

THE RECORD NEWS

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Feature Articles: Gangubai Hangal, Manna Dey

‘The Record News’ - Annual magazine of

‘Society of Indian Record Collectors’ [SIRC]

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From the Editor

I am pleased to present our annual issue – The Record News (TRN-2009) to all the members, wellwishers and friends of ‘Society of Indian Record Collectors’ [SIRC]. In addition to Mumbai and Pune, record collectors at small and remote places such as Amravati and Nanded are doing very well and they do meet once in a month to listen to old music from gramophone discs. Solapur unit has been broadcasting radio programs from local radio station for last five years. Public reading library in Solapur has now provided for storage and listening room for the old discs. This model could be used nationwide for the preservation of old discs for posterity. Hope the records will be in better care in the public domain.

With the advent of technology, it has become simpler to store large amount of data in compact size media like CD’s, MP3 discs and now high density hard drives. As a result, there is a danger of an existence of the shellac and vinyl records. SIRC members therefore have the responsibility to store and preserve the original disc records for posterity.

This issue contains unusual article on great person in Hindustani vocal music viz. Late Gangubai Hangal. It also contains an article on Manna Dey on account of the prestigious ‘Dadasaheb Phalke’ award conferred on him. Lindstrom Project from Germany has invited me to write an article for their research magazine. I have included the draft copy of the article to appear in their publication planned for 2010. Record collectors and music lovers shall find them useful.

- Suresh Chandvankar
- Editor

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SIRC NEWS FROM MUMBAI

During the period of this report, Mumbai unit of SIRC has presented the listening sessions by invitations from the following organizations:

- 1] Cultural wing of Ashay Film Club, Pune
- 2] Y. B. Chavan Pratishthan, Mumbai
- 3] Bhavan's Cultural Center, Andheri
- 4] Karnata Sangh, Matunga
- 5] Suburban Music Circle, Santacruz and Borivli
- 6] Mani Bhavan, Mumbai
- 7] Deodhar's School of Indian Music

Topics of the listening sessions held: Abdul Kareem Khan, Shri.G.M.Londhe, Bhimsen Joshi, Gangubai Hangal, Gauhar Jan of Calcutta, Gajanan Watve, G. N. Joshi, Bal Gandharva, Manik Verma, Music Directors: Datta Davjekar, Salil Chodhury and Sudheer Phadke.

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Gangubai Hangal (1913-2009)

On Tuesday, July 21, 2009, Dr. (Smt.) Gangubai Hangal passed away at the ripe age of 96 years. Her fans and music lovers were shocked, since they thought that she would complete the century of her life. She was quite energetic in her advancing age and had recently visited 'Mahalaxmi Temple' at Kolhapur. After the 'Darshan' of the 'Mahalaxmi Devi', she had rendered her musical service to the deity by singing in the 'Sabhamandap' for a short while. She was the 'Grand Mother', not only to her family but to the entire state of Karnataka. A State mourning was declared, educational institutes were closed for two days and last rites were performed with state honor. In recent times, she was probably the only artist to receive such honor posthumously.

Dr. Gangubai Hangal was the most senior living vocalist of the 'Ustad Abdul Karim Khan' branch of 'Kairana (Kirana)' Gharana. She was singing for over eighty years and taught music to several disciples, including her daughter Krishna Hangal.



'Gangubai Hangal: last photographs'

Gangubai was a great performer and a very witty person. On her eightieth birthday, as she talked to a group of her fans, family friends and journalists, one young journalist asked her about the secret of her enthusiasm and love for such a forceful music at such an advanced age.

She laughed and asked him what he would do when he is very hungry?. He replied that he would eat lot of delicious food to satisfy his hunger. She then said, 'I am also hungry at this age, not for the food but for the music. Then I sing a lot, since that is my real food'. True, 'Music was her life'.

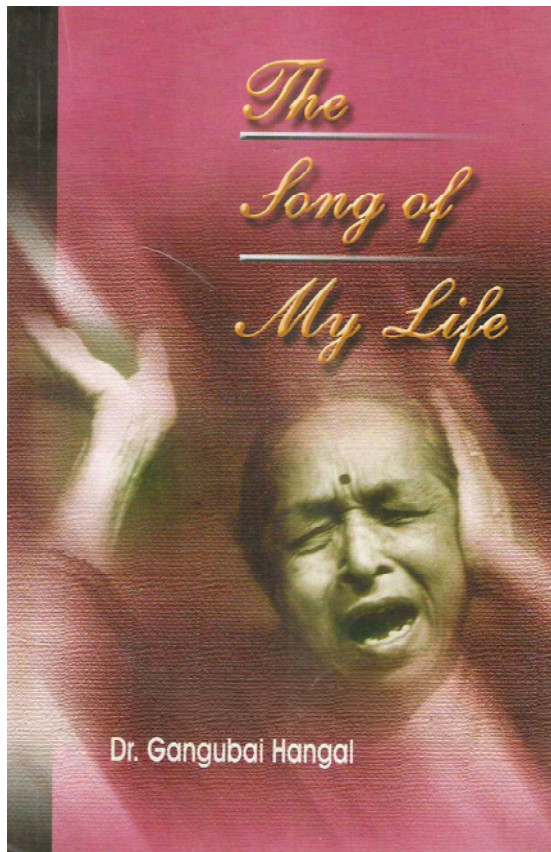


CD cover of Gangubai Hangal's recordings

Another young man asked a question about her famous 'singing pose' in which she puts her palm of the left hand on ear and stretches her right hand out. She said, 'This is the pose of the policeman who controls the traffic on the road. I listen to and check the notes (Swaras) in the Raga that I am rendering. I permit the appropriate ones and ward off the inappropriate notes to maintain the purity and discipline of my music. My voice became broad after a minor throat surgery. Due to such a man like voice, I am often called 'Ganguboa' so this pose suits to me very well'.

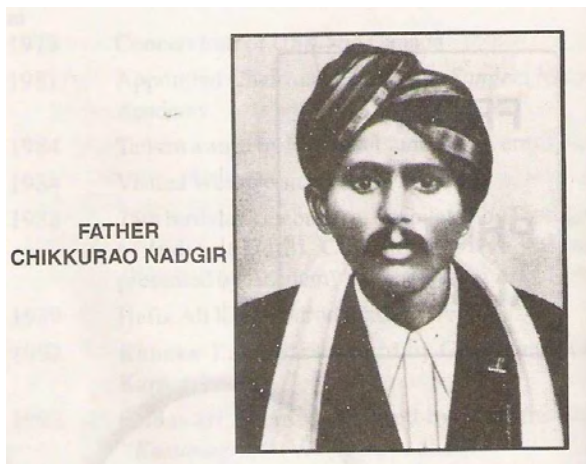
Yet another gentleman asked why she sings only pure classical Ragas and no other form of light music. To this, she remarked, 'My mother taught me all forms of light classical music including lessons in Kathak style dance. I have recorded Gazal, Thumri, Marathi Bhavgeete and devotional songs on gramophone discs in early thirties. Nowadays, I don't find sufficient time even for classical Ragas and hence do not sing light classical music'.

Gangubai has left behind a large number of recordings, photographs and a small book of her memoirs. Originally in Kannada, this book now has been translated and is available in English.



"The Song of my life: An autobiography (2003)"

Gangubai's father Mr. Chikkurao Nadgir was a lawyer and belonged to a high caste 'Brahmin' community. Her mother's name was Ambabai alias 'Ambakka'. Her grandmother's name was 'Gangavaa'. Ambakka adopted this name for her daughter and thus she became 'Gangu'.



Gangubai's parents

Hangal was their native place and they used it as their surname. Ambabai was an expert vocalist in Carnatic style music and the first Guru of young Gangu. Ustad Abdul Karim Khan used to visit their house to listen to her 'Sargam', to learn notations and to hear the renderings of 'Javali' and 'Pallavi' styles. Sometimes, he would listen to young Gangu and bless her with the words, 'Beta, Gala Achha Hai Tera. Khoob Gana Aur Khoob Khana' (Dear Child, your voice is very sweet. Sing a lot and eat a lot). Gangubai followed former part of his advice and sang a lot throughout her life.

On her way to school, young Gangu would often stop at the music shop that played gramophone records to attract customers and probable buyers. She would listen to the records of classical music with great interest. Her most favorite records were sung by Zohrabai Agrewali (1868-1913). Young Gangu did not know the names of the Ragas 'Puriya', 'Bhoopali', 'Multani' etc. at that time. However, she learnt the songs on these records just by listening to them several times. She wanted to sing forcefully just like Zohrabai Agrewali. Incidentally, Zohrabai passed away in 1913, and Gangubai was born in the same year viz. 1913.



C. 1868-1913

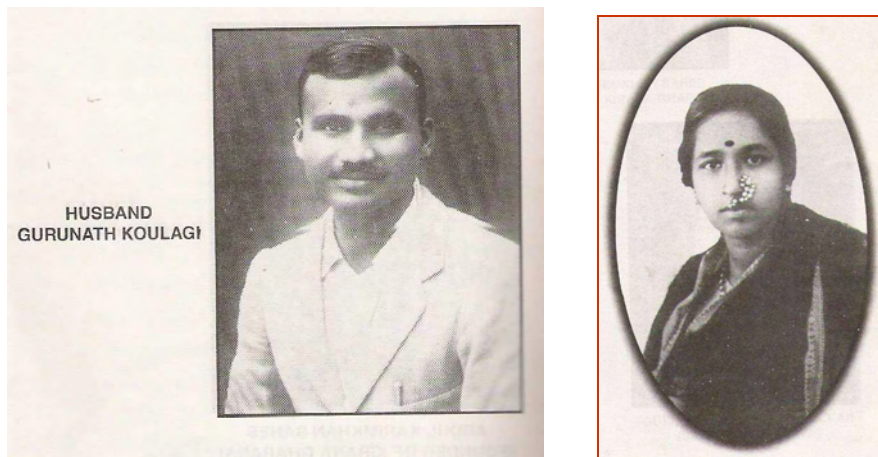


(L) - Zohrabai Agrewali, (R) - Gangubai (1945)

It is interesting to note that early 78-r.p.m. gramophone records have also influenced young Bhimsen Joshi and Kumar Gandharva in initiating them in the field of music. During early twenties, Pandit Bhaskarboa Bakhale was the Principal of music school in Belgaum. Ustad Abdul Karim Khan had established

‘Arya Sangeet Vidyalaya’ (music schools) in Miraj, Pune, Dharwad, Belgaum and several other towns. As a result, Hindustani classical music became very much popular in that area. Due to such an atmosphere, young Gangu was attracted to Hindustani music even though her mother was singing Carnatic music. Her mother made every effort to teach her music within the available means. She gave up her own singing to avoid any influence that young Gangu may have of Carnatic music on her singing. She was not very keen on her formal school education. Hence, Gangu left school after the fifth class and continued her music tuitions and ‘taalim’ for rest of her life. Initially, she had some basic training in vocal music from local teachers. Prof. V. N. Bhatkhande’s series of books on music contributed towards her singing practice.

She married Mr. Gurunath Koulagi in 1929 at the age of sixteen. He was a lawyer but did not practise in the court. He ventured into many small business and trades but was not greatly successful. However, he had always encouraged Gangubai in her pursuit of music and career as a performing artist. He passed away in 1966. At that time, Gangubai did not know that this would be her main profession and would help in supporting her rather large family.



Gangubai’s husband (L), Gangubai (R)

Until about 1930/32, Gangubai had not moved out of Dharwad and Hubli. Later on she often visited Mumbai for concerts, radio programs and for cutting gramophone discs. She travelled a lot for participating in all India music conferences. She also toured Europe, Canada and America in the later part of her career. She mesmerized her audiences through her soul touching music. Gangubai witnessed and adopted herself to various phases of sound recording technology. Beginning with three minutes 78-rpm shellac discs to longer duration CD’s and DVD’s she has recorded prolifically and canned her music for posterity. In the early twenties, Smt. Heerabai Barodekar began to perform on concert stage like a male singer. She also played female roles on Marathi stage when male actors like ‘Bal Gandharva’ were playing female roles. She also acted in a couple of films. Thus, she opened up new fields to young women and became a

role model for many. Gangubai was one of them who always wanted to sing on a concert stage like her. Although she never acted on Marathi stage, she played a role of a singer in Marathi/Hindi film 'Vijayachi Lagne' (C.1935) produced by Mr. Bapurao Pendharkar of 'Lalit Kaladarsh Drama Company'. Its screen play was written by Mr. B. V. alias 'Mama' Varerkar, who later on wrote several Marathi songs (Bhavgeete) for gramophone singers including Gangubai. Unfortunately, this film is not available today. She established herself as a female vocalist having unique masculine voice. Like men, she used to wear a wrist watch on her left hand and never played 'tanpura' on stage. This was probably necessary to keep both the hands free during the performance. Like her 'Guru bandhu' Pt. Bhimsen Joshi, her concerts used to be a feast, not only for ears but also for eyes too. Her hand movements and facial expressions were unique and picturesque. This could be due to her training in Kathak dance during early childhood. She had a wonderful team of accompanists in her family only.



Gangubai with tanpura (L), in her famous pose (R)

Her maternal uncle (Mama) initiated her in music and used to help her in her 'taalim' (Practise). He would often accompany her on tabla. Her daughter Krishnabai provided vocal support for many years. She had a high pitch feminine voice. Gangubai would allow her to sing for quite long time during the performance. As a result, their concert used to be an unusual duet between two female singers. It would appear as a duet between a male and a female due to Gangubai's peculiar voice. Krishnabai passed away in 2004, leaving Gangubai alone.

'Kirana Gharana' is now over 100 years old. Although originated by Ustad Abdul Karim Khan, it developed equally powerful branch known after his nephew Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan. Several vocalists have made this style popular all over world. However, many of them just copy their Guru or senior singers from this Gharana. Gangubai and Bhimsenji appear to be the exceptions. Both have successfully

brought in several elements from the great singers of other Gharana and molded them in Kirana style. Hence, their music stands out as a special one. This was some kind of re-mixing experiment done nearly fifty years ago. During her 75th birthday celebrations, musicologist Dr. Ashok Ranade interviewed her in detail. This was recorded as a video and is a treasure for music students and researchers. In this interview, she has talked about her training with guru 'Sawai Gandharva'. She says, "I was asked to practise 'kharj sadhana' for half an hour every day. This involved singing in lower octave and produce swara (notes) for maximum possible time during each long breath. This was done at times when 'kharj sadhana' was very common among male disciples and usually not recommended to female students. This improved my stamina. I was also asked to practise 'swar palta' for over one and half hour in different tempi. This made my 'taans' perfect and I acquired command over producing 'taans' at will and spontaneously. However, at that time it was quite tiring and boring. Guruji would teach one pattern and leave me alone for practise. He would be doing his work in other rooms but listening to me carefully. He would come in and correct my mistakes. I used to feel like crying since he was not teaching further until he was satisfied with my practice. Now I understand how important that drill was. I used to like singing using 'Gamak'. However, guruji did not like female students singing in that style. Because of my very nature, I would absorb and adopt everything that I liked from the music of great singers and Gharanas. In those days, I was probably the junior most singer among the galaxy of musicians. I used to listen to the music of great masters in various music conferences, especially those from the North. I liked music of Kesarbai Kerkar, Faiyaz Khan, Ameer Khan, Omkarnath Thakur, Bade Gulam Ali Khan and would try to include some of their elements in my music". This is how her music became rich and with a special tonal quality that was unique of her style. Although we are familiar with her broad and changed voice, her earliest gramophone records are the examples of her totally different high pitched voice. Around 1930, gramophone company's officers toured South India for talent search. They met Ambabai and a contract was drawn to cut discs of both mother and the daughter. However, after serious stomach operation Ambabai passed away and her records could not be made. Within a year Gangubai's father also passed away. Gangubai slowly recovered from this shock and decided to devote full time to music. Around 1933-35, she began to visit Mumbai frequently. She recorded prolifically for His Master's Voice (H.M.V.) Company and cut over sixty songs. List of her available songs from that era is now available at:

[<http://courses.nus.edu.sg/course/ellpatke/Miscellany/gangubai.htm>]

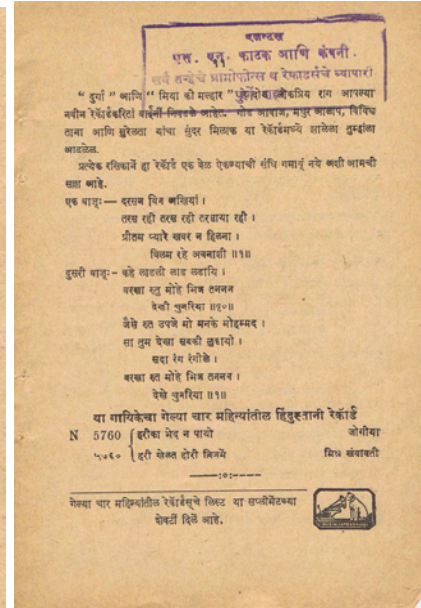
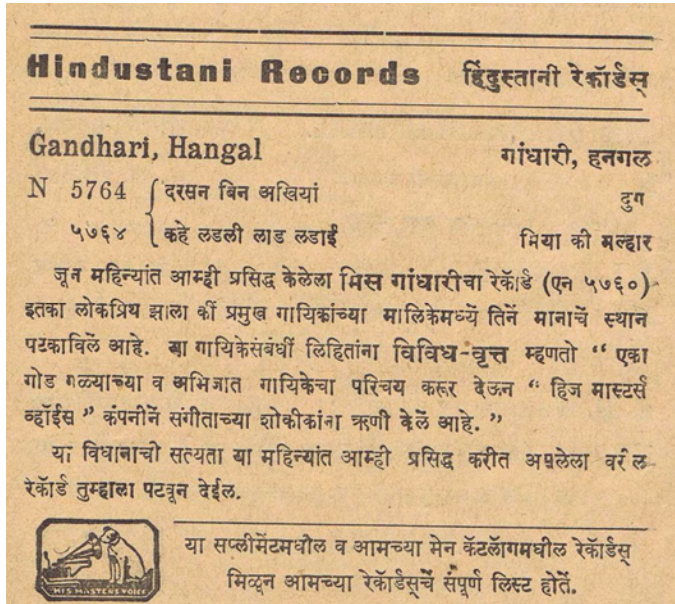
On these discs, she has sung pure Ragas, light classical music and Marathi Bhavgeete. List of some of the Ragas recorded is: Miya Malhar, Khambavati, Jogiya, Malkauns, Deskar, Adana, Shuddha Sarang, Multani, Shankara, Hindol, Suha Sudharai, Bageshree, Des, Mand, Durga, Bahar, Bhoopali, Bihag, Puriya, Kamod and Bhairvi. These are 78-r.p.m. (rotation speed of 78 revolutions per minute) double sided gramophone records with one song per side. These are

made out of shellac and need a careful handling since they are breakable. Paper label pasted at the center of the disc has her name printed as 'Gandhari Hangal'. One can listen to her high pitched female voice with extremely fast 'taans'. These records were very popular and had a huge sale. That is why her photograph in a star shaped frame is seen printed in 1935 catalogue of HMV. Title of this photograph says



From 1935 HMV catalogue

“Rising star on the gramophone horizon”. Caption below this photograph reads as: “Kannad Kokila Gandhari Hangal”. It also mentions that this singer has a bright future. In those days, several Marathi daily and weekly newspapers and magazines used to review the records sold in the market. ‘Vividh Vrutta’ from Mumbai was one such popular magazine and had published the review of Gangubai’s gramophone records.



From 1935 HMV catalogue

1935 HMV catalogue has reproduced part of the review on Gangubai's records. It says that music lovers and listeners are thankful to the gramophone company for introducing this excellent singer through her wonderful records.

In light music, she has recorded Gazal and Thumri and these records also had an excellent sale. However, her Marathi records had the highest sale. These are over twenty songs consisting of Marathi classical songs and Bhavgeete. Around 1930-32, Pt. Vinayakbuwa Patwardhan and Prof. Narayanrao Vyas tried to popularize classical Ragas by writing 'bandish' in Marathi language. Some of their records became quite popular among music lovers and common listeners. Mr. B. V. alias Mama Varerker and poet Mr. S. A. Shukla alias 'Kumud Bandhav' wrote Marathi compositions for several singers. Gangubai also recorded couple of songs like e.g. 'Kashi sadaya na ye majhi daya' (Raga: Jogiya), 'Hariche guna gau ya' (Raga: Bhimpalas) etc. 'Ae ri aali piya bina' is a very famous bandish in Raga Yaman. Shukla kavi wrote Marathi composition 'Chal lagbag ye jhani' and Gangubai recorded it with Sitar accompaniment. Mama Varerker wrote two Marathi songs for children – 'Aaicha chhakula' and 'Balacha chala'. These were issued on two sides of one 78-rpm record number N 5136. These were lullaby songs and became extremely popular among middle class Marathi houses. Small children used to sleep while listening to these songs played on gramophone.



HMV record cover (1936)

Gramophone Company issued a special record sleeve for this children record. It contains young Gangubai's photograph in 'star' shaped frame. In this photograph, she looks like a loving mother. Record sleeve mentions her name as 'Kannad Kokila' and recommends this record to the customers.

Gangubai has unknowingly set another record in the history of Marathi Bhavgeete. In 1935, Mr. G. N. Joshi of HMV was recording two duets in the studio. The songs were – 'Chakake kor chandrachi' and 'Tu tithe aan mi ithe ha' and were written by Mr. S. A. Shukla. The tune was set by Mr. G. N. Joshi, requiring a very high pitch singing by the accompanying female singer. However, she could not sing well in the higher scale. Mr. Joshi was about to give up the recording since he was not satisfied. At that moment Gangubai entered the studio for her usual recording schedule. Mr. Joshi requested her to accompany her. In the beginning she flatly refused. However, after lot of persuasion she agreed. With the consent of the scheduled singer, she tried it out and it worked very well. She recorded both the songs in one schedule. These were the 'First' Marathi Bhavgeet duets that were recorded in 1935 and were issued on the gramophone discs.

Around fifteen years ago, I attended the felicitation function at National Center of Performing Arts (N.C.P.A.) in South Mumbai in which Gangubai Hangal was presented an award. I met her in the lounge before the function and showed her some of her early gramophone records. She was quite surprised to see them and asked, 'Who listens to them now?' She called Krishnabai and showed them to her. She narrated several incidences of that period. Krishna was a small child and she used to sleep in studio or to play around during the recording sessions. HMV offered her fifteen rupees for each record. However, she became very famous through these records and received contracts for radio programs in

'Sarvajanic Ganesh Utsav'. She had her first private concert in 1936 at Goregaon in Mumbai.

Today, these records are a part of the history and excellent documentary examples in studying the evolution of her 'Gayaki' - "Art of Singing". Her music appears to be imperfect compared to her recordings in the later part of her career. This could be understood since she did not receive proper and prolonged tuition. Although Sawai Gandharva had agreed to teach her, he was very busy on Marathi stage and toured extensively. He used to act and sing in many plays including those staged by his own company. Whenever possible he would give some lessons to Gangubai and ask her to practise. She would try it sincerely but it was not a disciplined training. It is interesting to note that around same time, the Gramophone Company issued records of her idol Smt. Heerabai Barodekar, Guru Sawai Gandharva and Guru Bandhu (young child prodigy) Master Firoz Dastur from Bombay. All these records were very popular among music lovers.

After about 1936, Sawai Gandharva wound up his drama company and settled down at his native place Kundgol for health reasons. Gangubai began to receive proper training and it continued for four years. She would travel from Hubli to Kundgol by railway, sometimes with her (child) daughter Krishna. On her way to station, often she would face criticism from the half closed doors, 'Look, a mother of three children is going to learn music'? How is she not ashamed of leaving her family to become a singer'? She would ignore such harsh and personal comments and just concentrate herself on her goal. Many times, the return train to Hubli would be late and her younger Gurubandhu Bhimanna (later Pt. Bhimsen Joshi) would accompany her with a lantern in his hand. They would wait for the train on the platform and discuss about the music and new lessons from Guruji. This brother-sister relationship grew and continued till her death.



With Gurubandhu Pt. Bhimsen Joshi

This rigorous 'taalim' was quite useful and her singing became perfect and matured. She cut one 78-rpm disc after a gap of about twenty years. By this time, her voice had completely changed due to surgery on her throat. She recorded

Ragas 'Bhairav' and 'Marwa' on this disc. This red color record label has her name printed as 'Bai Gangubai Hangal', both in Roman script and in Devnagri.



Record label of 1955 HMV disc

This tune 'Suna suna batiya' in Raga Marwa became so much popular that it was played as a background score in a Marathi suspense thriller drama 'Dial M for Murder' produced by Mr. Atmaram Bhende. Later, she cut few EP and LP records for HMV during early sixties and late seventies. These new and modern technological developments could record upto six to twenty minutes on each side. New era of audio tapes and compact discs were helpful in recording entire concerts. Video recording techniques could capture entire live program. Gangubai enjoyed all these media and has recorded prolifically, leaving behind lot of audio-video material for posterity.

Government of Karnataka has decided to set up her memorial in Hubli. Her grandson has taken special interest in preserving her legacy. If you visit Hubli, you would visit 'Smaran Mandir' where a museum has been set up. It has a section of old instruments and an exhibition of photographs. You would see Gangubai releasing her own photoframe featuring young Gangubai with her tanpura. Her music is played on audio equipment and her videos are screened on large flat screens. It creates a wonderful atmosphere and takes us through music of last century. In vocal music of Hindustani style, she was the only female vocalist that sang like a male.



‘Smaran Mandir’, Hubli

She was honored with several awards and distinctions including honorary doctorate conferred on her by Delhi University. She would often say that she had passed just her fifth standard and she does not deserve this honor. However, she had earned it through her love, loyalty and passion for her music and the professional career. Music was her religion and also her life.



‘Smaran Mandir’, Hubli

Gangubai was a great exponent of her Gharana but she was a great human being too. She was always supporting young artists and was used to mix with

young children learning music. Several years ago, Smt. Vijaya Mulay interviewed her on Doordarshan. They were discussing about the status and dignity of the female artists.



Exercising her franchise (L), at the convocation of Delhi University (R)

Gangubai expressed, "Whenever any male artist becomes famous and popular, he is rewarded with titles like 'Ustad', 'Khansaheb', 'Bua', 'Acharya', 'Pandit' etc. However, a female artist of that status is always addressed as Bai, Begum, and Jan and so on. Why this partial treatment? This sharp question remained unanswered. However, her point was noted. Later on, print and electronic media began to address female artists with titles 'Pandita' or 'Vidushi' while announcing their programs. Credit for such a welcome change goes to Gangubai only.

In her long interview recorded on her 75th birthday, she advised youth, "I do not find depth and improvisation of musical ideas among the younger lot. This may be due to the fact that this generation does not want to stick to one Guru and to get complete training for longer period. You spend over twenty years to get one degree in any discipline, but want to get mastery in music by just attending a few classes and changing teachers. How would it be possible?"

How true! Commercialization of music around us is a real proof of what she meant and suggested. May her soul rest in peace and her music give peace to a listener's soul.



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Discography of Gangubai Hangal

Ref. [<http://courses.nus.edu.sg/course/ellpatke/Miscellany/gangubai.htm>]

Marathi records (HMV, c.1935-40)

1a	N 5105	OMC 296	Halavi Chalavi Jagatala
1b		OMC 297	Balishata Kaal Kasala [Comp. by B.V. Varerkar]
2a	N 5121		Bhairavi - ka wel lavla
2b			giriwar hi bala
3	N 5130		G.N.Joshi & Gandhari Hangal
3a		OMC 1870	Tu Tithe Aan Me lthe Ha
3b		OMC 1869	Chakake Kor Chandrachi (with Gandhari Hangal) [Comp.by S.A.Shukla alias Kumud Bandhav]
4a	N 5136	OMC 1917	Aaicha Chakula Chimukala
4b		OMC 1959	Nahi Bala Chala Na Wate Bara [Comp. by B.V. Varerkar]
5a	N 5146	OMC 1918	Jogia - Kashi Sadaya Na Ye Majhi Daya

5b	OMC 1958	Tilang - Madhuvani Hari Majala [Comp. by B.V. Varerkar]
6a N 5174 6b	OMC 1915 OMC 1916	Natkuranji - Mana Dhyas Lage Madhyamavati - Kusum Chap Kan Dhari [C. by B.V. Varerkar]
7a N 5226 7b	OMD 225 OMD 226	Sindhura Abhang - Aamha Anand Aamha Sindh Bhairavi Abhang - Lo Lo Lagala
8a N 5240 8b	OMC 227 OMC 230	Sakhe Sodu Nakos Aabola Nav Rangi Rangalela [C. S.A.Shukla alias 'Kumud Bandhav']
9a N 5264 9b	OMC 228 OMC 229	Yaman - Chal Lagbag Ye Jhani Bhimpalas - Hariche Gun Gau Ya [Comp. by S.A.Shukla alias 'Kumud Bandhav']
10		*Hindol - Laal jhinkar ho [1931, RPG CD/cassette]

Hindustani records (HMV, 1933-35)

11a N 5629 11b	OE 1853 OE 1855	Tilang Thumri - Le Chalo Gokul Gam Gazal - Din Darshan Mohe
12a N 5640 12b	OE 1859 OE 1860	Gazal - Rukhe Pur Noor Hai Gazal - Hamne Darfare Tujhe
13a N 5645 13b	OE 1856 OE 1857	Khamaj Thumri - Shyam Sundar Tori Mand Kerava - Kit Gayo Bavari Mana
14a N 5656 14b	OE 1852 OE 1854	*Malkauns - Mero Man Har Lino *Bageshree - Chod More Balam Baiyya

Hindustani records (HMV, 1935)

15a N 5760 16b	OMC 306 OMC 307	*Khambavati - Hari Khelat Brijmen Hori *Jogia - Harika Bhed Na Payo
16a N 5764 16b	OMC 303 OMC 305	*Miyan Malhar - Kahe Ladli Lad Ladai *Durga - Darsan Bin Aankhiya
17a N 5807 17b		Multani - aaj baajat badhai Shankara - gauvey charavey

18a	N 5814	OMC 1841	Shudha Sarang - Aab Mori Baat
18b		OMC 1842	Adana - Aai Re karkara
19a	N 5827	OMC 304	Hindol - Koyaliya Bole
19b		OMC 307	*Deskar - Aamila Mata Mashi bolo Ji [1931]
20a	N 5834		Gazal Kerwa - Aankhe Churate Ho Kise
20b			Gazal Dadra - Pike Hum Tum Jo Chale
21a	N 5885	OMD 139	*Bahar - Saunde Sugandha (Tritaal)
21b		OMD 140	*Bhupali - Ninadiya Jage (Tritaal)

The Twin [c.1936]

22a	FT 3096	OE 1850	Bihag - Aaliri Aalubeli Sunder Naar
22b		OE 1858	Bhairavi - Tore Bina Nahin Chain
23a	FT 3108	OE 1849	*Puriya - Rangkar Rasi Aave
23b		OE 1850	*Kamod - Tarana: Tan Derena [1934]
24a	FT 5270		Mand - Kit Gayo Bavari Bana (kerva)
24b			Khamaj Thumri - Shyam Sundar Tori Dekhi
25a	N 15621	OMD 153	Sudhrai - Dar Dar Bole (ektaal)
25b		OMD 154	Des - Kanha Nandko Khilale (tritaal)
26a	N 36258	OML 5689 -1P	*Marwa - Sun Sun Batiya [1950]
26b		OMH 10142-1P	*Bhairav - Ae Banata Banay [1950]

EP records [1961]

27a	7 EPE 1225	Asawari - Shri Mata Bhavani
27b		Chandrakauns - Kab Ghar Aayo
28a	7 EPE 1232	Abhogi - Charan Dhar Aayo
28b		Yaman - Kanha Bajai Aaj Bansuri
29a	7 EPE 1239	Dev giri - Bana Pyara
29b		Jaijaiwanti - Achal Raho Raja

LP record (c.1981)

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Manna Dey's unusual devotees

Shree Prabodh Chandra Dey alias 'Manna Dey' will soon be honored with prestigious 'Dadasaheb Phalke' award. On this great occasion, it will be interesting to know about two Bengali persons who are great devotees of Manna Da and his music. Mr. Deba Prasad Das is from Arunachal Pradesh and Dr. Gautam Roy is from Howrah, Kolkata. Both consider Manna Da as their 'Guru' and have done great work in preserving Manna Da's legacy for posterity.

Mr. Das is a music teacher in a government school at Tezu in district Lohit of Arunachal Pradesh. He met Manna Da in February 1982 during a concert and proposed to write a book on him. Manna Da was quite amused with this thought and wondered who would read such a book. Besides, he was mostly in Mumbai and very far away. Even today, normal postal services are quite slow and highly unpredictable. Modern facilities such as mobile phones and internet were not even dreamt of. However, Das did not want to give up. He worked hard against all odds and decided to accomplish his task. He began to collect information, articles, photographs, song texts and booklets, gramophone discs and audio/video tapes. He also met Manna Da several times in Kolkata and wrote letters for more and more information.. He began to put together the biographical and discographical details. He came in contact with the members of 'Society of Indian Record Collectors' in 1990 and made an appeal for help support and guidance from every possible person. As a result, he published [Manna De's](#) first ever Bengali Autobiography titled 'Aami Niraalaay Bosey' in 1997 Kolkata book fair. [Renowned lyricist Pulak Bandyopadhyay wrote the preface of this book.](#) HMV published a set of two audio cassettes of Manna Dey songs on this occasion. This book was very well received by both press and public.

Encouraged with this success, Mr. Deba Prasad Das published a discography of Manna Dey's songs titled 'Mera sab kuch mere geet re' on Manna Da's birth day on May 1, 2001. According to this study, Manna Da has sung over 2900 songs in number of different Indian languages, the major chunk being Bengali (1165) and Hindi (1512) songs. Remaining two hundred songs are in Marathi, Bhojpuri, Magadhi, Panjabi, Maithili, Assamese, Oriya, Gujrathi, Konkani, Kannadi, Malyalam, Sindhi and Nepali. The book was marked as 'an outstanding research' by the leading Bengali periodicals.

Eight years after the publication of this biography by Mr. Das, one more biography of Manna Dey was written by Dr. Gautam Roy of Howrah, Kolkata, and published by 'Ananda publishers Pvt. Ltd.', 45 Beniatola Lane, Kolkata-700009. This new Bengali book was also well received by Bengali readers. Mr. Das was shocked when he found all his honesty, passion, diligence and sincerity was copied in this book without his knowledge or even an acknowledgement to his work. He tried to raise this issue of plagiarism in his own capacity and gave an interview to e-TV Bangla channel. It was telecast on April 30, 2007. Within a

week, the same channel telecast an interview of Manna Dey in which he said, "What is the wrong if Dr. Roy has copied from Mr. Deba Prasad's creation? Deba Prasad is just a 'Stupid'. Gautam is a doctor, a Ph.D. doctorate man, thus I don't like this type of insulations on Gautam by Deba Prasad. On the contrary, he should definitely appreciate Dr. Gautam Roy that Dr. Roy had done a very praise worthy work indeed".

Stunned with the 'Guru' and the 'Mentor's strange stand, Mr. Das, recalling the case of 'Ekalabya', decided to keep quiet and continued his passionate research for the benefit of future researchers and students of music. He submitted both the versions of the book to 'Anand Bazaar Patrika' for their unbiased scrutiny and opinion. In an article dated August 9, 2008, Anand Bazaar Patrika supported Mr. Das. Pointing out the word to word resemblance of both the books, they exclaimed, "How Manna Dey himself marked 'Jibaner Jalsaghare' as his first biography, while 'Aami Niraalaay Bosey' was already published eight years ago!".

Meanwhile, this new book received an award of 'Publisher's Guild'. It was translated in English by Sarbani Putatunda and published by Penguin books in 2007. Its Marathi translation is done by Dr. Aparna Jha (Mehendale) and is published in 2008 by Sahitya Prasar Kendra, Nagpur. Famous playback singer Mrs. Suman Kalyanpur has written a preface for this Marathi translation. Dr. Roy's book will soon be translated into Hindi and Gujrathi. Several years ago, in 1982, Manna Dey was worried about the readership of such a book. However, he is fortunate to see this day when his book is being translated in many languages. This is quite unique compared to his contemporary male singers (viz. Rafi, Mukesh, Talat and Kishore) who received such honors after they passed away.

Both the Bengali biographies were based on the memoirs narrated by Manna Da himself. So, there are many common mistakes especially in the world of Hindi film songs. e.g. the duet song "Bhaarat ki ek sannaari ki...." in Ramrajya was not at all sung by Manna Dey but by Yashwant Nikam & Madhusudan Pandey. But both Mr. Das and Dr. Roy mentioned the song as Manna Dey's song. This could probably be due to the fact that both the Bengali writers did not have access to Mumbai film world compared to the Bengali music lovers and film historians. Moreover, it is difficult to understand how a researcher like Mr. Das mentioned many songs of Hemanta Mukherji, Sandhya Mukherji and Tarun Bandyopadhyay as Manna De's songs and how the same mistake was repeated by Dr. Roy? Many Bengali friends who have read both the versions of the autobiography have expressed that the book has repetitions of incidences and goes round and round. These should have been edited professionally. However, Marathi translation is much better and concise. However, all these books give a detailed account of the emergence of Manna Dey as a musician, an excellent singer and a great human being.

Prabhodh Chandra was lovingly called 'Maanaa' by his mother, family members and friends. Upon arrival in Mumbai, the pronunciation changed to 'Manna' and

stayed in the film industry and among music lovers. Young 'Maanaa' did not realize that he has a melodious voice until he won the inter collegiate music competition in all the categories of music successively for three years. His childhood and early youth was full of fun, and he spent most of his time in wrestling and wandering. His uncle Krishna Chandra (K.C.) Dey was a great singer and actor of repute. He used to sing on radio, in concerts and act in Bengali films. He was blind and hence 'Maanaa' used to accompany him even in his music lessons by writing down song texts, notations and play tanpura and harmonium. K. C. Dey realized the potential and encouraged him in the field of music. When Maanaa decided to take up music as his career, he began to teach him music. He also took him to Mumbai in 1942 as his assistant when he was invited to compose music for Hindi films. In the beginning, Manna sang a duet with Suraiyya for film 'Tamanna'. K. C. Dey had composed music for this film. Around 1943, musician Shankar Rao Vyas approached K. C. Dey with a proposal for playback for Prakash Pictures 'Ram Rajya'. As he was very busy with other films, he declined the offer and suggested the name of Manna Dey. Thus Manna sang his first solo song for this film that was screened for three years and this was the only film seen by Gandhiji. Manna Dey wanted to be a singer and composer like his uncle. So he began to take music lessons first with Ustad Aman Ali Khan of Bhendi Bazaar gharana and then with Ustad Abdul Rehman whom he met in All India Radio. Later he spent many years as an assistant music director with Khemchand Prakash, Anil Biswas and Sachin Dev Burman. Sachin Dev would first teach the tune to Manna and in turn he would teach and rehearse it with the singers. He used to get frustrated while teaching and would think that it would be best in his voice. In 1950, Sachin Dev Burman composed 'Upar Gagan Vishal' for film 'Mashaal' and told Manna that this tune is composed for you. Manna sang it so well that he got established as a promising playback singer. Although he composed music for few films, finally he emerged as a playback singer and provided playback for over forty years. Soon he sang songs of Bengali version of V. Shantaram's 'Amar Bhoopali' composed by Vasantrao Desai.

In 1951, he came in close contact with Raj Kapoor as his second (first Mukesh) voice. This association lasted until award winning song 'Ae bhay jara dekhke chalo' of 'Mera Naam Joker'. In many films, Raj Kapoor has used playback of both Mukesh and Manna Dey. However, the audience seems to have accepted this quiet willingly. Manna Dey changed the idiom of romantic songs and gave it a masculine touch as evidenced in the duet songs from 'Chori Chori' and 'Shree 420'. He has sung songs of diverse moods from classical to western music. In 'Bhoot Bangla', 'Ziddi' and 'Padosan' he sang wonderfully for Mehmood. On the other hand, the songs for Balraj Sahani in 'Do Bigha Zamin', 'Kabuliwala', and 'Waqt' are in altogether different mood. 'O Meri Johrajabin' is a must even today in Indian marriages not only in North India but also in USA and Canada. Pran was known for his villain roles in Hindi films for several years. When he switched over to character actor roles in 'Upkar' and 'Zanjeer', Manna Da's songs 'Kasme Vada Pyar Wafa' and 'Yaari Hai Iman Mera Yaar Meri Jindagi' helped to boost

the roles at greater heights. It was also interesting to see Pran singing on screen for the first time. Manna Da's Marathi film songs and devotional songs are popular even today. He won award for his song in Malyalam film 'Chemmin'. Mohammad Rafi, Mukesh, Hemant Kumar, Talat Mehmood and Kishore Kumar were leading playback singers when Manna Da entered this field. Each one had a special feature in singing. Manna Da emerged as a singer with firm base in classical music, although he sang songs in different moods. His songs based on pure classical ragas are remembered even today. Some prominent ones are 'Tu pyar ka sagar hai', 'Puchoo na kaise maine rain bitayi', 'Sur na saje kya gaun main' and that eternal Bhairvi 'Laga chunari men daag'. He has sung a duet 'Ketki gulab juhi champak bana jhoole' with Pt. Bhimsen Joshi in film 'Basant Bahar'. Bengali film, Aadhunik and Puja songs are not much known outside Bengal. His non-film (Private) songs are even less known. He sang 'Naach Re Maura' with singer Meena Kapoor for the opening ceremony of Vividh Bharati station of All India Radio. He sang famous Bhoopali 'Ghanashyam sundara shreedhara' with Lata Mangeshkar in Bengali version of 'Amar Bhoopali' and with Laxmi Shankar he sang its Kannada version. Mahatma Gandhi had written a letter to young Maniben Patel, (daughter of Sardar Vallabhai Patel) replying her queries: Where does God live? How to find him? Music director Vasatrao Desai accepted a challenge to set tune to this unusual letter during Gandhiji's birth centenary in 1969. Manna Dey has recorded it ('He namratke sagar') on a special 78-rpm disc specially made by the Gramophone Company for this occasion. He has also cut advertisements and propaganda records for toothpastes and mine safety rules etc.

Around 1980, after Amitabh Bachchan's Raj, Manna Da realized that his voice won't be suitable for the heroes of the new era and hence he retired gracefully from playback singing. After about 1990, technological innovations brought in new gadgets in the market and by 2005, personal computers, laptops, mobile phones, internet and electronic mails became the daily tools. Both Dr. Gautam Roy and Mr. Deba Prasad Das used these tools effectively for better and faster outreach of their work for the benefit of internet users and computer buffs. Soon, in Kolkata book fair - 2009, Mr. Deba Prasad Das published 'Manna World' - first ever multimedia CD. This is a part one containing Bengali section and contains biography, discography and a video of Manna Da's 60th year playback singing celebrations in Kolkata in 2003. The contents of this CD are most elegant and presented in a beautiful form. This CD is published by 'Prama Publication', Tezu, Arunachal Pradesh and is available for just one hundred rupees. Mr. Das has planned for part two containing information on Manna Da's songs in Hindi and other languages. Next, Mr. Das has already begun to collect material for bio-discography of his Grandguru [guru's guru] Krishna Chandra Dey. One day he wants to build a museum cum archive at his home town 'Alipurduar', where he wants to display all the material he has collected over last thirty years. While this is a very ambitious project, it would be desirable to have it available on internet for the visitors from all over the world. Glimpses of his research and collection are also available on the net at www.mannade.com. Mr. Das is also trying his

best to convince the Govt. of India for honoring Manna Dey with the highest National award – “BHARAT RATNA”.

Dr. Gautam Roy has established ‘Manna Dey Sangeet Academy’ at Howrah, Kolkata and also launched web site ‘www.Mannadey.in’. This web site is quite exhaustive and contains his biography, list of the songs and a wonderful photo gallery. This could be updated with audio and video clips in future. Inspired by a heart touching music of Manna Da, these two works will be quite useful references for the future generations studying and listening to old music.

October 10, 2009

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When I was interviewing Manna De/1991

- Deba Prasad Das

I have been undergoing research on Manna De for more than 27 years

Manna Dey and Mr. Deba Prasad Das

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Revisiting old song - 'ye zindagi usi ki hai'

Original article in Marathi: Suresh Chandvankar

Translation in English: Dhananjay Naniwadekar

If a theoretical exercise is carried out for fun, to choose just one song as the very best among 'Hindi Film Songs', (which number close to seventy-thousand by now), the song, 'yeh zindagi usiki hai' from the film 'Anarkali' will surely be in contention. Because of this stature that the song has been accorded by music lovers, fans of C Ramchandra and followers of film music were pained by the recent controversy questioning who should get the credit for the composition. Today, neither Roshan nor C Ramchandra is amidst us to present their version of the story. That is why several people have objected to Hridaynath Mangeshkar's claim, made from the platform of 'Idea SaReGaMaPa' - TV programme, that seventy-five per cent of the credit for the song belongs to Roshan. Only Lata Mangeshkar could tell the correct story now, if she so desired. In such cases, existing literature on the subject can also come handy. Luckily, NCPA's Wadia Library of music in South Mumbai has archived several books and rare newspaper cuttings, and they are generously made available to researchers. The archives do contain information about this song. Its acquaintance would provide vital help to students of the subject.

The germ of the controversy lies in an old article by Latadidi. Composer Roshan died on 16 November 1967. A tribute by Lata Mangeshkar was published in the Marathi daily 'Loksatta' on 18 November 1967. She wrote: 'Roshan was a complete music composer. There was something quite different about his music. His compositions had pure Indian base. He had made deep study of classical music. Not only did he compose his own songs with due responsibility and involvement, but on occasion he sincerely offered help to other composers. I remember an incident clearly. 'Yeh zindagi usi ki hai', the famous song in 'Anarkali', was taking shape. Its dhruvapad (mukhada) was ready. But C. Ramchandra was confused about composing the tune of the antara 'sunaayegi ye daastan, shama mere mazaar kii' and the song was stuck. By sheer coincidence, we met Roshan this time and explained our difficulty. He immediately came to the recording room and composed a beautiful tune in only a few minutes. Thus, thanks to Roshan's generous and timely help, that the song from antara 'sunaayegi ye daastan' onwards became especially outstanding and hence dear to the listeners.'

LOWDOWN ON LATA



FRESH from her Silver Jubilee, Lata Mangeshkar has raised a hornets' nest again by taking some barbed pot-shots at the man who helped her towards that landmark in her career.

The reference, of course, is to C. Ramchandra, who finds himself the target of Lata's graceless pen in the otherwise befitting tribute that this celebrated singer has paid to the late Roshan in the Marathi Lok-satta of November 18, 1967.

WHAT SHE SAYS

In this tribute, Lata, by subtle innuendo, suggests that the theme song of "Anarkali" — "Ye zindagi usi ki hai" — was composed, not by C. Ramchandra, but by Roshan!

To quote her own words as they read when translated into English:

"Roshan was a musician of integrity. His music was of a different type. His compositions were the purest from the angle of Indian music. His knowledge of classical music was sound and rich. Not only did he fulfil the responsibilities of his musical undertakings, but he helped other musicians unreservedly with their compositions.

"Here I remember one incident clearly. It happened when

the music for Anarkali was being composed. 'Ye zindagi usi ki hai jo kisi ka ho gaya pyar hi me kho gaya' was the song in question. But music director C. Ramchandra did not know how to put to music the 'antara' of this song. And the whole thing was stuck there. C. Ramchandra was perplexed.

"At that time, we met Roshan by chance. When he was informed of the difficulty, he came to the sound-recording room and, within a matter of minutes, gave a very haunting turn to the song, and thus helped bring it to a happy end. And it is only after this that the portion starting from the line, 'Sunayegi ye dastan', came to touch the hearts of music lovers."

TRIBUTE INDEED!

What characteristic feminine petulance! Surely, if the whole thing happened as Lata would have it, the time to raise it was when Roshan was alive.

But then Roshan, who was a good friend of C. Ramchandra, would never have allowed Lata to do so. And so she has done it, with singular lack of grace, in an article that is supposed to be her tribute to the memory of a great composer.

First of all, unless we accept the rest of "Anarkali" music, too, to be someone else's work,

it is difficult to believe that so versatile a composer as C. Ramchandra got so badly stuck that he just could not go ahead with the tune. And one has only to hear the song carefully to discern that there is little of 'Roshan' about it. In wind and limb, it is 'Ramchandra' all over.

RULED OUT

Also, the whole argument presumes that the tune could be altered by the mere act of Roshan's walking into the recording-room. But this kind of "approval" is ruled out in the case of an S. Mukerji film — which is what Anarkali was — where a tune does not go on the tape until it has been okayed beforehand by that producer.

Of course, it is quite possible that Ramchandra consulted Roshan on the tune — the same way as Roshan took Ramchandra's opinion on his own work from time to time. But such consultation does not mean that the tune ceases to be a "signature tune" of the composer.

The whole episode, therefore, has shown Lata up in a poor light indeed. If she had a score to settle with C. Ramchandra, she could at least have chosen a better time, place and occasion to do so.

—RAJ

TOI 6 JAN 1968

It's not known what reactions were offered by Marathi readers to newspapers about this article. But 'Raj' (Raju Bharatan) wrote an article in English about it, which was published in 'Times of India' on 6 January 1968. It was titled 'Lowdown on Lata', and he asked the same question which is being raised today. 'Why wasn't the information made public while Roshan was still alive?' Raju Bharatan had castigated the singer for trying to settle scores with C. Ramchandra under the garb of paying fulsome tribute to Roshan. It's not known whether Latadidi had responded to the article in TOI by Mr. Raju Bharatan.

MID-DAY 10 MAY 2008

IMMABLE OLDIES

MELODIANA



WHO stands out as more memorable, Lata in 'Aayega aayega aayega', or 'Aa jaa re pardesee'? Don't stop to pick and choose, just reflect upon whether there was any theme – between *Nahal* and *Madhumati* – in which the heroine became (again via Lata) no less a will-o'-the-wisp part of our mindset.

There was such a theme – Bina Rai as *Anarkali* through 'Yeh zindagee usee kee hai'. C Ramchandra rose to his zenith here, as he harnessed Lata's voice to make Bina immortal on the silver screen. Not even the Lata-Naushadian Yaman spell, cast by Madhubala as *Anarkali* in *Mughal-e-Azam* via 'Khuda nighabhaan ho tumharaa', could quite match the frozen image of Bina Rai as *Anarkali* – dying with a song on her lips, as she is entombed alive.

"She sings like an angel!" a British daily hailed Bina – meaning Lata! Bina's 'Yeh zindagee usee kee hai' begins in *Kaafi* – in the sense that the *komalidhauri* is in *Kaafi*. It moves fluidly, after that, into *Kirvani*. And finally settles in *Bhimpalasi*. Who played the sitar so nerve-tingly in 'Yeh zindagee usee kee hai'? It is Ustad Halim Jafar Khan.

There were other Lata-C Ramchandra solos in *Anarkali*, with which this singer-composer

C Ramachandra's haunting old melodies can still bring on gooseflesh. He gave Lata Mangeshkar an unforgettable hit as "Aayega, aayega", whereon the singer went from strength to strength. Charting C Ramachandra's musical history gives us a flashback into a career dotted with hits

'meloduo' held us captive. Among them was C Ramchandra's own



ANARKALI IN SONG: Bina Rai in the movie

Lata favourite, 'Mohabbat aese dhadkan hai', then there were 'Mujh se mat poochh mere ishq mein kya rakha hai', 'Dua kar gham-e-dil Khuda se dua kar', 'Aa

jaa ab to an jaa', 'O naasmaan wale shikwa hai zindagee ka' and 'Mohabbat mein aese kadam dagmagaye', not to mention the matching impact, left by Bina Rai as *Anarkali*, in that court-scene duet with Hemant Kumar: 'Jaag dard-e-ishq jaag'.

For all that, it is 'Yeh zindagee usee kee hai' – capturing Bina Rai, first, in the season of youth (opposite Pradeep Kumar as *Salim*), then in all her depth of despair at the end of the show – that has a special *Anarkali* niche in the viewer's heart. To think that

Ramchandra never wanted to compose this *Anarkali* theme at all, being (early 1952) in the midst of a financial face-off with the *Filmistan* banner! "It was Lata

who forced me do *Anarkali*," C Ramchandra confided in me. "I just couldn't say 'no' to Lata those days, you know how things were between us!"

Yet the same Lata, once the vibes went wrong, was to contend (in a signed article in a prominent Marathi daily) that C Ramchandra got stuck in a certain portion of 'Yeh zindagee usee kee hai', adding for good measure that Roshan had to come and help him out! Taken aback by this Lata claim, I straightway rang C Ramchandra to check. But that 'Mombasa Mombasa' style of composer, right then, was out of India (somewhere in Africa), so I waited patiently for him to get back. The moment he returned, I asked C Ramchandra whether he had read Lata's charge. The man countered with, "I heard about it, but I was away from India, so I have to see it for myself. Do you have exactly what Lata said?" I had it in front of me and read it out, ending with the Lata observation that C Ramchandra on *Anarkali*, in the case of 'Yeh zindagee usee kee hai', just did not know how to proceed from the 'Sunayegee yeh dastaan shama mere mazaar kee' point.

For what seemed an eternity, C Ramchandra fell silent – I could almost feel the tears in his eyes, at

the other end of the line, as he, finally, spoke up with: "Yes, I know nothing at all about music, every single song of mine, for Lata, were tuned by me with the help of someone else! All those melodies of mine, for Lata, that you listeners say you treasure, I did not compose them at all! How could I have – when Lata says I got stuck in finishing just one tune?"

So overcome was C Ramchandra that he took some time calming down on the phone. Finally, as he gathered himself, his pride as a composer was touched, and he sought to know, "Where did Lata argue that I got stuck – at the 'Sunayegee yeh dastaan' point, did you say? Oh yes, now I remember! Roshan just happened to be there, as the 'Yeh zindagee usee kee hai' recording, took shape. And there was this *jhatka* I wanted to take in a particular way – it was at the 'Sunayegee yeh dastaan' turning, now that I come to think of it. Roshan, as a friend of mine, suggested that the *jhatka* could be taken in a way different from mine. But my self-esteem, as a composer, did not allow me to take that *jhatka* in any style but my own. Do you get the impression, hearing the two sides of the 'Yeh zindagee usee kee hai' record, that I was stuck at the 'Sunayegee yeh dastaan' point – or anywhere else?"

We certainly don't – we can feel C Ramchandra moving, freewheelingly, from 'Sunayegee yeh dastaan' to this evergreen song's 'Alvida alvida!' climax. Let the evergreen climax to this column too, therefore be, 'Alvida alvida!'

Several years passed. In 1994, Raju Bharatan, the well-known film journalist, wrote the book 'Lata Mangeshkar: A Biography' in English. The book registered brisk sales. Within one year, Smt. Leena Sohoni translated the book into Marathi and Mehta Prakashan published it. There is a chapter in it titled 'Marathi Noor Jehan'. A detailed explanation about the original short retort by Raju Bharatan was published on pages 113 to 117. This was the explanation: 'It would be an understatement to say that I was stumped by (Lata's) article in Marathi. I immediately phoned Anna (C. Ramchandra). But he had gone to Africa. I got in touch with him as soon as he returned to India. I read out Latadidi's charge against him (that he was stuck for the tune) from the original article in Marathi. He was furious. Then he said: 'Yes, every line I have composed for Lata was done with the help of other composers. I know nothing about composing music.' He became very emotional. After the anger and hurt had somewhat subsided, he added: 'Yes, Roshan was my friend. But I composed the song in the early 1950s, and in those days he was deferential towards me. It is true that he was present, by pure coincidence, when I was composing the tune for the stanza, 'sunaayegi ye daastaan'. In that line, I wanted a particular 'jhatka'. Roshan thought a different type of swing to the notes should be employed. These differences in approach are routine

Not just Raju Bharatan, but a huge majority of music lovers do not think even today that C. Ramchandra needed help for composing the tune. Annasahab had himself added: 'I am not suggesting at all that I have never been stuck. But if C. Ramchandra faces such a hurdle, he himself has to find a way. Similarly Roshan has to rely on his wits to overcome the challenges which he faces. Lata Mangeshkar can help neither Roshan, nor C. Ramchandra in these matters.'

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Lindström labels in India

An article for 'Lindström Project' magazine, Germany (2010)

'Carl Lindström' (1869-1932) and 'Carl Lindström G.m.b.H' company names are associated mainly with the 'Odeon' label records, not only in India but worldwide. The 'Odeon' label records were sold all over the world for almost fifty years. They posed a real threat and a competition to the records produced by the British Gramophone Company and American Victor Company. The company survived through the world wars I and II and flourished even during the period of great depression of 1929 in America. Like Gramophone Company, it also absorbed small players in many countries. 'Odeon in India' is a vast subject and should be covered separately. In this article, I plan to outline a brief overview of the 'Lindström labels in India' with a special reference to the small record companies that flourished with the support of 'Carl Lindström G.m.b.H'. Main reference source used for this article is the pioneering work of Michael Kinnear, a discographer and a researcher from Australia [Kinner, 2003]. I have also referred to 'The Record News', a magazine/newsletter published by the 'Society of Indian Record Collectors', founded in 1990 at Bombay, India.

Beka Records and Beka Grand Records (1904-1927)

[Kinner, 2003, Kinnear, 1991]

Name 'Beka' is derived from the surname initial of the founders Heinrich **B**umb and Max **K**oenig. In 1905, within one year of its foundation, over one thousand recordings were issued on 'Beka' label records. During 1905-1910, Beka recording team visited several countries. In November 1905, the team arrived in Bombay. After taking some recordings in Bombay, the team travelled to Calcutta by train to take more recordings of local Bengali artists. Meanwhile, Mr. Valabhdas Runchordas and Mr. Lakhmidas Rowji Tairsee of Bombay were engaged as brokers for the Beka Records G.m.b.H. As a result, some three hundred and thirty single-side disc records of Indian repertoire were issued. Two more recording tours of 1906 and 1910 resulted in the 'Beka Grand Record' catalogues of over 3000 discs, posing a major threat to the 'Gramophone' catalogues. In 1908, the Gramophone Company set up a record pressing plant at Sealdah in Calcutta. This move might have discouraged Beka Record G.m.b.H. from attempting to continue with the Indian disc record market.

In July 1910, Beka Record G.m.b.H., was merged with Fritz Puppel G.m.b.H., of Berlin, to form Beka Record A.G., and a month later the Beka / Puppel merger was amalgamated with Carl Lindström A.G., controllers of the 'Odeon Record'. In October 1910, the 'Sun Disc Record' was placed in the Indian market at the low price of rupees two per double side disc, to which 'The Gramophone Company' responded with the 'Zonophone Record' at the same price. Not to be left out,

'The Talking Machine & Indian Record Co.', joined the low-price record market with the 'Phon-o-Phone' record, manufactured in Germany, which essentially was a re-release of previously issued 'Beka Grand Record' titles that had fallen off in sales. As a result of the amalgamation mentioned above, 'Beka Grand Record' was displaced in priority by 'Odeon Record' by the brokers and agents in India. By early 1914, the number of 'Beka Grand Record' releases still in the catalogue numbered less than one hundred out of the three thousand plus titles that had been recorded since 1905. The re-percussions of the outbreak of 'World War One' were severe for the company founded by Valabhdas Runchordas, since he had been tied to German recording companies since 1906. India, then being a part of the British Empire, had banned any trade between Germany and India. As a result, all the disc supply was cut off during the war years. In this situation, Valabhdas Runchordas had no alternative than to set up his own disc record factory to continue the trade. In 1914, he went on a world tour seeking to acquire equipment to continue his activities. Although he had strong business ties with English, German and Swiss companies, he had to turn to Japanese suppliers for setting up his disc pressing factory. He could acquire some matrices from German sources during this tour. By early 1915, he broke off with his partner Lakhmidas Tairsee and set up another company in the name of 'The Viel-o-phone Co., Ltd.' Bombay, in the compound of his residence at Mahim, complete with record pressing machinery. Soon he went into manufacturing disc records with the 'VIEL-O-PHONE' and the cheaper priced 'PHON-O-PHONE' labels. He also manufactured five inch violet label 'BABY RECORD'. Although a few discs were pressed, technical problems forced Valabhdas Runchordas to abandon the venture. A selection of the discs were then manufactured by J. E. Hough Ltd., London on behalf of The Talking Machine & Indian Record Co. Valabhdas Runchordas continued to advertise himself as 'The Beka Record Agency' until about 1920's, although the supplies of 'Beka Record' from Germany appear to have ceased around 1912/13.

Summary of the 'Beka Record' series

Owner	Bumb & Koenig, G.m.b.H. Berlin, Germany	1904-1906
	Beka Record, G.m.b.H. and Beka Record A.G.	1906-1910
	Carl Lindström, A.G., Berlin, Germany	1910-1931
Manufacturer	Beka Record, G.m.b.H. Berlin	1906-1910
	Carl Lindström, A.G., Berlin, Germany	1911-1914
Agent	Valabhdas Runchordas & Co. Bombay	1905-1906
	Valabhdas Lakhmidas & Co. Bombay	1905-1914
	Valabhdas Runchordas & Co. Bombay	1915-1927
Distributors	The Talking Machine & Indian Record Co. Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi & Madras	1906-1927

Series	Numerical	1415 +	(Blue) [Beka Record – 8-inch, 10 inch]
	Numerical	1000-s	(Blue) [Beka Record – 11 inch]
	Numbers	1415 to c.1730 +	
	Numerical	20,000 +	(Blue) [Beka Record – 8-inch, 10 inch]
	Numbers	20010 to c.22024 +	

The first 'Beka Record' releases of 1905 were eight, ten, eleven and twelve inch diameter discs with white and Navy blue color labels, and used as it's trade mark – a flamingo – depicted listening to a talking machine – in parody of the dog listening to the gramophone. The labels were printed with the words – Imported by..... either Valabhdas Lakhmidas & Co., or The Talking Machine & Indian Record Co. Bombay. However, some discs have a ribbon banner – 'The James Manufacturing Coy. Kalbadevi Road, Bombay' – indicating that some stocks were specially made for that company.

The 'Beka Record' (8"), 'Beka Grand Record' (10") and 'Beka Master Record' (12") have identical catalogue and matrix numbers. The early 1905 Beka recordings of Indian repertoire are numbered between 1425 to about 1750. In the beginning, the discs were single side recorded. In 1908, those titles which had remained popular with the record buying public were reissued as double-side discs without any change to the label style. With the recordings from the 1907 recording tour, the numerical system moves directly to 20000 right through to 22000 plus – indicating the release of some two thousand titles. In 20000 series Master Mohan of Gujrathi stage and Mr. Bal Gandharva of Marathi stage have recorded stage songs. In 22000 series, the highest known number is 22028 – a recording by Mr. Amalya Chandra Mitra – in Bengali, presumably recorded at Calcutta in 1911. One disc in the 20,000 series (20290 / 20291) was labeled as 'National Grand Record' that featured recitations by Babu Surendranath Banerjee in support of the Swadeshi movement. Among other artists, Miss Malka Jan, Miss Bedana Dassi, Mr. Talim Hussain (Sanai) and Mr. Mohammad Yakub (Harmonium) have provided similar recordings for both the 'Gramophone' and 'Beka' companies. The final releases of the Indian repertoire appear to have taken place in about November 1912.

Very few 'Beka Records' have survived today and they are of poor quality compared to Odeon, HMV, Zonophone and other label records. This may be one reason why they were not popular among collectors in India. Also, no catalogues have been found or seen so far.

'Viel-O-Phone' and 'Phon-O-Phone'

Phon-o-phone record was first advertised in March 1908. The selections offered on this label are not known except for a few titles in the advertisements. In 1914,

Valabhdas Runchordas travelled to Europe and managed to acquire the stampers of discs that had previously been issued as the 'Singer Record' which had originally been manufactured by The Wellington Cycle and Motor Co., Bombay and later by Schallplatten-Fabrik Favorite, G.m.b.H., of Hanover-Linden, Germany [Kinnear 1994].

In 1909, Schallplatten-Fabrik Favorite, G.m.b.H., took over the pressing work of 'Singer Record' on behalf of Singer Phono & Record Agency, Bombay. In November 1912, Schallplatten-Fabrik Favorite, G.m.b.H., was organized as Favorite Record, A.G. and in October 1913, this company was acquired by Carl Lindström, A.G., thus placing the 'Singer record' masters under the same ownership as the 'Beka Record' and 'Odeon record' repertoires, for which Valabhdas Runchordas was the distributing agent of India. By late 1914, Valabhdas Runchordas had opened a factory in Bombay in the name of 'The Viel-o-phone Co.,' Ltd., but this venture failed. In 1926, in association with Edison Bell, Ltd., London, he rebuilt and refurbished the factory. Equipped with new disc record presses, 'The Viel-o-phone Co. Ltd.,' produced an Indian repertoire of 'Viel-o-phone' discs along with the 'Phon-o-phone' label. These issues were catalogued to an orange label G-series. This series included Gujrathi, Hindustani, Punjabi and Sindhi repertoire. The full details of releases on this label are not known, however, the label remained in circulation until 1930. The most successful recordings issued on the 'Viel-o-phone' label in various label styles were a series of 'Koran' recitations and the 'call to prayer' discs which were used extensively in the mosques.

Valabhdas Runchordas tried to acquire the matrices of Indian repertoire of the 'Beka' and 'Odeon Record' for which he had been the representative in India, since 1905. Carl Lindström A.G. Berlin declined his offer and in 1929, started the process of establishing their-own agencies in India. By 1933, The Viel-o-phone Co. Ltd. had run into both financial and technical problems. During the mid-1940's, the assets of Valbhdas Runchordas, including the factory at Mahim, are believed to have been sold off.

Today, few records of Viel-o-phone and Phon-o-phone are found with the record collectors. The 'Viel-o-phone' label is printed in a variety of colors with minor variations of the label style. It has a picture of open right palm in a circle printed in the top half of the label. Some pressings have 'Viel-o-phone' printed on one side and 'Viel-o-phone Record' printed on the reverse side. 'Phon-o-phone label has a pair of crossed swords as the trademark. The quality of printing on these labels is of very low standard. Recorded sound is too noisy and not of very good quality.

Ram-a-phone and Ramagraph Records (1907-1940)

[Kinner, 2003, Kinnear 1995]

A little known indigenous record label of India by the name 'RAM-A-PHONE DISC RECORD' was first placed on the Indian market in September 1907, and continued to be marketed until about 1940. This label survived so long, primarily due to the business acumen of several generations of the Ramchunder family of Bombay.

T. S. Ramchunder & Bros. was originally established in the name of B. S. Ramchunder & Bros. sometimes prior to 1851 as traders of musical instruments. T. S. Ramchunder and his younger brothers entered the business around 1890. In about 1895, they began to import Edison phonograph machines from America and offered locally recorded cylinders as an incentive to the purchasers of the phonographs. This continued well over a decade as a sideline to their main business. As one of the premier musical instrument, phonograph traders and suppliers of Bombay, T. S. Ramchunder & Bros. had a good knowledge of the 'best' native talent (mainly from Urdu, Parsi and Gujrathi theatre). They had also planned to enter into the 'talking machine' industry. In late 1906, they were approached by the recording experts of the German recording company, Lyrophon=werke, Adolf Liben & Co., Berlin, who had come to India to make recordings for the 'Lyrophon' label.

The German 'Lyrophon' company used a different tactic to most other recording companies by offering each business (for whom the recordings had been taken) to have the disc records issued on a label of their own design and title. T. S. Ramchunder & Bros. chose the name 'RAM-A-PHONE' containing the initials 'Ram' of the family name ('Ram'chunder) in the disc label. The label design was prepared by Harishankar Ramchunder featuring a lyre and a bird with the letters T.S.R. entwined within the lyre. This basic design, with minor modifications, remained the 'trade mark' of the label throughout its entire life. T. S. Ramchunder & Bros. had secured for the Lyrophon recording experts, singers of the highest caliber, including several associated with the New Alfred Natak Mandali, Mumbai Gujrathi Natak Mandali, the Parsi Natak Mandali, and classical singers such as Miss Achhan Bai, Miss Chanda Karvarkarin and Mr. Murad Ali, the comic singer. During early months of 1907, some 520 recordings were taken by the recording operator in Bombay and the matrices were shipped to Germany to be reproduced in the name of 'RAM-A-PHONE DISC RECORD'. This complete batch of single side recorded discs was made available in India in September 1907. These were released with a twenty pages catalogue featuring a sketch of Miss Chanda Karwarkarin. Photocopy of this catalogue has been obtained and printed in the vol. 20 of 'The Record News' – magazine of 'Society of Indian Record Collectors', Bombay. This has a listing of 420 recordings, all single side recorded discs, of which all but 23 discs were 10" in size, the remainder being 8" discs which were mainly repeat recordings of titles in 10" size.

During 1908, T. S. Ramchunder & Bros. acquired their own recording machine from their agents in London to make further recordings for their label. Using this machine, next series of recordings were taken under the supervision of Shivshankar Ramchunder and assisted by Harishankar Ramchunder. They were later joined by Narayandas Purshottam in 1909. While the actual recordings were taken by T. S. Ramchunder & Bros. at Bombay, the matrices were shipped to Berlin for manufacturing disc pressings.

In the meantime, The Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. had raised an objection to the use of the name 'Rama-phone' sounding similar to their trade mark 'Gramophone'. The matter was taken to court, enforcing an injunction on the use of the word 'Rama-phone', thus forcing T. S. Ramchunder & Bros. to change their label name to 'RAMAGRAPH DISC RECORD' with all stocks having to be pasted over with the revised brand name.

In November 1912, Lyrophon=werke, Adolf Liben & Co., was converted into a limited liability company in the name of Lyrophon=werke, G.m.b.H., which in 1913, was absorbed into Carl Lindström A.G., conglomerate. Carl Lindström A.G. continued to press the 'Rama-Graph Disc Record' including the back catalogue releases, with the addition of new series in the 1000, 2000 and 3000 numerical blocks. According to Harishankar Ramchunder, who worked with T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., from 1905-1941, the discs were also pressed in Germany by one or two other 'makers' and suggested that the Nigrolit-Werke, G.m.b.H. of Berlin might have been one of the pressing factories involved.

During World War I, record supplies from Germany were curtailed and the activities at Ramagraph in Bombay came to a complete halt. T.S. Ramchunder died in 1922 and the control of the business passed on to younger family members. In 1927, T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., turned to The Viel-o-phone Co. Ltd. to have pressings made of some of the back catalogues along with a new series of 'electric' recordings. The whole back catalogue was renumbered to various series with a prefix letter R- and the label colour changed to red and renamed to simply 'Ramagraph'. The 'Viel-o-phone' pressings were rather rough and gritty, so following a couple of pressing runs, T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., reverted to sending the stampers to Germany for reproduction by Carl Lindström A.G., Berlin. The design of the record label was made more attractive, and changed to a red-orange colour. This arrangement continued well up to 1931, however a complication arose with the merger of The Gramophone Co., Ltd., and Columbia Graphophone Co., Ltd., (who controlled Carl Lindström A.G.) in April 1931. The 'Columbia' and 'Odeon' labels operated by these companies introduced to the Indian market in early 1930's were now under the control of Electrical and Musical Industries (E.M.I.), Ltd., as was the 'Odeon=werke' pressing plant who produced the 'Ramagraph' discs for T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., through to 1933. An offer was made by The Gramophone Co., Ltd., in India, to purchase the masters of the 'Ramagraph' label, however, T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., declined the offer, and also to join the 'private recorder'

scheme offered by The Gramophone Co., Ltd. By 1936, there had not been any new recordings made by T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., and the 'Odeon=werke' had not renewed the custom pressing arrangement with the company, which essentially brought the manufacturing and marketing of the 'Ramagraph' label to a close. In 1939, the building then occupied by T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., at Kalbadevi in Bombay is reported to have been gutted to fire, forcing the company to relocate across the road at new premises. At this time, T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., stopped trading in disc records and talking machines and this branch of their business was closed. Relatives of the Ramchunder family have still maintained a musical instrument shop at Kalbadevi road with proudly displayed and garlanded portrait of T. S. Ramchunder hung on the wall.

Summary of 'Ramagraph Record' series

Proprietor T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., Kalbadevi, Bombay

Manufacturer Lyrophon=werke, G.m.b.H. Hanover-Linden, Germany
 Carl Lindström, A.G., Berlin, Germany
 The Viel-o-phon Co., Ltd., Mahim, Bombay

C. 1907

Series	100 up	(Black)	Various [Lyrophon]
	151 up	(Black)	Himat (Bhai)
	201 up	(Red)	Miss Achhan
	224 up	(Navy/Black)	Miss Chanda
	300 up	(Black or Blue)	
	401 up	(Black)	Sayed Abdul Hadi-Koran
	451-465 [8"]	(Black)	Miss Manku
	466-500 [10"]	(Black)	Various
	501-510 [8"]	(Black)	Murad Ali
	511-	(Black)	

C.1908-1914

521-	(Black)	[Lindström]
1000-	(Black)	
2000-	(Blue)	[Natak]
3000-	(Red)	[Natak]
4000-	(Black, Blue)	

C. 1922-1933

R-1	(Black or Red) - reissues	[Viel-o-phone]
R-400	(Red)	[Hindustani]
R-500	(Red)	[Marwari]
R-800	(Red)	[Sindhi]
R-901	(Blue)	[Marathi]

R-1001	(Orange)	[Hindustani]
R-1001	(Red)	[Lindström]

In the first batch of 'Ram-a-phone' records, the numerical sequence and the matrix numbers of the discs were the same beginning at 100. Thus, the first catalogue number was 100 with a matrix number of 100i. The disc records of Miss Achhan and some of those of Miss Chanda Karvarkarin were given special red labels with black lettering and sold for three rupees, while the other recordings had black labels with gold printing and were offered at two rupees and eight annas. The 8" discs were offered at one rupee and eight annas.

The first (single side recorded) pressings of RAM-A-PHONE disc records had plain reverse sides with only the words 'Made in Germany', but later pressings of the discs have an embossed design reading 'RAMAGRAPH RECORD' surrounding the trade mark and the words 'Trade Mark' across the spindle hole, along with small illustrations of a talking machine and disc, and the words 'Made in' (above) and 'Germany' (below). Some copies of single-side recorded discs have been found with RAM-A-PHONE RECORD labels – but with 'RAMAGRAPH RECORD' backs, and other copies with the word 'RAM-A-PHONE' pasted over with 'RAMAGRAPH' – also with the 'RAMAGRAPH RECORD' back.

From catalogue number 521 onwards all 'RAMAGRAPH DISC RECORD' releases were double-sided, and those titles from the earlier releases formerly pressed as single-side recorded discs which had remained popular were re-released as double-sided discs under the new label name. The matrix series utilized for the earlier releases have the matrix number suffixed by 'i', while other matrices have a suffix of 'ind', or 'IND', but the significance of this variation is not understood except that it seems to identify recordings taken in India.

The 'Ramagraph Disc Record' was recorded and marketed specifically for the market in Bombay, and did not seek to broaden it's appeal beyond that territory, making no attempt to extend to Central, Northern and Southern India. The recording program and releases on this label were slow but steady, and had remained within the confines of western India, particularly reflecting tastes of the Gujtrathi, Hindustani and Marathi speaking people in Bombay.

A trade report of recordings of Indian repertoire available on the market in India during early 1911 gives a break up of over 500 recordings offered by T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., : Arabic- Koran recitations (05), Gujtrathi (160), Hindustani (369), Instrumental (08), Jain stavan (12), Parsi (05), sindhi (24). These recordings represent the 'live' catalogue of 'Rama-Graph' recordings that were still in manufacture at that time. Between 1911 and 1912, the known number of releases on the 'Ram-A-Phone' disc record and 'Ramagraph' disc record, extended to about 800 titles. At some stage, other numerical series were introduced in the 1000 series with black labels, the 2000 series with Navy blue

labels, and a further series in a 3000 numerical block, but it is not known when these series were first issued.

By the mid 1920's, besides the 'Gramophone' and the 'Viel-o-phone' companies labels, there was only the 'Ramagraph' disc record still being produced for the record buying public in India. Although T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., was a very minor player in the field of sound recordings in India – it had survived, and renewed its interest in the disc record market by the introduction of a new dark-red 'Ramagraph' label. The introduction of the new series beginning at R-1 continued the same old procedure of identical catalogue and matrix numbers. However, with the introduction of 'electric' recordings the sequence of matrix numbers was broken up into 'blocks' which seem to have been used solely for the small number of recordings artists for the 'Ramagraph' label. These numerical 'blocks' begin with a series at 2000- and included in the R- series from about R-140. The first of these 'electric' recordings are identified by a small 'star' (*) embossed in the label, and this 'star' device often seen on disc pressings of several makes of pressings that were manufactured by Carl Lindström, A.G., Berlin, (at the Odeon-werke, Weissensee, Berlin) is believed to be a means of identification of early 'electric' recordings pressed by 'Odeon-werke', but utilizing the 'electric' recording method of Carl Lindström, A.G. Printed labels of the records have words – 'Made in Germany'.

The matrix series for subsequent recordings are prefixed 'RAM-' for a general series of recordings, and issued in the 'R-' catalogue series. The RAM-5000 matrix series was reserved for Pyara Saheb, who had been making recordings for several companies since 1904, and also made cylinder recordings for H. Bose's Records earlier. The RAM-5000 matrix series of recordings by Pyara Saheb, was curiously duplicated by The Gramophone Co., Ltd., in launching their 'THE TWIN' record label in 1928, and it is interesting to note that the whole RAMAGRAPH – R-1000 series was issued on the 'TWIN' label song for song, coupling for coupling, and that these 'Gramophone' recordings were also repeat recordings of discs that Pyara Saheb had been making over the past couple of decades. The RAM-6000 matrix series was reserved for recordings by Mr. Madhavrao Valavalkar, of songs from Marathi dramas, and issued in a separate R-900 series. There may have been other series as well but the details of such series are as yet unknown.

{Twenty songs of Mr. Valavalkar have been reissued recently on audio MP3 CD by 'Underscore records Pvt., Ltd.', in collaboration with the 'Society of Indian Record Collectors', Bombay}.

[ref.http://www.underscorerecords.com/catalog/audio/details.php?cat_id=06AM013ACD]

During 1927, T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., had made recordings of Gur Tikam das of Shikarpur (from Sindh Province), Mr. Chiman Lal of Gujraht and Seth Sobhraj, a Sindhi singer of repute. They continued to have a good reputation for the harmonium that they made, and promoted their instruments by sponsoring public

concerts of Mr. Pyara Sahib and Mr. Mohamad Hussain, both of whom were 'Gramophone' celebrities of long standing and sure to draw large audience to their concerts. They both had recorded prolifically on almost every label of that period. In about 1933, a new design was given to the 'RAMAGRAPH' label, with a red and brown colour, overprinted in gold, which was basically a modified and prettier version of the R-series type of label. This label presented no new recordings and was used for re-pressings of titles that had retained their popularity over the years. These discs were also made in Germany, and it is presumed that they were manufactured by a pressing plant within the E.M.I., Ltd., conglomerate of companies, if not by Carl Lindström, A.G., at their Odeon-werke, Berlin. By 1936, this new design label appears to have gone into a state of relapse once again and to have not released or re-issued any more titles, and by 1938 had little more to offer its customers for disc records, other than left over stocks, of the variety of label styles that T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., had marketed over the past three decades.

The achievement of T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., in surviving in the sound recording industry of India for over three decades is no small achievement in itself, particularly in that the musical tastes of the record buying public were constantly changing – an aspect which the T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., seemed to be able to cope with, but curiously, the firm never took advantage of disc recording facilities in India, for the 'Ramagraph' discs were never manufactured in India during their entire life-span, and always dependant on resources and facilities outside of India.

Summary

In this short article, I have tried to summarize two indigenous disc record manufacturers who had ties with Carl Lindström A.G. in disc pressing operations, although Mr. Carl Lindström never visited India. Both the businessmen were from Bombay. The labels described are 'Beka Grand Record' and 'Ramagraph' that operated in India during 1904-40. Today, over five hundred discs of both the labels together have survived and the discs are available with the record collectors in India. These collections are endangered since they are in private hands. It is necessary to digitize the sound on the discs using modern technology and preserve the label scan images for posterity and further research.

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Appendix A

Lyrophon in India

[Kinnear, 2003]

The name 'Lyrophon' was first used as a trade mark applied to phonographs produced by Continental Phonograph Fabrick, Költzow & Russ, Berlin, in 1899. By 1904, the name 'Lyrophon' was being used by Adolf Lieban & Comp., Berlin, as the name for his own brand of talking machines and disc records. The Lyrophon=werke, Adolf Lieban & Comp., Berlin, was originally established as a phonograph company, by singer Adolf Lieban in the name of A. Lieban & Comp., in early 1901 with a catalogue of 'original' cylinder recordings. By 1904, the company had been reformed in the name of Lyrophon=werke, Adolf Lieban & Co., G.m.b.H. and had entered the disc record business.

The Lyrophon Company is known to have sent recording engineers to Russia and Sweden and also out to Middle East and Asia, and by 1906, the company claimed to name a catalogue of over five thousand recordings. The company had sent a recording operator out to India to make the initial recordings for T. S. Ramchunder & Bros., Bombay, in 1907, which were issued as 'Ram-a-phone' disc record. In 1910, Lyrophon=werke, Adolf Lieban & Co., G.m.b.H. through Grunbaum & Thomas A.G. provided A. Janowitz & Co., Calcutta, with the pressings of the 'Ajano Double-Face Record' which were made available in India in 1910. The full scope of the releases of 'Ajano Double-face Record' is not known, but the label includes recordings by the legendary vocalist Badi Malka Jan of Agra.

In November 1912, Lyrophon=werke, Adolf Lieban & Co., G.m.b.H. was reformed in the name of Lyrophon=werke, G.m.b.H. During 1913, Carl Lindström A.G. Berlin took over Grunbaum & Thomas, A.G., Berlin and its sister companies, Da Capo, G.m.b.H., and Lyrophon=werke, G.m.b.H., Berlin. In 1913, reformed Lyrophon=werke, G.m.b.H. advertised disc records in several 'oriental' languages including Bengali, Hindi and Tamil repertoires, as available for manufacture. Under what labels any pressings might have been made from this date is not yet known. This is a puzzle for the discographers, record collectors and researchers.

Appendix B

'Singer' and 'James Opera' Record

[Kinnear, 1994, 2003]

Around 1907, apart from 'Ramagraph' label records, two more labels viz. 'Singer Record' and 'James Opera Record' were issued in the Bombay market under German collaboration. These were also indigenous efforts by Bombay based firms – 'The Wellington Cycle Co.' (Singer Record) and 'The James Manufacturing Coy.' (James Opera Record). Until about 1910, over one thousand single side discs were issued on these labels. Several makes of 'Singer' brand gramophone machines were also available in the market. The disc

manufacturing operations were done with the support of 'Beka' company. During 1910-13, due to mergers and acquisitions, Beka, Singer and James Opera records were controlled and operated by Carl Lindström, A. G. Thus, these labels joined the family of 'Lindström labels in India', although discs manufacturing activity came to complete halt by 1915.

Appendix C

An unusual 'Indian Parlophon' label record

'Parlophon' is a record label, founded in Germany in 1896 by the Carl Lindström Company. The £ trademark is a German *L*, for Lindström. Lindstrom initially used the "Parlophon" brand on gramophones before it started making records. On August 8, 1923, the British branch of "Parlophone" (with the "e" added) was established. This label was popular for Jazz and Dance music records in Europe and USA. No Indian recording has been issued on 'Parlophone' label. Recently, two records of Indian 'Parlophon' label have been found in the collection of Mr. Sunny Mathew, Kerala, India. [Please see the illustration]. This is a black label with writing in gold. At the bottom rim of the label, letters 'CARL LINDSTRÖM A. G.' are printed with a * marking above the lettering, indicating the method of 'Electrical Recording' employed. Number B.95043-I is printed just above this * mark. Dr. Rainer Lotz, Bonn, Germany informs me that B-series is a regular 'Parlophon' block. Flip side of this record has a number B.95043-II. This is a 'Tamil' language recording with Catalogue no. C. A. 645 and matrix number 'Mad 1323' seen at the center of the label. Upper half of the label has writing - "MADE IN GERMANY" in four languages viz; Tamil (germaniyil cheyyappattathu), Telugu, Kannada and English. Lower half of the label shows the credits in 'Roman' and 'Tamil' script. Prefix 'Mad' (with the matrix number 1323) means short form of the name 'Madras' city, where recordings were taken. South Indian 'Odeon' label records were issued from 1932 to 1942 and major series is C.A. 501 up, with highest known number at 1470 issued in 1942. It appears that around 1930-32, few trial 'Odeon' records were issued on 'Parlophon' label featuring both German and Indian numbering systems. These recordings could be dated around 1930. This is an unusual illustration, not covered in Michael Kinnear's book on '78 rpm record labels of India', published in 2003. Label illustrations with this article also include two variations of South Indian 'Odeon' label records. This needs to be investigated further while preparing a detailed document - 'Odeon in India' for the forthcoming issue of this journal.

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