60's, large number of shellac records were bought in bulk and recycled for obtaining shellac material'. Out of over half million-shellac 78-rpm records, only few thousand copies have survived and are resting in the music departments of universities, small archives but mostly with private collectors. These are bulky, easily breakable and require careful handling. Today, these are required for the showpiece, fake gramophone machines used as a piece of decoration in the drawing rooms of rich persons.

During 80's, with the emergence of tape recorders, huge stocks of LP/EP records piled up in Mumbai and in Kolkatta. So, in 1981/82, company announced a sale of records at 1/3 price. Record loving public queued up since early morning outside the 'Universal' building in Fort, Bombay, waiting for opening of the record sale depot. Retailers / record shop owners placed their agents to buy the records in huge bulk quantities. So, company had to restrict sale of 4-6 records per person. This continued for few years and enriched the collections of the collectors in major cities. Flea markets were also full with used EP/LP records

Records made their appearance in films too. Earlier, in Black & White films, hero / heroine used to proudly play a 78 rpm record on a radiogram / ampligram. In late 70's, actor Danny Dengzopa used LP record as a weapon in Hindi film - 'Ittefaq'. He played a role of a crippled husband tied to a wheel chair. He would

move in the house and would hit wife Nanda by throwing a record at her. In Hindi film 'Karz', Rishi Kapoor danced on the floor made out of design of a LP record with letters HMV on backdrop. He was dancing on the record and singing – 'OM Shanti OM'!. Several big shops in major cities use LP/EP records as showpieces or wall hangings. Music channels presenting song competitions and 'antakshari' programs use LP records for decorating the sets. Today, these are (mis)used by DJ's and VJ's on various music channels and in music shops, where they handle carelessly to damage the grooves and the playing surfaces.

In Chorbazzar of Mumbai, and at many places and flea markets in India, records are available even today, but there are very few takers. Usually LP records are removed from sleeves and the two are stored separately. They are put in two different sacs. Vinyl record is sent for recycling whereas paper / cardboard sleeve is sent to paper mill for making pulp. Thus invaluable information in grooves (audio) and in print form (notes and poster art on sleeves) is lost forever. Who has a desire and time to preserve this?

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The record collectors-I

In 1930-35, Ranga Rao family lived in a remote place in Telangana district in south India. Radio broadcast was just in the budding stage and had not reached small villages. Access to the newspapers was also not easy. However, there was a spring wound, horn type gramophone machine in the house and its sound would fill the house entertaining everybody. Little V. A. K. Ranga Rao used to listen to the records for hours. This passion developed so much that when he was sent to school in Madras for higher education, he insisted to carry the gramophone and the records of his choice. The hostel authorities not only permitted but he used to listen to the records in the company of his friends. Young Ranga Rao developed interest in many different fields such as dance; music, journalism and record collection went beyond passion. He became great fan of the music of C. Ramchandra and used to meet him often.

Today he is nearing 78 years of his age and has a collection of over 40,000 shellac records of different languages and music styles. He has wonderful 78-rpm records in his collection that has become a great reference source for researchers all over the world. He lives in a palace like two-storied house 'Ram Mahal' near eye hospital in Madras. I have visited his place once. As you enter the second floor, a large size, smiling photograph of late Anna Chitalkar (C. Ramchandra) welcomes you. He has collected each and every record of C. Ramchandra and wants to listen to 'Tum Kya Jano Tumhari Yaadmen Hum Kitana Roye' before he breaths his last. He also has a huge library of books on music and in many different (Indian and foreign) languages. He has founded a trust to take care of his treasure after him and for the benefit of the generations to come.

At the North-East end of India, in Calcutta, a building material supplier Mr. Sarajlal Mukherjee collected over 25,000 shellac records in about 40 years. His father and grandfather were both fond of recorded music. Harubabu (as he was called in house and among friends) began with a sizeable inherited collection and began to collect seriously from 1951. He went to several flea markets in West Bengal. He used to visit Jamindars and also received collections as gifts and donations. He has an unusual 'test' pressing of Rabindranath Tagore's recitations and talks. The recording engineers discarded these records and Harubabu got them for 75 paise each. Harubabu lived close to Dum Dum factory in Calcutta. The company while reissuing old recordings often consulted him. Gramophone Company has brought out several albums using the records from his collection.

Harubabu passed away in March 2000 and was a living encyclopaedia of Bengali records. He inspired several young music lovers and encouraged them in collecting old 78-rpm gramophone records. I had an opportunity to meet him in 1996, during record collectors meeting in Calcutta. He told me that the Thakur (Tagore) family of Jorasanko bought the first cylinder phonograph machine in 1894. As per the wish and will of Harubabu, his daughter and son in law have set up an archive/memorial in the premises of his shop/business place and this memorial has become a great source of reference. Often in the evening, music lovers and fans of old records and researchers gather at this 'memorial and listen to the melodies of bygone era. Thus, two great collectors have preserved over 80,000 gramophone records and at two ends of India and moreover they will be managed by trusts and shall be available in public domain for several years to come!

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The record collectors-II

Although two big record collections shall be managed by trusts, large number of record collectors scattered all over India are really worried about the future of their collection. Inherited records, love towards the recorded music, passion is the main driving force among these collectors. In Bombay, many bank employees are in record collection. Mr. Prabhakar Datar, Shreeram Sukhtankar and Ram Page worked together in Reserve Bank of India and had a common interest in 78-rpm records. They would collect mostly classical, Marathi Drama and Film music. Since 1986, they began to present listening sessions at private halls and in cultural groups and the response used to be tremendous. Mr. Narayan Mulani is a businessman and had a record retail shop in his family. So, he was exposed to records since his childhood. Today he has a huge collection of over 5000 records of early film music, and classical music. He is an expert in putting together the broken pieces of a shellac record.

Other record collectors from Mumbai are: Mr. Krishnaraj Merchant, Mr. Madhukar Sherikar, Dr. G. B. Nadkarni, Dr. Ashok Ranade, Ashok Thakurdesai, Bhalchandra Meher, Mr. Yende, Preetamkumar Menghani, (Late) Mr. Arun Athalye, Mr. Vijay Nafde, Dr. Prakash Joshi, Predeep Acharya, Sharad Dalvi, Mukund Acharya, Sheelkumar Sharma, Deepak Kanegaonkar, Amiya Chakravarty, C.M. Desai, Sharad Desai, Nalin Shah, Shyam samant, K. R. Tembe, Ameen Sayani, Gopal Sharma, B. Sobhraj Waswani, Vishwas Nerurkar, Mr. V. V. Navelkar, Mr. Kamlesh Gandhi, Najma and Shabbir Loynmoon, Mohammad Salim, Hussienibhai Recordwala and myself-Suresh Chandvankar! Most of the collectors have thousands of records or songs on tapes and some of them have even published number of geet-kosh, books and compilations and produced documents of academic interest.

Record collectors from other places are: (Late) Prof. Sharadbhai Mehta (Nadiad), Mr. Mohan Sohoni, Jayant Raleraskar and Ashok Thobde, Mr. Manvendra Birulkar, Mr. Godbole, Prof. Vilas Patil, (Late) Mr. Basappa Ankalgi (Solapur), Mr. P. T. Shastri, Prabhuraj Kulkarni, Prof. Shreekant Deshpande, Madhukar Dharmapurikar (Nanded), Mr. Chandekar (Aurangabad), Sudheer Peshwe (Tuljapur), Hasmmukhbhai Dalwadi (Nagpur), Suman Chaurasiya (Indore), Uday Dravid, (Late) Mr. Sudheer Dodwadkar, Chandrakant Pai, Vijay Joshi, Dr. Prakash Kamat, Mr. Riswadkar, Captain Pandit, S.K.Pandit, Sunil Deshpande, Mr.Thakurdesai, Adwait Dharmadhikari, Milind Sabnis (Pune), Mr. Arvind Hambarde (Amravati), Vinodkumar Sonthalia, Sushantakumar Chatterjee, Rantideb Maitra, Mr. Amitabh Ghosh, Dr. Amlan Das Gupta, Sharvari Roy Chowdhury, Snehashish Chatterjee, Mohammad Ilyas, A. Ghosh, Ashok Bhargava (Calcutta), Indramani Ghosh, N. Parthasarathi (Hyderabad), Vijay Verma (Jaipur), Prof.Yasin Dalal, Pushpendra Singh Jadeja. Mr. M. H. Bhatt (Rajkot), Narendra Kamal Sreemali, Prof. Yadav, K. C. Nayak (Baroda), Akbar Shah, M. S. Bindra, Mr. Dinesh sharma, V. Parthasarathi (New Delhi), Harminder Singh Hamraaz (Kanpur), Harish Raghuvanshi (Surat), R. N. Dash (Patna), Mr. Yeshwant Parashara (Muzaffarpur), Atul Verma (Bhopal), Sumeet Gupta (Meerut), T. Santhanakrishnan (Tamilnadu)

Among the overseas collectors of Indian records: Nandkumar Balwally, Sunil Dutta, Krishna Hegde, Phillip Yampolski (USA), Andre Brunel, Phillipe Bruigurre, James Stevenson (France), Hans Neuhooff, Rainer Lotz, Shreenivas paruchuri, (Germany), Art Levine, Romesh Aeri, Regula Quereshi, John Campana (Canada), Dr. Joep Bor (Holland), Yousuff Khan, John Payne, Bill Dean Myatt, John Payne and Nicolas Magriel (U.K), Prof. Rajeev Patke (Singapore) and of course Michael Kinnear (Australia) who did a pioneering work in the discographical research of Indian records and has published number of research articles in magazines internationally. He has also published many books on gramophone records, the most recent one: An encyclopaedia of 78 rpm record labels of India!

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Records and research

Although record collectors were very proud of their treasures, they knew very little about research aspects. Around 1990, a meeting of record collectors was convened in Mumbai. Mr. Michael Kinnear from Australia attended the meeting and took the collectors into the wonderful world of research and 'Discography'.

Discography is a science of reading label on a gramophone 'disc'. It contains lot of invaluable information on the record label. As seen, upper half of the label shows company name [e.g. 'His Master's Voice' logo / brand [e.g. Nipper dog drawing]. The lower half of the labels contains technical details such as type of the record [LONG PLAY], side 1 or 2, catalogue number [ECLP 2254], matrix number [2XJW.1210] and speed of the record (33 1/3). Type of record (Indian vernacular), title of the record (Around India with Lata), song titles and type and text and name of the artists, lyricists and music directors. And then there are strange numbers and letters and symbols engraved/etched in the blank space between the end of the grooves and the outer rim of the paper label that is located at the center of the record.

This huge information is arranged chronologically and put together in a scientific manner. This is done for records in all formats and published in the forms of monographs / catalogues or books. Thus, a discographer records all the details on the discs and helps in putting together the history of gramophone records. This is an old discipline and large number of renowned discographers have published number of books / discographies in Europe/USA and in other countries. In India, no one even knew about it and Mr. Michael Kinnear from Australia began to collect data in early 70's. Today, he has published over half dozen books on Indian records and published over 50 research articles in magazines of international reputation. These are listed in his site – www.bajakhana.com.au How did he enter into this interesting field of Indian music?

Little Michael, born and brought in Australia was fond of music and records, since the family had a records shop on ground floor and his mother used to play violin. After formal education, he worked for a gramophone company, learnt art of recordings, and also was associated with sales, distribution and with record catalogues. Slowly he got interested in discography. He was editing some tapes of recordings of Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan and got interested in Indian music. He also realized that Indian records are interesting and no one wants to look into academic aspects. He then decided to devote most of his time in preparing an encyclopaedia of Indian records. He visited India several times since 1970 and began to collect information by visiting record company offices, record collectors and persons involved with any aspect of records. He got entry into EMI London offices too and an access to library and catalogues.

In 1985, he published "A Discography of Hindustani and Karnatic Music" [Greenwood Press, USA]. This book contains details of over 3000 LP and EP records of North and South Indian classical music in both vocal and instrumental disciplines. In 1990, he helped in establishing 'Society of Indian Record Collectors' [SIRC] and became the founder member. He wrote over 30 articles in "The Record News" - a journal of SIRC that has a worldwide circulation among the record collectors and music lovers. In 1994 he published "The Gramophone Company's first Indian recordings [1898-1908], Popular Prakashan, Mumbai. Recently he has published: Gramophone Company's Indian recordings, [1908-10], Record labels of India, Bio-discography of Abdul Karim Khan. He is the real driving and motivating force behind SIRC that is now over 14 years old!

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Society of Indian Record Collectors [S.I.R.C.]

As mentioned in the beginning, gramophone records were first made in 1902 at Calcutta. Gramophone was the 'home entertainer' on demand, and radio was to appear later say after some 25 years [C. 1925]. As the record buying public increased, some of them soon piled up huge collections of records and gramophones. Many young kids grew listening to these 78-rpm records and many inherited these treasures. As we have seen, some of them began to enrich their collections and became the proud owners of gems of records. However, these collectors did not know one another and could not communicate.

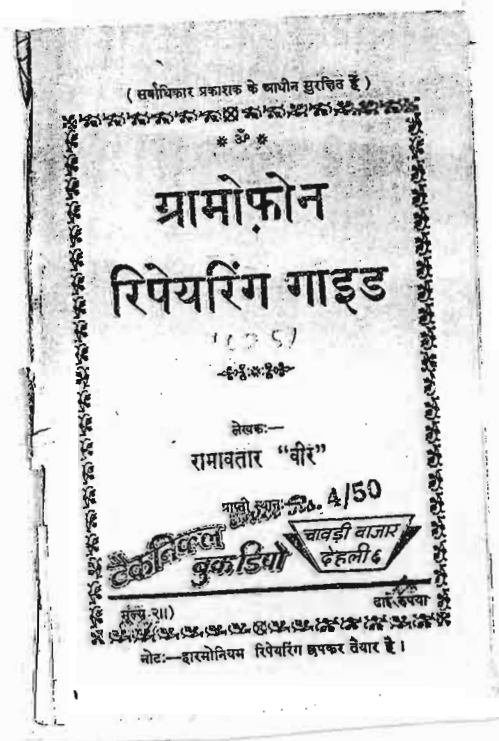
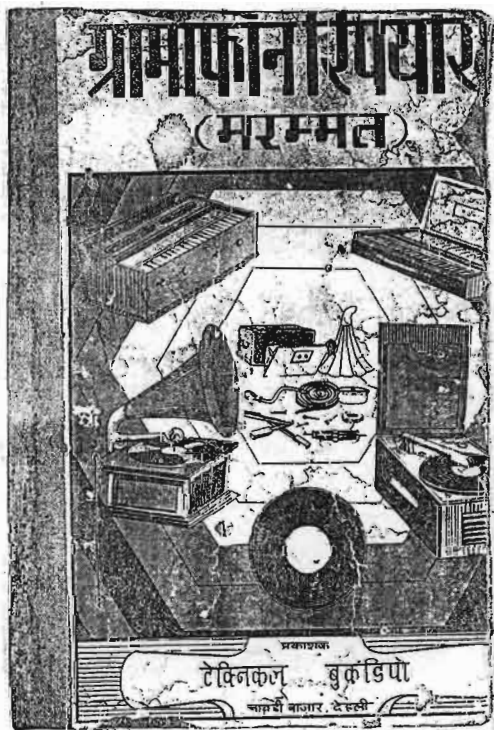
Around 1950, Mr. G. N. Joshi, executive officer of HMV in Mumbai tried to bring together record collectors for mutual friendship and he initiated some programs and activities. Renowned journalist and music lover Mr. Nalin Shah founded 'Vintage Cine Music Association' and organized several programs of listening to old songs from gramophone records. These two efforts discontinued after few years. Dr. Prakash Joshi of Bombay and Dr. Prakash Kamat of Pune began such listening sessions and continue even now in their houses and in small groups.

In March 1990, an informal meeting of record collectors was held in Mumbai and Mr. Michael Kinnear, Australia also attended it. At his suggestion, a decision was made to form 'Society of Indian Record Collectors' (SIRC). The aim of the society was to bring together for social communication, all persons, individual or institutions interested in the preservation, promotion and research into all aspects of Indian musical culture that have been committed to the medium of sound recordings in the various formats. The objective of the society was to freely disseminate information between members about all aspects of sound recording in India. The society decided to have units / chapters at other cities and also decided to have a common publication — "The Record News". This magazine is expected to link the record collectors spread in India and abroad. It was also planned to have monthly/periodic listening sessions so as to make listeners aware of the treasure embedded in the grooves of the records. Membership fee at the moment is Rs.500 annually and Rs.5000/- for life time.

Today, after over 12 years of existence, SIRC has made considerable progress in achieving the set goals. We have enrolled over 200 members with over 75 from overseas, majority from USA and European countries. SIRC has its branches in Pune, Nanded, Solapur, Tuljapur, Baroda, Aurangabad and now recently in Amravati. Record collectors and music lovers at all these centers come together every month to listen to old music from the records. Solapur unit presents weekly one-hour radio programs based on these old treasures. Mumbai unit takes the responsibility of publishing the magazine. 'The Record News' was published quarterly until 1998 and now annually from 1999. Life members get all the back issues in bound form in addition to all the forthcoming ones.

With the advent of tape recorders, CD players and ever increasing storage capacities in computers, record collectors are using these alternative means of storage. Several film companies, TV and radio programs as well as record companies need original formats for recordings/transfers and for using as illustrations. With time, number of collectors will reduce. It is necessary to have National Sound Archives where old gramophone records/collection could be deposited for posterity. Small efforts are already taken up and SIRC wants to play a major role in realizing this dream. If Govt./private book libraries in major Indian cities make one small room for records and tapes available, then lot of musical culture stored in these records and grooves could be saved at number of places. These rotating discs shall bring immense listening pleasure along with historical information. Let us all work together to make this happen.

- Suresh Chandvankar



K. L. SAIGAL BIRTH CENTEBARY SPECIAL:

Kundan Lal Saigal (1904-1946)

Mr. Kundan Lal Saigal, popularly known as K. L. Saigal was the most popular actor-singer of the Indian films during 1935-47. Born on April 11, 1904 at Jullunder in Punjab, he entered in the films in 1931-32 and acted in several films until his untimely death on 18th January 1946 (or 1947?) at the very young age of just forty-two. As a boy his mother used to take him to a Sufi-Pir Salman Yousuf of the Yesvi sect. Singing was his hobby. Later on he learnt music and basic melodic structure and perfected after practicing a lot. He also learnt from the great masters: Faiyaz Khan, Pankaj Mullick and Pahari Sanyal.

His father was violently against his singing and was disappointed with his poor results at school. He left home and came to Calcutta. Before choosing music and singing as his vocation, he worked as a time-keeper in the Punjab Railways. He was a salesman for short time and tried to sell typewriter machines. He used to sing within his friend circles. In one such private concert, Hindusthan Record Company's sales representative listened to his songs. He immediately recognized the talent and the sales potential of his records [if made]. Saigal was persuaded to make a life time contract with this company and his one of the early records – 'Jhulana Jhulao' in Raga Dev Gandhar became an instant hit.

At the age of 28, he entered the films and soon became a successful actor-singer. His films such as Devdas, Shah Jahan, President, My Sister, Zindagi, Chandidas, Bhakta Surdas, Tansen, Dushman became hit and the songs are evergreen even today and to the extent that young musicians are tempted to use them in jingles and re-mix song versions. Around 1935, i.e. before his film career, Saigal used to participate in classical music concerts but unfortunately it is neither documented nor recorded and hence lost to history. What available is three-minute song recordings on a 78 rpm shellac record. The first remark you hear if you talk about Saigal with someone will be 'He was a natural singer' or 'His voice was born with him' or 'Golden voiced he was' and so on. He was the first non-Bengali to be honored to sing Rabindra Sangeet and the first superstar of Indian Cinema.

Saigal managed to develop what the Italians call 'La Voce Bianca' or the 'White Voice' of Italians that follows you like a scent and hides in your memory like a coiled serpent. Year 2004 is celebrated as his birth centenary year. For several years, at 7 hours and 57 minutes, every morning Radio Ceylon used to play a 78 rpm record of Saigal's song. Saigal's body has left, but not his voice. You can hear him in Kabul, in Nairobi and in Kuwait, in Tanzania and in Rabat. The Teheran radio has played his Persian Gazals. His voice is well known in Jakarta and in Fiji-islands. Every year on his Punyatithi, All India radio plays his records. Who said Saigal is dead?

Top 25 songs [suggested listening session] of Kundan Lal Saigal

- 1] Balam aaye baso more manmen – Raga Sindhura (Devdas)
- 2] Dukhake din aab bitat nahin – Raga Des (Devdas)
- 3] Radhe rani de daro na – Raga Yaman (Puran Bhakta)
- 4] Ek bangala bane nyara – (President)
- 5] Duniya rang rangili baba – (Dharati Mata)
- 6] Jhulana jhulao re – raga Devgandhar
- 7] Karun kya aas niras bhai – (Dushman)
- 8] Main kya janun kya jadoo hai – Raga Yaman (Zindagi)
- 9] Rumjhum rumjhum chal tehari – Raga Shankara (Tansen)
- 10] Diya jalao – Raga Deepak (Tansen)
- 11] Sapta sur teen taal – Dhrupad (Tansen)
- 12] Nis din barsaat nain hamare – (Bhakta Surdas)
- 13] Madhukar shyam hamare – (Bhakta Surdas)
- 14] Maiyya mori main nahi makhan khayi – (Bhakta Surdas)
- 15] Aae dile bekarar kyun – (Shah Jahan)
- 16] Chaha barbaad karegi - (Shah Jahan)
- 17] Gam diye mushtakil kitana najuk hai dil - (Shah Jahan)
- 18] Jab dil hi toot gaya - (Shah Jahan)
- 19] Do naina matwale – (My sister)
- 20] Kya maine kiya hai – (My Sister)
- 21] Panchi kahe hota udaas / Suno suno he krishna kala - Geets
- 22] Duniyamen hun duniyaka talabgaar nahin hun – Gazal
- 23] Kaun viranemen dekhega bahar – Gazal
- 24] So ja rajkumari so ja – (Zindagi)
- 25] Babul mora naihan chhota hi jay – (Street Singer)

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प्रथम दिवस आवरण FIRST DAY COVER



कुन्दन लाल सहगल KUNDAN LAL SAIGAL

Saigal's films and recorded songs

Year of release	film-company & city	Name of the film (language)	No. of songs
1932	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta	1] Mohabbat Ke Aansoo(Urdu) (alias tears of love) 2] Subahke Sitare (Urdu) 3] Jinda Lash (Urdu) (alias a living corpse)	- - -
1933	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta	1] Puran Bhakta (Hindi) Co-singer: K. C. Dey 2] Rajrani Meera (Hindi) Co-singer: Miss Indubala 3] Yahudiki Ladki (Urdu) 4] Dulari Bibi (Urdu) (based on: 'our wives')	4 - 6 -
1934	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta	1] Chandidas (Hindi) Co-singers: Uma and Pahadi Sanyal 2] Daku Mansoor (Urdu) (alias Karishma-e-Kudrat) 3] Rooplekha (Hindi) (alias Muhabbatki kasauti)	2 - 1
1935	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta	1] Devdas (Hindi) Co-singer: K. C. Dey 2] Debdas (Bengali) 3] Dhoop Chaon (Hindi) Co-singers: K. C. Dey, Uma & Pahadi Sanyal 4] Bhagya Chakra (Bengali) 5] Karwan-e-Hayat (Urdu)	4 2 4 4 -
	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta. /International film craft/New Theaters Ltd.	1] Devdas (Tamil) 2] Karodpati (Urdu) (alias The Millionaire) 3] Pujarin (Hindi) Co-singer: K. C. Dey	2 4 4
1937	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta	1] The President (Hindi) 2] Didi [Badi Bahan] (Bengali)	3 4

1938	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta	1] Dharati Mata (Hindi) (alias Mother Land)	4
		2] Desher Mati (Bengali)	2
		3] Street Singer (Hindi)	2
		Co-singer: Kanan Devi	
		4] Sathi (Bengali)	2
1939	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta	1] Jeeban Maran (Bengali)	6
		2] Dushman (Hindi) (alias The Enemy)	4
1940	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta	1] Zindagi (Hindi)	6
1941	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta	1] Lagan (Hindi)	5
		Co-singer: Kanan Devi	
		2] Parichay (Bengali)	5
1942	Ranjit Movietone Bombay	Bhakta Surdas (Hindi) Co-singer: Khursheed	8
1943	Ranjit Movietone Bombay	Tansen (Hindi) Co-singer: Khursheed	6
1944	New Theaters Ltd. Calcutta	1] My Sister (Hindi) (alias Meri Bahan)	6
		Co-singers: Utapla Sen and Pankaj Mullick	
	Ranjit Movietone Bombay	2] Bhanvara (Hindi) (alias Harjaai)	6
		Co-singers: Ameerbai and Arunkumar	
	Unity pictures Calcutta	1] Kurukshetra (Hindi) Co-singers: Satyachoudhury, Kalyanidas, Radha Rani	4
		2] Tadbir (Hindi) Co-singers: Suraiyya, and Nasim Akhtar	6
1946	Kardar Productions Bombay	1] Shahjahan (Hindi) Co-singers: Shamshad Begum, Shamdhad and Naseem Akhtar	6
	Murari Pctures Bombay	2] Umar Khayyam (Urdu) Co-singer: Suraiyya	4

1947	Jeet Productions Bombay	Parwana (Hindi) Co-singers: Suraiyya	4
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Total number of films (Hindi + Bengali + Urdu + Tamil) = 37

Total number of film songs – 130

Songs and records of K. L. Saigal:

1] Film songs:	130 [Hindi + Bengali + Urdu + Tamil]
2] Gazal:	33
3] Geet	3
4] Hori	2
5] Bhajan	1
6] Classical	1
7] Bengali (Modern)	2
8] Panjabi	2
9] Persian	2

Total: 176

[About 88 records of 78 rpm format]

Most of the records were released on Hindusthan, Hindusthan/New Theaters and New Theaters label. His records are also found on Jien-O-Phone, HMV and Columbia record labels. In 1959, his duet with Ila Chakravarty's voice was released and this experiment of mixing two voices was greatly appreciated. In LP/EP era, several of these songs were reissued on single play (S. P.), extended Play (E. P.) records in 45 rpm format. In 1962, 1963, 1965 and later in 1974 and in 1982, selected songs were again reissued on long Playing (L. P.) records in 33 1/3 format. In 1983, T-series company released a set of five audio-cassettes and several pirated versions were available in many countries. In 1990, official Compact Disc of Saigal's songs was released in London. His songs are now available in audio and video CD and DVD forms in leading music stores.

Complete discography of K. L. Saigal's records is published in 'The Record News' – Vol. 8, October 1992, in the journal of the 'Society of Indian record Collectors', Mumbai.

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BOOK REVIEW:

An encyclopaedia of 78 rpm record labels of India

During 1902-1970, number of gramophone companies produced thousands of records in 78-rpm (revolutions per minute) format. Until about 1950, although Gramophone Company had captured Indian market, over one dozen companies were operative under British, German, French and Japanese collaborations. They produced largely 10" diameter 78 rpm black records made out of shellac [a mixture of slate dust mixed with lac]. At the center of these records a colorful label of about 4" diameter contained lot of information like catalogue and matrix number, song title, names of the singers, lyricist and the music director etc. Over 350 labels of different designs, colors and style have been found. Mr. Michael S. Kinnear has now published a book: "The 78 rpm record labels of India", from Australia. This book contains about 500 pages out of which 400 pages are devoted to the label details. Each page contains label photograph at top followed by useful information below such as the name of the company, proprietors, record numbers and series and a brief history of the recording company.

Several colorful label illustrations have been included. Major companies mentioned are: Beka, Nicole, Pathe, James-Opera, Singer, Sun, Ramagraph, Odeon, Young India, Broadcast, The Twin, Columbia and of course HMV. Although we are familiar with the Dog and Horn label of HMV records, early labels contain birds and animals like horse, tiger, an elephant, cuckoo, sparrow, bulbul, heron, deer, swan etc. Other labels have colorful designs with flowers and leaves. Early gramophone concert records contain an angel cutting grooves with a feather in his hand. Broadcast label shows diamond at the center and emerging out of sea waves like Sun, whereas the Sun record label of F. B. Thanawala, shows a semicircle with SUN letters written at the center. Saraswati Cinetone Record label shows Goddess Saraswati playing Veena with peacock sitting nearby. Columbia label shows tiger head whereas The Twin label shows twin heads of two kids. Young India record company operated in Bombay from about 1935-55 and produced records with variety of colorful labels. Early Parbhat Film Company film songs records were made on this label and contained a small thumbnail photograph of the singer at top left rim of the label. V. Shanataram was one of the promoters and when he formed Rajkamal Kala Mandir, some of his early film songs were too released on Young India label. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose recorded messages for Indian on this label and their photographs have been published on the record labels. Apart from these HMV also produced records with photographs of Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindra Nath Tagore and Bhagat Kanwar Ram. This book is useful to record collectors and researchers and is dedicated to the oldest record dealer from Mumbai: Late Mr. Bachooobhai Recordwala.

"The 78 rpm record labels of India"- Michael Kinnear, Australia (2003), Pages 500 Price – 120 Australian Dollars + Postage.

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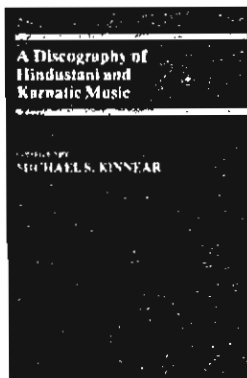
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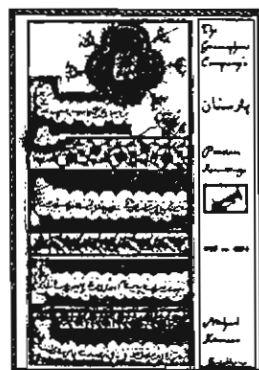
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