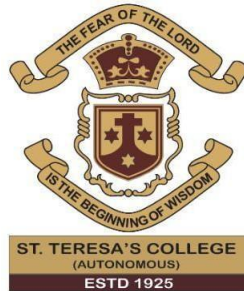




**TRACING THE EVOLUTION OF MALAYALAM SONGS  
FROM 1978 TO 2021: A POSTMODERN ANALYSIS**



*Project submitted to St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of BACHELOR OF ARTS in English Language and Literature*

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**DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this project entitled 'Tracing the Evolution of Malayalam Songs from 1978 to 2021: A Postmodern Analysis' is the record of bona fide work done by me under the guidance and supervision of Ms. Niveda Sebastian, Assistant Professor, Department of English.

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### Introduction

Malayalam cinema, also known as Mollywood, refers to the film industry that produces movies in the Malayalam language. It is based in the Indian state of Kerala and has been active since the early 20th century. The first Malayalam cinema, *Vigathakumaran*, was released in 1928, marking the beginning of a long and illustrious journey for the industry.

Over the years, Malayalam cinema has grown in popularity and has produced numerous critically acclaimed and commercially successful movies.

One of the defining features of Malayalam cinema is the importance given to songs in its movies. Malayalam songs are known for their meaningful lyrics, melodious tunes, and soulful renditions. These songs have played a significant role in shaping the culture and identity of the Malayali people. Many iconic songs from Malayalam movies have become a part of the state's cultural heritage and are still popular among the masses.

Over the years, Malayalam cinema has undergone significant changes, both in terms of content and style. The industry has seen the rise of new actors, directors, and technicians who have brought fresh ideas and perspectives to the table. Malayalam movies have explored a wide range of themes, including social issues, political satire, and human relationships. There has also been a shift towards more realistic and nuanced portrayals of characters and situations, reflecting the changing times and attitudes of society.

In recent years, Malayalam cinema has gained a wider audience and recognition beyond Kerala. Movies like *Premam*, *Kumbalangi Nights*, and *Jallikattu* have received critical acclaim and commercial success across India and the world. The industry has also embraced new technologies and platforms, with several Malayalam movies releasing on OTT platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime.

Malayalam cinema has come a long way since its inception and has established itself as an integral part of Kerala's cultural landscape. With its unique blend of music, storytelling, and social commentary, it continues to captivate audiences and inspire new generations of filmmakers. Malayalam film songs make use of all the different types of music ranging from the classical to the pop, both eastern and western. In this chapter a brief classification of music is attempted.



Music is an art form and cultural activity whose medium is sound organized in time. General definitions of music include common elements such as pitch, rhythm, dynamics, and the sonic qualities of timbre and texture. Different styles or types of music may emphasize, de-emphasize or omit some of these elements. Music is performed with a vast range of instruments and vocal techniques ranging from singing to rapping; there are solely instrumental pieces, solely vocal pieces and pieces that combine singing and instruments.

In its most general form, the activities describing music as an art form or cultural activity include the creation of works of music, the criticism of music, the study of the history of music, and the aesthetic examination of music. Ancient Greek and Indian philosophers defined music as tones ordered horizontally as melodies and vertically as harmonies. Common saying such as 'the harmony of the spheres' and 'it is music to my ears' point to the notion that music is often ordered and pleasant to listen to. However, 20th-century composer John Cage thought that any sound can be music.

The creation, performance, significance, and even the definition of music vary according to culture and social context. Indeed, throughout history, some new forms or styles of music have been criticized as 'not being music', including Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge* string quartet 1825, early Jaz in the beginning of the 1900s and hard- 1980s. There are many types of music, including popular music, traditional music, art music, music written for religious ceremonies and work songs such as chanteys. Music ranges from strictly organized compositions—such as classical music symphonies from the 1700s and 1800s to spontaneously played improvisational music such as jazz, and avant-garde styles of chance based contemporary music from the 20th and 21st centuries.

It is true that film plays an important part in our everyday life and as an industry it has been in the propagation of information to a mass population. The film music of Kerala is the most

popular form of music in the state. Before the development of Malayalam cinema and Malayalam film music, the Keralites followed Tamil and Hindi songs, and this habit has stayed with them till now. The history of Malayalam film songs begins with the 1948 film *Nirmala* produced by artist P.J.Chериан. He was the one to introduce playback singing for the first time in Malayalam film.

The main trend in the early years was to borrow the tune from hit Hindi or Tamil songs into Malayalam. This was changed by 1950s with the arrival of a number of poets and musicians. Malayalam film music industry started finding its own identity by mid 1950s. Music directors like brother Laxmanan, G. Devarajan, V. Dakshinamoorthi along with lyricists Vayalar Ramavarma, P. Bhaskaran etc created a new world of music in Malayalam film industry songs play a great role behind the success of every film. It is a matter of common consent that's makers now-a-days use songs only as a tool for the success of their films.

The origin of Indian classical music is found in the oldest Hindu scripture called 'Samaveda'. It has the most complex and complete musical system with eight basic notes of 'Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, and Sa'. It is monophonic in nature.

The instruments used in Indian classical music are Veena, Mridhangam, Tabla, Flute, Sitar, Violin, Gottuvadhyam, Sarangi, Ghatam, and Mukharsankh. Indian classical music broadly classified into two, Carnatic and Hindustani.

Carnatic music is an ancient form of music that originated in Southern India; its origin is believed to be divine. Some of its leading composers are Mysore Sathasiva Rao, Thyagaraja, Muthuswami Dheekshithar and others. Carnatic music has twenty eight Melakarta Ragas, each raga has its own divine style and form. Raga stands for a group of sounds decorated with musical expressions that create a sense of pleasure to the listener. Raga can be loosely defined as melody type or expressive mode. It consists of a series up to

seven Swaras which bear a definite relationship to Adhara Sadja and which occur in a particular sequence. Ragas are classified mainly into Janaka ragas and Janya ragas. Janaka ragas are also known as Melakarta ragas. A Janya raga is said to be derived from a Janaka raga. It takes the same Swaras as in its Melakarta raga but may take fewer Swaras. We get totally thirtyfive Talas after allowing the seven Talas to be sub divided on the basis of five Jathis. These thirty five Talas allow further subdivision based on five Gathis [speed]. The five Gathis are once again the same as the above namely Thisra, Chatusra, Ghanta, Misra and Sankeerna. A Tala sometimes spells the "Taal or Tal" which literally means a clap, tapping ones hand on ones lap. It is the term used in Indian classical music to refer to musical metre that us any rhythmic beat or strike that measures musical time.

As Carnatic music is popular among Southern India, Hindustani plays a major role in the northern parts. It originated in North India around 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. In contrast to Carnatic music, the Hindustani classical music is influence not only by ancient Hindu musical traditions and Vedic philosophy but also by the Persian elements. Hindustani classical music is the most popular stream of Indian music.

Hindustani music is based on the Raga system. The Raga is a melodic scale, comprising of notes from the basic seven- Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, and Ni. On the basis of notes included in it, each Raga attains a different character. The form of Raga is also determined by the particular pattern of ascent and descent of the notes, which may not be strictly linear.

Hindustani classical music is primarily vocal-centric. The major vocal forms associated with Hindustani classical music are the khayal Ghazal, Dhrupad, Dhammar, Taranna and Thumri. Dhrupad style of singing is traditionally performed by men with a Tanpura and Pakhwaj. The lyrics sung in Dhrupad are in a medieval form of Hindi and typically heroic in

theme, or in praise of a particular deity. A more adorned form is called Dhamar. The place of Drupad has been taken by somewhat less austere and more free from khayal.

Khayal consists of about 4-8 lines of lyrics set to a tune. The performer uses these few lines as the base for improvisation. The khayal form of Hindustani classical music is ascribed to Hussain Shah Sharqui, the 15<sup>th</sup> century ruler of the Sharqui dynasty. It was made popular by the 18<sup>th</sup> century ruler Mohammed Shah. Some of the modern day vocalists are Bhimsen Joshi, Nagraj Havaldar, Kishori Amonkar, Ulhas Kashalkar, Ajoy Chakraborty, Prabakar Karekar, Pandit Jasraj, Rashid Khan, Aslam Khan, Shruthi Sadolikar and Mashkoor Ali Khan.

Another vocal form of the Hindustani music is Tarana. Tarana are songs that are used to convey a feel of joy and are used to convey a feel of joy and are usually performed towards the end of a concert. Thumri is an informal vocal form of Hindustani classical music and is said to have begun with the court of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, the Nawab of Oudh.

Originally, a Persian form of vocal music, Ghazal is an important part of Hindustani classical music. Ghazal exists in multiple variations, including folk and pop forms. Some notable ghazal performers include Mehndi Hassan, Ghulam Ali, Jagjit Singh and Pankaj Udhas. The themes of Ghazals range from love, joy, and piety.

The term "Classical Music" originates from the Latin *classicus*, meaning first class, or from the Romans' artistry of the highest order. It encompasses a vast range of music styles over a period of 800 years. Sometimes, the term "Art music" is used. Western classical is just one among many different traditions of classical music, so when we're discussing Western classical music, specifically discussing European classical music. To make matters more confusing, there is a specific period in history referred to as the "Classical Period", which differentiates the style of music in that era from other eras preceding and succeeding it.

Throughout the history of Western classical music, there have been two strands of evolution, usually distinguishable from each other, which evolved in parallel – Church music and Secular music. For example, Church music includes Gregorian Chants, Carols, Mass, and Requiems, while Secular music includes Sonatas, Concertos, Symphonies and Opera both Church and Secular music influenced each other, while evolving and adapting to man's ideological progress in history. This project is an attempt to trace and analyze the major changes that happened to Malayalam film songs during the last four decades, especially in the context of the postmodern trends in music. Since the coverage of the topic is too wide to be contained in a project work like this, I have selected the songs that won the state award instituted by the Government of Kerala to represent the trends of each period under discussion.

The project analyses the postmodern elements in the select Malayalam songs from 1979 to 2021. The first chapter comprises of the theory, the second chapter analyses the songs with the help of the theory and the last chapter is conclusion.

## Chapter 1

### Postmodernism in Music and Instruments

Postmodernism is a movement with multiple dimensions that evolved in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century which had made its impact felt in different walks of human life such as philosophy, science, art, literature, and architecture. It is a movement that historically succeeded 'Modernism'. It negates many of the presumptions of Modernism while at the same time functioning as an extension of it in some respects. While encompassing a wide variety of approaches, postmodernism is generally defined by an attitude of skepticism, irony, or rejection towards the meta-narratives and ideologies of modernism, often calling into question various assumptions of enlightenment rationally. Consequently, common targets of postmodern critique include universalist notions of objective reality, morality, truth, human nature, reason, language, and social progress. Postmodern thinkers frequently call attention to the contingent or socially conditioned nature of knowledge claims and value system, situating them as products of political, historical, or cultural discourses and hierarchies. Accordingly, postmodern thought is broadly characterized by tendencies to self-preferentiality, epistemological and moral relativism, pluralism, and irreverence. Postmodern critical approaches gain purchase in the 1980s and 1990s and have been adopted in a variety of academic and theoretical disciplines, including cultural studies, philosophy of science, economics, linguistics, architecture, feminist theory, and literary criticism, as well as art movements in fields such as literature and music. Postmodernism is

often associated with schools of thought such as deconstruction and post-structuralism, as well as philosophers such as Jean-Fredricois Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, and Fredric Jameson.

The term postmodern was first used around the 1880s. John Watkins Chapman suggested “a postmodern style of painting” to depart from French Impressionism. J.M Thompson, in his 1914 article in *The Hibbert Journal* (a quarterly philosophical review), used it to describe changes in attitude and beliefs in the critique of religion.

In 1921 and 1925, postmodernism had been used to describe new forms of art and music. In 1926, Bernard Iddings Bell, president of St. Stephen’s College, published *postmodernism and other Essays*, marking the first use of the term to describe the historical period following modernity. In it, he criticizes the lingering socio-cultural norms, attitudes and practices of the Age of Enlightenment forecasts the major cultural shifts towards Postmodernity, and (being an Anglo-Catholic priest) offers orthodox religion as a solution. However, as a general theory for a historical movement, it was first used in 1939 by Arnold J. Toynbee: *Portland Building* (1982), by architect Michael Graves, is an example of postmodern architecture. In 1949 the term was used to describe dissatisfaction with modern architecture, and led to the postmodern architecture movement, and a response to the modernist architectural movement known as the International Style. Postmodernism in architecture was initially marked by a re-emergence of surface ornament, reference to surrounding buildings in urban settings, historical reference in decorative forms (eclecticism), and non-orthogonal angles. Peter Drucker suggested that the transformation into a postmodern world happened between 1937 and 1957. He described a yet ‘nameless era’ which he characterized as a shift to conceptual world based on pattern, purpose, and process rather than mechanical cause, outlined by four new realities: the emergence of

Educated Society, the importance of international development, the decline of the nation state, and the collapse of the viability of non-Western cultures. In

1971, in a lecture delivered at the institute of Contemporary Art, London, Mel Bochner described 'post-modernism' in art as having started with Jasper Johns, 'who first rejected sense-data and the singular point-of-view as the basis for his art and treated art as a critical investigation'. In 1996, Walter Truett Anderson described postmodernism as belonging to one of the four typological world views, which he identified as either (a) Postmodern-ironist, which sees truth as socially constructed, (b) Scientific-rational, in which truth is found through methodical, disciplined inquiry, (c) Social-traditional, in which truth is found in the heritage of American and Western civilization, or (d) Neo-Romantic, in which truth is found through attaining harmony with nature and/ or spiritual exploration of the inner self.

Postmodern music is either music of the postmodern era, or music that follows aesthetic and philosophical trends of postmodernism. As the name suggests, the postmodernist movement formed partly in reaction to the ideals of the modernist. Because of this, postmodern music is mostly defined in opposition to modernist music, and a work can either be modernist, or postmodern, but not both. Jonathan Kramer posits the idea that postmodernism (including musical postmodernism) is less a surface style or historical period (i.e., condition) than an attitude. The postmodern impulse in classical music arose in the 1960s with the advent of musical minimalism. Composers such as Terry Riley, Henryk Gorecki, Bradley Joseph, John Adams, Steve Reich, Philip Glass, Michael Nyman, and Lou Harrison reacted to the perceived elitism and dissonant sound of atonal academic modernism by producing music with simple textures and relatively consonant harmonies, whilst others, most notably John Cage challenged the prevailing narratives of beauty and



objectivity common to Modernism. Some composers have been openly influenced by popular music and world ethnic musical traditions.

Postmodern classical music as well is not a musical style, but rather refers to music of the postmodern era. It bears the same relationship to postmodernist music that postmodernity bears to postmodernism. Postmodern music, on the other hand, shares characteristics with postmodernist art, i.e., art that comes after and reacts against modernism. Through representing a general return to certain notions of music-making that are often considered to be classical or romantic, not all postmodern composers have eschewed the experimentalist or academic tenets of modernism. The works of Dutch composer Louis Andriessen, for example, exhibit experimentalist preoccupation that is decidedly anti-romantic. Eclecticism and freedom of expression, in reaction to the rigidity and aesthetic limitations of modernism, are the hallmarks of the postmodern influence in musical composition. Author on postmodernism, Dominic Strinati, has noted, it is also important to include in this category the so called 'art rock' musical innovations and mixing of styles associated with groups like Talking Heads, and performers like Laurie Anderson, together with the self-conscious.

One can say that in the case of instruments there is a tremendous change that is happened in the music industry, one can see the innovations of the technology area, where totally changed, the growth of technology is something beyond our expectations.

One of the main differences between North Indian and South Indian music is the increased influence of Persian music and musical instruments in the north. From the late twelfth century through the rise of British occupation, North India was under the control of a Muslim minority that was never able to extend its sphere of influence to South India. During this time, the music of North India began to acquire and adapt to the presence of

Persian language, music, and musical instruments, such as the setar, from which the sitar got its name; the kamache (1998.72) and santur, which become popular in Kashmir; and rabab (alternately known as rebab and rubab), which preceded the sarod. New instruments were introduced, including the table and sitar (1999.399), which soon became the most famous Indian musical instruments worldwide. Legend has it that the table was formed by splitting a pakhavaj drum in half, with the larger side the dahini. The barrel-shaped pakhwaj drum, which was ancestor of both the table and mrdangam, has been depicted in countless paintings and prints. New genres of music were formed as well, such as khyal and qawaali, that combine elements of both Hindu and Muslim music practice.

Both Hindustani and Karnatic music use the system of ragas – sets of pitches and small motives for melody construction – and tala for rhythm. Hindustani classical music is known largely for its instrumentalists, while Karnatic classical music is renowned for its virtuosic singing practices. Instruments most used in Hindustani classical music are the sitar, sarod, tambura, sahnai, sarangi, and tabla; while instruments commonly used in Karnatak classical music include the veena, mrdangam, kanjira, and violin. The use of bamboo flutes, such as the murali, is common to both traditions as well as many other genres of Indian music. In fact, many of these instruments are often used in both North and South in India, and there are many clear relationships between the instruments of both regions. Furthermore, often instruments that are slightly different in construction will be identified by the same name in both the south and the north, though they might be used differently. Throughout its history, the people of India have developed numerous systems for classifying musical instruments, many of which were based on morphological characteristics. The ancient Hindu system divided instruments into four categories: stretched (strings; 2008.

141.2a, b), covered (drums; 89.4.154), hollow (wind; 1986.12), and solid (bells; 89.4.154).

This system is widely known to be the inspiration for the Western system of instrument classification put forth by Mahillon in

1880, which renames these groups- chordophones, membranophones, aerophones, and idiophones- basing the distinction on the way in which sound is created and not exclusively on construction.

The stretched instruments are Kanjira, Kamanche, Sarod, Setar, Sitar, Sarangi and Tambura. Kanjira is a frame drum of South India. It consists of a skin (usually iguana) stretched and pasted on a circular wooden frame. There are three or four slots in the side of the frame, in which bell-metal jingle-disks are suspended from metal crossbars. The name kanjira is related to the khanjari and kanjani of North and East India and Nepal. The kanjira is tuned to various pitches by wetting the skin. It is held at the bottom of the frame by the left hand, which also varies the tension of the skin, and is beaten with the fingers of the right hand. The kamancheh is one of the world's earliest known bowed instruments. It has been altered and changed as it has traveled to other parts of the world (1998.72). Some argue that the kamancheh is the predecessor of many other stringed instruments such as the rabab, the sarangi, and the Chinese erhu. The sarod is a relatively new instrument to south Asia, having been around for less than 200 years. The Sarod is a plugged string instrument with a skin cover resonator and sympathetic strings. Like the Sitar, it is primarily used in Hindustani music and is accompanied by tabla.

The word Setar means "three strings". Other instruments in this family include two-stringed dutar and the single-stringed ektar. As Indian musicians adopted the setar, they added more and more strings. Early sitars, which evolved from the setar, have six strings while more contemporary ones include six playing strings and thirteen sympathetic strings. A Persian

setar in the museum's collection is a miniature that was made primarily for the purpose of decoration. Many such instruments exist in India. The sitar is easily India's most capital instrument overseas, having been popularized in the West by George Harrison of the Beatles, who studied with Ravi Shankar, one of the greatest sitarists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The sitar has its roots both in the Persian Setar as well as in the vina. Like many stringed instruments used in the classical music, the modern sitar (1999.399) has sympathetic strings that sound only when one of the primary strings is struck on the same note. These strings, which are never played by the performer, resound in sympathy with the playing strings, creating a polyphonic timbre that many have come to associate with India through the popularity of this instrument. It is interesting to note, however, that the addition of the sympathetic strings is a relatively recent development in the Indian music starting in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (89.04.1586). The use of sympathetic strings is known to have existed in other parts of the world prior to their initial use in India. A sarangi is a bowed stringed instrument with a skin-covered resonator (89.4.200). The typical sarangi is made by hand, usually from a single block of tun wood about 66 to 69 centimeters long (46.34.43). The three playing strings are made of goat gut, and sympathetic strings (usually as many as thirty-six, though the number varies) of brass and/or steel. However, the design of sarangis varies from region to region (1982.143.2). For example,

the Nepalese sarangi is generally much smaller than its Indian counterpart, and not all sarangis have sympathetic strings. The tambura is a long, stringed instrument made of light hollow wood, with either a wooden or a gourd resonator. It is typically used in accompaniment with other instruments, providing a drone pitch. Some of the tamburas in the Museum's collection are not full-sized instruments, but rather miniatures created for their aesthetic appearance. The artistic craftsmanship on the inlay in these objects is

beautiful. India has a long history of creating musical instruments as decorative objects, and the tradition is represented in the Museum's collection. Veena is one of the main stringed instrument. Veena played along with the pakhavaj, the veena is one of the most commonly depicted instruments in Indian iconography. The veena has taken many forms in both South and North India. In North India, it was called the bin or the rudraveena, and was the predecessor of the sitar. It was often built of two large gourd resonators connected by a piece of bamboo, with frets held on with wax. Most of the veenas depicted in iconography are rudraveenas. In the South, the veena- or Saraswathi veena- continues to be the most popular instrument in classical music. In its basic shape, the veena is a hollow wooden stringed instrument with two gourd resonators (though there can often be more than two or sometimes only one gourd resonator). The gottuvadhyam or chithraveena, is another important in Karnatak music. Unlike the rudraveena and the saraswathiveena, the gottuvadhyam has no frets and is played with a slide using a method similar to that of the Hawaiian slide guitar.

Covered instruments are Mrdangam, Pakhvaj, Rabab, Tabla. The mrdangam is an elongated barrel-shaped drum found predominantly in South Indian (1986.467.18). It is derived from the pakhavaj and is used as the primary rhythmic accompaniment in Karnatak music as well as religious Kirtan music. In the east (Bengal, Odisha), this barrel-shaped drum is known as the khol. Next one is the pakhvaj. It is a barrel-shaped drum with two heads, each of which contains tuning paste, or siyahi. The history of the pakhvaj is unknown, yet as the predecessor of both the Hindustani table drums and Karnatic music, it served as the primary accompaniment for

much of Indian classical music. It appears in the musical iconography of Hindu religious painting and in the artworks of the royal Muslim courts of the Mughal empire. The rabab is

a stringed instrument with a skin-covered resonator that can be bowed or plucked depending on performance tradition. It is found in various forms throughout North Africa, the Near East, South Asia, and Central Asia. Like the way the setar and the vina were adapted to eventually become what is known today as the sitar, the rabab was adapted to become the sarod. However, there are many musicians in India today who still play the rabab, and it is quite popular in several music genres. Tabla is the main and very common instrument. It is two drums played by the same performer. Both drums have compound skins onto which a tuning paste or siyahi, is added to help generate the wide variety of tones these drums can produce. The bayan is the larger of the two drums and is generally made of metal or pottery. The siyahi on the bayan is off-center, which allows the performer to add variable pressure on the skin, changing the pitch of the instrument with the palm of his or her hand while striking it with the fingertips. The smaller drum is called the dahini, or sometimes referred to as the tabla. Dahini is usually made of heavy lathe-turned rosewood and provide much higher pitch that bayan does.

The hollow or wind instruments are Murali and sahnai. The murali is a transverse flute made of bamboo. It is used in a variety of musical genres and is often associated with the Hindu deity Krishna. The sahnai is a double reed instrument of North India and Nepal. In South India, a double reed instrument called the nagasvaram is used. Both instruments have seven equidistant fingerholes and no thumbhole. Frequently, the instrument's flared open end is made of metal while its body is made of wood or bamboo; however, they are not exclusively made in this fashion.

The solid or bell instruments are Chimes, Carillon, and other different kinds of bells. A bell is a directly struck idiophone percussion instrument. Most bells have the shape of a hollow cup

that when struck vibrates in a single strong strike tone, with its sides forming an efficient resonator.

## Chapter 2

### Analysis of the select Award winning songs from 1978-2021

Every year Kerala honors artists of the Malayalam film industry on their exceptional achievements. Kerala state film awards started in the year 1969, the awards are managed directly by the Department of Cultural Affairs, Government of Kerala. The awardees are decided by an independent jury formed by the academy and the Department of Cultural Affairs. The jury usually consist of eminent personalities from the film field.

Let us see the list of artists who were honoured with the state film awards in the music section only representative list provided below.

The term 'Music director' used to appear in the film credits for a professional hired to supervise and direct the music selected for a film or music documentary, but today the more common designation is music supervisor. In India, where a large number of films are produced as musicals, the term 'Music Director' is commonly used for the composer and music producer of the songs and score used in the film. The roles also entail arranging, mastering, mixing and supervising recording of film music with conducting and orchestration.

In 1969 Devarajan master is the best music director. His compositions were always very soft song, at the same time when going to sing that song, understand that it is very difficult, because there are some minute sangathis and raga visthaarams. Because in that time the music directors always prefer a song under a raga, and in that film all the other songs were also in that same raga, and the directors never take a risk in the case of singers. They always prefer the famous singers. They will never introduce a newcomer. So, at that period there is only a few numbers of singers are there.



Another notable musician who received the award was M.B. Srinivasan for his work in *Bandhanam* in 1978. In 1988, G. Aravindan won the award for his compositions in *Ore Thooval Pakshi*. Vidhya Sagar received the award in 1998 for his work in *Pranayavarnangal*, while M. Jayachandran was awarded in 2008 for his work in *Madambi*.

In recent times, there have been several talented music directors who have won the Best Music Director award. In 2018, Vishal Bhardwaj won the award for his compositions in *Carbon*, while Sushin Syam was awarded in 2019 for his work in *Kumbalangi Nights*. In 2020, M Jayachandran was awarded for his compositions in *Sufiyum Sujathayum*.

The most recent winner of the Best Music Director award is Hisham Abdul Wahab for his work in *Hridayam* in 2021. With each passing year, the Indian film industry witnesses the emergence of new and talented music directors who continue to raise the bar with their exceptional music compositions. The award for Best Music Director remains an important recognition of the contribution of these talented individuals to the industry.

The art of songwriting in the Indian film industry is highly regarded and has been a vital aspect of Indian cinema since its inception. The ability to express complex emotions, thoughts and feelings in a succinct and lyrical manner is highly valued by audiences and critics alike. Lyricist plays an important role in the development of a song. They are the backbone of the song. The lyricist writes or creates a song on the situation provided in the film. Earlier lyrics were created in a fraction of seconds as the lyricist were poets themselves, but now the music director composes a music note and then comes the duty of the lyricist to pen down the lyrics. Lyrics should be written in certain meter and scale. It is the lyrics of a song that mostly get into the audience. Over the years, there have been many lyricists who have contributed immensely to this craft and have produced unforgettable lyrics that have become an integral part of the Indian cultural landscape.

Starting from 1969, Vayalar Rama Varma's work on the film *Kadalpaalam* gained immense popularity among the masses and helped establish him as one of the leading lyricists of his time. In 1978, Kaavalam Narayana Paniker's contribution to the film *Vaadakakk oru Hridayam* showcased his immense talent in writing poetry that resonated deeply with the audience.

O.N.V Kurup is widely considered as one of the greatest lyricists of all time in the Indian film industry, and his work on the film *Vaisali* in 1988 was nothing short of extraordinary. His ability to capture complex emotions and human experiences in simple yet powerful verses is what made his lyrics so memorable and beloved by many.

Yusuf Ali Kechery's contribution to the film *Sneham* in 1998 was widely acclaimed for its profound and meaningful lyrics. His ability to weave a narrative and express emotions in a way that touched the hearts of his audience made him one of the most respected lyricists of his generation.

In 2008, O.N.V Kurup returned to the spotlight with his work on *Gulmohar*, which once again showcased his mastery of the craft. His ability to use words to create a vivid and immersive world for the listeners is what made his lyrics so captivating.

In 2018, B.K Harinarayanan's work on *Joseph and Theevandi* was highly appreciated for its emotional depth and complexity. He was able to capture the essence of the film's themes and present them in a way that was both thought-provoking and engaging.

Sujesh Hari's work on *Sathyam Paranja viswasikkumo* in 2019 was also widely praised for its unique and refreshing style. His ability to infuse modern themes and sensibilities into his lyrics made him one of the most exciting lyricists of his generation.

In 2020, Anwar Ali's contribution to the film *Malik* was widely acknowledged for its lyrical excellence. His ability to use language to create vivid and immersive imagery was what made his lyrics so captivating.

Finally, in 2021, B.K Harinarayanan's work on *Kaadakalam* once again solidified his status as one of the best lyricists of his time. His ability to use words to evoke powerful emotions and create unforgettable moments is what makes him one of the most respected and celebrated lyricists of his generation.

Overall, the contribution of these brilliant individuals has been immense and has left an indelible mark on the Indian film industry. Their work will continue to be celebrated and appreciated for years to come, and their legacy will inspire future generations of lyricists to create exceptional work that touches the hearts of millions.

The field of music has been a source of inspiration and entertainment for people all over the world for centuries. Throughout history, there have been countless talented singers who have made their mark on the music industry with their unique styles and exceptional vocal abilities. The categories of best female and male singers have seen some of the most incredible performers who have made an unforgettable impact on their audiences.

Starting with the category of best female singer, the performances of P. Leela, P. Madhuri, K.S. Chithra, Sujatha, Manjari, Shreya Ghoshal, Madhusree, Nithya Mammen, and Sithara have all been standout performances in their respective years. P. Leela's 'Ujjayiniyile' in the movie *Kadalpaalam* in 1969 was a beautiful performance that captured the hearts of many listeners. P. Madhuri's 'Rakilikal Paadi' in *Tharo Oru Janmam Koodi* in 1978 was a memorable performance that showcased her exceptional vocal range and control.

K.S. Chithra's 'Indupushpam' in *Vaishali* in 1988 was a stunning display of her vocal talent, while Sujatha's 'Varamanjaladiya' in *Pranayavarnangal* in 1998 left a lasting impression on

her listeners. Manjari's 'Mullulla Murikin' in *Vilapangalkappuram* in 2008 was a standout performance that showcased her incredible vocal range and control. Shreya Ghoshal's 'Neermathalapoov' in *Aami* in 2018 was a beautiful performance that showcased her exceptional vocal abilities and her ability to convey emotions through her voice.

Madhusree's 'Parayatharikil vanna' in *Kolambi* in 2019 was a memorable performance that captivated her listeners with her powerful and emotive voice. Nithya Mammen's 'Vaathukal' in *Sufiyum Sujathayum* in 2020 was a beautiful and soulful performance that showcased her exceptional vocal abilities. Sithara's 'Paalnilavin' in *Kaanekaane* in 2021 was a stunning display of her vocal prowess, leaving listeners in awe of her ability to convey the emotion and mood of the song through her voice.

Moving on to the category of best male singer, the performances of K.J Yesudas, Jayachandran, G. Venugopal, Sankar Mahadevan, Vijay Yesudas, Najim Harshad, Shahabas Aman, and Pradeep Kumar have all been standout performances in their respective years. K.J Yesudas' 'Ponthinkalalla' in *Kumara sambhavam* in 1969 was a beautiful performance that showcased his exceptional vocal range and control. Jayachandran's 'Raagam Sree Ragam' in *Bandhanam* in 1978 was a memorable performance that captivated his listeners with his soulful voice.

G. Venugopal's 'Unarumi Ganam' in *Moonampakkam* in 1988 was a stunning display of his vocal talent, while K.J Yesudas' 'Etho Nidathan' in *Ayal Katha Ezhuthukayan* in 1998 left a lasting impression on his listeners. Sankar Mahadevan's 'Kalyana Kacheri' in *Maadambi* in 2008 was a standout performance that showcased his exceptional vocal abilities and his ability to convey the emotion and mood of the song through his voice. Vijay Yesudas' 'Poomuthole' in *Joseph* in 2018 was beautiful.

Singing is the act of producing musical sounds with the voice and arguments regular speech by the use of sustained tonality, rhythm and a variety of vocal techniques. A person who sings is called a singer or vocalist. Professional singers usually build their careers around one specific musical genre such as classical or rock. They usually take voice coaches throughout their careers.

In the case of singers already said that in old times there is only few singers in Malayalam industry, because the producers only prefer experienced singers. At that time the recordings are live. So, only well experienced singer can sing a song in one day, others will definitely take two or three days and the cost will increase. So, that's why the music directors choosing experienced singers.

But now the technologies are changed so anyone can take a song at any time. Instruments are not playing live, there is separate recording section. There is also an other option to record the instruments by using midi-keyboard. The midi-keyboard is connected to the system, the instrument sounds are available in the software called VST (Virtual Studio Technology). And it can make the sounds of almost every instrument. So, now a single person can make tracks who knows everything about the track, instrument and sounding or either who is capable in singing and at least who knows to play atleast one instrument. The development in technology and social media gives more opportunity to newcomer singers.

So, through the project analyses the drastic change in Malayalam songs that happened between 1969-2022. A song is a magical element that gives a powerful feeling to every individual. A song can heal all types of sorrows in one's life and gives pleasure. As already mentioned the rating of the film also based on its songs,

background score, lyrics of the song etc. music becomes life for some, and for some others it is a profession.

Talking about the Malayalam film songs from 1969 to 2022, one can see a great change in the lyrics and composition of the song in the early years most of the Malayalam film songs were composed on a single raga and thala by the popular Carnatic musicians. The instruments used for composing a song would be traditional instruments which have now become rare pieces Tabla and flute played a major role in the composition of a Malayalam song. As songs have great importance in a Malayalam film, much importance is given to also orchestrations. Earlier a song was composed live and there were no retakes allowed because of the lack of new technologies as of now. Kerala had no recording studios earlier and so singers and music directors had to go up Chennai for their work. A singer was to sing a song with Sruthi, raga, thala and bhava. The expression of a song depended on the visual clipping of that particular song. Recording a song was a hectic work for both the singers and the composers as the recording would lag up to one day.

Talking about lyrics, they were penned mainly by well-known Malayalam poets. Lyrics were usually composed instantly by the writers as they were well experienced in the particular field. Most of the writers composed their songs by using decorative and attractive words. The core element of a song is its beautiful lyrics. Lyrics play a major part in controlling an individual's emotions such as sorrow, joy, and romance. But now-a-days the situation has changed as no one gives importance in the lyrics of a song and the background music of a song has taken the place of the lyrics. Now the lyrics in a song do not consist of any kind of meanings or decorative and attractive words as they are written as daily life conversations with common man's language.

Film *Chronic Bachelor* that was released during 2003 was the first film to introduce westernized music in Malayalam songs. This particular song was composed by Deepak Dev. For the composition of the song, he used western instruments like keyboard, guitar, jazz etc. In most of the old movies there are many westernized songs, but it lacked its clarity, technology, difference is sound engineering etc. The 2004 released movie *Four the People* introduced the genre Rap into Malayalam song. The person behind this was Jassie Gift, after the releasing of the song 'Lajavathiye', people judged that there was no relation or connection with the music or the lyrics because the lyrics was different from other lyrics as it was direct lyrics. This song gradually was popularized between the young generation and the people began accepting songs in these genres. On talking the list of state awards from the year 1969-2021 we see that the award is not being given to extreme classical music rather it is given to soothing songs and that are well accepted by the people. During the old time there were only few singers, music directors and lyricist. But nowadays there are so many singers with variety voices, so that the music directors now prefer for new voice. Music directors of today do not prefer classical based songs. Songs in this period is different from the past. Now the people hear all the genres of music through social media. So, there is a vast platform to explore different kind of music genres. So, people are ready to accept any kind of music. Also, the music directors trying to add different kinds of genres in Malayalam songs. So all know that some songs during this period is sung by very popular actors or actress in order to raise the rating of the song. The developed technology helps to develop the quality of the song even though the singers are not good in their singing. The trend seen in songs of this period is that it is the remake of the old songs. This remake of the song gives the song much more popularity than the original song.

Nowadays the devotional or religious songs are made into remix by adding pop and metal rock into it. Metal songs are also getting more popularity among the young generations. The best example of metal bands of Kerala is TDT (The Down Trodence), Chaos, Mother Jane, Bloody Wood etc. On the arrival of metal band in Kerala the new generation of people accepted this kind of songs and encouraged the composition of these songs. The Nadan Pattukal and the Tribal songs came to be taken into the Malayalam cinemas and it captured the attention and interest of the people.

On taking the year 1969 P. Leela had won the Kerala state award for best female singer category. Her voice is very sweet and is a classical singer. She received the award for the song 'ujjayiniyile gaayika' from the movie *Kadalpaalam*. On taking the year 2018 Shreya Ghoshal received the Kerala state award for the song 'Neermathalam' from the movie *Aami*. This song on compared to the song ujjayiniyile by P. Leela is much more melodies and the lyrics is also light. The lyrics of the song Ujjayiniyile is like a poem whereas the lyrics of Neermathalam is much more light lyrics with common words.

### Conclusion

This project observes the difference that took over from the year 1978 to 2021. In that time there are more options for choosing the best song and the singer for the award but now there are varieties of categories and wide options, but the preference is much more given to the songs in the melody genre. There are western type of songs, rap, melodies, fast numbers but the songs earlier had only a single category that is either classical or melodies. Before



music directors preferred one raga in a song, but now a great change has come into the usage of raga that is in a single song music director add an element of combination of ragas. On the arrival of Western music in Malayalam Remix became a great trend among the youngsters. In the Malayalam industries the Malayalam songs are now influenced by the western songs and the songs of today have no particular meaning and sense. The people accept these kinds of songs but these songs have only a small life for a small period and people gradually forget these songs whereas the old songs are always in the heart of the people and it always stays evergreen.

The music directions now prefer songs from other languages and copy them into Malayalam by changing the lyrics. The awards in these upcoming years are given to songs by selecting the much better one from these new generation categories. On comparing 'Sudhamanthram' and 'Freak penne' we can compare the change in music, lyrics, and the singers. The Malayalam film songs have lost all its purity and freshness as the songs of today are just an entertainment rather than a pleasure. Most common criticism faced by the Malayalam film songs is that the professional singers with variety voices are given a better platform in the Malayalam film industry. Through this project I tried to compare the changes that had taken over throughout these years up to 2022. The project ends with the conclusion that both are equally worth in quality. Because musical quality is more powerful in the past years but sounding and technicality is poor, but now technicality and sounding is much better when compared to past but musically the song value is poor. So, both are equally worth in quality.

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