

THE GLOBLISATION OF INDIAN MUSIC: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract

Humans have interacted over long distances for years and this interaction, in turn, gave rise to a term “globalisation”, which is a process of international arising from the interchange of world views and other aspects of culture. Even India is not untouched of this globalisation in any context. The present article deals with impact of Indian music on the lives and interest of music lovers around the world. The oldest and rich tradition of Indian music has helped it extend beyond narrow borders of social classes and geographic borders.

Although Indian music is a so-called ‘classical’ tradition, with an ancient and highly developed theoretical base, it also has important links to folk and popular styles. Indian music has had a significant impact on western music at various points in history. Indian musicians/performers have been adapted well and with deep respect in the west also. Among them, Pt. Ravi Shankar and Zakir Hussain are the names which readily come to one’s mind. The sitar’s popularity in West has been done through performances and association of Pt. Ravi Shankar with renowned musicians of the West and it gained the zenith of popularity with popular rock band, “The Beatles”. At the same time, the impact of globalisation is such that even the West is now increasingly becoming a consumer of Bollywood music. In this regard, Indian musician A.R. Rahman has made distinguished contribution by giving music in Hollywood movies. This globalisation of Indian music is appreciated by all. On the other hand, the term global has certain economic and political connotations. The big challenge globalisation puts forward in the face of Indian music is the question of diversity.

Keywords: Globalisation, Classical Music, Bollywood.

1. INTRODUCTION

It can be argued that there is nothing more universal in the world than music. Music has brought people and cultures together from the beginning of time. All the music sharing is because of globalisation which is a very old phenomenon but today it connotes widely. Today music is not only an art but also an extremely important industry in the Global economy. Globalisation of Indian music definitely enhances mutual international understanding and communication through networking.

The term globalisation has been increasingly used since the mid-1980s especially since the mid-1990s (DULUPÇU, Murat Ali 2005, pp. 4). According to the Giddens, the concept can be defined as ‘the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa (Giddens Anthony 1990, pp. 64).

Indian music is one of the oldest and richest living traditions of monophonic modal music, and it has an influence on many important music traditions (including western art music), which have incorporated some of its basic musical concepts. It has developed a wealth of instruments and styles, which have developed right up to the present day. This has also helped it to get extended beyond narrow borders of social classes and geographic borders Smt. Subbalakshmi, Pt. Ravi Shankar, Shri Ali Akbar Khan, Zakir hussain and many others are world renowned artists who have popularised Indian classical music around the globe. In the young generation, artists such as Anoushka Shankar, Salil Bhatt, Niladri Kumar, Meeta Pandit have made successful endeavours with Indian classical and world music as a part of creating novelty in the changing times. Today classical music is being merged into various genres coming from all over the globe.

In this paper I will explore the manner in which the Indian music globalised in the world. The music under discussion is that of the Indian subcontinent and the classical music of North and South India.

2. BACKGROUND

Indian music has a very long, unbroken tradition- the accumulated heritage of centuries. The origin can be traced back to Vedic days- nearly two thousand years ago. Today's Indian culture is an outcome of the interaction and interweaving of races and cultures, both indigenous and foreign; and it is the study of the contribution of these various races and tribes that gives us the picture of the evolution of Indian music. The Negritos, the Mongoloids, the Dravidians, and the Aryans, all have contributed to the complexity of Indian culture.

From the very beginning of the evolution of culture and the civilization, music has been one of the most popular fine arts; not only in the Indian Subcontinent but all over the world. In ancient times, when there was very little communication between the stretches of human habitats, arts and cultures evolved around civilizations, which developed mainly alongside the rivers. Music of each civilization was unique and distinct from the others. Music say, of Indus Valley civilization, was quite different from that of the Chinese, the Egyptian or the Greek civilizations. However, as the means of transport and communication made it possible for us to come closer to each other and the world looked to be a global village, music of one cultural heritage mingled with the music of other societies. Cultures and civilizations came close together and in the process influenced each other. This phenomenon of the Globalization changed the meaning of arts and culture.

The music of South Asia particularly that of the Indian classical music- traditions, has evolved a unique relationship with the West. It has succeeded in maintaining its tradition largely unmarked by the West and has journeyed away from its cultural home to be welcomed elsewhere. On the one hand, Western audiences have related to the complexity and integrity of Indian music as similar to their own classical systems: on the other hand, Indian music and musicians represent an exotic culture. The beginning starts in 1950s when Indian classical music became an International music, mainly due to the efforts of Pt. Ravi Shankar, the central figure in the twentieth century globalisation of Indian music. Countless Indian musicians have since made the journey to West, and have been active as performers, instrumental teachers, and professors. Such artists include the Hindustani instrumentalist Ali Akbar Khan, Amjad Ali Khan (sarod), Nikhil Banerjee, Zakir Hussain (tabla), T. Viswanathan (flute), T. Ranganathan (maridangum) and M. S. Subhalakshmi (voice). Also, many Universities in United States and Europe offer classes in Indian music taught by Indian teachers (Gerry Farrell 2000, pp. 561).

The Globalisation of Indian music has resulted in many collaborations in the West between Indian musicians and Western musicians, in the fields of classical music, jazz, and popular music. These collaborations include concerts for sitar and orchestra, Indian jazz groups, and sitar-flavored mass-media pop. Indian music in all its myriad form is now established as a significant strand of the culture fabric of Western musical life.

Though the twentieth century has witnessed the establishment of Indian music as a global cultural phenomenon, the interaction between Indian musicians and the West has a longer history that stretches back into the 1800s. In the following section we will present a historical prospective of globalisation between East and West.

3. HISTORICAL PROSPECTIVE OF EAST-WEST CONNECTION

Interaction between Indian musicians and the West has a longer history way back to 1800s. Interactions occurred between Western explorer and Indian musicians in the 1500s and 1600s, but not until the eighteenth century did Western scholar start to talk a wider and more sustained interest in Indian music. Towards the end of that century, some orientalists, including the famous philologist Sir William Jones, carried out serious studies of Indian music. Then, in 1834, Captain A. N. Willard published an important treatise on Indian music, drawn mainly from observation of contemporary performances. Throughout the 1800s, Western scholars showed an interest in certain aspects of Indian music, notable in notation and tuning (Broughton, Simon and Ellingham, Mark 2000, p. 109).

The first amongst the British scholars to produce very serious and authentic treatises on Indian music were Mr. A.H. Fox Strangways and Mr. H.A. Popley. The former wrote the *Music of Hindostan* (1914) and the

latter *The Music of India*. In the British contribution to the study of classical music of India, reference has to be made to pioneering works like *Musical Modes of India* by Sir Wilson Jones. A Treatise on the *Music of Hindustan* by Capt. Willard, *Grammar of Music* by J. D. Paterson, *Some Indian Conceptions of Music* by Mrs. Maud Mann, *Sanghit* by Fancis Gladwin and others. These writers believed that Indian Music possessed so much value for the life of the people of India that, in this great day of national aspiration and progress, it ought to be known and understood by every man and woman who has India's good at heart, so that it may become cultivated in every city and village throughout the land.

We may now turn to the second and rather interesting part of our study namely efforts made by our musicologists and performing musicians to project and spread our classical music in the Western countries. There is no clear historical source to ascertain the first or maiden effort which may have taken place. The first isolated efforts perhaps took place during the last quarter of the 19th Century. No exchanges took place during Mughal period or the earlier part of the British period. In general, instrumental music was the first to be projected and for obvious reasons vocal music (except for some Dhrupad Music and professorial assignments for khayal singers) has not been able to make much headway even today.

The first journey to Western countries was perhaps made by Ustad Shamsuddin Khan (Sitar and Surbahar) of the Jaipur gharana in the summer of 1894 in Europe. In the early part of the 20th century, Ustad Sakhawat Hussain Khan, the noted Sarod player of Lucknow visited England and ably demonstrated the traditional playing of the Sarod. The next major projection of Classical Indian Music was done by Ustad Allauddin Khan of Maihar who accompanied Uday Shankar, the internationally famous Indian dancer, in his European tour. This visit of Ustad Allauddin Khan, a master of several Indian instruments including the Violin, helped to open up the presentation of various Indian instruments to the common listeners of Europe. With his great receptivity, Ustad Allauddin Khan imbibed some of the technical excellence of Western Violin players, developed fresh ideas on Indian orchestration and also brought with him ideas relating to rhythmic variations/patterns.

Although Indian musicians were present in the West during the late 1800s, in the twentieth century they started making the journey westward in far greater numbers. They come to bring the musical culture of India to the West and to make it more comprehensible to Western listeners. It was also in twentieth century that Indian music and musicians started to have an impact on Western popular culture, culminating in sitar explosion of the 1960s.

4. INDIAN MUSIC GLOBALISED WORLD

Everyone loves a little piece of music that brings joy to the soul. Music is after all sweet nectar that helps getting the world cultures together and erases hatred from the Earth. Both the Indian as well as the Western music cultures have contributed a lot to each other. By the mid fifties when the country had somehow regained its breath from the world war and some cultural agreements with various nations were signed, the Radio was expanded and later the Indian Council for Cultural Relations was set up. It was at this stage that imaginative, talented and far seeing artists like Pt. Ravi Shankar started making musical appearances quite regularly in U.S.A and Europe with almost unprecedented success. Ravi Shankar was almost single-handedly responsible for popularizing Indian music in the West, in part through his brilliant showmanship and ease performing for Western audiences, and in part because of his association with George Harrison of *The Beatles*. *The Beatles* included sitar (and tabla) in some of their songs, most famously the sitar melody in Norwegian Wood, played by Harrison himself, who studied with Shankar in 1966. *The Beatles*, in a lot of ways, were the first truly globalized entertainers. Millions of their records were sold and they performed live and had done TV appearances in all of the countries in the world.

The awareness for Indian art music and philosophy grew as pioneers like Pt. Ravi Shankar, Ustad Alla Rakha and Ustad Ali Akbar Khan moved to the West in the late 1960's to play in major festivals and teach in establishing schools in various parts of USA and Europe. Ravi Shankar was a man who brought in what we call World music. *The Beatles*' member, George Harrison describes him as 'the godfather of World Music'. He introduced the magic of sitar and Indian classical music to the Western music and revolutionized the way world perceives music today (Thussu, Daya Kishan 2013, pp. 129). He was truly one of those people who have inched the gap between the western and the Indian classical music closer with their work. The highly expressive melodies and extended improvisations played by Shankar and his longtime tabla player Alla

Rakha were a good fit with the extended jams of rock groups such as Cream, (who cite Indian music as a direct influence), Jimi Hendrix, The Grateful Dead, The Jefferson Airplane, The Doors, and others.

Pt. Shankar loved to mix the music of different cultures. In 1978 he collaborated with several prominent Japanese musicians — Hozan Yamamoto, a shakuhachi player, and Susumu Miyashita, a koto player — on “East Greets East”. The collaborations between Ravi Shankar and violinist Yehudi Menuhin (symbolically called East Meets West) also won a Grammy Award in 1967 for their joint album. Shankar not only popularized Indian classical music in the West but also pioneered the concept of organizing music concerts to raise fund for humanitarian causes and was a guiding spirit behind the hugely successful 1971 Concert for Bangladesh in the New York. He was rightly described as Indian’s first and best-known cultural ambassador by Ronen Sen, a former diplomat. Other international high profile musicians include conductor Zubin Mehta, as well as fusion artist Alla Rakha Rahman, who has made it to the list of Time magazine’s world’s most influential people and is trained in both Western classical and traditional Indian music.

The fusion of Indian music with pop music was primarily the result of the creative endeavours of *The Beatles*, who had experimented with different mixtures of sounds and instruments. A numbers of Jazz musicians, among them Miles Davis and John Coltrane, initiated sharp changes in style under the influences of Shankar’s music. Guitarists, especially, were attracted to the sound of Indian sitar, among them Jazz guitarist John McLaughlin and Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead (Wetzel, Richard 2012, pp. 28).

One another artist who popularized Indian music was Jeffrey Kagel (Krishna Das) who was the most popular Kirtan singer in the world. He did a lot of experimentation with Rock and Roll, and after that turned to Indian classical and studied under Guru Neem Karoli Baba. He learnt the art of Yoga and devotion in India. He has reproduced Kirtan to the world and led the devotional music of India to new corners of the world. He played a key role in bringing together the western and the Indian music as he uses the best of the both for his compositions. Indian music still makes an occasional appearance in pop, for example Paul McCartney’s use of the tabla in Pipes of Peace.

Another musician who stood as a classic example in this act of globalization is Zakir Hussain. A classical tabla virtuoso of the highest order, he has established himself as a national treasure in this country. Along with his legendary father and teacher, Ustad Allarakha, he has elevated the status of his instrument both in India and around the world. His contribution to world music has been unique, with many historic collaborations, including Shakti, which he founded with John McLaughlin and L. Shankar, Sangam with Charles Lloyd and with other various artists. His music and extraordinary contribution to the music world were honored in feb 2009 Grammy award.

In the Indian cinema the renowned Indian filmmaker, Satyajit Ray, also brought classical Indian music to the attention of Westerners through the music scores of some of his early films, which were composed by Ravi Shankar and Vilayat Khan. In the course of time collaborations ensued between Indian musicians and Western musicians and a new kind of experimentation on fusion music begin. Pakistan-born Adnan Sami was the first person to play Indian Classical music on electric piano (Kumar, Raj 2003, pp. 3).

5. THE INFLUENCE OF INDIAN MUSIC ON JAZZ

Jazz and Indian classical music—two of the great musical idioms of the world—at first would seem to have little in common. Indian music, with roots going back to thousands of years, developed in the courts and temples of India, and now is performed in concert halls around the world. Jazz, whose journey started in jam sessions, the black church, night clubs, and even brothels, is now heard as well in concert halls around the world.

Indian music’s influence on jazz is pervasive and longstanding. Its beauty, grace, and unique melodic phrasing has inspired musicians for decades, and it’s exciting rhythmic language has given percussionists, instrumentalists, and even vocalists new resources upon which they have drawn. For few jazz musicians, the influence is so strong, it is immediately apparent at every level of their music ([www. sessionville.com](http://www.sessionville.com)).

Since 1970s, South Indian musicians have seen the connections between jazz improvisation and India’s classical music traditions. From the awareness the genre known as “fusion” was born, and this, intern, starts an interface between East and West that continues to excite a younger generation of music and listeners. In 2000s, the Australian singer Susheela Raman fused carnatic kritis with an electric, hard driving Chicago

blues style (As in her album *Salt Rain*). The talented American jazz pianist Vijay Iyer, whose parents are from South India, has worked with saxophonist Rudresh Mahanthappa other to bring into jazz a subtle integration of Carnatic music rhythm and improvisational procedures, creating a unique style that defies definition (see the album *Reimagining 2005*) (Titon, Jeff Todd 2009, pp. 208). Yet when one examines them closely, we see just how much these musics have in common as modes of human expression, paths for spiritual advancement, and in the realm of pure music itself. We then can see just how much Indian music has influenced jazz, and will continue to do so on many levels.

In my opinion, among major jazz artists most directly influenced by Indian music, the two best known are saxophonist John Coltrane, and guitarist John McLaughlin. Two different generations—Coltrane the grand master steeped in be-bop and traditional jazz, eventually defining the avant-garde and transcending the idiom itself. McLaughlin, a jazz innovator who embraced electricity and Rock, and spearheaded what became known as the Jazz-Fusion movement. Both are consummate virtuosos hugely influenced by Indian music, and both opened the door for others to follow.

Coltrane was influenced mainly by Hindustani music—he befriended Ravi Shankar, and even named his own son Ravi. Coltrane's famous quartet with pianist McCoy Tyner, bassist Jimmy Garrison, and drummer Elvin Jones—one of the most influential jazz groups of all time—explored the extended modal improvisations and time frame found in Shankar's music. As part the social transformation happening in America during the 1960s and 70s, jazz also began searching more deeply for it's own roots beyond the dominant Euro-American influences, and that created an interest in African music and culture, and world music in general. As jazz reached back to African music, it also discovered Indian music and philosophy. These non-Western assimilations ran concurrently, and continue to this day.

Today Classical music is being merged into various genres coming from all over the globe. The blend of European, African and Asian country's music with Indian is common face of today's world fusion. Jazz and pop with Indian music that is Indo-Jazz & Indi- Pop is quite popular. Various Bands and Groups have emerged who are experimenting with a wide variety of music of the world.

6. MUSICAL INSTITUTES OUTSIDE INDIA

From 1965 and particularly in 1967 and 1968, Indian artists attracted large and enthusiastic audiences in the most prestigious American concert halls. Colleges and universities offered courses and sponsored concerts; even somewhat isolated schools such as Utah State. University made Indian music part of a summer session. In 1967 Ustad Ali Akbar Khan opened a California branch of his (Calcutta) College of music. Likewise, in 1967 Ravi Shankar opened an American branch of his Kinnara School in Los Angeles. Western University has sponsored a number of Indian musicians, particularly those of the Karnatak tradition, to teach in their World Music Program (Brill, Leiden, E. J. 1982, pp. 36).

There are couple of institutes which have opened up their branches outside Indian also. The Ali Akbar College of Music (AACM) was founded in Kolkata (Calcutta) in 1956. It opened its first U.S. branch in Berkeley, California, in 1967. The Ali Akbar College of Music is the only institution outside India which teaches the classical music of the Baba Allaiddin Khan Seni Gharana (or Tradition) in the traditional style. However the institution acknowledges the influence Indian music continues to have on western musical genres such as jazz, popular music, rock and roll, classical music, fusion, and world music. The East/West connection is a phenomenon that is still unfolding today and is an interesting area of study.

7. THE GLOBALISATION OF BOLLYWOOD

The globalisation of Indian film industry began in the late 20th century. Bollywood cinema exactly went global in 1995, with Aditya chopra's *Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge* (Mehta, Bhattacharya Rini 2011, pp. 1). There has been a growing Western interest in Bollywood, which produces more than 300 Hindi films every year (Geetha, J. 2003, pp. 30-32). Bollywood blockbusters are now exported in large numbers of subtitled prints to the U.S.A. and the UK. Newspapers like *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have started publishing regular reviews of these releases and multiplexes in New York, San Francisco, and Toronto routinely premier Bollywood films.

One distinguishing feature of Indian films has always been its music. As the largest film industry in the world, Bollywood is well-known for their classic stories, vibrant song and dance numbers. Several Indian film

personalities have received recognition abroad as well such as A.R. Rehman, who composed and collaborated with the Pussycat Dolls for the hit song "Jai Ho" for the 2008 British film "Slumdog Millionaire". He had produced an album along with late Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and come up with an album Ekam Satyam with Michael Jackson in 1999 (Kumar, Raj 2003, pp. 17). Pakistani artist such as Shafqat Amanat Ali Khan, classical singer and former lead vocalist of Pakistani Rock band "Fuzon," have been collaborating with Bollywood directors. Two of his renditions- "Mitwa" (for film Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna) and "Tere Naina" (for film My Name is Khan) are examples of some of the best Sufi-inspired music that Bollywood can offer (Thussu, Daya Kishan 2013, pp. 140).

Indian cinema with its characteristic film music, has not only spread all over Indian society, but also been on the forefront of the spread of India's culture around the world. In Britain, Hindi film songs are heard in restaurants and on radio channels dedicated to Asian music. The British dramatist Sudha Bhuchar converted a Hindi film hit *Hum Aapke Hain Kaun* into a hit musical "Fourteen Songs" which was well received by the British audience. Film-maker Baz Luhrmann acknowledged the influence of Hindi cinema on his production *Moulin Rouge* by the inclusion of a number "Hindi Sad Diamonds" based on the filmi song "Chamma Chamma" which was composed by Anu Malik (Conrich, Ian; Tincknell, Estella, July 2007, pp. 206). In France, the band Les Rita Mitsouko used Bollywood influences in their music video for "Le petit train" and French singer Pascal of Bollywood popularized filmi music by covering songs such as "Zindagi Ek Safar Hai Suhana". In Nigeria bandir music—a combination of Sufi lyrics and Bollywood-style music—has become popular among Hausa youth (Gopal, Sangita and Sujata Moorti 2008, pp. 8). Hindi film music has also been combined with local styles in the Caribbean to form "chutney music". Such is the impact of globalisation that the west, which not so long ago revered traditional Indian art and music is now increasingly becoming a consumer of Bollywood music.

Indian cinema, with its characteristic film music, has not only spread all over Indian society, but also been on the forefront of the spread of India's culture around the world. When music channels like MTV and Channel V on cable and FM radio started broadcasting in India, the Hindi film music gained even more popularity. The music is crucially important economically since the sale of music rights may recover most of the budget of the film. Recently, the film industry has been prereleasing soundtracks for films along with music videos, which are essentially clips of the songs from the film, 2 months in advance. This heightens pre-release interest among audiences. Since the success of the song *Chaiyya Chaiyya* in *Dil Se* (1998), most directors and producers include what is popularly called as an "item number," a song and dance sequence, in their films. The dancing style, choreography, and wardrobe for these item numbers are largely influenced by MTV music videos and American hip-hop, salsa, and pop music.

The effect of the globalization of Indian cinema is applicable not only to the Bollywood, but also to the regional film industries of the country. Bollywood has gone beyond geographical boundaries. Many Indian films are not only making more money outside the Indian market but also attracting foreign producers and directors to the industry. Producers these days fund Indian Filmmakers like Gurinder Chadha (*Bride and Prejudice*) and Mira Nair (*Monsoon Wedding*).

8. CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that in recent years, Indian music has a tremendous global impact all over the world. It has become an integral part of musical genres and is incorporated in various music terms of other country. This globalisation of Indian music in such a huge scale is because of the extensive efforts by our musicians who make the unknown aware of the rich tradition of Indian music. This interaction also leads in enrichment of our own music culture. We wish that such exchange of music continue in the years to come.

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