

Contents

Preface	25
Transliteration	29
Transliteration Code	31
Music Notation System	33
A. Name of Indian notes with their correspondances	33
B. Help to the hand-writing of notes & <i>bola-s</i> (बोल)	34
C. Notation system	36
D. Comparison : <i>Bhatkhandeji & Paluskarji Svaralipī-s</i> (स्वरलिपी) .	40
<i>Tāla</i> (ताल)	41
A. Generalities	41
B. Notation & <i>thekā</i> (ठेका)	42
C. Speed Calculation	43
D. <i>Tāla-s</i> found in the text	43
E. Counting <i>Tāla</i> (ताल)	48
<i>Bola-s</i> (बोल)	51
A. Generalities	51
B. <i>Bola-s</i> (बोल) development.....	52
C. <i>Bola-s</i> (बोल) in <i>gata-s</i> (गत).....	53
Abbreviations used.....	55
<i>Gata-s</i> (गत)	59
Abhogi Kanada (आभोगी कानड़ा) <i>Ābhogī Kānadā</i>	59
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , RDC	59
Adana Kanada (अड़ाना कानड़ा) <i>Aḍānā Kānadā</i>	59
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , RDC	59
<i>Druta sthāī, tīnatāla</i> , KCG.....	60
<i>Druta sthāī, tīnatāla</i> , PM	60
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	60

Ahir Bhairav (अहीर भैरव) <i>Ahīra Bhairava</i>	61
<i>Madhya laya gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	61
<i>Druta sthāī, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	61
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	62
<i>Druta sthāī, tīnatāla, PM</i>	62
<i>Vilambita sthāī, tīnatāla, PM</i>	63
<i>Cāratāla kī savārī, PM</i>	63
Ahir Lalit (अहीर ललित) <i>Ahīra Lalita</i>	64
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	64
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	64
Ahir Todi (अहीरी तोड़ी) <i>Ahīra Toḍī</i>	65
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	65
Alhaiya Bilaval (अल्हैया बिलावल) <i>Alhaiyā Bilāvāla</i>	65
<i>Vilambita sthāī, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	65
<i>Vilambita, tīnatāla, VK</i>	66
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	66
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	67
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	67
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	68
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	69
<i>Ekatāla, PM</i>	70
Anand Bhairav (आनन्द भैरव) <i>Ānanda Bhairava</i>	71
<i>Druta sthāī, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	71
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	71
Badhans Sarang (बड़हंस सारंग) <i>Baḍahansa Sāranga</i>	75
<i>Madhya, tīnatāla, VNB</i>	75
<i>Druta sthāī, tīnatāla, PM</i>	75
<i>Madhyalaya, tīnatāla, VRP</i>	75
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	76
Bageshree (बागेश्री) <i>Bāgeśrī</i>	76
<i>Vilambita sthāī, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	76
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla, MC</i>	77
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	77
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	78
<i>Jhapatāla, MC</i>	78
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	79
Bageshree Kanada (बागेश्री कानड़ा) <i>Bāgeśrī Kānadā</i>	79
<i>Druta, tīnatāla, Shah</i>	79
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	80
Bahaduri Todi (बहादुरी तोड़ी) <i>Bahāduri Toḍī</i>	80
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	80
Bahar (बहार) <i>Bahāra</i>	81
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, MC</i>	81
Bairagi Bhairav (बैरागी भैरव) <i>Bairāgī Bhairava</i>	81
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	81

<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM.....	82
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG.....	82
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG.....	83
Bangal Bhairav (बंगाल भैरव) <i>Bangāla Bhairava</i>	83
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG.....	83
<i>Jhapatāla</i> , KCG.....	84
Bangeshree (बंगेश्री) <i>Bangeśrī</i>	84
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , Vaze Bua	84
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , KCG.....	84
Barwa (बरवा) <i>Baravā</i>	85
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , LMM.....	85
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	85
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB.....	86
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , KCG.....	86
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VRP.....	86
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , KCG.....	87
Bhairav (भैरव) <i>Bhairava</i>	87
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	87
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	88
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM.....	88
Bhairav Bahar (भैरव बहार) <i>Bhairava Bahāra</i>	89
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG.....	89
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG.....	89
Bhairavi (भैरवी) <i>Bhairavī</i>	90
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , MC	90
<i>Kaharavā</i> , KCG.....	90
Bhankhar (भंखार) <i>Bhankhāra</i>	90
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	90
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	91
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , SNR.....	92
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM.....	92
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM.....	93
Bhatiyar (भट्टियार) <i>Bhatiyāra</i>	93
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM.....	93
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	94
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM.....	94
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG.....	95
Bhim (भीम) <i>Bhīma [Gāvati]</i>	96
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	96
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , IK	97
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , IK.....	97
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM.....	98
Bhimpalasi (भीमपलासी) <i>Bhīmapalāsī</i>	99
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	99
Bhinna Shadj (भिन्नषड्ज) <i>Bhinnaṣadja</i>	99

<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	99
Bhopal Todi (भूपाल तोड़ी) <i>Bhūpāla Todī</i>	100
<i>Ādā cautāla, KCG</i>	100
Bhupali (भूपाली) <i>Bhupali</i>	101
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	101
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	101
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	102
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla, VNB</i>	102
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	102
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	103
Bibhas (बिभास) <i>Bibhāsa</i>	103
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	103
Bihag (बिहाग) <i>Bihāga</i>	104
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	104
Bihagda (बिहागड़ा) <i>Bihāgadā</i>	104
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	104
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	105
Bilaskhani Todi (बिलासखानी तोड़) <i>Bilāsakhānī Todī</i>	105
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	105
<i>Vilambita, jhūmarā, LMM</i>	106
Chaiti Gauri (चैती गौरी) <i>Chaitī Gaurī</i>	109
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	109
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	110
Chandrakauns (चन्द्रकाँस) <i>Candrakaunsa</i>	110
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	110
<i>Vilambita jhapatāla, LMM</i>	111
Charju Ki Malhar (चरजू की मल्हार) <i>Carju Kī Malhāra</i>	111
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	111
Charukeshi (चारुकेशी) <i>Cārukesī</i>	112
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla, PM</i>	112
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	112
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla, PM</i>	113
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla, Vimal Balsara</i>	113
Chaya (छाया) <i>Chāyā</i>	113
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	113
Chayanat (छायानट) <i>Chāyānata</i>	114
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	114
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla, Inayat Khan Sufi</i>	115
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla, VNB</i>	115
<i>Jhapatāla, KCG</i>	115
Darbari Kanada (दरबारी कानड़ा) <i>Darabārī Kānadā</i>	119
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	119
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	119
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	119

<i>Sthāi, cautāla</i> , PM	120
Desh (देश) <i>Deśa</i>	120
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	120
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , IK	120
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	121
<i>Madhya laya gata, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	121
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	121
Deshkar (देशकार) <i>Deśakāra</i>	122
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	122
Desi (देसी) <i>Desī</i>	122
<i>Druta sthāi, ekatāla</i> , KCG	122
<i>Āḍā cautāla</i> , KCG	122
Devchandhar (देवगांधार) <i>Devagandhāra</i>	123
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	123
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	123
Devagiri Bilaval (देवगिरी बिलावल) <i>Devagiri Bilāvāla</i>	124
<i>Vilambita, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	124
<i>Vilambita, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	125
Devsakh (देवसाख) <i>Devasākha</i>	125
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	125
Dhanashree (धनाश्री) <i>Dhanāśrī</i>	126
<i>Sūlatāla</i> , VNB	126
Dhavalashree (धवलाश्री) <i>Dhavalāśrī</i>	126
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	126
Dhuliya Malhar (धूलिया मल्हार) <i>Dhūliyā Malhāra</i>	126
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	126
Durga (दुर्गा) <i>Durgā</i>	127
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , MC	127
Gara (गारा) <i>Gārā</i>	131
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , VK	131
Gaud Malhar (गौड मल्हार) <i>Gauda Malhāra</i>	131
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	131
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	132
Gaud Sarang (गौड सारंग) <i>Gauda Sāranga</i>	132
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	132
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	133
<i>Vilambita sthāi, jhūmarā</i> , KCG	133
Gauri (गौरी) <i>Gaurī</i>	133
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	133
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	134
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	135
Gavati (गावती) <i>Gāvātī</i> (see Bhim (भीम) <i>Bhīma</i>)	135
Gorakh Kalyan (गोरख कल्याण) <i>Gorakha Kalyāṇa</i>	135

<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	135
<i>Vilambita, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	136
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	137
Gujri Todi (गुजरी तोड़ी) <i>Gujarī Toḍī</i>	137
<i>Jhapatāla</i> , KCG	137
Gunkali (गुणकली) <i>Guṇakalī</i>	138
<i>Lakṣhaṇa gīta, tīnatāla</i> , VRP	138
Gunkri (गुणक्री) <i>Guṇakrī</i>	138
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	138
Hamir (हमीर) <i>Hamīra</i>	141
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	141
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	141
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	142
Hansdhvani (हंसध्वनि) <i>Hansadhvani</i>	142
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	142
Hemant (हेमन्त) <i>Hemanta</i>	143
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	143
Huseni Kanada (हुसेनी कानड़ा) <i>Husenī Kānaḍā</i>	144
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , Mohamad Hussain Khan	144
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , Sharafat Hussain Khan	144
Jajjawaianti (जयजयवती) <i>Jayajayavantī</i>	147
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , RBS	147
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	147
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	148
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i>	148
<i>Rūpaka</i> , MC	148
Jait (जैत) <i>Jaita</i>	148
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	148
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	149
Jait Kalyan (जैत कल्याण) <i>Jaita Kalyāna</i>	149
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	149
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	150
Jaitshree (जैताश्री) <i>Jaitāśrī</i>	150
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	150
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	151
Jaldhar Kedar (जलधर केदार) <i>Jaladhara Kedāra</i>	152
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	152
Jaunpuri (जौनपुरी) <i>Jaunapurī</i>	152
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	152
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	152
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG (USA, 1970)	153
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	153
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	153
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , RBS	154

<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , Baba	154
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	155
Jayant Malhar (जयंत मल्हार) <i>Jayanta Malhāra</i>	155
<i>Madhyalaya, tīnatāla</i> , VRP	155
<i>Madhyalaya, tīnatāla</i> , Pandit Gune	156
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	156
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	157
<i>Ekatāla</i> , VRP	157
Jhinjhoti (फिजोटी) <i>Jhinjhotī</i>	157
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	157
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	158
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	159
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	160
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i>	160
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	160
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	161
Jog (जोग) <i>Joga</i>	162
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	162
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	163
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	163
Jogi Asavari (जोगी आसावरी) <i>Jogī Asāvārī</i>	164
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	164
Jogkauns (जोगकांस) <i>Jogakaunsa</i>	164
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	164
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	165
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	166
Kabir Bhairav (कबीर भैरव) <i>Kabīra Bhairava</i>	169
<i>Madhya gata, tīnatāla</i> , VRP	169
Kafi (काफी) <i>Kāfi</i>	169
<i>Madhya gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	169
<i>Madhya gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	170
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	170
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	171
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	171
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	171
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	172
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	172
Kafi (काफी) <i>Kāfi [Miśra]</i>	172
<i>Tarānā, tīnatāla</i> , VRP	172
Kafi Kanada (काफी कानडा) <i>Kāfi Kānadā</i>	173
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	173
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , J. N. Natu "Geet Samuha"	173
<i>Ekatāla</i> , KCG	174
Kalavati (कलावती) <i>Kalāvātī</i>	174
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	174

<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	175
Kalingada (कालिंगड़ा) <i>Kālingadā</i>	175
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	175
Kamod (कामोद) <i>Kāmoda</i>	176
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	176
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	177
Kaushi Bhairava (कौशी भैरव) <i>Kauśī Bhairava</i>	177
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	177
Kaushi Kanada (कौसी कानड़ा) <i>Kauṁsī Kānaḍā</i>	178
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	178
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	178
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	179
<i>Druta, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	180
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	180
Kedar (केदार) <i>Kedāra</i>	181
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	181
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , RBS	181
Khamaj (खमाज) <i>Khamāja</i>	182
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	182
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	182
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	183
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	183
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	184
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	184
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	184
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , VK	185
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	185
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	185
Khambavati (खंबावती) <i>Khanbāvati</i>	186
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	186
<i>Rūpaka</i> , LMM	186
Khat (खट) <i>Khaṭa</i>	187
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	187
Komal Asavari (कोमल आसावरी) <i>Komala Āsāvārī</i>	187
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	187
<i>Vilambita rūpaka</i> , LMM	188
Kukubh Bilaval (कुकुभ बिलावल) <i>Kukubha Bilāvāla</i>	188
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	188
<i>Jhapatāla</i> , VRP	189
<i>Jhapatāla</i> , VNB	189
Lachari Todi (लाचारी तोड़ी) <i>Lācārī Toḍī</i>	193
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	193
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	193
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	194
Lachchasakh (लचचासाख) <i>Lacchāsākha</i>	194

<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	194
<i>Sthāi, cautāla</i> , Jha	195
Lakshmi Todi (लक्ष्मी तोड़ी) <i>Lashmī Toḍī</i>	195
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	195
Lalit (ललित) <i>Lalita</i>	196
<i>Ekatāla</i> , LMM	196
Lalit Pancham (ललित पंचम) <i>Lalita Pañcama</i>	196
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	196
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	197
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	197
Lalita Gauri (ललिता गौरी) <i>Lalitā Gaurī</i>	198
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	198
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	199
<i>Rūpaka</i> , KCG	199
Lankadahan Sarang (लंकादहन सारंग) <i>Lankādahana Sāranga</i>	200
<i>Jhapatāla</i> , VRP	200
<i>Vilambita, dhamāra</i> , VNB	200
Lankadahan Sarang - Desi ang (लंकादहन सारंग - देसी अंग) <i>Lankādahana Sāranga - Desī Anga</i>	201
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	201
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	201
Latangi (लतंगी) <i>Latangī</i>	202
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	202
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	202
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	202
Madhu Bhairav (मधु भैरव) <i>Madhu Bhairava</i>	205
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	205
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	205
Madhukauns (मधुकाँस) <i>Madhukaunsa</i>	206
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	206
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	207
Madhuvanti (मधुवन्ती) <i>Madhuvantī</i>	207
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	207
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	208
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	208
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	209
<i>Madhya laya sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	209
Madhyamad Sarang (मध्यमादि सारंग) <i>Madhyamādi Sāranga</i>	210
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	210
<i>Druta, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	210
<i>Madhya laya sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	211
Mali Gaura (माली गौरा) <i>Mālī Gaurā</i>	211
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	211
Malkauns (मालकाँस) <i>Mālakaunsa</i>	211

<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	211
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	212
Mand (मॉड) <i>Mānda</i>	212
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	212
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	213
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	213
Mangal Bhairav (मंगल भैरव) <i>Mangala Bhairava</i>	214
<i>Rūpaka</i> , PM	214
Manjh (मंझ) <i>Mānjha</i>	215
<i>Ekatāla, Vaze Bua</i>	215
Maru Bihag (मारु बिहाग) <i>Māru Bihāga</i>	215
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PB	215
Marwa (मारवा) <i>Māravā</i>	216
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , RBS	216
Megh Malhar (मेघ मल्हार) <i>Megha Malhāra</i>	216
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	216
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	217
<i>Rūpaka</i> , KCG	217
Mira Ki Malhar (मीरा की मल्हार) <i>Mīrā Kī Malhāra</i>	218
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	218
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	218
Miya Ki Malhar (मियाँ की मल्हार) <i>Miyāṃ Kī Malhāra</i>	219
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	219
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	219
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	220
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , Rais Khan	220
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	221
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	221
<i>Jhapatāla</i> , KCG	222
Miya Ki Sarang (मियाँ की सारंग) <i>Miyān Kī Sāranga</i>	222
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	222
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	223
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , RDC	223
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	223
<i>Rūpaka</i> , LMM	224
Mudriki Kanada (मुद्रिकी कानड़ा) <i>Mudrikī Kānaḍā</i>	224
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , J. Shah	224
Multani (मुलतानी) <i>Mulatānī</i>	225
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	225
Multani Dhanashree (मुलतानी धनाश्री) <i>Mulatānī Dhanāsrī</i>	225
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	225
Naiki Kanada (नायकी कानड़ा) <i>Nāyākī Kānaḍa</i>	229
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	229
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	230

<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	230
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	231
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , Kumar Gandharva	231
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VRP	231
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VRP	232
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , Gune	232
Naiki Kanada (नायकी कानडा) <i>Nāyaki Kānaḍā - Agra Gharānā</i>	232
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , J. Shah	232
Nand (नंद) <i>Nanda</i>	233
<i>Madhya laya sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	233
Narayani (नारायणी) <i>Nārāyaṇī</i>	233
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , SNR	233
Nat (नट) <i>Nata (Nāta)</i>	234
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	234
<i>Druta gata, kaharavā, KCG</i>	235
Nat Bhairav (नट भैरव) <i>Naṭa Bhairava</i>	235
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	235
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	236
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	237
Nat Bihag (नट बिहाग) <i>Naṭa Bihāga</i>	238
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	238
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	239
Pancham (पंचम) <i>Pancama</i>	243
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	243
Paraj (परज) <i>Paraja</i>	243
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PB	243
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	244
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	245
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	245
Patdeep (पटदीप) <i>Paṭādīpa</i>	246
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	246
<i>Jhapatāla</i> , PB	246
Patmanjari (पटमंजरी) <i>Paṭamanjari</i>	247
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	247
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	247
Piloo (पीलू) <i>Pīlu</i>	248
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , NB	248
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , VK	248
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , VK	249
Prabhat Bhairav (प्रभात भैरव) <i>Prabhāta Bhairava</i>	249
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	249
<i>Rūpaka</i> , KCG	250
Puriya (पूरिया) <i>Pūriyā</i>	250
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	250

<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	251
<i>Madhya laya sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	251
<i>Madhya laya sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	252
<i>Madhya laya sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	252
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	252
Puriya Dhanashree (पूरिया धनाश्री) <i>Pūriyā Dhanāsrī</i>	252
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , RBS	252
<i>Sthāi, cāratāla kī savārī</i> , Sudeepta Sharma	253
Puriya Kalyan (पूरिया कल्याण) <i>Pūriyā Kalyāna</i>	253
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	253
Purvi (पूर्वी) <i>Pūrvī</i>	254
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	254
Ramdasi Malhar (रामदासी मल्हार) <i>Rāmadāsī Malhāra</i>	257
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VRP	257
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VRP	257
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	258
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	259
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , SNR	260
Ramkali (रामकली) <i>Rāmakalī</i>	260
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	260
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	261
Samant Sarang (सामन्त सारंग) <i>Sāmanta Sāranga</i>	265
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	265
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	265
Sarparda Bilaval (सरपरदा बिलावल) <i>Saraparadā Bilāvāla</i>	266
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VRP	266
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	266
<i>Madhya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	267
Sawni Kalyan (सावनी कल्याण) <i>Sāvanī Kalyāṇa</i>	267
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	267
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	268
Sazgiri (साजगिरी) <i>Sājagirī</i>	268
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , Gune	268
<i>Jhapatāla</i> , VNB	269
Shahana (शाहाना) <i>Śahānā</i>	269
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	269
Shankara (शंकरा) <i>Śānkara</i>	270
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	270
Shiv Mat Bhairav (शिव मत भैरव) <i>Śiva Mata Bhairava</i>	270
<i>Rūpaka</i> , KCG	270
Shree (श्री) <i>Śrī</i>	271
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	271
Shreetank (श्रीटंक) <i>Śrītanka</i> (see <i>Tānkī</i>)	271

Shuddh Gunkali (शुद्ध गुणकली) <i>Śuddha Guṇakālī</i>	271
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	271
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PM</i>	272
Shuddh Kalyan (शुद्ध कल्याण) <i>Śuddha Kalyāṇa</i>	272
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, VNB</i>	272
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, RBS</i>	273
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	273
Shuddh Nat (शुद्ध नट) <i>Śuddha Naṭa</i> (see <i>Naṭa (Nāṭa)</i>)	274
Shuddh Sarang (शुद्ध सारंग) <i>Śuddha Sārāṅga</i>	274
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	274
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla, IK</i>	274
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	275
<i>Rūpaka, LMM</i>	275
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	276
<i>Druta, ekatāla, LMM</i>	276
<i>Ādā cautāla, KCG</i>	277
Shukla Bilaval (शुक्ल विलावल) <i>Śukla Bīlāvala</i>	277
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, Gune</i>	277
<i>Jhapatāla, VNB</i>	277
<i>Jhapatāla, VNB</i>	278
Shyam Kalyan (श्याम कल्याण) <i>Śyāma Kalyāṇa</i>	278
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	278
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla, PM</i>	278
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	279
<i>Ādā cautāla, LMM</i>	279
Sindhura (सिंदूरा) <i>Sindhūra</i>	279
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	279
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, LMM</i>	280
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	280
Sohini (सोहनी) <i>Sohanī</i>	281
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	281
<i>Madhya laya sthāi, tīnatāla, NB</i>	281
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, PB</i>	282
Sorashtra Bhairav (सौराष्ट्र भैरव) <i>Saurāṣṭra Bhairava</i>	282
Sorashtra Tank (सौराष्ट्र टंक) <i>Saurāṣṭra Tanka</i>	282
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla, KCG</i>	282
Sughrāi (सुघराई) <i>Sugharāi</i>	283
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla, Jha</i>	283
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla, Jha</i>	284
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla, VNB</i>	284
Sughrāi (सुघराई) <i>Sugharāi (śuddha dhā prakāra)</i>	285
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla, VNB</i>	285
Suha (सुहा) <i>Suhā</i>	285
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla, VNB</i>	285

<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	285
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	286
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	286
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	287
Suha Sughrāi (सुहा सुग्राई) <i>Suhā Sugharāi</i>	287
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VRP	287
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , Shah	288
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , Shah	288
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	288
Sur Malhar (सूरमल्हार) <i>Sūra Malhāra</i>	289
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	289
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	289
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	290
Tanki (टंकी) <i>Tankī</i>	293
<i>Madhya laya sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	293
Tilak Kamod (तिलक कामोद) <i>Tilaka Kāmōda</i>	293
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	293
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	294
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , MC	295
<i>Madhya laya gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	295
<i>Cārātāla kī savārī</i> , KCG	295
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	296
Tilak Shyam (तिलक श्याम) <i>Tilaka Śyāma</i>	296
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , RS	296
Triveni (त्रिवेणी) <i>Trivenī</i>	297
<i>Jhapatāla</i> , VNB	297
Vasant (वसंत) <i>Vasanta</i>	301
<i>Druta sthāi, ekatāla</i> , KCG	301
Vasant Bahar (वसंत बहार) <i>Vasanta Bahāra</i>	301
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	301
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	302
Vasant Mukhari (वसंत मुखारी) <i>Vasanta Mukhārī</i>	302
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	302
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	303
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	304
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	304
<i>Druta, ekatāla</i> , PM	305
Vashaspati (वाचस्पति) <i>Vācaspati</i>	306
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , BM	306
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , BM	306
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	307
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	307
<i>Kaharavā dhuna</i> , PM	308
Vindravani Sarang (वृन्दावनी सारंग) <i>Vṛndābanī Sāranga</i>	308
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , Narendra Bataju	308

<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , MC	309
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	309
<i>Druta, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	309
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	310
<i>Madhya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	310
<i>Druta, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	311
<i>Madhya, tīnatāla</i> , VNB	311
Yaman (यमन) <i>Yamana</i>	315
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	315
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	315
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	316
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	316
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , MC	317
<i>Vilambita sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	317
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	317
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , MC	318
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	318
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , VK	318
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , VK	319
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , BP	320
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , BM	320
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	320
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	321
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	321
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , PM	322
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	322
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	323
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	323
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , LMM	323
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	324
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	324
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	324
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	325
<i>Sthāi, cāratāla kī savāri</i> , KCG	325
<i>Ekatāla</i> , KCG	326
Yamini Bilaval (यमनी बिलावल) <i>Yamanī Bilāvala</i>	326
<i>Madhya laya, tīnatāla</i> , Jha	326
<i>Vilambita gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	327
<i>Druta gata, tīnatāla</i> , KCG	328
Zila Kafi (ज़िला काफ़ी) <i>Zilā Kāfi</i>	331
<i>Druta sthāi, tīnatāla</i> , PM	331
Bibliography	335
Glossary	341
List of Illustrations	355
Index I - Terms	359

Index II - Authors	363
Index III - <i>Rāga-s</i> (राग)	367
Statistics	371



Sample

To my Guruji, Dr. K. C. Gangrade
To Sophie, my better half
and to all music lovers

Preface

The present volume covers 454 compositions¹ on 164 *rāga* (राग)² which were collected over my student years.

It all started in India, way back in 1970, when I joined the Faculty of Performing Arts of Banaras Hindu University (then called Music College) as a bonafide sitar student. After passing Diploma (1973), B. Mus. (1976), M. Mus. (1978), M. A. in French literature (1979), I completed a Doctorate of Performance and Compositions (D. Mus.) in sitar, in may 1983.

During all these years, I had the unique privilege to learn and imbibe at the feet of *Dr. K. C. Gangrade* and also, for a short span of two years, during my Master's degree course (M. Mus.), from late *Pandit Lal Mani Misra*.

We had to acquire a fairly good knowledge of the taxonomy of *rāga* (राग) and had to learn lots of compositions from *prakashita* (प्रकाशित) « common » and *aprakāśita* (अप्रकाशित राग) « rare » *rāga-s* alike.

It is a well known fact that vocalists are much more erudite in *rāga* (राग) than instrumentalists — despite few exceptions. That is why we had to concentrate on vocal music and study compositions from vocal audio recordings as well as from the major works in *devanāgarī* (देवनागरी) by acknowledged masters such as *Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande*, *Pandit Vinayak Rao Patwardhan*, *Pandit Vaze Bua*, *Kumar Gandharva*, *Pandit Shrikrishna Narayan Ratanjankar*, *Pandit Jaishukhlal Shah*, *Pandit Ramashraya Jha* and others. A number of their *bandiṣa* (बन्दिशा) have thus been included in this work — whithout the lyrics or in a transcribed form for sitar.

1. While in India, we always use the term « composition » in English when speaking of *gata* (गत) and *bandiṣa* (बन्दिशा), it is actually a misnomer and should better be called « theme ». In Western musicology, a composition is a work, a musical piece (symphony, sonata etc.) which may include a number of themes.

2. See statistics, p. 371.

You will also find *gata-s* (गत) I composed, out of which 24 were submitted for the doctorate.

But the core of this *gata-s* (गत) compilation comes, on one hand, from late *Dr. Lal Mani Misra* (*gata-s* (गत) he taught us as well as others found in his two published books) and, on the other hand, from *Dr. K. C. Gangrade* (either composed by himself, or which he learnt from his late *guru-s* (गुरु), *Ustad Rustam Khan*, *Pandit Dinkar Rao Patwardhan* and *Pandit Shankar Rao Telang*). These traditional *gata-s* (गत) of the *Gwalior gharāna* (घराना) and *Amirkhani-s* are truly outstanding — the word is not too strong — and are a noteworthy heritage of *Dr. K. C. Gangrade*.

However, reader has to be warned that learning *gata-s* (गत) is not an easy affair. Indian notation system — *svoralipī* (स्वरलिपी) — has a thoroughly different function than staff notation has in the West. While the latter is extremely precise, accurate, *Hindusthānī svoralipī* (हिन्दुस्तानी स्वरलिपी) purposely gives a blurred skeletal image of the *rāga* (राग) theme, thus, *de facto*, prohibiting us to learn anew from writings. Indian music theory may be studied from the *śāstra-s* (शास्त्र), the greatest musicological works, « classics » of music literature written over the centuries. *Rāga* (राग) analysis may also be apprehended through the main XIX-XXth cent. authors but, and that's the limit, one can only read **about** *rāga* (राग) — but not **the** *rāga* (राग) itself. Therefore, in India, use of writing is limited to revise or deepen knowledge about a previously learnt *rāga* (राग) and that is done by ear.

— How to render in writing the subtle way a phrase or a note has to be taken ? all the parameters of an oscillated, *āndolita* (आन्दोलित) note ? of the many slide, *mīṇḍa* (मीण्ड) types ? ornamentations etc. ?

— Only the core of a *rāga* (राग) theme is noted down. As such, there is no life, no music in it. Pretty ugly if not properly decoded. Even for the best composition books available (the 5 000 *bandīśa* (बन्दिशा) of the VI vols. of *Krāmika Pustaka Mālikā* (क्रमिक पुस्तक मालिका) by *Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa Bhātakhande*¹ (विष्णुनारायण भातखंडे), the VII vols. of *Rāga Vijnāna* (राग विज्ञान) by *Vināyaka Rāva Patwardhana*² (विनायक राव पटवर्धन)). In *gata-s* (गत), even the *bola-s* (बोल), rhythmic meters, are often similar and don't seem to offer an infinite variety. *Gata* (गत) writing is in noway a photography of the *rāga* (राग) although, in an Indian context, a good theme has to incorporate all the *rāga lakṣhaṇa* (राग लक्षण) - characteristics - in a condensed intelligible form.

1. See *Bibliography*, p. 335.

2. See *Bibliography*, p. 336.

While attempting to decode a theme skeleton, one has to recall in memory the *rāga* (राग) it belongs by internally singing its movements, known *bandīśa-s* (बन्दिशा), recalling its rules etc., getting deeper and deeper into its form and spirit, sensing it, feeling it in such a way that all its notes and movements progressively come to life in their context, making of the *rāga* (राग) a living melodic being.

Last but not least, one advice. Whenever you want to learn a *gata* (गत) on a *rāga* (राग) you don't know, don't rush on it but do listen to different interpretations by acknowledged great vocalists¹, take notes on what you hear and read about it from main Hindi authors². Cross-check your sources, find what is consensual about its characteristics, movements and then only, learn the *gata* (गत). If the theme is instrumental (i.e. with a consequent metric element), then always start by learning the *bola* (बोल) by heart, counting the *tāla* (ताल) on your fingers (cf. p.48), before grafting melody on it. That will keep you from going astray. Sing the *gata* (गत) and do make it sing on your instrument ! Repeat it thousands of times, over and over again, revise its *sthāi* (स्थाई) and *antarā* (अन्तरा), recall it in memory until it becomes part of you.

I hope this compilation will benefit sincere students of *Hindustānī rāga sangīta* (हिन्दुस्तानी राग संगीत) and that given themes are representative of the greatness of *rāga* (राग).

Patrick Moutal

Paris, February 13, 2012



1. Please, forget YouTube as it is too difficult to sort out the good from the bad. That could completely misguide you. Do listen to LPs, CDs from the acknowledged Masters, go to <http://moutal.eu> where you will find a huge collection of vocal gems (754 audio mp3 and video mp4 archives, on feb. 11, 2012) and browse <http://www.musicindiaonline.co/#/genre/8-Classical/>.

2. See *Bibliography*, p. 335.

Sur Malhar (सूरमल्हार) Sūra Malhāra**Druta sthā, tīnatāla, LMM**

Feb. 1977

X	2	0	3
स्थाई			
सा - - नी	नी ध म -	- धध पप नीनी	ध धप -प प
दा - - दा	-र दा दा -	- दिर दिर दिर	दा रुदा -र दा
			- पप
			- दिर
म प - मम	रे म - रेरे	सा रे - सासा	नी सा - सासा
दा रा - दिर	दा रा - दिर	दा रा - दिर	दा रा - दिर
			मम रेम रे सानी सा
			दिर दिर दा दिर दा

Vilambita gata, tīnatāla, LMM

Feb. 1977

X	2	0	3
			स्थाई रेम रे सासा नी सासा
			दिर दा दिर दा दिर
सा सा सा नीनी	ध मनी ध प	रेम सारे नीसा	
दा दा रा दिर	दा दिर दा रा	दा- दा- रा-	
		अन्तरा	पप म पप नी नी
			दिर दा दिर दा रा
सा सा सा सासा	नी सासा रे सा	रै रै रै सासा	
दा दा रा दिर	दा दिर दा रा	दा दा रा	
			नीसा रै नीनी ध म
			दिर दा दिर दा रा
प नीध प मरे	म रेसा रे नीनी	सा सा सा	
दा दिर दा दिर	दा दिर दा दिर	दा दा रा	

T

Tablā (तबला) : The most popular and complete percussion instrument of *hindusthānī* (हिन्दुस्थानी) music.

Tāla (ताल) : Rhythmic cycle. It is composed of a certain number of *mātrā-s* (मात्रा) (beats) grouped in several *vibhāga-s* (विभाग) (divisions) indicating : i) the *sama* (सम) (first beat, in notation : « + » or « x »), ii) the *tālī-s* (ताली) (lit. « clapping of hands », in notation : « 2 », « 3 » etc.) and iii) the *khālī-s* (खाली) - empty beat(s) - in notation : « 0 ». Each *tāla* (ताल) uses a peculiar *thekā* (ठेका) - mnemonics representing the basic structure - and can be performed in different *laya-s* (लय).

Tālī (ताली) : First beat of each *vibhāga* (विभाग) (division) other than the *sama* (सम) (first beat) or the *khālī* (खाली) (empty beat). Lit. « clapping of hands ». Like for *sama* (सम), *tālī-s* (ताली) are indicated by hand clapping. In notation, they are indicated by numbers : thus, in *tīnatāla* (तीनताल) (×4²4⁰4³4), *tālī-s* (ताली) are « 2 » and « 3 ».

Tāna (तान) : Virtuoso passage. Can be *ārohī* (आरोही), *avarohī* (अवरोही), *ārohī-avarohī* (आरोही-अवरोही), *gamaka* (गमक), *sapāṭa* (सपाट), *vakra* (वक्र), *alankāra* (अलंकार), with *bola-s*, *mūṇḍa-s* (मूंड), *ghasīta* (घसीट) etc.

Tappā (टप्पा) : Vocal genre of semi-classical music which would have been created in Penjab by « *Shore Mihan* » *Gulab Nabi*. These love-songs require a very great virtuosity : the *vakra tāna-s* (वक्र तान) in extremely fast « zigzags » - are so unique that they immediately identify the genre.

Tāra (तार) : i) String, ii) higher. Ex. *tāra saptaka* (सप्तक) / *sthāna* (तार स्थान) = higher octave / register etc.

Tarānā (तराना) : Vocal composition sung in a fast tempo and using rhythmic syllables (onomatopoeias)

Thekā (ठेका) : i) Mnemonics representing the structure of a *tāla* (ताल). ii) the playing of a basic *calana* (चलन) of a *tāla* (ताल) without variations¹.

Thumarī (ठुमरी) : Semi-classical vocal music genre. *Thumarī-s* (ठुमरी) are only sung in a few *rāga-s* (राग) like *bhairavī* (भैरवी), *khamājā* (खमाज), *jhinjhoī* (झिंझोटी), *tilaka kāmōḍa* (तिलक कामोद), *deśa* (देश), *pilū*, *kāfī* (काफी), *jogiyā* (जोगिया) etc. whose peculiarity and greatness reside in the fact that they may be interpreted in all different genres. Although labelled as « light music », *thumarī-s* (ठुमरी) are in no way an « easy music » and require from the vocalist a good dose of lyricism and virtuosity.

1. See *tāla* (ताल) p. 41.

Index III - Rāga-s (राग)

A

Abhogi Kanada	59
Adana Kanada	59
Ahir Bhairav	61
Ahir Lalit	64
Ahir Todi	65
Alhaiya Bilaval	65
Anand Bhairav	71

B

Badhans Sarang	75
Bageshree	76
Bageshree Kanada	79
Bahaduri Todi	80
Bahar	81
Bairagi Bhairav	81
Bangal Bhairav	83
Bangeshree	84
Barwa	85
Bhairav	87
Bhairav Bahar	89
Bhairavi	90
Bhankhar	90
Bhatiyar	93
Bhim	96, 135
Bhimpalasi	99
Bhinna Shadj	99
Bhopal Todi	100
Bhupali	101
Bibhas	103
Bihag	104
Bihagda	104

Bilaskhani Todi	105
-----------------------	-----

C

Chaiti Gauri	109
Chandrakauns	110
Charju Ki Malhar	111
Charukeshi	112
Chaya	113
Chayanat	114

D

Darbari Kanada	119
Desh	120
Deshkar	122
Desi	122
Devchandhar	123
Devgeri Bilaval	124
Devsakh	125
Dhanashree	126
Dhavalashree	126
Dhuliya Malhar	126
Durga	127

G

Gara	131
Gaud Malhar	131
Gaud Sarang	132
Gauri	133
Gavati	135
Gorakh Kalyan	135

Gujri Todi	137
Gunkali	138
Gunkri.....	138

H

Hamir.....	141
Hansdhwani	142
Hemant.....	143
Husseni Kanada	144

J

Jaijaiwanti.....	147
Jait	148
Jait Kalyan	149
Jaitshree	150
Jaldhar Kedar	152
Jaunpuri.....	152
Jayant Malhar	155
Jhinjhoti	157
Jog	162
Jogi Asavari.....	164
Jogkauns.....	164

K

Kabir Bhairav	169
Kafi	169
Kafi (Misra)	172
Kafi Kanada	173
Kalavati	174
Kalingada	175
Kamod	176
Kaushi Bhairava.....	177
Kaushi Kanada.....	178
Kedar	181
Khamaj	182
Khambavati.....	186
Khat.....	187
Komal Asavari	187

Kukubh Bilaval	188
----------------------	-----

L

Lachari Todi	193
Lachchasakh.....	194
Lakshmi Todi.....	195
Lalit.....	196
Lalit Pancham.....	196
Lalita Gauri	198
Lankadahan Sarang.....	200
Lankadahan Sarang (Desi ang).....	201
Latangi	202

M

Madhu Bhairav	205
Madhukauns	206
Madhuvanti.....	207
Madhyamad Sarang	210
Mali Gaura	211
Malkauns	211
Mand	212
Mangal Bhairav.....	214
Manjh	215
Maru Bihag	215
Marwa	216
Megh Malhar	216
Mira Ki Malhar	218
Miya Ki Malhar	219
Miya Ki Sarang	222
Mudriki Kanada	224
Multani.....	225
Multani Dhanashree	225

N

Naiki Kanada	229, 232
Nand.....	233
Narayani	233
Nat	234

Nat Bhairav	235	Shyam Kalyan	278
Nat Bihag	238	Sindhura	279
P			
Pancham	243	Sohini	281
Paraj	243	Sorashtra Bhairav	282
Patdeep	246	Sorashtra Tank	282
Patmanjari	247	Sughray	283
Piloo	248	Sughray (shuddh dha prakar) ..	285
Prabhat Bhairav	249	Suha	285
Puriya	250	Suha Sughray	287
Puriya Dhanashree	252	Sur Malhar	289
Puriya Kalyan	253	T	
Purvi	254	Tanki	293
R			
Ramdasi Malhar	257	Tilak Kamod	293
Ramkali	260	Tilak Shyam	296
S			
Samant Sarang	265	Triveni	297
Sarparda Bilaval	266	V	
Sawni Kalyan	267	Vasant	301
Sazgiri	268	Vasant Bahar	301
Shahana	269	Vasant Mukhari	302
Shankara	270	Vashaspati	306
Shiv Mat Bhairav	270	Vindravani Sarang	308
Shree	271	Y	
Shreetank	271	Yaman	315
Shuddh Gunkali	271	Yamini Bilaval	326
Shuddh Kalyan	272	Z	
Shuddh Nat	274	Zila Kafi	331
Shuddh Sarang	274		
Shukla Bilaval	277		



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