

8.15 **Gaayakee** and **Gharaana**
(personal styles of singers and heritage of schools of singers)

In the case of literary compositions, each talented writer has some style which distinguishes the particular writer's work from those of others and the readers can enjoy these specialties through printed letters. Similarly each composer may have some special mode of expression. But, in case of music the listeners enjoy these specialties through someone else's - the singer's - voice. Moreover, a particular singer also may have a special style of singing a special song. These combined specialties are the *Gaayakee* or the special musical style. In case of Indian music this *Gaayakee* or style is passing from teacher to students for centuries; this fact is described as *Guru-Shishya-Parampara* or teacher-student-succession chain.

This *Gaayakee* is not only limited in wording or tuning a song but it covers the mode of presentation also. The Indian music is traditionally a "*Guru-mukhee Vidya*" - an art which must be learnt from the mouth of a teacher. The disciple would stay and live in the teacher's house as a part of the family for years together (which was completely free for the student and the local king or ruler was responsible for the support of both, the student and the teacher) and try to master the special skill of presenting the particular *Raag* or *Raags* in the most original way. Still it is not mere imitation of the Guru; a talented student will add his own merit to this art and later as a Guru himself will pass on this skill to next generation of students. For example both *Raags Bhairav* and *Jogiya* have *Komal Risav* and *Komal Dhaibath* still their ways of application are not same in those *Raags*. An expert teacher helps the pupil to master this difference.

Another specialty of Indian classical music is its *Gharaana* or tradition of particular school of music. "*Ghar*" means room or house and "*Gharaana*" is the specialty of that house of music. There were many such schools under the patronage of local rulers or kings. Each of these built up its own tradition which was unique in fashion and style in particular fields of music. So, an Indian musician must respectfully acknowledge his obligations and link to a school in which his training was conducted. Even in the present days, there are different such schools such as *Gawalior Gharana*, *Lucknow Gharana*, *Vishnupur Gharana* etc.

So, the teacher plays an important role in the training of Indian musicians. Learning music from a book of notations is as lifeless as anything. This book is a mere textbook or a teaching aid and by no means a substitute of a teacher or Guru.