

CHAPTER – I

BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUNJAB GHARANA

1:1 History of Punjab

The Geographical area of Punjab is 50,362 sq. km.

The history of Punjab dates back to 7000 B.C. The earliest human civilization known as the Indus valley Civilization is believed to have been established in this region. The earliest signs of human activity were also started in this period. The Indus Valley civilization grew from small villages and settlements of highly refined urban life, at its height. Around 3000 B.C. it boasted the splendid cities of Harappa (Near present Day Shaiwal in west Punjab) and Mohenjo Daro in the lower Indus valley. It was in about 900 B.C. That the battle of Kurukshetra mentioned in the Epic Mahabharata was believed to have taken place in Kurukshetra.

The word “Punjab” is a combination of two words “Punj” means five and “Aab” means water. These two words are taken from the Persian literature. Hence the state is also called as the land of five rivers. The word “Punjab” is mentioned in the second volume “Aeen – e – Akbari”.

By 1000 A.D. the Muslim invaded Punjab led by Mohamad of Ghazni. In 1030 A.D. the Rajputs gained control of gthis territory. In about 1192 A.D. the Ghoris defeated the

Chauhans and ruled till the establishment of the Mughal rule, a spirit of religious liberation led to the rise of the Militant sikh power.

Punjab Subsequently came under the region of various Muslim rules until the victorious entry of the Mughals in 1526. Under the Mughals the province enjoyed a period of peace and prosperity for more than 200 years. Punjab came under British occupation in 1849, after the British victory over the Sikhs. When the Indian subcontinent received its independence in 1947, Punjab divided into two parts, i.e. Pakistan and India, with the larger western portion becoming part of Pakistan. In 1966 the Indian smaller half was further divided into three; Punjab, Harayana and Himachal Pradesh. The present provincial boundries were established in 1970.

Punjab is culturally very rich and have deep-rooted tradition of indian classical music.

Regrading Tabla playing and its tradition, Punjab has great influence on it.

As a subject researcher has given brief details about Punjab Gharana of Tabla.

1:2 BIRTH & DEVELOPMENT OF PUNJAB GHARANA

It is believed that the tradition of Gharanas came into in existence way back in the year 1710.

If we focus on Gharana, Delhi Gharana has been the first and origin of all Gharanas.

Researcher has given brief introduction about all the other Gharanas which came in existence prior to Punjab Gharana.

1:2:1 Delhi Gharana.

It is said that except Punjab gharana, all the remaining Gharanas are known or identified directly or indirectly with its relationship of Guru & Shishya. Though the playing styles of all the Gharanas are every different from each other, still it is believed that Delhi Gharana was the pioneer amongst all the gharanas for instrumenting gharana style. Or it can be said that Delhi Gharana is the mother of all the Gharanas from where the Gharana playing style was produced. It is said that the Tabla exponent Ustaaad Siddharkhan of Delhi gharana had designed the Tabla. Ustaaad Siddharkhan & his descendants had developed such an independent playing style that is was absolutely free from the impact of the playing style of Pakhawaj. The ancestors of Siddharkhan used to play one of the most ancient percussion instrument called as "Dukkad". This instrument was made of two nessler and to create various sounds strokes on "Kinar" played a major role. The playing style of Dukkad might have been the impact on the playing style of Delhi Gharana. The most important use of "Chaant" was introduced in Delhi Gharana playing style and later on it also became the signature playing style or identity of Delhi Gharana. In this style the use of middle & index finger play an important role. "Tirakita" is played by both Ring & little finger. The senior Tabla artists of Delhi Gharana used to render Tabla playing in medium speed. The variations of their playing were mainly peshkaar, Kayada Rela. These compositions used to be very descriptive and sometimes the original compositions were used to be very simple small in size.

"The pioneer of Delhi Gharana was ustad Siddharkhan Dhadi. The playing style of Delhi Gharana became popular as "Dilli – baaz". The special feature of this Gharana is that while playing the use of index & middle finger help a lot to create gentle, soft and melodious sound.

Different kinds of syllables i.e. table bols are included in the playing to add more beauty and importance. Such as peshkaar, Kaida, Relas, Laggi-Ladi etc.” 1.

“Delhi Gharana is the first Gharana which was pioneered by Ustaaad Siddharkha Dhaadi.

Dhaadhi, Dhaari & Daadhi terms were used which used to be represented by the Khalifa. People belong to Dhaadhi community were into the Music profession. Later on over the period of time these artists got converted into Muslim religion. The playing style of Delhi Gharana is very soft & melodious. This style is mainly based on Chaanti (stroke) & placing of fingers that’s why it is also known as kinar ka Baaz. This style has its limitation of producing sound that’s why it has the impact of a closed sound i.e. Bandh Baaz.

The compositions of this style are mainly based on Chhatahra Jaati. The use of the entire palm is prohibited that’s why the sound of “DhirDhir” comes from within.”2

“ Ustaaad Siddharkhan is considered to be the pioneer of Delhi Gharana. He was born around 1700 but birth place is not traceable. His contemporaries were Kabbe Husain Dholakia, Niyamat Khan, Sadarang Khusro etc. Siddhar Khan inculcated a specific playing style & the bol (syllables) which sounded very different from pakhawaj style and had its own independent style, improvisations, playing style, placing of fingers on table had its own flavor & individuality.

Aabaan Mistry, Peshkar, Kayada, Rela, Mukhada etc. are played in this style but use of full palm is prohibited that’s why “DhirDhir” is not possible in this playing style.”3

“The distinctive features of this gharana are perhaps more widely known than those of the other gharanas. The more important artistic excellences of this school, say, as follows:

1. A manifestly sweet and soft look of the compositions, so that they may well be said to be winsome even from the viewpoint of sheer musical quality, without of course becoming music in the strict sense of the term. It is therefore admirably capable of drawing and holding attention entirely because of its intrinsic excellences, that is, in the form of solo recitals.
2. Very liberal use of the first two fingers of both hands which lends crispness, accuracy and sonority to the bols. Also, a very free use of kinar because of which this style of playing is called kinar baaj.
3. The repertoire, here, abounds in quayedas, peshkars, relas, mukhdas, and mohras which are not too long in range, and therefore do not strain listeners' attention.
4. Chatusra-jati as the dominant rhythmic idiom of most of the compositions of this gharana.
5. A duly controlled, and never sprawling, resonance of bols as played, because of which this style is called closed baaj.
6. This is remarkable feature of the art of this gharana, once the player's hands have been put on the tabla for beginning a recital, they are not allowed to retract before the entire playing is over.
7. Avoidance of a very fast pace. This negative demand is set by the very inner structure of the compositions of this gharana, as also by the requirement that one has to use only two fingers of the right hand and two of the left, in executing the various bol-patterns." 4

I agree with the statements & opinions regarding the playing style of Delhi Gharana given by various Tabla exponents regarding the playing style of Delhi Gharana. The available books are not sufficient to provide enough materials to prove that ustad Siddhar Khan Dahdi was the pioneer of Delhi Gharana and that he created many composition on the basis of Peshkar, Kayada, Rela, Mukhda etc.

After the detailed study & survey of the above mentioned statement the conclusion is this that Delhi Gharana is considered as one of the oldest gharanas. One another aspect was also discovered while doing the research, that while playing Chatustra Jaati, tistra Jaati style can also be adjusted in the same pattern. In this gharana . No body can deny the huge contribution made by ustad Siddhar Khan Dhadi & his followers to uplift Delhi gharana an important platform in the history of Tabla Gharanas.

1:2:2 AJRADA GHRANA

“ Ajrada Gharana style is very close & near to Delhi Gharana Style. It means Ajrada Gharana style must have been evolved from Delhi Ghrana style. Kallu Khan & Miru Khan both of them belonged to avillage called Ajrada in Meerut district (U.P.) had come to Delhi. These two artists were very talented & innovative. They brought the changes & innovations in Delhi Gharana style created a new playing style which was a success and accepted by all and later on this new style was introduced as Ajrada Gharana. The specific feature of this style is the gradual increase in the speed while playing kayda, rela. Ajrada style is blessed with both beauty & speed. It is very melodious to hear. This style developed with the helpof some

changes in Delhi Gharana in such a way that this new style could be played smoothly without any obstacle. Ajrada gharana's table players played a major role for developing this new technique. For example : "..... ". While playing these style, left hand emphasis is more. Maximum composition of Delhi gharana are set to Chatustra Jaati. The exponents of Ajrada Gharana improvised the same format in one & half 1.5 time speed & that created the wonder & mesmerized the rest. Thus with so much innovations & improvisations Ajrada Gharana artists created a different and free style playing." 5

" Ut. Kallu Khan & Ut. Miru Khan Pioneered this Gharana. These two exponents were siblings and were the disciples of Delhi's "Ut. Sitab Khan". They were the residents of a village called Ajarada in Meerut district, thus the name of this Gharana was formed "Ajradda Gharana. The most famous table artist of this gharana was Ut. Mohammad Baksh.

If the Kayda syllables of both Delhi & Ajrada Gharana styles are minutely observed then the differences can be differentiated. In Ajrada Gharana Playing style the strokes on right hand & left hand Tabla are not only very complicated but the syllables are also very complex and yet the melody aspect is well taken care of. In this style aadilaya kaayedas are mostly used."6

"The pioneer of Ajradda gharna are Ut. Kallu Khan & Ut. Miru Khan. The base of the playing style of this gharana is very nearer to Delhi gharana playing style. This gharana has many compositions based on Tishra Jaati. This newness has given lot of importance to this gharana style. The fingers like ring finger, little finger & middle finger play a major role in this style." 7

"The 2 brothers Ut. Kallu Khan & Ut. Miru Khan were the promoters of Ajrada Gharana and the timeperiod of this Gharana is considered from 1780 onwards. That means after Delhi

Gharana, Ajradda Gharana is the oldest or the second oldest Gharana as per the records available.

Around 1940, Ut. Hbibuddin Khan, son of Ut. Shammu Khan, became very famous because of his unique way of playing. He also took training from Ut. Muneer Khan. After this, his son Ut. Manju Khan & his disciple Pt. Sudhirkumar Saxena. Hajari Lalkathak, Karan Singh, Ram Dhruv, Maharaja Banerjee who took this tradition forward.

In Ajrada playing style maximum compositions of Kaydas are composed in Tishra jati. In this playing style the importance of Baayan and the use of index finger middle finger & ring finger are found more often.”⁸

“Most of the compositions of this gharana were set in tisra jati and would appear to evoke, when properly played, the semblance of an undulating flow. However, there are quite a few other artistic features too, mainly the following, which distinguish the structural idiom of the baaj of this gharana:

1. Occasional punctuation of a whole composition with moments of intentional deviation from the bais laya without letting the run of the pattern go haywire, - a structural subtlety to which one could well apply Milton’s characterization of some good music as marked by “wanton heed nand giddy cunning.”
2. In actual playing a co-ordinate use, all along, of the two drums, the left and the right ones, so as to work up (in the playing of the theka) the delightful semblance of a seamless breathing sound – clear and articulate, yet not without depth.

3. In respect of the technique of actual playing, the Ajrada Ustads use the first three fingers of both hands to facilitate proper executions of the very intricate quayedas for which this gharana is rightly famous. It is precisely because of this intrinsic subtlety of conception and dexterity in execution that most of the fair-minded table maestors openly declare that the Ajrada idiom is essentially meant for those who are fairly competent players themselves, and not for lay listeners who can only respond to fluency and accordant bodily jerks. This style is indeed so rich in its inner filling and so intricate in the collocation of its bols that one needs a sense of both design and skill of execution to play and follow the quayedas of this gharana discriminatingly.”⁹

According to the researcher

After studying all the detailed research work and the opinions of various writers, which say that ajrada Gharana was pioneered by ustad Kallu Khan & Ustad Miru Khan, but here, I would like to mention that as per research work of Dr. Ajay Ashtaputre, there was an artist named Ut. Miyan Basant who was senior to kallu khan & Miru Khan and actually started this Gharana. Dr. Ajay Ashtaputre has also mentioned in the preface of his book, that Miyan Basant was the Guru of Kallu Khan & Miru Khan.

This Gharana was started in the year 1780 and according to Pt. Satyanarayan Vashisthji there's a speciality in Ajrada Gharana traditional style that whenever any composition of Kayda are played, lot of innovations and variations are done but at the same time the artists come back to the traditional style also. In this Gharana, along with Aadilaya Compositions chatashra jaati compositions are also played. There are lot many specialities in this gharana which uplifts the standard of this gharana more than the rest of the gharanas.

1:2:3 LUCKNOW GHARANA

“Lucknow imbibed the knowledge of Tabla from Delhi Gharana. Some of the nawabs of Lucknow had recommended some artists of Delhi Gharana for Lucknow & then Ut. Bakshu Khan & Modu Khan came to Lucknow and the new atmosphere of Music had great impact on their playing style. Many differences started taking place in the playing styles of lucknow gharana. In compare to the kinar part of Tabla, Syahi the use of syahi & the strokes on it became more prominent & heavy. In the Eastern playing style also peshkar, kayda, Rela etc. are played as per the tradition. “Dhit Dhit”, “Dhagetita”, “Gadigin”, “DhirDhir”, etc. patterns are also important in Compositions of this Gharana.”¹⁰

“ Ut. Siddhar Khan’s grandson Ut Meru Khan & Ut. Bakshu Khan are descendants of Lucknow Gharana. As per the history of the Lucknow timespan between 1847 to 1857 is considered to be very important period in the region of Nawab Wajidali Shah as far as Music is Concerned. Amongst the desciples of Ut. Meru Khan. Pt. Ramsahay Mishra had taken the front seat. Other disciple who were very promising, & made their own mark were Ut. Mamman Khan, Kesar Khan, Vilayat Ali Khan etc.

The special features of this gharana are :-

Eminent artists of Delhi were the pioneers of this Gharana. Because of the influence of Kathak dance & Pakhawaj, the playing style became more powerful.

On the Tabla, instead of chaanti, the usage of syaahi is more.

On the baaanya, the use of Meend, Ghaseet through thumb area was more.

In this playing style Paran, Gat-Paran, Tukda etc. are played.

This gharana also has some impact of Punjab gharana, because Ut. Meru Khan's wife was the daughter of a eminent table player of Delhi gharana and as token of gift he had received some good Delhi gharana based compositions. It proves that she had a good Knowledge of Tabla.”¹¹

“ Ut. Meru Khan and Ut Bakshu Khan were the pioneers of this Gharana. Lucknow 's music had lot of impact of kathak dance. Exponents of Kathak dance both male & female used to perform at various places. The use of Pakhawaj was slowly coming down because of kathak, Tabla became more important as far as the accompaniment was concerned. The dance style had all kind of emotions such as vigorous steps, fast foot steps, romantic pathos & other emotions and thus table was an apt instrument for this instead of pakhawaj. The exponents of Delhi Gharana & Their disciple brought this necessary changes in the format of playing. This new innovative playing style was named as “Lucknow Baaz” or “Purab Baaz”. Banaras & Farukhabaad Gharana are derived from this style. The special features of the Gharana:-

For creating melodious sound/naad, fingers have been striking on specific places of the table more effectively and efficiently.

In comparison to Ajrada Gharana , Lucknow gharana playing style has much bigger phrases of Kayda-palta and composition are also bigger & elaborate.”¹²

“ Some of the more important features of Lucknow baaj may be put thus:

1. Instead of a liberal use of Kinar or Chanti alphabets which distinguish the Distinguish the Delhi baaj, they (that is, the Kalifas of Lucknow) introduced some open strokes to be played at the lau point, that is at the place between the syahi and kinar and also at a part of the syahi area itself.

2. Again, in place of two fingers, all the five fingers were freely put to use by the Lucknow maestros while playing at the right drum; and on the left one, the thumb began to be used primarily for the sake of producing a typical resonance which, in the technical language of tabla, was called ghissa, ghaseet, or meend.
3. The quayedas too of the Lucknow gharana are different from those of the Delhi and Ajrada schools, essentially in respect of being larger in extent. What is more, in this school quayedas are not played so liberally as other kinds of patterns such as tukdas, nauhakkas, paran, gat-parans, chakradars and fards.
4. Besides using the basic alphabets which are used by the composers of other eastern gharanas, the masters of Lucknow gharana used their creative genius in liberally punctuating their compositions with alphabets like “Dhit-Dhit”, “Kdedhi-Tit”, “Dhin-Ghidnag”, “Katan-Ghidan”, “Titakat-Gadigin” and some others at such points of the compositions as made for added beauty.” 13

As per the researcher’s observation for Lucknow Gharana:-

In the preceding lines it is very clearly stated that the art of Tabla playing came to Lucknow from Delhi. The very first scholars Ustad Modu Khan and Bakhshu Khan came to Lucknow from Delhi and promoted ‘Delhi Ka Baaj’. The influence of Pakhawaj and dance on Tabla playing changed its structure. Later it changed into strong, steady and intense. It created its own presence and uniqueness.

In Lucknow playing style there is a maximum use of ‘Lav’ and ‘Syahi’. In this style along with ‘Kayada’, ‘Rela’, ‘Gat’ etc. are played similar to Delhi Baaj and ‘Paran’, ‘Chakradar’, ‘Tukada’ etc. are also played the most. This may be due to the influence of dance. In this

mostly the combinations like 'Dhir Dhir', 'Gidanaga', 'Dhatin', 'Tatin', 'Dinnag', 'Tak Tak' etc. are practiced.

1:2:4 FARUKHABAAD GHARANA:

“ The art of table playing first developed in Delhi and then Lucknow Gharana come into existence. Later Lucknow Gharana's Ut. Bakhshu Khan's disciple (son-in-law) pioneered the farukhabaad Gharana. Ut. Bakhshu Khan's daughter got married to Farukhabaad resident Haji Vilayat Ali Saheb. As a dowry, the art of table playing with unique compositions were given. Thus, the art of Tabla reached Farukhabaad.

Haji Vilayat ali Khan Saheb was the pioneer as well as an exponent table artist of Farukhabaad. He had immense knowledge of tabla. The compositions of Haji Vilayat Ali Khan are remembered even today also. Amongst his disciples, were ImamBaksh, Mubaraq Ali, Salari Miyan etc. were great artists. Salari Miyan had innovated many variations of peshkaar, which became very popular in later years. Ut. Husain Ali son of Haji Vilayat Ali Saheb became an exponent in the field of Tabla. His disciples who were descendants later became the maestros such as – Tabla nawaaz. Ut. Muneer Khan and later his disciples Ut. Ahmedjaan Thirakwa & Ut Amir Husain are very known names in the field of Tabla. The playing style of this gharana is popularly known as “Madhya laya ka baaj”.

Farukhabaad gharana's artists are basically free style table player who believe lot in the freedom given for playing. In this playing style these table bols are frequently used such as. DhaKaDha, DhinDhaSDha, NaTa, DhinTa, GiDaNaGa etc.”¹⁴

“The pioneer of Farukhabaad Gharana is Ut. Haji Vilayat Ali Saheb who was the son in law of Ut Bakhshu Khan Saheb of Lucknow. He brought some basic changes in the playing style of Lucknow and created many compositions. Thus farukhabaad Gharana become very different from the rest and also became very popular.” 15

“Ut. Haji Vilayat Ali khan saheb started taking training of Tabla at very tender age. Ut Haji vilayat ali Saheb was only an exponent artist but also a very good composer and a teacher too. He only brought the change and newness in the Lucknow style which is known as farukhabaad gharana style. This style is a pure term of Tabla only. It doesn't have the impact of neither any dance from of any other style. Ut. Nisaar Ali Kha the elder son of Ut. Haji vilayat Ali Saheb, was a pakhawaj artist at Rampur Darbaar. They were belonged to theis tradition.” 16

“Ustad Haji Wilayat Ali Khan was a player and composer of very great merit. By virtue of his sheer creativity he produced innumerable compsitions, giving a wholly new gturn to the Lucknow ones. The main features of this gharana may be put as follows.

1. Quite without any trace of Kathak influence, this style is neither so ostentatious as the Banaras or Punjab baaj nor so soft and dainty as the kinar baaj of Delhi and Ajrada.
2. The repertoire of this gharana includes many more gats, relas and chalans than peshkars and quayedas. Patterns known as Samet or Chalan (composed by Salari Khan) are very popular, and pleasing to the ear. Liberal use of bols like dhir-dhir and tak-tak is apeculiarity of this gharana.
3. Aptness for both solo playing and accompaniment.

4. Utter freedom from admixture with the alphabets of naqqara and dhol rhythm.
5. The farukhabad ghrana seems to have the richest stok of gats and chakradar tukdas.”¹⁷

Researcher’s point of view about farukhabaad gharana.

As per the researcher, all the compositions of this gharana have very deep impact of pakhawaj style playing. Because of the different style playing technique farukhabaad gharana stands apart. The artists of this style are all composers. Creativity is an important phenomenon of this gharana.

1:2:5 BANARAS GHARANA.

“The pioneer table maestro of Banaras Gharana was Pt. Ramsahay. Pt. Ramsahaji established Banaras gharana. Banaras & Lucknow gharana, both have impact of each other in their playing style. Because both the gharanas have kathak dance style tabla accompaniment. Thus the similarity is bound to take place. Banaras gharana emphasizes more on pakhawaj style playing. In Banaras gharana both daayan & banyan (right & left tabla) are played with pressure and open sound. In Banaras gharana instead of Peshkar, they commence their playing with “Uthaan” style, while playing the various moods and expressions are played on Baanyan (left) melodiously in medium & slow speed and the other variations such as bol-baant, chalan etc.

Certain popular kaydas of Delhi Gharana are played with full vigour and fun in this ghrana style also. The Banaras gharana artists in comparison to Delhi Gharana, play kaydas with

help of 2 fingers and lot of rigorous practice and hence they sound very melodious. The table artists of this Gharana usually use high pitch table and they change the direction of syaahi of the right tabla so that while playing the syaahi part is covered by the right hand palm and thus it gives a very artistic touch.”¹⁸

“The table artist of Banaras gharana Pt. Ram Sahayji, was the disciple of Ut. Modu Khan of Lucknow, hence Banaras gharana style is also a branch of eastern style playing and full of all the features of it. But in comparison to peshkar & kayda, Gat, Paran, Chhand, Laggi, are given more importance. The artists of this Gharana commence their recital with “Uthaan” instead of Peshkaar.

In this Gharana and the style Pt. Kanthe Maharaj and his able son cum disciple Pt. Kishan Maharaj are well known table artists of Indian Music.”¹⁹

“Banaras gharana is the branch of Lucknow Gharana. The other leading pioneers of this Gharana are Pt. Ramsahayji, Janaki Sahayji, Ganeshi Maharaj & Maheshi Maharaj. Who have contributed up to great extent. There are 2 categories of these leading pioneers. In one category all those table artists are there who were the followers & disciples of muslim ustad and in the other category, those who didn't learn from them.”²⁰

“The Banaras Gharana owes its emergence and identity to Pandit Ram Sahayji, who learned the art of table playing under the expert guidance of Ustad Modhu Khan of Lucknow gharana. After migrating to Banars, Ram Sahayji gave a new turn to the art and innovated a distinct style, the special features of which may be listed as follows:

1. It is a completely open baaj. In other words, whole hands are used here, as against mere fingers; and therefore the sounds produced are, at times, a bit too loud, tending (incidentally) to detract baaj.
2. A solo recital here begins not with a peshkar, but with the playing of abig bol-pattern, technically called uthan. The repertoire also comprises tadas, tukdas, parans, fards, kavita-todas and chakradars.
3. Further, strange though it may seem, this gharana draws a distinction between masculine and feminine gats. The former are, as a rule, emphatic in character and emit loud sounds; and the latter are comparatively gentle in their impact. I wonder if this distinction owes its origin to the one that is freely drawn between tandava and lasya in our dances.
4. What is more, the compositions of this gharana are influenced much more by pakhawaj than by naqqara, tasa, or dhol; and the permutations are here called bol-bant.
5. The compositions are indeed replete with alphabets that relate to pakhawaj. Syllables like dhumkit, takitataka, gadigan, ghidan-kidan here dominate. This can easily lend an impressive look to the total recital, specially if the audience is of kind that does not look for subtleties, and is stuck by mere loudness.” 21

PUNJAB GHARANA

1:3 The Origin of Punjab Gharana:-

According to the scholars and the maestros, the birth year of all the Gharanas is year 1710. And in that Delhi Gharana is considered to be the oldest. The pioneer of Delhi Gharana was Ustaad Siddharkhan. He was the person who encouraged Bandish style from with free style table playing and his time span started in 1710.

Ut. Siddharkhan Daadhi, the pioneer of Delhi Gharana and Pt. Lala Bhawani Das pioneer of Punjab Gharana were contemporary. According to Pt. Yogesh Samsi Ut. Siddharkhan Daadhi & Pt. Lala Bhawani Das both were court musicians at Nawab Ahmedshah's Sangeet Darbaar for 12 years. Where they used to perform regularly on Pakhawaj. Their time span started in 1670. Later Ut. Siddhar Khan Dhadi contributed and introduced a new technique in Tabla playing style. But according to the survey, that time Pakhawaj style playing was still prevalent in Punjab Gharana and later Kadir Baksh-I improvised the style from Pakhawaj to Tabla As per the Statistics, the time period of Lala Bhawani Das was 1670 onwards and his disciple Ut. Kadi Baksh-I tiem period was 1720 onwards. As per this research and statistics we can conclude by saying that Delhi Gharana and Punjab Gharana were formed simultaneously similarly Punjab & Lucknow Gharana both are contemporary Gharanas followed by Banaras Gharana.

1:3:1 Brief History of Punjab Gharana:-

“The heritage of Mrudung-Vaadan in Punjab is fairly old and has pervaded in both India and Pakistan. Similarly like in India, even in Pakistan no historical documentation or Mrudung-Vaadak is evident.

Lala Bhawani Din (one who is referred to as Bhawani Das by the artistes of Punjab Gharana) was the pioneer of Punjab Gharana. Even in the manuscript, Bhawani Das is portrayed as the father of Punjab’s Mrudung heritage.

Among the ancient artistes of Mrudung, whose names are reliably referred in Hakim Mohammed Karam Imam’s Book “Mada-UI-Moosiki”(1855A.D.) the prominent ones that surface are those of Kirpa Mrudung-Vaadak and Ghasiram Mrudung-Vaadak who have been traced back to the time of Aurangzeb and Mohammed Shah Rangile’s rule.

Reference to the them is also available in the book “Musalman Aur Bharatiya Sangeet” authored by Acharya Kailashchandra Dev Brahaspati. From their names, they both appear to be artistes of Punjab origin.

Since medieval age, Punjab’s innumerable Hindu and Musalman Mrudung-Vaadaks flourished throughout the nation on the strength of their ingenuine expertise. In the Gurudwaras (Sikh Temples) of Punjab, even today there exist a few, selective Mrudung-Vaadaks who maintain their hold by accompanying the vocal “Dhrupad-Dhamaarf” in their “Bhajan Kirtan” (devotional hymns).

In the 15th, 16th & 17th centuries, which Baaj (creative style of playing) was being played on Mrudung, how was it played, whether it held solo performances or not and if so, how was its

presentation done, nobody seems to be aware of all this. Therefore, it is left to one's own imagination as to how Kirpa Mrudung-Vaadak of Aurangzeb's era and Ghasiram from Mohammed Shah Rangile's court presented their performances. Whatever cumulative information in the form of words, Bandishes etc. is available today, is only two centuries old.

According to the chief representatives of art from Punjab Gharana, the present Punjab Gharana is traced back to Lala Bhawani Das. There is a legend behind its inception and how it took place via Bhawani Das, that is popular among artistes, as the following goes:-

Once a Muslim Subedar (administrative officer) from Lahore invited Bhawani Das over to perform. The subedar was so besotted over his Mrudung-Vaadan that he began harbouring a wish of the local artistes of Lahore (a predominantly Muslim city, at that time and now in Pakistan.) to be trained in Pakhawaj playing. He openly declared his wish to Lala Bhawani Din. Hearing this, Bhawani Din was in a quandary. People presumed that he did not wish to impart the knowledge of his great hereditary art to all and sundry, but this point does not appear relevant to me. A scholarly and great artiste of such high repute would never stoop so low as to possess a shallow mentality. He may have probably been having his own reasons to decline thus. In those days before the students were given practical training in Pakhawaj, they were initiated into an indepth theory of Taal-Shastra with a scientific approach. Which Taal should be played with which composition, in what order should it be played, how and when is it used to experiment the positive Taal and in words and syllables bow will Laugh-Guru-Plute (tempo/counts of each beat) Lagu = 1 beat, Guru = 2 beats, Plute = 3 beats be set mathematically etc. Various such details were taught to Mrudung-Vaadaks along with its practical aspect. Surmising that the apostates (non-Hindus) and the undeducated would not be able to comprehend the indepth intricacies and the exculsive qualities of his science, he may have refrained from training them. There after afraid of risking his life by incurring the wrath

of the Muslim rulers of neighbouring states, he may have been coerced into accepting to teach.

This is how, stationed in Lahore for a few years, Lalaji trained the local artistes in Pakhawaj. While in Lahore he even innovated a new style of playing a folk instrument called Dukkad (meaning a pair of instruments). He taught this Baaj to his Punjabi students, which is how the Dukkad Baaj got evolved. The same Baaj later seems to have metamorphosed into the Baaj of Tabla by the time it proceeded down to its third generation of disciple lineage, because some scholars seem to firmly believe that the modern Tabla of Punjab Gharana are nothing but the refined version of the original Dukkad.

Although it is proved that both the Kudan Sinh and Punjab heritage's original pioneer was none other than Bhawani Din, still some people seem to harbor a belief that the pioneer of both these Gharanas may have been two different persons. Ustad Allarakha, the living representative of Punjab Gharana refers to Lala Bhawani Din as Bhawani Das. Even he maintains that it is possible for these to have had separate identities. As it is two people having the same name is not uncommon. But with so much reliable information available in several books, this doubt is eliminated. Hakim Mohammed Karam Imam and Fakirullah both indicate Bhawani Das as having been the Guru of Taj Khan Deredar as well as Kudan Sinh.

In the manuscript authored by Mathura's well known Pakhawaji Pt. Chhedaram at the turn of the 20th century and referred as Pothi in the original version of this researched volume, the complete history of Pakhawaj's heritage is available. He has written that by defeating Khabbe Hussain Dholakia in a contest, Kewal Kishenji's grandson Bhawani Das made the former's son, Amir Ali, his won disciple. Later on, Amir Ali propagated in Punjab the Dukkad-Baaj innovated by Bhawani Das and trained several disciples in it. According to the Pothi, Taj

Khan Deredar's son, Naasir Khan Pakhawaji was trained by Jankidas, the grand-disciple of Bhawani Das. (Jankidas was the disciple of Bhawani Das's nephew Tikaram). Later Naasir Khan was appointed in the royal courts of Baroda.

In the book, "The Major Tradition of North Indian Tabla Drumming" by Shri Robert Gotlieb, it is categorically stated that behind the Punjab Gharana's inception and evolution stands the name of its founder Bhawani Das though the author does concede that his is based purely on his personal interview with Ut. Allarakha.

Ut. Allarakha Khan represents the Punjab Gharana. He considers Lala aBhawani Das as the pioneer of his heritage. He always refers to him as Bhawani Das, never as Bhawani Din. In his interview he claims that he got to hear of Lala Bhawani Das directly from his Guru's mouth." 22

"In the Punjab heritage of Pakhawaj, Lal Bhawani Das had five primary disciples. The first was Ut. Kadir Baksh (senior), whose son Miya Hussain Baksh, grandson Miya Fakir Baksh and great grandson Kadir Baksh all followed in the same footsteps.. Second disciple was Ut Taj Khan Deredar whose son Naasir Khan was an outstanding virtuous. He was also the disciple of Jankidas of Mathura. Ut. Naasir Khan spent a very long period of his life in Baroda during Jiyaji Rao Gaekwad's rule and prepared several students by teaching tghem the art in the famous "Kalawant Karkhana" of Baroda. Among whom Pt. Kanta Prasad is the chief. In the familial heritage of Naasr Khan, his son Naasir Hussain, grandson Nazir Khan etc. became illustrious artistes. The third disciple was a nameless Hindu through whose disciple Pt. Bhawani Prasad, Braj's Makkhanlal attained knowledge. The fourth disciple was Haddu Khan Lahorewale from whom Pt. Baldev Sahay of Banares lerant his art – or so the artistes of Punjab Gharana claim. But the representatives of Banares Gharana strongly refute

this claim. The fifth one was Amir Ali who was the son of Khabbe Hussein and had made the latter's son in his own disciple. The "Pothi" refers to the evolution of Punjab's Dukkad Baaj by Amir Ali." 23

1:3:2 Development of Punjab Gharana :-

"According to Pt. Sushilkumar Jain (Chandigarh) Punjab Gharana has its origin in Lahore.

This gharana was introduced by the famous Pkhawaj player Lala Bhavani Das. The playing style of this Gharana got its recognition very late. Before this style could include n Punjab Gharana, the other 3 gharanas i.e. Ajrada, Farukhabad & Lucknow gharana were already had established themselves. Ut. Kadir Baksh-I introduced a change in the playing style. He tried the Pakhawaj playing style on Tabla and later developed it also. He used to play pakhawj style on Tabla. Later Ut. Allarakha saheb created many new composition and peshkaar of Punjab gharana also taught the same to his son & other disciples. Thus we can say that after 1947, the playing style of Punjab Gharana was developed much better. For this credit should go to Ut. Allarakha & Ut Zakir Hussain who brought a new dimension in playing & created history in the field of music. Other than Ut. Zakir Hussain there are many more Tabla maestros who are still serving with full dedication to keep it alive and unique, they are Pt. Yogesh Samsi, Ut. Faisal Kureshi, Anuradha Pal, Pt. Aditya kalyanpur, Shri. Hitendra Dixit, Shri Praful Athley, etc.

Punjab Gharana is the leading Gharana of Indian Music. Lahor was the main town of music before partiiton. If we focus on the playing style of Tabla then in Pubjab Gharana follow varied forms of presentation and these styles have maintained till the date. These forms are

known by different names in Punjab Gharana e.g. 'Talvandi Bahiya Gharana', 'Kasur Gharana', 'Naliya Gharana' etc. However after the independence these styles were restricted to Pakistan. The present playing style of Punjab Gharana is established and developed by scholars like Ustad Alla Rakha Sahab, Shri Lakshman Singh Saini of Punjab and Pandit Sushil kumar Jain.” 24

“Punjab Gharana is the legacy of Indian Music. If we highlight on the history of India then the people who (invaded) came to India from western countries entered only through Punjab. Later those who settled down in India established their cultural and musical tradition over here. This had a tremendous impact on Indian culture and music. Punjab was the centre of this transformation. This influenced all the styles especially vocal and instrumental music of Punjab.

Before independence Punjab was the largest province of India. After the partition its premier / major portion along with its playing style had gone to Pakistan. However till today in Punjab the music, especially Tabla and its playing style is preserved. The towns of Punjab namely Malerkotla, Jalandhar, Pathankot, Ludhiana, Amritsar, and Patiala etc. have preserved Tabla playing. The Tabla playing style of Punjab is influenced by Pakhawaj. However the style of Pakhawaj playing has a major impact on Tabla playing and it is unique in its own way.

It is a known fact about Bandish of Punjab Gharana that there is a small village named Chham and Jodiya in Jammu and Kashmir and which is on the border of Pakistan. It is said that there is a book of Bandish in the hermitage (Ashram) of Baba Lalji. In that volume there is a mention of traditional Bandish of Pakhawaj and Tabla. In which names of its types are also given e.g. 'GajParan', 'TofkiParan', 'SinduriParan', 'GhosekiParan', 'ChausarkiParan' and 'RaasParan'.” 25

Punjab Gharana's Past Tabla Masters:

1. Ut. Fakir Baksh
2. Ut. Kadir Baksh
3. Ut. Allah Rakah
4. Ut. Shaukat Hussain Khan.

Present Tabla Masters of Punjab Gharana.:

1. Ut. Zakir Hussain.
2. Ut. Altaaf Hussain "Taafoo" Khan.-
2. Ut. Abdul Sattar "Tari Khan".
4. Pt. Yogesh Samsi
5. Ut. Faizal Kureshi

Era of Tabla Maestros of Punjab Gharana.

Mian Qadir Baksh 1903-1962

1. Khalifa Akhtar Hussain Khan 1947-2001
2. Ut. Shaukat Hussain khan 1930-1996
3. Ut. Bshir Hussain 1940-1991.
4. Ut. Faryaad Husssain Bhulli 1945-2004.
5. Ut. Bashir Khan 1946 –
6. Ut. Arshad Ali 1955-
7. Ut. Ghulam Abbas Khan 1956-

8. Ejaz Hussain "Ballu" 1962-
9. Mohammed Ajmal Khan 1958-
10. Ut. Sajjad Ali 1968-

1:3:3 Purpose of Punjab Gharana :-

Prior to Punjab Gharana, 5 Ghranas were already there to have its own identity, Punjab gharana created very different & innovative compositions and those compositions had the flavor of pakhawaj. This style gave a new dimension to Punjab gharana and later it became very popular style. Because of the pakhawaj style playing, it created its own identity.

The playing style of this gharana had many features – esthetic beauty, melodious playing. Forceful playing style & the command over layakari. There are the features of Punjab gharana which is distinguished clearly from the rest of the gharanas. Hence Punjab Gharana playing style is different, innovative, powerful, forceful, melodious & has esthetic beauty.

Credit goes to Pt. Lala Bhawanidasji who brought these differences into notice. Because this type of (Pakhawaj oriented playing) playing was very unusual style of playing which had some newness and unique style of composition. It is proven that the importance & existence of Punjab Gharana was always there and it will be. Because the compositions of this gharana are very unique, different Laykari oriented, beautiful, melodious which requires tireless & effortless practices to attain the perfection. Many great tabla masters & musicologists have written many books about Punjab gharana. There is no doubt that Punjab gharana is an exclusive gharana. This gharana has given us Tabla- gurus cum maestros of all time. Ustad

Allah Rakha, Ustaad Zakir Hussain & Pt. Yogesh Shamsi for which we the table artists or teachers or students will always remain grateful to Punjab Gharana.

1:3:4 The specialties of Punjab Gharana:

1. "The Tabla of this Gharana is open 'Khula' and powerful as it is highly influenced by Pakhawaj. In this Gharana mostly four fingers are used together to give stroke.
2. In this playing style of this Gharana the a calculation / measures of distribution of 'Theka' and 'Layakari / rhythm' is extremely complex; e.g. 'Chakradara' has length / interval of nine and a half ($9^{1/2}$) 'Matra' then power 'Dam' of quarter two ($1^{3/4}$) and then after the interval of fifteen and half ($15^{1/2}$) 'Matra' and power 'Dam' of a quarter ($1^{1/4}$) 'Matra' etc.
3. The compositions of Punjab Gharana has strong (strong) influenced by the native language; e.g. 'Ghat' is pronounced instead of 'Dhati' or 'Dher Dher Kett' is pronounced in place of 'Dhir Dhir Katt' etc.
4. 'Kayada' is promoted a lot in Punjab Gharana. 'Kayada' is a very complex and rhythmic composition. Punjab Gharana is mostly popular for its 'Gat' and 'Rela'.
5. In the compositions of this Gharana mainly notations like 'DHINADAN', 'DHIDANT', 'KRITAN', 'DHADAGEN' etc. and in the 'Theka' notes like 'DHATI DHADA' AND 'DHER KET TER KET' is used in very (high speed) 'Drut Gati'.
6. The specialty of Punjab Gharana means 'Meend' work on 'Baya' and flexibility of the left surface of Tabla.
7. Punjab is a border province. It is a life style that the war is foreseeable for its safety and security. This had influenced the music too. This is why the music of Punjab is

very powerful and robust / forceful and swift / fast. During war this proves to be stimulus and during the time of peace it is ornamental as well as entertaining. The notations in compositions of this Gharana have power, speed and courage.

Some of the compositions of Punjab Gharana are presented here as examples, we have availed them from representative of Gharana Ustad Allah Rakha as well as some other prominent artists.”²⁶

FOOTNOTES

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4. Author Pt. Sudhirkumarsaxena, Book – “The art of table rhythm” page no. 110. Publisher- Sangeet Natak Academy.
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22. Author Pt. Aban Misty. Book "Pakhawaj & Tabla" : page no. 65
23. Author Pt. Aban Misty. Book "Pakhawaj & Tabla" : page no. 67
24. Excerpts from the interview of Pt. Shushil Kumar Jain (Chandigarh).
25. Excerpts from the interview of Pt. Pushkarraj Shridhar (Vadodara).
26. Author Pt. AbanMistry. Book-Pakhawaj & tabla page no. 262, Publisher- Pt. KekiJijina.