



## CLASSICAL MUSIQI OF KASHMIR

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### Introduction

Classical Musiqi of Kashmir is related to pious hearted people because this music plays the spiritual songs which is a heavenly pleasure and God related. The change of the rulers made Kashmiri culture, art and literature to accept some influence of change which obtained a place honour among our artists, poet's intellectuals and creative writers. Kashmir had trade relations with Iran and Middle part of Asia in olden days. The culture of these states is seen even by now in Kashmir. Music also could not escape.

There are three distinct forms of music in Kashmir, namely, Sufiana Musiqi (traditional Classical music) handed down to the present generation by old masters: Chhakri, Rouf, Wanawon etc, (folk music); and Ghazals, Geets and choral songs (modern light music).



Sufiana Musiqi is the classical Musiqi of Kashmir. This is a beautiful and charming heritage of Kashmiri culture and civilization. This indicates the features of Iranian and Indian music like “Muqam” and “Rag Ragni”. In this way, this Musiqi represents the adorned and integrated charm of Kashmiri associated culture. This fact can never be ignored that Kashmiri music is as old as Kashmir history itself. It is also known as *Fanooni Lateefa*.

### Historical Background

Nilamata Purana, the source of Kashmir's cultural heritage and history says that Gundaro Devta was an eminent expert of music. The ancient historical discourse certifies this view that Sufiana Musiqi was popular not only in Kashmir but outside this region also because several kashmiri musicians were associated with outside musical institutions and meetings in which the famous musicians Sarang Dev is included. He was related to Devagree Raj Darbar in South India. “Sangeet Ratnakara” an exalted book on Shastria Sangeet is written by Sharang Dev.

Sufiana Musiqi is the music of pious hearted people which commonly exists in the faculty of “Sama” because this music plays the spiritual songs which is a heavenly pleasure and God related, full of solace and satisfaction. It remained confined to courts, Darbars and Mehfiles associated with Sultans, Amirs, Vazirs and elite.

There is no doubt that the cradle of Sufiana Musiqi is Kashmir, even if its real land is Iran, (Persia), Greece or Middle Asia. Its tune theory it has also been affected and influenced by Central Asian music through the ages. Names of the Muqams have been drawn from both indigenoues and foreign music. Lalit, Multani, Bahar, Basant Bihag and others have been taken from Hindustani Shastriya Sangeet where Araq, Husani, Navroz-e-Saba, Rehavi, Isphehan, Rast-e-Farsi and others are from the Iranian and central Asian, classical musical systems. This cultural interaction has resulted in a unique form and an interesting synthesis of the various types of classical music presented by Kashmir. There is no doubt that Kashmir had trade relations with Iran and Middle part of Asia in olden days. The culture of these states is seen even by now in Kashmir. Music also could not escape. This music suits to the kashmiri temper and causing them to adopt it with love.

Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-1470), known as Budshah had played a significant role in the progress and development of Sufiana Musuqi. It has attained a respectable place in his period. Budshah ruled Kashmir for fifty years. There was progress, peace and political rest in his period. Art, culture and other aspects of knowledge developed in this period. There were prominent scholars in his court which included the distinctive musical experts from Asia, India and Iran also.

Whatever the conditions of its beginning is, it is important to note that when this Musiqi came to kashmir its language was Persian. The Bandishes were only in Persian language. But with the passage of time. The importance of Persian language became less and the kashmiri language came into existence. Our elders and lovers loved it whole heartedly and nourished it by their blood, lifted it to a high level of respect and include the Bandishes of kashmiri saint poets.

According to Mohammad Yaqoob Sheikh (a leading classical artist of Kashmir) “no doubt the mystical poetries were included but that did not make any change in its basic techniques and terms. Late ustad GH.Mohammad Kaleen Buf (one of the leading mystical musician). His individuality stood in his laye and voice which he kept maintained through the complete song. He was called the master of layekari and was much experienced to fix the new Bandishes in varied Muqams which is his precious treasure in Kashmiri Sufiana Musiqi.”



### Different Patterns of Classical Musiqi

Sufiana Musiqi is divided in many Muqams and melodies with separate characteristics. But the act of showing peculiarity is not as clear and shining as we see in Indian classical music. Despite that fact, each Muqam has an obvious individuality. There is a Gamak, Meend, Kan, Jhala in Indian music. There are also the different patterns of layekari and rhythm in it. Sufiana music does not have all these techniques. Indian music have a unique and own way of playing tabla and song pattern but Sufiana music does not have the same pattern. There are different persons concerned with singing and playing different musical instruments with varied duties and responsibilities for a uniform song. On the contrary, in Sufiana Musiqi a singer and a player is the same. Here, a singer presents a song and plays instruments simultaneously. So, a singer is required to remember a song by heart, present it in a better way and play the instruments related all at once with great care, which is very difficult. From this view, Kashmiri artists have developed the music pattern.

Importance of Swaras in Kashmiri Classical Musiqi

There is also the great importance of swaras and tals in Sufiana Musiqi. The song in Sufiana Musiqi rises from low level to ascent. It starts from 'Sa' and then ends either at this swar or at second or third swar 'Re' or 'Ga' when a song begins with a Muqam, 'Re' or 'Ga' of Madhya Saptaq is dropped in frequent Muqam. Besides, in every Muqam, a swar is dropped at rising or lowering a song, which identifies the individuality of a Muqam signifying the importance of the used swar. The tals used in classical Musiqi are: Neem Saqeel tal, DouRoya tal, Zarbi Turki tal, Rawani tal, Zarbi Fakta tal, Doukiya tal, Yaka tal, Chap Andaa tal, Sey tal, NeemDour tal, Dhamal tal.

Sufiana Musiqi also came into existence with co-operation and combined support of song and harmony, lyric and intention. A lyric with verse and harmony with musicians voice, combine with the sangiti of different instruments. There are mainly four musical instruments played with Kashmiri Classical Musiqi: Santoor, Sazi-Kashmir, Madham, Kashmiri Sitar in addition to this Tabla is played for Taal.

This Musiqi used to be presented by the highly spiritual masters namely; late ustad Kamal Bhat, late ustad Mohammad Abdullah Tibat Bakal, late ustad GH. Mohammad Kaleen Buf, late ustad Abdual Gani Namata Hali, Sheikh Abdul Aziz, ustad Mohammad Abdullah Setari, Mohammad Yaqoob Sheikh. Some of the famous Gharanas: Wathoor Gharana, Bijbihada Gharana and Sultan Joo Gharana. All the given artists belong to these Gharanas and have their own traditions in the style of singing.

According to ustad Ghulam Mohammad Saznawaz, "The tradition of Sultan Joo's Gharana has been playing the great role for the progress and development of this Musiqi. The tradition of this Gharana is old enough and was established by late ustad Sultan Joo who came from Iran during the reign of Ranbir Singh (1857-1885)".

### Conclusion

The findings indicate that Classical Musiqi of Kashmir is also known as *Fanoon-i-Lateefa* by the Kashmiri musicians. This Musiqi Identifies the Kashmiri culture and also indicates the features of Iran and Indian music like "Muqam" and "Rag Ragani" this Musiqi suits to the Kashmiri temper, taste and was fully developed during the period of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin. During his period musicians came from Iran and Turan. What ever the conditions of its beginning is, now the different institutions worked hard to develop it with their significant role.

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