



# Role Of Ustad Gulfam Ahmed In Transforming The Culture Of Rabab In India

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## ABSTRACT

India has a vivid musical culture and every region has its own style of musicality. Musical instruments used in Indian music are one of the main points of difference between the different styles of music prevalent in the state. There is an influence of Persian musical instruments in the Northern part of India which makes the North Indian music distinct from the other styles like South Indian music.

This was due to the control of Muslim minority over North India. Persian language became popular in North India which introduced Persian music and musical instruments in the North Indian culture. Musical instruments like sitar (also Setar), sarod, Kamanche and rabab became much popular in the state of Kashmir. Rabab is a popular string instrument played in different forms in Central Asia, South Asia, and North Africa. This stringed instrument can be plucked or bowed as per the tradition of musical performance. Rabab can be called the forefather of Sarod as Rabab was adopted in Ancient India that became Sarod today.

Rabab in different forms is played internationally and is still popular in the Indian music genre as several Indian musicians play it. Some of the most eminent Rabab players are Ustad Mohammed Omar, Ustad Rahim Khushnawaz, Ustad Ghulam Hussain, Ghulam Mohammed Attaie, Homayoun Sakhi, Ustad Essa Qassemi, Ghulam Jailani Nabizada and Ustad Gulfam Ahmad.

Ustad Gulfam Ahmad is a globally popular Rabab and Sarod player who is also known for his Sufiyana kalam's on the unity of Hindu and Muslims. He had a great contribution towards the revival of Rabab playing in India as he popularized this aged old practice of playing Rabab in India. After three of his disciples played Rabab in Golden Temple to accompany the tabla playing in the kirtan, it caught the eyes of the netizens. After 200 years, this kind of revival was a great thing.

**Keywords:** Rabab, Indian Classical Music, History of Rabab, Gulfam Ahmed, Popularity the Rabab

## Introduction:

Gulfam Ahmed Khan was born in the year of 1956 in Bagrasi near Bulandshahar situated in the state of Uttar Pradesh. He was born and brought up with his father who was a top grade staff artist (Rabab and Sarod player) along with All India Radio (AIR) in Delhi (Personal Communication, 2024). He grew up in the city of Fatehpuri, Khar Baoli which is also known as walled city. Gulfam Ahmed Khan were four brothers and two sisters among whom he was the fourth child of his parents.

From the age of six Gulfam Ahmed Khan started learning Rabab from his father and continue it till his last breath. He died in the year 1967. And after that the eldest brother of Gulfam Ahmed Khan whose name is Muktar Ahmed who was also an excellent artist with All India Radio, took all these under his control but unfortunately, he also died in the year of 1994.

When Gulfam Ahmed's father died then he had once said that his family was in bad situation and therefore at that time it become much more difficult for him to continue his studies. In the year 1969 he lost his mother but after all that he never gives up or loose hope and continued his Riyaz. Gulfam Ahmed Khan frequently visit to Lucknow to his cousin who name was Ilyas Khan who was a Professor in Bhatkhande College for music learning. Gulfam Ahmed Khan also taught to play Sitar to Bollywood Actor Raj Kapoor.

Gulfam Ahmed Khan was studying in class 4 when he lost his father. Gulfam Khan said that how he struggled for almost seven years after he lost his father. He had to do odd jobs like he had done salesman job in a clothes

shop and also in a shoe shop in Ballimaran. At that he also did job in a unit of embroidery in Delhi East which was assisted by his brother. Other than this he had no other ways to get food or to run his own (Personal Communication, 2024)

He mentioned also that at that time rupee had a value and to fills one's stomach eight annas were enough. The cost of Salan at that time was four annas (twenty-five paisa) and in one anna one can get one tandoori roti. Gulfam recalls that some shopkeeper paid Rs. 80 while other shopkeepers would pay Rs. 100 in one month (Personal Communication, 2024)

### Research Question

The focus of research is on the questions that How did Rabab evolve as a musical instrument? Where did Rabab come from and in what different ways it still exists today? What was Gulfam Ahmed's role as a Rabab artist? What are different styles of playing rabab style? How did Gulfam Ahmed help to grow the popularity of rabab in India?

### Gulfam Ahmed as a Rabab artist

Gulfam Ahmed Khan teaches the methods of playing a musical instrument which is similar to sarod to the local people of Afghanistan. Gulfam Ahmed Khan who travels a lot between New Delhi and Kabul had taught approximately 250 nationals of Afghanistan and 50 more under his guardianship. The people of Afghanistan gave him enormous respect for his skill in playing instruments and therefore they called Gulfam Ahmed Khan as Ustad (Personal Communication, 2024)

Specially Ustad Gulam Ahmed Khan tried to popularized the Indian classical instrument Dhrupadi rabab which is also known as Narad Vina throughout Afghanistan and in the other parts of the world. It can produce sonorous tunes which are used in spiritual meditation, whereas the Afghan rabab is used for those tunes which are fast and entertaining. According to Gulfam Ahmed Khan, if the Indian government promotes this instrument, it can become more popular throughout the country.

Gulfam Ahmed Khan came to India for a tour of 4 days and will go to New Delhi on Monday. He was born in a town named Bugrasi which is situated in Bulandshahar and he started playing the musical instrument rabab with his father whose name is Ishtiyaque Khan who had a great knowledge over the musical instrument specially on rabab and sarod (Personal Communication, 2024)

When Gulfam Ahmed Khan was at the age of nine, he did his first performance at Gurudaspur. The audience was so overwhelmed by his performance, after that he got more courage to continue his paying of musical instrument. Day by day his love to play rabab increase and grew stronger. He thereafter started more practice and therefore his skill became more efficient day by day.

After that few years later Gulfam Ahmed khan had performed in Ahmedabad and after that he did not have to look back. But in 1980s he did not perform anywhere for some years because of dishonored of great art. During this gap he only played the sarod for only to return to the rabab during 1990s.

After a break Gulfam Ahmed Khan again started a new and fresh journey of his plays of musical instruments and after that he gave some performance in the public forum and wrote the popular music of Gata Jaaye Mast Kalandar, Allah teri shan, Maula teri shan by his instrument that is rabab.

Gulfam Ahmed Khan became popular throughout Punjab by his song. He also played the rabab in Afghanistan when he visited to his daughter' and son in law's house. Many of the locals there insisted him to taught them the play of rabab and when they insist him. He become so famous that the Indian Embassy who are there in Afghanistan, who are senior officers there invited him to do some classes to the Afghan people on the plays of rabab. Though he was unwilling to do that but though he accepts their request and accepted their offer.

Between 2009 to 2014 Gulfam Ahmed Khan stay in Afghanistan and during these 5 years he trained there many local people and, in this period, he learned many local songs. Gulfam Ahmed Khan also said that he taught more than 250 peoples of Afghanistan learned to play rabab, and some of them become rabab players professionally. He also said that some of around 50 afgans take some tips from him (Personal Communication, 2024).

Gulfam Ahmed also mentioned that he once performed at Sankatmochan Hanuman Temple and that was his wonderful spiritual experience and there the audience also enjoyed a lot by his performance and after that he continue to go there frequently and do his spiritual performance. He also said that one of the great cities is Banaras and the culture of Banaras is wonderful and fabulous.

Gulfam Ahmed Khan is an awesome musician who can play Rabab and Sarod excellently and he also recently awarded with the title of Padma Shri. Throughout his musical career which was unparalleled, he also became the grand ambassador of intercultural relations of the two counties that is India and Afghanistan. In Afghanistan he had been greatly respected by the people and there were many people of Afghanistan who are under his guardianship.

Gulfam Ahmed Khan became more popular and get more success when the locals of Afghanistan impressed by his performance and skills of playing rabab and this happened when he went there to visit his daughter and son in law. And as soon as his fame and talent were known to everywhere and also reached to the doors of Indian embassy in Afghanistan, there the officers did not waste anytime and invite him for taking more classes for teaching instrument in the embassy.

## Rabab in India

The origin of rabab or the Senia rabab, can be traced from Afghanistan as the Afghani traders of horses and the soldiers actually brought rabab with them to Kashmir. The Indian classical music had a great place for rabab but over the time the melody of this old instrument faded away and other instruments evolved to catch attention of the listeners.

The name rabab or the Senia rabab was important for distinguishing the two different forms of rababs as it has lost its presence in the Indian classical music (Dhar, 2003). The vivid musical culture of India once bestowed rabab the central place in the musical realm of the nation. Senia rabab got its popularity when Miya Tansen played it.

Now, the Senia rabab also known as Bhartiya dhrupadi rabab has no existence in the classical music of western India but the other forms of rababs are still in use. Kabuli rabab is still popular in Afghanistan. The body of Senia rabab is made of a dandi also called zidar with a circular hollow belly or the soundbox that is inside the sheepskin used in rababs. The body consists of six silk strings stretched from one end of the body to other on the fingerboard made of fretless wood. The strings of the rabab are played with the help of plectrum.

There are two different styles of sitting for playing rabab. One is the common gomukhasan and the other style is called the virasan. This instrument primarily plays the rhythm of baaz where the melody is played through the usual alaps, jhalas and jods.

These are commonly played in the dhrupadi gan. This style got popularity through the musical maestros like Chhajju Khan, Bahadur Sen, Jafar Khan, Pyar Khan, Basat Khan and Ali Muhammad Khan. The legendary artist Muhammad Ali Khan was the second son of Basat Khan was greatest Rababiya in the Senia school who decided to stay in Kolkata during his last days.

If we observe the Ajanta paintings, we can find musical instruments like rabab and sarod. This indicates the presence of Rabab or Sarod in ancient India as a popular musical instrument that dated back in the early 5th century. From a very long period of time, the musical technique, scales and instruments are exchanged between nations like India and Greece (significant role was played by Persia) (Levizolli, 2006)

This exchange not only enhanced the style of music in the two nations but also helped to evolve in a much better way. The harp like string was removed and zither like string was used in the instrument. This way the primacy of the harp shifted in the whole region.

The revival of rabab and the emergence of vina or bin came after the culture of playing harps faded away. Two different families evolved mainly who used to prevailed in North India known for playing the plucked zithers, the vina or bin and also the different forms of rabab. The musical compositions and the other devotional compositions played in different temples, courts and Ashrams were the music that needed the melody of this musical instrument.

Rabab has marked its distinct presence in the devotional music of India. The prolific significance of rabab in the devotional music of India has become the reason why it is called dhrupadi rabab. It is also called a Rudra Vina as it is an important element to compose Dhruvapada style in the Indian devotional music.

Later, the Rudra vina went through an evolution where it was used only for the large fretted musical instrument and was called bin. In the making of rabab, the silk strings or the gut of the rabab has been used. There the two types of bridges, one flat and the other standing or composite in nature that are embedded for enhancing the musicality of the rabab. Over the time, sarod got introduced in the Indian classical music and the standing bridge that was there in the rabab was retained and the flat Bridge was no more used.

Sikhism also patronized rabab through by playing it along with the other instruments in devotional performances. Guru Nanak and Bhai Mardana used Rabab for the composition of the devotional music and Rabab became the dominant string instrument in Sikh Tradition. Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the last Guru of Sikh was also a lover of the rabab music (Lallie, 2016).

The legacy of playing rabab has been in the Rababiya families and outsiders were not acclaimed. Student of Radhika Mohan Moitra, Somjit Dasgupta once said the story of Murad Ali Khan. Murad Ali Khan got training of Susringar and bin but was not allowed to play the bin just because he was not the part of Madhav Mal's family who was his teacher. He was a prolific bin player of Madhav Mal tradition but because he was forbidden to play bin that's why he invented sarod by transforming rabab in 1830 (Barlow & Subramanian, 2007).

He added a metal plate on the instrument instead of the wooden plate. The metal strings were replaced by the gut strings which give more clarity to the musical notes played on Sarod (Dutta, 2008). The metal plate has been used in the sursinger previously but when the same change was brought in the rabab it got transformed into sarod and became much popular all over the world. The enhancement in the volume of the sound of rabab was appreciated by the musical world as at that time microphones were not popular. If rabab is played in this era the electronic amplification it can bring will enhance any piece of music.

Rabab is the ancestor of the two widely used musical instruments in Indian classical music namely Sitar and Sarod. The compositions that are made for playing rabab were framed to compliment the dhrupada beat cycles or dhruvapada tal.

The compositions that were made for rabab later were called gats. Bolkari or the stroke work is one of the important elements in playing rabab in Dhruvapada music and is emphasized with the strokes of the right hand and the big gamakas. After that the Layakari or the rhythmic pattern in music evolved and it is still prevailing.

In 18th century, it became an independent instrument played in different concerts and musical shows and was not accompanied by any singing.

The innovative "*Gatkaari*", "*Bolkari*" and "*Larant*" styles were created by the great maestros. With its gut strings and wooden base instead of a metal plate like the sarod, the rabab can produce all the ornamentations played on the sitar or sarod. Four of the main strings are utilized in for *Jhala* on rabab instead of the *Chikari* (side strings) used in sitar or bin playing. In actuality, the rabab is the source of all modern sarod playing techniques (Slawek, 2017)

### **Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance**

The skin-covered rabab, along with the fiddle (and the rebec, which isn't mentioned in written records until the 14th century), was one of the most significant bowed string instruments of the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance. The rabab's history in the Arabic-Islamic world begins in the ninth century, and as early as the tenth century, prominent Arabic writers like Al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) wrote in-depth accounts of the instrument (Rommen & Nettle (Eds.), 2020)

The rabab quickly expanded over the Iberian Peninsula, where it had been largely ruled by Arabs since 711 (Al-Andalus), and after the Christian reconquest, it was incorporated into European musical culture. For instance, the *Cantigas de Santa María*, penned in the thirteenth century by Alfonso the Wise, contain multiple representations of rabab performers. Moreover, the North African *rabāb*, a bowed string instrument with a very similar organology, continues to be an essential component of andalusi music in Morocco and Tunisia (Rommen & Nettle (Eds.), 2020).

### **Rabab in Colonial Days**

The courts of Lucknow, Jaipur, and other cities saw a downturn at the end of the 19th century, and a new kind of patronage emerged for the musicians in the "courts," or rather the coteries of Bengali zamindaars surrounding Calcutta, the new capital of British India. The Calcutta zamindars fostered an environment of music enjoyment and education that persisted into the 1980s, in addition to providing financial support. Under their direction, numerous inventions were completed, and a gharana for playing the pakhawaj was established.

The most crucial thing was that they kept up the workshops where the instrument manufacturers made their instruments, which gave them a reliable source of revenue. Along with playing the sarod, sursingaar, rabab, and other instruments, Radha Mohan Moitra and Haren Krishan Sheel also led workshops. Together with the musicians they supported, they either produced innovations themselves or helped. For example, the renowned musician Ustad Alauddin Khan of Maihar enhanced the deeper notes of the sarod by placing a larger resonator (*chakki*) on it. To achieve sharper tones, Radhika Mohan Moitra, on the other hand, lowered the resonator's height.

### **Rabab: The Popularity Worldwide**

The first known bowed instrument is the Arab rabab, which is also the ancestor of the medieval European rebec. It was originally recorded in the tenth century and had a significant role in Arab music during the Middle Ages. During the Middle Ages, the name "rabab" was also used to refer to any instrument with a bow (Dutta, 2008). The rabab is characterized by two or three strings and a membrane belly. The player's fingertips are used to halt the strings in the absence of a fingerboard. Different body forms exist. Rababs with pear and boat shapes were very popular and had an impact on the rebec. There are also bodies that are rectangular, trapezoidal, spherical, and flat.

Throughout the Middle East and Africa, as well as Central Asia, northern India, and Southeast Asia, the word rabab, rebab, or other derivative name refers to a spike fiddle- i.e., one that has a small round or cylindrical body and appears skewered by a slender neck.

There are two ways the rabab made it to Europe. A pear-shaped variant was adopted in the Byzantine Empire in the 9th century as the *lira*, migrating westward and potentially giving origin to the medieval fiddle. Introduced by the Arabs to Spain in the eleventh century, the boat-shaped variation was played alongside its newly evolved European descendent, the rebec, until the fourteenth century. It is still played in northern Africa. A variation of lutes is referred to as rabab in some parts of Central Asia (Akbar, 2017)

### **Changes in Rabab Playing Style and its Structure**

The body is made of one piece of wood, and the head is covered by a hollow bowl which serves as the sound-room. The bridge rests on the skin, and is held in place by the string tension. The instrument has 3 melody strings tuned in 4ths, 2-3 drone strings and 15-20 sympathetic strings. The trunk of the mulberry tree is used as the base for the instrument. The head is made from goat skin, and the strings are made from the intestines (gut) of young goats or nylon (Slawek, 2017).

The Seni rebab in northern India, which dates back to the time of the Mughals, has a big hook on the back of the head, which makes it easier for the musician to carry it over his shoulder and play even when he is walking. Sikh Rabab Traditionally, the Seni Rabab was a local variant of the Punjabi version of the Rabab, which is also known as the Firandia Rabab. The Gurudwara of Chandigarh, Dr. Balwinder Singh, disputes this version of the story (Lallie, 2016).



The Pamir rubab is played in the same way in Tajikistan, but with a much lower body and neck. The Pamir rubab has six gut strings. Instead of running from head to bridge, one of the strings is attached halfway down the neck, like the fifth string on the American banjo (Lavezzoli, 2006).

In Arabic, the word rebab means “bowed instrument”; however, the shape of its sound box, which consists of two semi-moon-shaped inlets, suggests that the Rabab was originally a direct plucking instrument. The Rabab's sound box is composed of a single block made from hollow teak wood, rosewood wood, or Deodar wood, and measures approximately 1 meter in length.

The sound box is circular in shape with a diameter of about 30 cm. The sound box is closed with a goatskin membrane. The sound box acts as the soundboard and the bridge rests on it. The Indian style of the bridge is flat and wide and made of wood. The bridge rests on the soundboard and all six strings rest on it.

With two and a half octaves of range, the Rabab features gut strings which are plucked with a plectrum made of coconut, ebony or bone, which, not being capable of returning a full-bodied and lasting sound, make the instrument more suitable to rhythmic elaborations and to a slow exposition with long and sustained notes, characteristic of the introductory section of Indian classical music. The wooden handle is approximately forty-five centimeters long and tapers into the headstock which is usually decorated and has visible key inserts (Slawek, 2017).

The Rabab is believed to have been introduced to India in the fourteenth century, and it, along with Rudra Vina, remained the most widely used stringed instrument both inside and outside the courts until the 18th century. Tansen's descendants, musicians who preserved the canonized style for centuries after the school's founder died, called themselves Rabābiya to differentiate themselves from Tansen's daughter's descendants, who called themselves beenkar.

The Seniya Gharana was the only family in which the instrument was taught, but with the rise of Surasingars and Surabahars in the early nineteenth century, and especially with the popularization of Sarod and Sitār during the twentieth century, Rabab and Rudra Vijiṇā, which are now considered to be extinct, were gradually abandoned (Lavezzoli, 2006).

The origin of this instrument can be traced back to the accidental fusion of the Afghan Rabab with the Indian Suringar. As you can see from the pictures below, the main difference between the two is the material used to make the fingerboard and strings. The Rabab has a wood fingerboard while the Sarod uses a polished steel one. The Rabab utilizes gut strings while the Sarod (like the Suringar) uses metal strings.

The sarod below is 130 years old. The tuning pegs of this sarod have been modified to include planetary gear mechanism rather than friction pegs. This not only allows for quick and accurate tuning but also provides much more stability.

The sarod shown below is the one I use. It is a modern instrument. It was built in 2013 by master sarod maker Nabakumar kanji of kolkata. The sarod that I use is inspired by the older instrument, but with a few modern modifications that make the sarod player play with more power and ease, and maybe even try things that, a generation ago, would have been considered technically impossible (Slawek, 2017).

As much as we Indians like to celebrate our heritage, and as much as we love the music produced by the great masters of the past, there is no denying that the sarod as an instrument keeps getting better and better, and with that, the music won't be able to hold itself back for much longer. Technology and music have gone hand in hand, and each is taking the other to a new level. (Deva, 1995)

### **The Early Sarod Masters**

In the last century or so, there have been a number of additions to the repertoire of the sarod. The classical grandmasters of the late 1800s and early 1900s relied mainly on quick stroke work to express themselves musically because, despite advances in the technology of the instrument, the sarod did not have a sustained voice. A sustained voice is an instrument's ability to reproduce a phrase as closely as possible to the singer's voice, with as few strokes as possible, and with accurate, contoured strokes.

The style of playing didn't change much in the early 20th century, as evidenced by the records of players from that period. For instance, in the following records, although each master has his own personal characteristics in his playing, it is safe to say that there is not a large stylistic difference.

Allauddin Khan's style changed drastically during this period. Allauddin and his family attribute this change to his extensive training on the sarsingar under Wazir Khan, the master of rudra Vina. Wazir was the master of music at the court of the Rampur Nawab, Hamid Ali Khan, and according to the family tradition, he was a direct descendant of Tansen's daughter, Saraswati Devi. Allauddin also made significant changes to the body of the sarod, making it louder and resonant, and possibly capable of a wider tonal range.

Hafiz Ali Khan (1888-1972) of Gwalior did not record early in his career. His latter-day recordings reveal a strong preference for a highly vocalised idiom in alap and jod, and a predilection for long meends (a glide from one note to another). Such preferences necessitated modifications to the relief of the fingerboard and to the string action setup, which Hafiz Ali Khan achieved through collaborative design work with Govardhan Sharma of Darbhanga, a legendary sarod maker. Sharma's family eventually migrated to Howrah, across the river from Kolkata. Hafiz Ali Khan, having learnt traditional sarod material from his father and uncles, also became a disciple of Wazir Khan, and studied the Sursingar as well

### **Gulfam Ahmed's Role in Popularizing the Rabab in India**

Gulfam Ahmed is a 7th generation musician who is well-known all over the world for his ability to play Rabab and Sarod. He is also well-known for his Sufi Kalams on the unity of Hindus and Muslims. Gulfam, Padma Shri Awarded in 2021 and many other awards, says, "Music doesn't speak Hindi or Muslim. Music speaks Hindi. Music has its own language. Music is the food of soul." My concerts don't take place in masjid or dargahs. Most of them take place in mandirs or ashrams. People don't appreciate musicians based on their religion.

He made the Rabab popular in the state of Punjab after performing it for the first time in 2005 at the 'Harballabh' festival. His Sufiana Kalams on the unity between Hindus and Muslims are very popular. "Mast Kalandar Gaata jaye", "Allah teri Shan," "Maula Teri Shaan," and "Charon Dham", are some of the most popular. "Koi Jai Mandir Me, Koi De Azhaan," "Giriija Me, Bole Koi Satnam", which is one of my 'Sufi Kalams on Hindu-Muslim Unity', composed in 2006.

At the end of the verse, he says, "Allah Allah khata jaye, kehta Jaye ram. Prem ke do ashkar naa jaane. Kaisa yeh Ansan?" Four years ago, he performed the Rabab on a request from the audience at the Sankatmchan temple, Varanasi. He said, "It was around 4 in the morning, and along with the Aarti I was performing the Rabab at the request of the audience."

Gulfam Ahmed's contribution in reviving the Rabab in kirtan in the golden temple of Amritsar after 200 years is history. Three of his Sikh students from Punjab played the Rabab to accompaniment of Tabla at a kirtan in the golden temple on 30 March 2007. Today, they play there daily. The tradition of playing the Rabab in the religion of Sikhs dates back to the time of Guru Nanak when one of his disciples, Mardana used to play the Rabab. Now, after 131 years, the tradition is being revived in all the Gurdwaras across the country (Lallie, 2016). After his Harivallabah performance, Raagis started coming to him to learn Rabab, and within a month, "a lot of Sikhs started coming to me," he says. "I also taught at the Punjabi University and Patiala Gurdwara as well as Gurudas University, Ludhiana, and I have taught Rabab to 65+ students in Punjab. In 2009-14, I taught Sarod, Sitar, Harmonium and Rabab to 185+ students at the Indian Embassy in Kabul. I went there at the invitation of the ICCR." Gulfam Ahmed keeps the Sarod played by his great-grandfather Sarkar Nayamatullah Khan almost 200 years ago.

### **Results and Discussion**

Several Indian performers play rabab in various forms, in India and abroad. It continues to be a prominent musical instrument in the Indian music genre. Rabab and Sarod player Ustad Gulfam Ahmad is well-known throughout the world for his Sufiyana kalams on the harmony of Muslims and Hindus. He played a significant role in the resurgence of Rabab playing in India by bringing this ancient art form to a wider audience. The internet community took notice of it when three of his pupils performed Rabab in Golden Temple to go along with the tabla playing during the kirtan. It was fascinating to observe this kind of resurrection after 200 years. This research paper focuses on the playing, modification and importance of Rabab in the Indian and international music world. One of the prolific players of Rabab and sarod Gulfam Ahmed Khan introduced rabab to Indian classical music again. The pivotal role he played in popularizing rabab in India is the main focus of this research paper.

The recent indulgence of rabab in Indian classical music has paved the path of reintroducing the same in songs and other music played all over the world. There are higher chances that the Indian music composers will use this instrument in making of songs. The aura that will be created by this box of melody in this era where the sound system used is one of the best qualities is something that is yet to be witnessed and appreciated.

### **Conclusion**

When technology gets combined with technique, a musician is able to compose music that has identical analogues in the vocal music. The reputation of a musician depends upon the technique he uses for playing the instruments and the technology applied to enhance the musicality. The way a musician makes an instrument sing impels the audience and adapts the gayaki ang.

Around the era when music composition was done without vocals and musical instruments mostly which was 14th and 15th century, rabab made his debut in Indian classical music. It reached its peak of popularity in the sixteenth century and stayed there and still sustains. Along with the Rudra vina and other musical instruments, the most widely used string instrument until the eighteenth, rabab had a remarkable presence.

Rabab and Rudra Vina were marginalized with the advent of the Sursingar and surbahar at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and both of these instruments were not much in use when the sarod and sitar emerged and became prominent in the twentieth century.

Developed and refined much before the successor Indian string instruments like Vina, sitar, sarod; Seniya rababs eventually incorporated some foreign elements associated with Persian and Afghani rababs. The naming similarity is still mysterious, though. Subsequently, the rabab helped to create the Sursingar, another melodious Seniya instrument.

The Indian sarod, which first emerged on the Indian music industry in the nineteenth century and rose to prominence both in India and internationally, is the ultimate result of the musical relationship between these four instruments (the Sursingar, three rababs, and the other instrument).

Ustad Gulam Ahmed Khan in particular made an effort to spread awareness of the Dhrupadi instrument, often referred to as the Narad Vina, throughout Afghanistan and other countries. Dhrupadi rabab is one of the classical instruments. It can generate spiritually oriented music, while the Afghan rabab is meant for fast-paced music. However, there should be increased promotion of and preservation of Indian Rabab. According to Gulam Ahmed Khan, this instrument may become more well-known across the nation if the national government supported it.

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