CONCLUSION

It will not be wrong to say that the modern sitar with its dynamic qualities is a gift of the artists of modern period, because the early sitar was only a part of accompaniment with vocal music. It never had an individual identity as a solo playing instrument till some predecessors of different Gharanas gave it a look and life afresh. In fact a vivid study of our history shows that our music even did not have an individual identity. It used to be a part of offerings and theatre. Naturally, instruments were developed for accompaniment only. Amongst these, the veenas had a special status in the music world.

Veda being the first written document of Indian history – does not produce much details about veenas or any other instruments. Yet some specifications show accompaniment of the instruments with mantras of ‘yajna’. In addition, use of ‘alavu’ (gourd) in Alavuvina also shows these instrument as ancestors of the modern ones.

Bharat considered Vipanci and Chitra as mukhya vina, but Sarangadeva considered them as pratyangas. To explain this probably Abhinava Gupta states that ‘in Gandharva (prevalent during Sarangadeva) vipanci has only a secondary status, but in Dhruvagana(prevalent during Bharat muni) there is no rule regarding this:

\[ \text{‘gandharve vipancyevoparanjika dhruvagane tvaniyamah’}. \]

Among these two instruments Chitraa was of 7 strings.

Around 7th century A.D. reference of seven stringed instruments is found in ‘Pitalkhora’ and ‘Kudumiamalai’ inscription. ‘Kudumiamalai’ reproduce the reference of seven stringed instruments with the nomenclature ‘Parivadini’. Amongst the seven gold strings four were used to produce notes (‘chatusprahara svaragamah’). Image of King Mahendravarman playing Parivadini proves the practice of playing the instrument.

The first visual representations of long necked lutes are found in ‘Ragamala Paintings’ of 17th - 18th Century. These Ragamala series are basically imaginative depiction of the mood and quality of each ragas. At the same time they also reflect the socio-cultural strata of these eras.
Naturally the instruments sketched in the pictures must have been only copies of those played. Though in most cases, from the pictographs, one fails to assume the proper name of the instruments. Yet the uses of double tumba in veenas are clearly visible. Usages of the instruments were mostly to give pleasure to the Royals, or to accompany singers. There were male and female singers as well.

18th century onwards written documents are found containing the name, description or usage of sitar. ‘Hamir Raso’, ‘Muraqqa-i-dehli’, ‘Nadirat-i-shahi’ are such examples. But the first etching of sitar is found in F. Baltazard Solvyns’ ‘Les Hindous’. There are certain points to be highlighted from Solvyns’ etching and description of sitar:

a. Presence of frets in the sitar – though they are not prominent.
b. Position of the hands and fingers of the player, specially the left hand.
c. Placing of sitar [in 30 degree angle]
d. Solvyns also referred to the solo performance of the instrument by Muslim musicians.

So far as its resemblance with tambura [as concluded by Dr. ] is concerned, tambura was never found to be played solo – as it is invariably a drone. Another point to support the fact is Solvyns has given a separate drawing for ‘Thambourah’ also, which is different from the sittar.

After Solvyns the next name should be Sir S.M.Tagore’s. He has great contributions in the field of music. He has described the sitar instrument of 3 – 5 – 7 strings also. Most important is the detailed description of the instrument and its playing style along with the grammer. The collection of Gats is also valuable additions. But most of the portions of the book ‘Yantra Kshetra Dipika’ is repetition of Kshetra Mohan Goswami’s ‘Sangeet Saar’. It is clear from his books – sitar was a solo played instrument during his time too. He has utilized it in Orchestration as well.

P.T.French has observed sitar as an accompanying instrument with voice. Comprising of five wire strings and 18 frets (movable) the instrument is able to produce chromatic passages. Probably French has heard the playing of sitar among Rajpoots only, where as
Solvyns has found its solo performance much before than him in the eastern part of India.

Dargah Quli Khan, the writer of the text 'Muraqqa-e-Dehli has mentioned about the younger brother of Sadarang as a master of playing different musical instruments. But he has not mentioned the name. K.C.D. Brihaspati mentioned this name as Khusroo Khan. This name creates confusion as it has got similarities with Amir Khusroo’s name. But it can be well said that during Dargah Quli the sitar was an uncommon instrument and only few people could play it. Though uncommon, it was developed enough to display the Raagdari System which could be possible only after a modification of the sitar in its initial form. Modern Musicologists consider Khusroo Khan for popularizing the instrument. e.g. according to Pt. Arvind Parikh – Faquir Khusroo Khan, the brother of Niyamat Khan Sadarang, introduced the solo performance of the instrument. From Mandir music this instrument came to ‘Darbar’ or court.

The gradual physical development of sitar instrument took place taking almost 200 years to get the modern form. In stead of papermache, fine seasoned woods are used. Qualities of dry pumpkin s are also developed by different makers. The thickness of tabli is varied. Numbers of strings are increased. Measurement and placing of strings over the bridge differs according to the artist’s requirement. Finally two major sitars are in vogue – ‘Gandhar – Pancham’ and ‘Kharaj – Pancham’.

Along with the development of the sitar instrument the playing style also was formed and reformed. As a result solo performance of modern sitar is well established. The style of playing has also changed and has become a compound of Dhrupad, Khayal, Tappa, Thumri, Dadra etc. and some special characteristics of the instrument itself. Modern performance may be called an ensemble of all the cream parts of each gat style. It is initiated with dhrupad ang Aap, made rich with khayal ang Vlambit and Maddhya or Drut Gat (which may be considered the refined form of Mazeedkhani and Razakhani gats) and concluded with Tan, Toda and Jhala. Moreover a raga presentation is mostly followed by Dhunn in Thumri, Tappa or Dadra ang.
The earliest and most popular gharana of sitar is Seni Gharana. All of the artists of this gharana used to stay in Alwar and Jaipur. Though the Senia Tradition ended with Kayam Sen – most of the other Sitar Traditions got their patronage from this Gharana. Disciples of these maestros flourished their art all over in India and abroad, glorifying their origine and status. Probably this is the reason which made Dr. Pankajmala Sharma to decide that Sitar does not have traditions or Gharanas. They can only be called baaj. Only one gharana is prevalent i.e. Seni Gharana. All others are having individual styles of playing. As in vocal Gharanas there are certain qualities that lead to recognize each gharana – but in sitar traditions there are no such specific qualities that make each gharana highlighted. e.g. Maihar Tradition originated from Ustad Alauddin Khan. He was a sarode player. He has taught many sitar students. But each of their style is different from another. The playing style of Pt. Ravi Shankar does not match with Pt. Nikhil Banerjee, though both are from the same tradition.

Jaipur Senia tradition is the only one to have soul sitar players for generations. This tradition is rich by two sides – through the training by Barkatullah Khan, the Senee disciple, and parentage of Ustad Ashiq Ali Khan, the descendant of Nayak Dhundhu, the pioneer of ‘Dhadhavani’ – also called the 5th vani of Dhrupad. They are rigid about their traditions and traditional specialities. This is the only tradition which is still following the Senee quality of sitar with 17 frets, showing their mastery in ‘meend’. Purity of Raga, following all the rules and rasas but scientifically- is the base of their playing style which is well followed by their disciples and descendants till date.

Maihar Gharana has its root in Rampur state that groomed Ustad Wazir Khan, the revered guru of Ustad Alauddin Khan, father of this baaj. To his credit he has taught a large no. of students, apart from his own son [Ustd. Ali Akbar Khan] and daughter [Smt. Annapurna Devi], who are pioneering this gharana from the middle part of the last decade. Two prominent names - Ustd. Ali Akbar Khan and Pt. Ravi Shankar have been glorifying the two worlds of

1 Personal interview with Dr. Pankajmala Sharma
Sarode and sitar Music. Another name to be highlighted is Late Pt. Nikhil Banerjee’s, who has, in his short life span, introduced a new and different style of sitar playing. This is the uniqueness of this gharana. All of the pioneers have their own and different dimensions which were later well folled and expanded by their successors worldwide.

Imdadkhani Gharana, also named as Gouripur Gharana, started its journey from Imdad Hussain Khan – the great surbahar and veena player. The names of Sarojan Sing and Torab Khan are also found, as Imdad Khan’s grand Father and father – who were great musicians, yet there is no proof of their being sitarists too. It is very clear that his practice of music initiated a new gharana of sitar. his son Inayat was the court musician of Gouripur – so it was also called the ‘Gouripur Gharana’. Inayat Khan himself was a sitarist. His son Vilayat Khan brought a radical change in the style and quality of sitar playing in the gharana. He has even restructured the string arrangements and their tuning system. His style of playing is also so different from his predecessors that this style is considered as a new gharana – ‘Vilayatkhani Gharana’.

Starting its journey from ‘Akhdaai Gaan’ sitar instrument flourished the most in various parts of Bengal. As a result, most of the present day Gharanas of sitar has their connection with Bengal in some way or other. From the time of the Tagores it has been found that Bengal has always been connoisseur of instrumental music as well as the vocals, resulting the number of sitar traditions -- Dhaka, Calcutta, Ranaghat, Vishnupur, Pathak, Kalipur- Zamindar traditions etc. most of these traditions faded out after a certain point of time, but Vishnupur Gharana and Pathak traditions are still in the lime light. Pt. Manilal Nag and his daughter Mita Nag and a good many of their students are flourishing the tradition in India and abroad. On the otherhand, Balaram Pathak and Ashoke Pathak are the modern descendants of Pathak tradition.

The root of sitar music in Lucknow is layed in ‘Razakhani Gat’ which is an excellent contribution of Md. Raza Khan. Later on the establishment of Bhatkhande Music College was a turning point for the musicians in Lucknow. Most of the music traditions here started developing with this college at the centre. Many great
sitarists from all over India were groomed by this college as Gurus and under their strict supervision hundreds of students learnt music. Later on many of them has established themselves as artists. As a result a single stylistic pattern could not develop. It is rather a collection of different ‘baaj’ in one city.

The same truth is found in the states of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan – who has developed and nurtured their music – folk and dance culture just like their greeneries, hills and sands. Classical music [both vocal and instrumental] also got nourishment by a class of people. Renowned artists of various Gharanas [or baaj] visited this place as invited artists in the ‘Sangeet Sammelan’. Their repeated visits contributed to create artists of sitar also. Many sitarists of Punjab state have been taking part in different conferences in India and abroad. The Universities also accepted sitar as individual subject in its different colleges. Every year a good number of students are passing out, but it is also noteworthy that a single style has not been developed. As a result more than one style is followed – which leads to conclude- no particular gharana or baaj of sitar has developed in these states.

Indore Veenkar Gharana is the only existing sitar Gharana – the artists of which do not have any taalim from the ‘Senias’. So, no concrete Senia qualities are found in their style of playing. This Gharana was initiated with Ustad Bande Ali Khan who was an inhabitant of Indore. Veena has been the main instrument played by the maestros, but later they have developed two different styles of their own. Ustad Rais Khan’s style of sitar playing is always concluded with a vocal recital by the maestro himself. Ustd. Abdul Halim Jaffar Khan on the other hand developed some technical alankaras for sitar and with those he has developed a new style which he calls as ‘Jafferkhani Baaj’ and is well followed by his disciples.

For all the contributions of the great maestros, Indian Orchestra is blooming. The ‘Maihar Band’ is still continuing with their performance in different states of India and abroad under the patronage of the U.P. Government. Many new groups of orchestra are up-coming with the Melodic sentiment of Indian Music, giving
it a neo name – ‘Fusion Music’ – and sitar has become a must for all the compositions.

Basically the two maestros Ustd. Vilayat Khan and Pt. Ravi Shankar have chosen two sectors of the same stream – sitar music – and did different experiments on them. Ustd. Vilayat Khan has always tried to develop and enrich the oars - already existing in his tradition. Accepting the ‘Gayaki ang’ as base, he has elaborated the traditional raga in its all possible [at times impossible]ways. Pt. Ravi Shankar on the other hand has accepted various influences of the World Music and mingled them in his own orchestration. But Indian Dhrupadi Tradition was also well maintained by him. both of them made the scope of sitar playing wider in two directions. So it can well be said that these two contemporary maestros are complimentary to each other and addition of these two styles cover the area of the whole of Sitar World.