CHAPTER – II

DEVELOPMENT OF SITAR FROM 18TH C
Development of Sitar from 18th Century:

'Sitar' this individual nomenclature is the gift of 18th century. The word appeared in the text, after 18th century only. Till the end of 17th century the instrument was there in different name and little bit in different form also. But Alastair Dick has identified 'Hamir Raso' of Jodhpur, Rajasthan(1725), as the earliest text in which the word 'sitar' is found for the first time.1

![Diagram of Development of Sitar from 18th Century]

Around 1739 this word appears in 'Muraqqa-i-dehli'(1739-41). This text is written by Dargah Quli Khan during the reign of Muhammad Shah, Rangeele. Reference of this instrument is given with the younger brother of Nyamat Khan or 'Sadarang', whose name is not mentioned here, and Adarang, nephew of Sadarang. Both of them were skilled in playing sitar. Adarang used to compose new notations and played them on the sitar, which

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1 'Sitar Music in Calcutta' – J.S. Hamilton, p-62
are usually played on other elite type of instruments. Adarang is described by Dargah Quli as incomparable in the world of music.¹

By the 3rd quarter of this century ‘sitar’ is found in the hindi poetry of Shah Alam’s ‘Nadirat-i-Shahi’.

Paintings and drawings of the Mughal era shows that more than one version of the instrument already existed by the end of the 18th century.**********

**Reference of sitar in Solvyns Francois Baltazard’s ‘Les Hindoos’(1791-99):**

A Flemish artist, Francois Baltazard Solvyns, first systematically portrayed the Indian musical instruments and the manner in which they were played. The journeyman artist Solvyns arrived in Calcutta in 1791. The collection of his etchings was published in Calcutta in a few copies in 1796, and then in greater numbers in 1799. There are four volumes of this book. Each of them are 1.5 ft. long and 1 ft wide. Four volumes of the original books are preserved in the Rare Book Section of The Asiatic Society, Kolkata. Divided into 12 parts, the XIth section contains 36 prints of musical instruments.

‘Les Hindoos’ was published in Paris between 1808 and 1812 in four (elephantine) volumes.² Mantle Hood remarked on it(1963) – “Historically ‘Les Hindoos’ is especially valuable for the fine engravings…… showing in many instances the playing positions of a number of Indian instruments no longer in use today. Without this reference the actual method of playing many instruments would be largely speculative.”³

**Solvyns on Sittar:** (Calcutta : Sec XI, No. 4, A Sittar or Guittar, Orme : 48)

‘To resume the subject of the preceding number, the instrument called Sittar or Guitar, resembles very much our guitar as well in its form as in its name. I am even uncertain whether it is originally Hindoo. I have been assured of the contrary, but the assertion remains without proof. An European would

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¹ 'Classical Musical Instruments' - Dr. Suneera Kasliwal, p - 142
² 'Musical Instruments of North India' - Eighteenth Century Portraits by L.B.Solvyns - Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr. and Stephen M. Slavek. P. 2 & 3
³ ibid - p-6
make much more of this instrument than the Hindoo musicians, who are satisfied with touching chords merely from time to time, and as they are much more charmed with the noise than with the melody of their music, they frequently, to create a variety in their dull and monotonous sounds, place an iron ring in each chord of the sittar, which being put in motion by the variation, and striking against each other, produces a singular noise which delights the ear of the Hindoos, and appears to them the supreme degree of perfection.

The sittar is now seldom used in India; perhaps the better sort of Hindoos have taken it in aversion since the Loutchias, or people of dissolute manners, have taken to playing it for money, and have chosen this music to accompany their obscene songs and other immoral practices. At their feasts, the Nautch, is sometimes performed to the sound of the sittar, and some tolerable musicians, or rather meer players upon it, may be heard.

The Mussulmen have taken up this instrument as they have the others, and if a traveler by chance hears the sittar, he may be pretty certain that it is played by one of them.

The instrument to which the ‘Ramannys’ (Bengali word for a female) dance the ‘Nautch’ (Bengali word for dance) are the ‘been’, the ‘sittar’, and others with chord.......

The ‘sittar’ is found in the 2nd volume of the book. The length of the etching is 13.5 inch or 34.3 cms. And breadth is 9.5 inch or 24.7 cms. With each etching Solvyns has documented the use of the instrument. The original write up is in French. But English description is also given side by side. Another remarkable characteristic of the documented part is – Solvyns has not translated the nomenclature of any instrument or events. He has just written the Bengali words in French and English scripts, e.g. Nautch - (dance), Ramyannys - (ladies), which created confusion among some non-Bengali scholars.

The ‘sittar’ of Solvyns’ etching had six strings. A close examination shows there are twelve frets in the instrument, but it is not possible to determine if these were arched type raised frets, as used today, or simply tied gut frets as found on Middle Eastern lutes.
The joint connecting the gourd (tumba) to the wooden ‘shoulder’, which in turn connects to the neck, is clearly visible in the etching. It has a jawari type bridge. The noticeable absence of the wide bridge used on modern instruments supports the assertion that the Indian sitar was developed from an imported instrument by overlaying features of the bin. On the other hand the presence of the ‘targahan’, ‘patti’ and ‘mankas’ clearly indicates that many features of the modern sitar are at least 200 years old.

The sitar’s low status among the binjar of Mughal courts can be explained if we assume that the instrument entered court life in the hands of low class accompanists of dancers, or possibly as an instrument that accompanied the songs of light classical or folk.

James Sadler Hamilton, in his work ‘Sitar Music in Calcutta- an Ethnomusicological Study’ has commented on solvyns’ etching: “the placing of pegs is similar to that found on the tamboura (Indian). It may well be said that this instrument, rather than being a ‘sittar’ as Solvyns claimed, is actually a tamboura (Indian).”

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2 J.S. Hamilton “Sitar Music in Calcutta” – p – 62
Reference of sitar from Capt. Robert Smith:

Capt. Robert Smith spoke of Sitar’s accompaniment with Dancers during his account journey in India between 1828 and 1833.

"these nauch girls accompany the recitative with slow and graceful movements........ to the music of the saringee and sitar."

In another instrumental performance -

"At the concert .... The principal one.... was considered first rate played on the sitar an instrument resembling the guiter but strung entirely with wire, in which respect it may with more propriety be linkened to that Italian instrument the mandolin; it was played upon principally with the forefinger armed with a piece of wire passing over the top and round a little above the first joint........"'

Around the same time of Capt. Smith Mrs. Meer Hasan Ali mentioned about the three stringed sitar being played by professional female musicians. She has mentioned the name as a 'saattarah'.

One of the most informative description of the early 19th century sitar is written by Capt. Willard in his 'A treatise on the music and Musician Of Indoostan', published in 1834. He spoke of metal frets, use of izrab and few specification of string tuning.

1 'Sitar and Sarode in the 18th and 19th century' Allyn Miner p-39
2 'Sitar and Sarode in the 18th and 19th century' Allyn Miner p-39
Reference of sitar in Haquim Karam Imam’s ‘Madunul Mausiqui’:

The name ‘sitar’ has been mentioned in the text book of Haquim Karam Imam’s ‘Madunul Mausiqui’ written during the time of Wazed Ali Shah, 1854 A.D. The sitar of this time had one gourd, 14 frets and three strings. This text also gives a detailed account of a number of good sitar players such as Nasit Khan, Rahi, Sen, Navab Husain of Delhi, Ghulam Raza of Faizabad, Ghulam Muhammad of Banda, Babu Iswari Prasad of lilahabad, Panna Lal Bajpe of Benaras, Barkat Ali Sanvalia of Farukhabad, Kutub Ali of Bareilly and Nabedar Daredar of Punjab. According to Md. Karam Imam, Ghulam Muhammad of Banda was the best among them.

From all these description it is clear that during the time of Md. Karam Imam, the sitar was quite a developed instrument, specially in the hands of Jaipur Seniyas.

Reference of sitar in Campbell’s article ‘Notes on the Musical Instruments of the Nepalese’:

During 1837, in his article ‘Notes on the Musical Instruments of the Nepalese’,(published in ‘Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal’, vol-vi, part-ii) A.Campbell has recorded the existence of a three stringed sitar in Nepal. He wrote ‘the ‘sitar’, or three stringed guitar of India, is used by a very few persons in Nepal, whose proficiency is most wretched. Professors of this instrument from the plains of India find some encouragement from the Goorkhas, - at least an occasional performer of tolerable skill may be heard at their court.

Reference of sitar in P.T.French’s work ‘Catalogue of Indian Musical Instruments’:

‘The ‘sitar’ is another instrument intended for the performance of species of music, though I have heard it used occasionally by Rajput minstrels as an accompaniment to the voice. It has five wire strings, three steel for treble, and two brass for bass and 18 frets, or with the nut 19; and it will be seen by a glance, and its capability for executing is considerable, though the metallic

1 Translation of ‘Madunul Mausiqui’ by Govind Vidyarthi
2 ‘Classical Musical Instruments’ – Dr. Suneera Kasliwal, p – 145
strings always produce a jangling effect, which is unpleasant. The sitar can be altered to any key by moving the frets up or down and a skilful musician knows how to do this exactly. The execution with which it is frequently played is wonderful, and the performer can execute chromatic passages at will, extending to fourths of original notes.\(^1\)

P.T. French has also mentioned about Soorsringer, Kuchwa sitar and Taoosee as variety of sitar.

**Reference of sitar in Sir S.M. Tagore’s works:**

*‘Yantra Kshetra Dwipika’*:

This is a teaching guideline for sitar, written in Bengali language, first published in 1872.

This book gives a detailed description of the sitar instrument, each and every part it along with two sketches.

This sitar is of 5 strings. The material of the strings are iron and brass. The tuning arrangement is also described in details. He has also stated the use of ‘chikari’ strings by others which is optional. According to him the positions of the daand where the khunti of these strings are placed, those are the notes in which the strings are tuned. The sitar has two and a half octaves – Mandra, Madhya and half Tara saptak and 17 frets. Apart are mentioned the method of playing the instrument, different alankaras [ornaments], chhand [rhythm] – their variety and notation of 94 ga s – among which 71 is composed by Shri Kshetra Mohan Goswami, the author of ‘Saangeet Saar’. One such example is:

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The word ‘setar’ is a Persian one. In 13th century during the reign of Giasuddin Balvan the great poet Amir Khusro entitled Kachchapi, Tritantri vinas as ‘setar’ in general. Basically the word ‘setar’ is synonymous with ‘tritantri’ as in Persian language ‘se’ means ‘three’. So ‘se-tar’ and ‘three-stringed instruments’ are the same. The structure of ‘tritantri vina’ is alike Kachchapi vina. That is why now a days three stringed instruments like Kachchapi vina are denoted as ‘setar’.

‘Universal History of Indian Music’:

In this work Sir S.M. Tagore mentioned the use of ‘setar’ in different parts of India during 2nd and 3rd quarters of 19th century.

‘Setar’ was found to be used in Nepal.

‘Maharajah Sir Lachniswar Sing, the chief of Durbanga in Behar (19th c.) was a great admirer of the art. He used to play ‘setar excellently well.’

‘Amor, the distinguished vocalists of the 3rd quarter of the present century were Ahmed Khan and Gopal Prasad. The latter’s brothers, Lachmi Prasad and Sarda Sahay, were first class players on the vina and setar.”

1. Yantrakosha - Sir S.M. Tagore, Calcutta, 1797 Sakabda
3. Ibid, p. 16
4. Ibid, p. 87
‘Babu Kali Prasanna Banerjee of Bengal played skillfully on the vina, surbahar and setar.’

By mid 19th century sitar was familiar for solo performance and accompaniment with vocal and dance. It had 3 to 5 strings, metal frets and was played with a mizrab. It had touchy tonal quality that used to please the listeners. But the next development of the instrument actually took place from the later part of this century.

Some examples of different sitar instruments are enumerated here under:

1 Sitar of early 19th century[ref: Allyn Miner]  II A sitar of early 19th c.[Ref: Allyn Miner]
A sitar with painted gourd[Ref : C.R. Day]

1 Ibid, p- 118 (Universal History ofIndian Music)
Physical development of sitar instrument:

It took almost a period of 100 years for the sitar instrument to get its modern shape, size and mechanism. Various regional influences have got some effect on the physical development of the instrument, and as a result a number of varieties were developed.

It is believed that until later part of the 19th century the sitar instrument, totally made of ‘papermache’, was also used. However later on dried pumpkin was used to make the tumba or the resonator.¹ In Kachapti sitar the pumpkin was cut horizontally, whereas on other sitars these are cut vertically. Addition of one more resonator also added to the amplification of sound. Besides in Jaipur, a sitar with 3 tumbas was in existence. The additional tumba, perhaps, was used to enhance the volume of sound and add depth to the tonality of the instrument. A visual representation of this instrument can be found in a 19th century painting of Senia sitarist Amrit Sen(1813-1893).

A sitar with three tumba is being kept in the archive of Indian Museum – Kolkata.

Until 19th century two types of fret arrangements were in vogue – ‘sitar with achal thaat’ or unmovable 24 frets (i.e. to change raga the frets do not need to change their respective positions) and ‘sitar with chal that’ with 17 frets (certain frets, which can be removed and replaced by the consecutive previous frets, are removed by making the sitar – ‘chal that’). A visual representation can be given, in this context, of Ustad Mushtaq Ali Khan – whose sitar was of 17 frets.

By the end of the 19th century the number of frets were increased to 20 in chal that sitar, i.e. the komal R, komal D in Madhya saptak and komal R and komal G in Tar saptak, were absent. Pt. Arvind Parikh is of opinion – to identify the S and P notes, which are two important frets for the instrument, these frets are purposefully been omitted. In Mandoline one dot is placed under S fret, so that the player can easily identify the position of S. Sitar instrument is played following the left hand from behind. These gaps of two pardas make it easier for the player to identify the two major notes.

The narrow neck of earlier sitar was inadequate for the production of alanksars like meed or gamak. So a wider neck has been introduced. Sir S.M.Tagore provides with a picture of a sitarist(1872), whose sitar is of a wide dandi, in his ‘Yantra Kshetra Dipika’.

Originally sitar had three strings. Later on addition of each string changed the pattern of tuning also. In the final stage of development, two ‘chikari’ strings and the sympathetic strings (tarab) are added to the modern sitar. Naturally the size of the instrument has been increased. The patri has been made into concave shape for the Tarab strings to fit in. Gulzar Muhammad Khan, a student of Omrao Khan, is credited with the introduction of chikari strings to the sitar, and Imdad Khan is said to have added the tarab wires for the first time.

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1 Personal interview with Pt. Arvind Parikh. on 01.07.01
More recently the sitar has been given its versatile form by Pt. Ravi Shankar and Ustd. Vilayat Khan. Both of them experimented on its sound production to suit with their individual tastes.

**Physical changes of sitar brought by the maestros: Ustad Vilayat Khan:**

Vilayat Khan, follower of Imdadkhani Gharana, or more specifically the founder of Vilayat Khani Gharana (as renamed by Pt. Arvind Parikh), has brought about lots of changes to suit with his playing style.

1. He has expanded the breadth of dand to play long meend.

2. Distance between tar parda has been increased to play gamak properly. So bridge is placed a little upward.

3. The rounded shape of parda has been changed slightly to play alankaras (e.g. gamak) properly.

4. To get proper resonance the thickness of tabli is increased.

5. Uniqueness of Ustd. Vilayat Khan lies in inventing the Gandhar - Pancham style in sitar. The 3rd string has been omitted, instead the 4th string is a steel one tuned to gandhar and the 5th string tuned to Dhaivat/or Pancham accordingly with the ragas. Last two chikari strings are played together, a harmony is established along with the particular raga.¹

¹ Personal interview with Pt. Arvind Parikh
Pt. Ravi Shankar:

Pt. Ravi Shankar also has his own style of playing sitar. He has made up his instrument according to his playing style. His experimenting with the instrument was given practical shape by Sri Kanailal. To play ‘alaap’ and ‘jod’ in ‘dhrupad ang’, kharaj and pancham strings are needed. These two strings are found in Surbahar. But during taan and jhala playing, these two strings create jangling and problematic sound. So, as the strings are added to the sitar instrument, two hooks are also kept for their locking system.

Pt. Ravi Shankar used to play duet concerts with Ustd. Aliakbar Khan. To play according to the scale of sarode, sitar needs to compromise half a note scale as sarode is comparatively a low-pitched instrument. There were problems with balance in playing alankars like meena. So the length and width of the instrument is increased slightly.

Pt. Ravi Shankar is fascinated to play long and elaborate alap-jod. So the Kharaj and brass pancham strings are used essentially for longer time. But due to the steel Pancham (i.e. fifth string) lack of enough space was also there, which used to obstruct the mizrab to move frequently. Panditji felt that the 5th string can be eliminated as it does not have much important role in playing a raga. In fact the ragas without Pancham needs the string to be tuned in either ‘madhyam’ or ‘daivat’. But there are ragas where both these notes are less important. While playing these ragas repeatedly there have been problem in tuning the string. So Pt. Ravi Shankar removed the 5th string and made his sitar a 6 stringed instrument.1

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1 Personal interview with Pt. Dipak Choudhuri on 01.09.01
Mustaq Ali Khan:

Mustaq Ali Khan, the exponent of ‘Jaipur Senia’ sitar tradition, used to play his sitar of 17 frets. He has followed a typical traditional technique. In his sitar Komal R, Komal G, Komal D, Komal N frets were absent.

He had a special technique of playing ragas. When his second finger of left hand is busy doing some long or short meend, the first finger should be kept on the previous note of the particular raga. This is a very tough technique to follow specially for the ‘Audav’ and ‘Sadav’ prakrutik Raga.1

Pt. Nikhil Banerjee:

One of the chief exponents of Maihar Gharana Pt. Nikhil Banerjee’s sitar had some special features. He was fascinated in playing the main string with 4- 4½ or 5 no. steel string which is a very difficult instrument to play. It gives the effect of surbahar in melody portion.

To play the kharaj and Pancham strings prominently he put a bridge by the side of the targahan.

He wanted to do something for the continuity of sound. Previously, continuity of the sitar sound was missing. In his playing there was a touch of vocal in alap or slow compositions. He liked some sort of very bold, deep sound. Whereas for speedy playing he needed a little sharper sound. Both were not possible for sitar

1 Personal interview with Pt. Debu Chaudhuri. on 01.07.05
The gradual development of sitar instrument took place taking more than 100 years to get the modern form. And finally two major sitars are in vogue—‘Gandhar Pancham Sitar’ of Vilayatkhani style and ‘Kharaj Pancham Sitar’ of other styles.
VARIETY OF SITAR

The elaborate alapchari of dhrupad anga, which was considered the epitome of been – baaj, might not have been possible on the sitar existing around the mid 19th century. Therefore Jaipur Senias introduced a new instrument called 'Surbeen', which was a mixture of Rudra Veena and Sitar. Another instrument called Been Sitar is said to have two or three gourds and tarab strings. Whereas in eastern India, most probably in Lucknow, another instrument with mixed features of the Been and Sitar emerged. This was named the Surbahar.

All these efforts indicate that though the sitar was developed and modified a great deal from its original form, it was still not perfectly suited to the execution of the type of music prevalent in those days. Surbeen and Been-sitar could not gain much popularity but the Surbahar did get popularized and musicians used to perform a full fledged alapchari of Been upon this instrument before playing gat-toda upon the sitar. This practice continued for more than a century.¹

Thus we get the variety of sitar - Persian Sitar, Karnatik Sitar, Kashmiri Seitar, Bin Sitar, Tauus or Esrar, Kachwar sitar, Sundari, Small Sitar, Large Sitar, Tarafdar Sitar etc.

Persian Sitar:

It is a three stringed instrument. The body of the instrument is made of wood, the belly is made of parchment, and the tailpin is of brass – which works as a foot for the instrument.

There are usually three gut strings, tuned like those of Sarangi, and played by means of a bow. In India its use is very uncommon but met sometimes in large native cities like Hyderabad or Jaypur.²

¹ 'Classical Musical Instrument' – Dr. Suneera Kasliwal, p-146
² 'The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and Deccan' – C.R. Day, Delhi 1891 (p-131)
**Karnatik Sitar:**

This is also a form of sitar mainly found in Southern part of India. This is thinner and shorter than the normal sitar found in Northern India. It is stringed in some special and peculiar manner. Day gives a detailed note on the arrangement and tuning of the instrument. The first two strings pass over the frets. The third does not pass over the frets but all three are tuned in the same note. The fourth passes round a small ivory peg, a little nearer to the bridge. * (5th string!) The 6th and 7th strings pass straight up the finger board in an ordinary manner. The 7th string is made of brass and all others are of steel. The tuning arrangement is:

...... Pa Pa Pa Re Pa Re Pa

This sitar used to be found in Kashmir area and was named as ‘sitar’ having three strings. Much information is not found about it but the shape of the instrument establishes it as a folk instrument.

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Bin Sitar:

Outwardly Bin sitar looks alike Bin. But it has got movable frets and their arrangement is also like those of sitar. Strings are arranged as Bin which is reverse as sitar's. also the tuning is like Bin. This instrument is mostly found in and around Maharashtra.

Tauus:

This is a form of sitar with movable frets. Its shape is like a peacock. It has 17 frets and 6 strings, but below them there are 11 sympathetic strings. This instrument is played with ‘mizrab’ and ‘bow’ as well. In fact it is at times plucked and at times bowed. Tauus is mostly found in and around Maharashtra. The tuning varies slightly, but mostly the notes are among S M P G. the sympathetic strings are tuned as per the raga.

Kachapti vina or Kachchapi vina or Kachwar sitar:

This is such a variety of sitar whose alabu or gourd is cut horizontally. So the shape is a little bit different from the normal sitar. It is almost 4 feet in length. Musicologists have described this instrument as Devi Saraswati’s instrument. It has 5 to 7 strings.

Sundari:

This instrument is almost like sitar, only its peg board portion is that of like guitar. Ram Avtar Veer writes about the instrument: ‘He (Manohar G. Barve) named his flute and sitar as ‘sundari’ (beautiful). The tone of the

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1. 'The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and Deccan' – C.R.Day, Delhi 1891(p- 122)
2. 'The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and Deccan’ – C.R.Day, Delhi 1891(p- 122)
latter instrument was thin and monotonous but it was exquisitely suitable for producing bird like sweet notes.¹

**Small Sitar:**

The small sitar as explained by C.R.Day is formed from a coconut. These sitars are much used by native ladies and their tone is singularly sweet and plaintive, but not as powerful as large sitars. The frets arrangement and playing style are same as large sitar.²

**Tarafdar sitar:**

This is the result of many experiments in R&D to find the optimum transducers to fit the particular wide tonal and musical range particular to sitars. The result is our 'Blue Spot™' transducer setup that is perfectly tailored for both response and sensitivity.

Unlike most transducers these electric lattice devices provide fairly natural warm tone.

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¹ ‘History of Indian Music and Musicians’ – Ram Avtar Veer, Delhi – 1987 (p-100-101)
² ‘The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and Deccan’ – C.R.Day, Delhi 1891(p- 116)
Large sitar:

The large sitar is later transformed into the shape of the modern Tarafdar sitar.
CHAPTER II

FORMATION AND REFORMATION OF GAT STYLES
Formation and Reformation of the Gat styles:

After the introduction of solo performance in sitar, gradually the reformation of playing style became essential. As a result gat formation and reformation was initiated.

Instrumental compositions in North Indian Music are referred to as ‘Gat’s. The word ‘gat’ is probably a derivative of the Sanskrit word ‘gati’, which means movement. The Gat style is created by the descendents of Senia Gharana during the 2nd half of the 18th Century according to the historical chronology. The Senia traditions had two schools –

1. Seni Rababiyas: the descendants of Tansen’s son Bilash Khan
2. Seni Beenkar: the followers of Tansen’s son-in-law Misri Singh

The Rababiyas gradually lost favour because of the limitations of the instrument, and the Beenkars flourished.

According to most scholars the Beenkars used to teach the techniques of Vina only to their blood related descendents. To teach the students, not belonging to their family, they started using Sitar and Surbahar. In Surbahar they taught the intricacies of ‘anibaddha anga’ such as alap-jod, and in Sitar they played compositions based on the then popular vocal forms. These were named as ‘Gat’. And ‘Baaj’ stand for the style of playing. There are mainly six types of Gat patterns or baaj. e.g.

1. Amir Khusroo Baaj or Gat
2. Ferozkhan Baaj or Gat
3. Mazeedkhan Baaj or Gat
4. Imdadkhan Baaj or Gat
5. Razakhani Baaj or Gat
6. Jaffarkhan Baaj or Gat

Amir Khusroo Baaj:

Amir Khusroo’s name is leading in order as creator of gat system. Though it is very clear in the history that gats for sitar, sarode, esraj etc. were first innovated by Mazeed Khan, a glance should be given in the earliest style of gat or baaj – i.e. ‘Amir Khusroo Baaj’. There is only one ‘Tuk’(portion) or ‘charana’ in ‘Amir Khusroo’s Gat’. Use of little todas are also found. The
bolls are simple and played in Madhya laya(medium tempo). A famous example on Kafi Raga is noteworthy:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
0 & | & | & | & 1 & | & | & + | \ \\
\text{Sa} & \text{Re} & \text{Re} & \text{Re} & \text{Ga} & -- & \text{Ma} & \text{Pa} & \text{Ma} & \text{Pa} & -- & \text{Pa} & \text{Ma} & \text{Ga} & \text{Re} & \text{Sa} & \text{Ni} \\
\text{Da} & \text{dere} & \text{da} & \text{ra} & -- & \text{da} & \text{ra} & \text{da} & \text{ra} & -- & \text{da} & \text{ra} & \text{da} & \text{ra} & \text{da} & \text{ra}
\end{array}
\]

**Ferozkhani Gat or Baaj:**

After Amir Khusroo, Feroz Khan is credited to be the next creator of systematic instrumental gat – ‘Ferozkhani Gat’. During mid 18th century Firoz Khan is known to have stayed in Delhi during the period of Alamgir II. He has formulated an instrumental style which is named as ‘Gat Style’ or ‘baaj’. This ‘baaj’ is still found in the 19th century written sources and in some traditions like Ghulam Ali Khan Sarode Gharana. 20th century sarode player Radhika Mohan Maitra was a great connoisseur and player of Firozkhani Gat.

Some specific characteristics of Ferozkhani Gat or baaj are:

1. They are played specifically to a medium speed.
2. They have stroke(bol) patterns set in varied and interesting rhythms.
3. Their melody line cover the entire characteristics of the raga.
4. Their melodic movement is characterized by large intervalllic jumps.
The limited scope of the then existing sitar were not capable of creating the intricate techniques, alankars and sound production. Around 1760, Firoz Khan went to Rohilkhand, and set an important event in the history of instrumental music. Firozkhani Gat or baaj established itself among the Rababiyas and later on it was accepted to some extent by the sarode players. Now this form is not in use because of its critical characteristics.

Two examples of Firozkhani Gat played by Pt. Radhika Mohan Moitra.

**Raga - Jaunpuri**

\[\text{I Pa Ma Pa Sa I -Sa Sa Pa Ma I Pa Da - DaN} \text{I Da Pa -Ma Pa I} \]

Da dir da da -r da da dir da da - dir da rda -r da

\[\text{I Ga - Re I - Ma Pa Da I Ni Ni Sa Re I Ni- NiDa -Da Pa I} \]

Da - da da ra da dir dir dir da rda -r da

\[\text{I Da Da -Da Ni I Sa Re Ga Re I Sa Re Ni Sa I NiSa Da -Da Pa I} \]

Da rda - r dir da dir da ra da dir dir dir da r da -r da

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1. "Sitar and sarode in the 18th and 19th centuries" - Allyn Miner, p-208

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Raga: Yaman Kalyan

I Ni Re Ga Da I -Da Ni Re Ga I Pa Ma Ga Ni I -Ni Re Ga Ma I
Da dir da da -r da da ra da dir da da -r da da ra

P

I Da Pa Ma Ga I Ma Ni -Ni Da I Pa -Pa Ma Ga I Ma Ga Re Ga I
Da dir da da ra -r da da ra da ra da ra

P

I Ma Ga Re Ga I Re Ni -Ni Sa I Da Ni Da Ga I -Ga Re Sa Ni I
Da ra dir dir da rda -r da da dir da -r da da ra

I Da Ni Da Sa I Ni NiDa -Da Pa I Pa Ma Ga Ma I Re Ga Ni Re I
Da dir dir dir da rda -r da da dir da ra da ra da ra

Mazeedkhani Gat or Baaj:

‘Mazeedkhani Gat’, the next systematic gat or baaj prevalent for a long time. Mazeed Khan was the grand son of Karim Sen (grandson of Tansen’s son Vilasi Khan). He has reformed the Amir Khusroo Gat style and introduced this gat style following the vilambit Khayal, played in slow tempo or vilambit Teental in some specific bols –

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1 ‘Sitar and sarode in the 18th and 19th centuries’ – Allyn Miner,
The first circle of this gat is called ‘sthaii’ and the 2\textsuperscript{nd} portion or circle is segregated and named as ‘Manjha’ because this is situated in the middle portion of Sthaii and Antara. According to Ustad Mustaq Ali Khan, the word ‘Manjha’ in the Mazeedkhani is taken from ‘Sozkhani Sangeet’, where the names like ‘Matla Manjha’ and ‘teep’ are present. The word ‘manjha’ actually means the middle part but is not played by him. The bols of Antara are –

\begin{verbatim}
| 1 | | | | + | | | 3 | | | 0 |
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
Dere da dere da ra da da ra dere da dere da ra da da ra
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
| | | | | + | | | 3 | | | 0 |
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
Dere da dere da ra da dere da ra da dere da ra da da ra (dere)
\end{verbatim}

After playing the Sthaii, Manjha and Antara portions swarvist ar with the help of ‘Todas’ were played. In Mazeed Khan’s time no Jod used to be played on sitar. The todas were composed on the basis of Parans of Pakhawaj or Tabla.\textsuperscript{1} Only theka was played in tabla to accompany the performance, there was use of Paran or Tukdaa. Since there was no chikari strings – the jhala portion was also not there. This baaj is also called ‘Paschim Baaj’ or ‘Pachao Ka Baaj’.

\textsuperscript{1} ‘Senia Gharana – Tis Contribution to Indian Classical Music’ -- Sarmistha Sen (p-170)
Imdadkhani Gat or Baaj:

Mazeedkhani Baaj is based on Vilambit Khayal style. Ustad Imdad Khan did a new experiment by intermingling Dhrupada with Khayal. He has stressed on the importance of Jhala in sitar playing. Some qualities that made this style of gat different from Mazeedkhani are –

- Use of long ‘meend’ (upto 7 parda meend in Surbahar)
- Use of pointing finger to play the instrument, including complex bolls and chikari.
- Use of alankaras (e.g. krintan jamjama, ghasit etc.)
- Jhala became a main part of playing.
- Application of small ‘tihais’.
- Gat and Todas are played in the style of Alap.

All these characteristics lead us to rename this style of Gats, because it apparently changed the style of ‘Mazeedkhani Gat’ apparently. Thus it was then called as ‘Adhunik Mazeedkhani’. Later on it got the nomenclature of ‘Imdadkhani Gat’.1

Razakhani Gat or Baaj:

After the strictness and rigidity of Mazeedkhani Gat and Dhrupad, came the era of Khayal. Naturally the style and formation of gat pattern also needed to be changed. Ghulam Raza Khan with his compositions surpassed the boundary and limitations of ‘Mazeedkhani gat’.

This gat is made following the rules of ‘Tarana’. According to some historians Ghulam Raza, student of Mazeed Khan, being the innovator of this gat style, named it as ‘Razakhani Gat’. Some others say that Mazeed Khan himself formed this gat style for his favourite student Raza Khan, keeping the Mazeedkhani Gat for his own family.

In Haqim Karam Imam’s ‘Ma-adan-ul Mausiqui’, we find Ghulam Raza playing in Razakhani style to please the noble men of Lucknow. Ghulam Raza and his sons were noted players on sitar and the style of their execution has been followed in parts of the country.2 About the style of Ghulam Raza –

1 ‘Bharatiya Sangeet Kosh’ – Bimalakanta Roychowdhury (p - 15)
2 ‘Universal History of India’ – S.M. Tagore
Karam Imam writes, “I have not heard any other person playing it so well except Ghulam Raza.” This style is also referred to as ‘Purab Ka Baaj’, apparently because Raza Khan’s family members started staying at the Eastern part of the country. Thus this gat became more popular in the Eastern part of the country. This style follows no tradition and is not systematic. The movements of left and right hands are faster in this type of gats, and also they are mainly based on Bolls.

According to Pt. Arvind Parikh, Rajakhani Gat was mainly based on Thumri. Originally this kind of gats were played in Pilu, Tilak Kamod, Sohini etc. Later on all drut gats were regarded as ‘Razakhani Gat’ which is not agreeable. Because Razakhani gat had special boll structure of 2/3 types.

**Style of Playing:**

Since this gats are composed on the style of ‘tarana’, the use of compound ‘bolls’ are frequent. Movement of left and right hands are faster. Though there is no strict boll composition or combination, still some example would better clarify the original style of gat. A famous tarana composition with its instrumental boll composition is noteworthy:

1 + 3 0 1
- Ta - na di - - m ta - na di - - m
- Da ra da da - - ra da ra da da - - ra

+ 3 0 1
- Ta - na tu - - m ta - na der der der der der der tum der
- Da ra da da - - ra da ra da dere dere dere dere dere dere da dere

After playing the gat different baats are played taking the bolls from the gat. Ustad Imdad Khan has applied ang with Rajakhani Gat. He has also introduced the use of Jhala compositions with the gat. He has given such a

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1 ‘Senia Gharana………………..Classical Music’ – Sarmistha Sen(p-167)
new formation of the same ‘Rajakhani Gat’ that his style of playing is considered as ‘Imdadkhani Style’.

**Jafferkhani Baaj:**

According to the creator of this baaj, Ustd. Abdul Halim Jaffar Khan, this baaj has evolved out of an urge to change in order to make the music of the sitar more complete and beautiful. This baaj incorporates finer divisions within a beat and creates multiple notes, keeping in mind the structure of the raga and its characteristic melodic pattern.

Initially the creator felt certain limitations of Mazeedkhani Baaj which leaded him to create a new baaj. Mazeedkhani Gat has typical bol patterns – which was little modified by Ustd. Abdul Halim Jaffar Khan, as the Gats of certain ragas do not fit well withine a fixed pattern of Bol. Mazeedkhani baaj usually have one note for one beat corresponding to one stroke of the mizrab with the right hand. In Jaffarkhani Baaj 6,8,12 or sometimes even 16 notes are created withine one beat. This is something unique to this Baaj and also the main point of distinction from the conventional Mazeedkhani Baaj. The main focus is on the beat, and that is why Jaffarkhani Baaj as a whole is elaborated best in the slower tempo vilambit gat, and in thumri ang.

In other style of sitar playing, the left hand movement fills in the Bol of the Mizrab. In this baaj, the ‘bol’ is set according to the needs of the right hand movement. This is Ustd. Abdul Halim Jaffar Khan’s own innovation in sitar playing. He has developed a synthesis of the techniques of the right hand and left hand in interplay with the rhythmic structure. This may be regarded as ‘Jaffarkhani Bani’ or ‘Jaffarkhani Baaj’ or ‘Jaffarkhani Gat’. This is the core feature or essence of this Baaj.

**Few examples are as follows:**

*Image of a musical notation*
**Raag: Pilu Vilambit Gat [Jaffarkhani baaj] in Teen taal**

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- **Notes**: The notes are indicated in the table, with each column representing a measure of the raag.
- **Scale**: The scale structure is provided, with each column representing a step in the scale.
- **Format**: The format of the raag is detailed, with each column representing a component of the format.
- **Names**: The names associated with the raag are listed, with each column representing a name.
- **Melody**: The melody is described, with each column representing a part of the melody.
- **Tempo**: The tempo is specified, with each column representing a beat or rhythm.
- **Playing Style**: The playing style is outlined, with each column representing a technique or characteristic.
- **Instruments**: The instruments used are listed, with each column representing an instrument.
- **Accompaniment**: The accompaniment style is described, with each column representing a part of the accompaniment.
Raag: Yaman Kalyan: drut Gat [Jaffarkhani baaj] in Teen taal

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Apart from these six gat styles or Baaj, there are also mentions of Amirkhani Gat or Baaj, Sitarkhani gat or Baaj. But much details and examples are not available about these patterns.