

**Globalization and Culture**  
**Prof. Anjali Gera Roy**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur**


**Lecture – 13**  
**World Music III**  
**Baul**

In this unit, we are going to look at yet another devotional music, which was appropriated in the category of world music namely the Baul music of Bengal. And, it is interesting that Baul music and Sufi music, which we, which was globalized by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's Qawwali is also not just at the devotional music, but the two have close intersections that the Sufis or the Bauls were highly influenced by Sufi teachings. And, like Sufism, it is not just music; it is a way of life.


(Refer Slide Time: 01:11)



(Refer Slide Time: 01:13)




☞ An iconoclastic cult of Bengal (West Bengal in India and Bangladesh) with a distinctive philosophy of which Bauls are initiated members and Baul music an integral part (Dasgupta 1946: 83-9)




Let us look at the globalization of Baul music which is found in both parts of Bengal. Baul is defined as an iconoclastic cult of Bengal; both west Bengal in India and present day Bangladesh with a distinctive philosophy of which Bauls are initiated members and Baul music is an integrate, integral part.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:40)

Bāul[(Arabic *āṭiyā* (disciple/ friend; Sanskrit *vātulā* (madcap), *vyākula* (restless)



☞ Bauls are a group of mendicant minstrels strongly opposed to formal religious practices, rites, customs and scriptures who dedicate their entire lives to the realization of the inner soul or the *moner mānush* through the medium of music



Baul, it is Arabic aulya, which may disciple or friend and Sanskrit vatula or madcap or vyakula (restless). Now, Bauls are group of mendicant minstrels, similar to the Sufi fakir, who would go from the place to place begging for alms. And, they were strongly

opposed to formal religious practices, rites, customs and scriptures, who dedicate their entire lives to the realization of the inner soul or the moner manush through the medium of music.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:27)




Despite Bāuls' attempts to preserve musical purity, Bāul music's contact with other musical influences has transformed it over the years leading to the production of a new musical genre two decades ago.

Despite Baul's attempts to preserve musical purity, Baul music's contact with other musical influences has transformed it over the years, leading to the production of a new musical genre. And, this happen not in the era of globalization as we found in the case of other music; the transformation occurred much earlier.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:57)

## Transformation

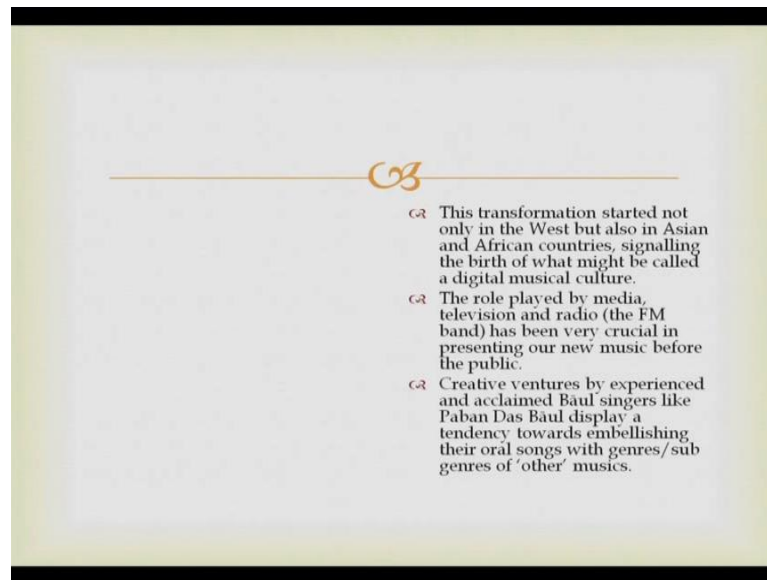


Began to be recorded and broadcast by the All India Radio around the 1960s that altered it significantly.

In the 1990s, however, a more radical transformation became evident in various aspects of Bāul music ranging from its structure, themes, style and modes of dissemination to systems of patronage.

It began to be recorded and broadcast in the same way as “Punjabi Geet” by the All India Radio around the 1960s; that altered it significantly. It was in the 1990s; however, a more radical transformation became evident in various aspects of Baul music ranging from its structures, themes, styles and modes of dissemination to systems of patronage.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:33)




And, it is these transformations that we are going to look at. This transformation started not only in the west, but also in the Asian and African countries signalling the birth of what might be called a digital musical culture. The role played by the media, television and radio, the FM band has been very crucial in presenting this new music before the public. Creative ventures by experienced and acclaimed Baul singers like Paban Das Baul displays a tendency towards embellishment of their oral songs with genres, sub genres of other music. I must point out that I am drawing on the work of my Ph.D. student; Sanchitha, Doctor Sanchitha Chowdry, who has done a very original work on Baul music and look at the emergence of Baul fusion music in the twentieth, in the last decade of the twentieth century with the onset of globalization. I recommend that you read her book for more details.

(Refer Slide Time: 04:53)

## Purna Das Baul

---




- ☞ Born in 1933 in Birbhum district, West Bengal, India, Purna Das Baul Samrat is the son of Nabini Das Kapha Baul and was born in the village Ekchakka near Rampurhat in Birbhum

Now, we begin with the founder. One of the earliest exponents of Baul music, who was born in 1933; there were several other Bauls before this. And, some of the Bauls in the past had been lost in and had been lost in (Refer Time: 05:18) we do not know their names. But, the tradition of Baul music dates back to several centuries. And, Purna Das Baul was considered one of the greatest exponents of Baul music. He was born in 1933 in Birbhum district of West Bengal, India. Purna Das Baul Samrat is the son of Nabini Das Kapha Baul, and was born in the village Ekchakka near Rampurhat in Birbhum.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:49)

---



- ☞ Dr. Rajendra Prasad, first President of the modern state of India, acknowledged Purna Das as Baul Samrat in 1967.
- ☞ In this capacity, Purna Das Baul Samrat was awarded the Indian President's Award by Shri K. R. Narayan, tenth President of India, in 1999

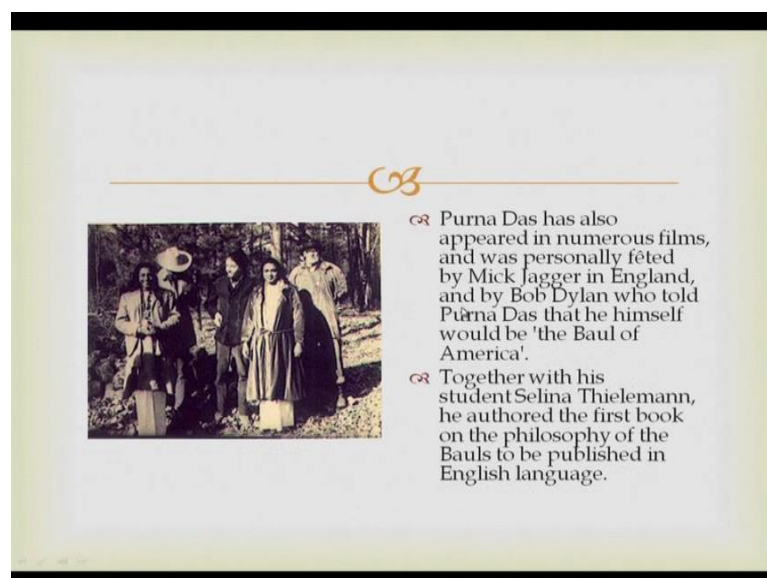
Now, Doctor Rajendra Prasad, the first president of India, acknowledged Purna Das Baul as the Baul Samrat in 1967. In this capacity, Baul Samrat, Purna Das Baul Samrat was awarded the Indian President's award by Shri. K.R. Narayan, tenth president of India in 1999. And, you can see this is in Shantinikethan and the kind of crowds that the Purna Das Baul drew in his a day.

(Refer Slide Time: 06:26)



And, we are going to listen to a clip from Samrat Purna Das Baul.

(Refer Slide Time: 07:42)





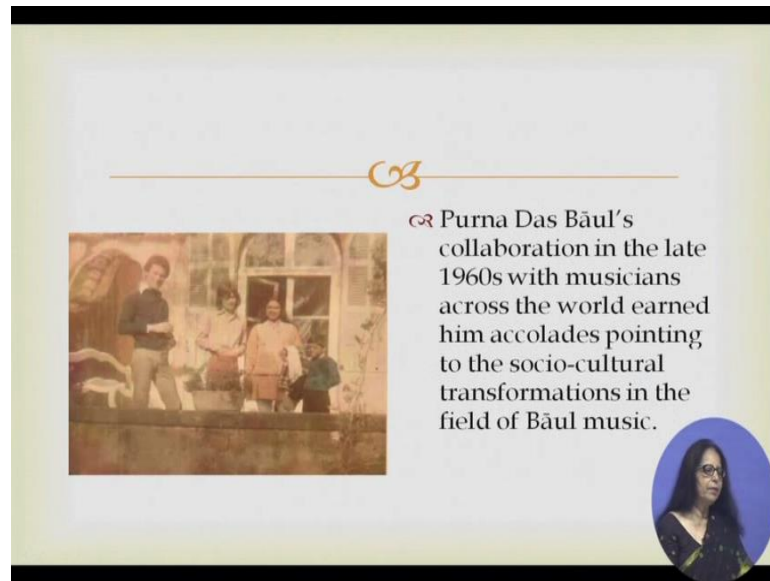
And, now we move on to the next stage which is the historic meeting between Purna Das Baul. And, he is also appeared in numerous films and was personally feted by Mick Jagger in England and by Bob Dylan, who told him that he would be the Baul of America. And, together with his student Selina Theilemann, he authored the first book on the philosophy of Bauls to be published in English language. Let us look at one of these collaborations.

(Refer Slide Time: 08:37)



So, we can listen to this, which is really a tribute. Baul rock, but this is another story. So, we retain the earlier narrative of world music.

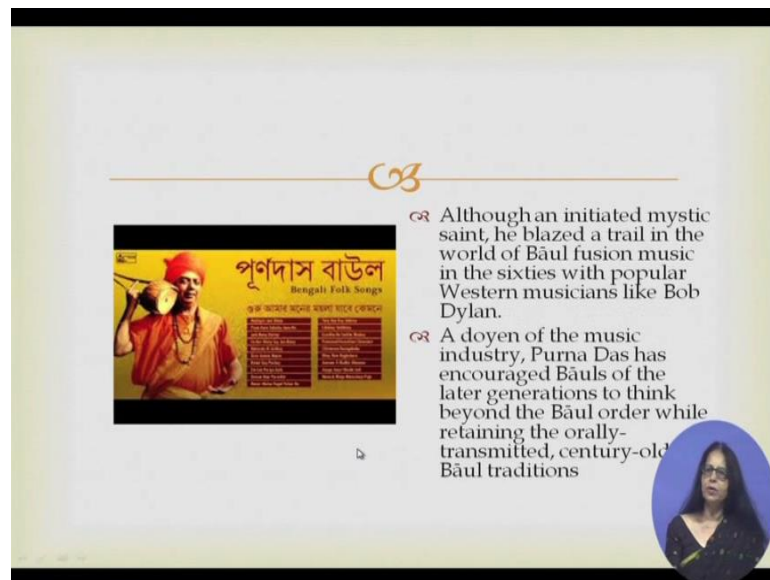
(Refer Slide Time: 10:17)



☞ Purna Das Baul's collaboration in the late 1960s with musicians across the world earned him accolades pointing to the socio-cultural transformations in the field of Baul music.

And look at Purna Das, who appeared, who was (Refer Time: 10:15) by Bob Dylan and his collaboration with 1960s musicians across the world earned him accolades pointing to the socio-cultural transformations in the field of Baul music. And, we have here; we have him with (Refer Time: 10:31).

(Refer Slide Time: 10:34)



☞ Although an initiated mystic saint, he blazed a trail in the world of Baul fusion music in the sixties with popular Western musicians like Bob Dylan.

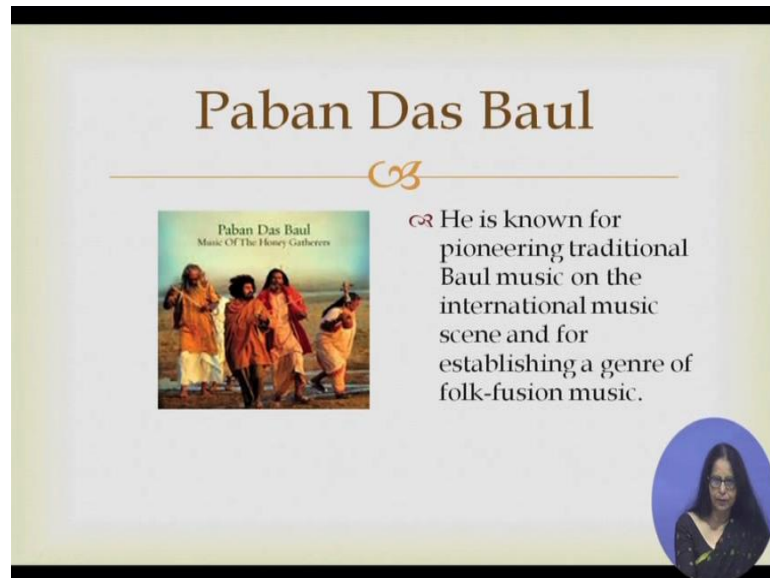
☞ A doyen of the music industry, Purna Das has encouraged Bauls of the later generations to think beyond the Baul order while retaining the orally-transmitted, century-old Baul traditions

Now, the important thing about Purna Das Baul is that although he was initiated as a mystic saint, he blazed a trail in the world of Baul fusion music in the sixties with popular western musicians like Bob Dylan. A doyen of the music industry, he



encouraged Bauls of the later generations to think beyond the Baul order, while retaining the orally transmitted, century-old Baul traditions much in the same way as the Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's Qawwali retained, while remaining within the Sufi tradition maiden for a into the world of commercial and world music. Baul music has been able to walk this titro.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:20)



The slide features a title 'Paban Das Baul' at the top center. Below the title is a decorative flourish. To the left is a small album cover for 'Paban Das Baul Music Of The Honey Gatherers' showing four Bauls in traditional orange and white attire. To the right of the album cover is a text block starting with a decorative symbol, describing Paban Das Baul's contributions to traditional Baul music and folk-fusion. In the bottom right corner, there is a circular portrait of a woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a dark top.


## Paban Das Baul

He is known for pioneering traditional Baul music on the international music scene and for establishing a genre of folk-fusion music.


From Purna Das Baul let us move one to Paban Das Baul, who is known for his pioneering traditional Baul music on the international music scene and for establishing a genre of folk-fusion music.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:40)

## Real Sugar




Born in Mohammedpur, a small village in the Murshidabad district of West Bengal, where his early musical influences were his father, and wandering baul singers.




He was born in Mohammedpur, a small village in the Murshidabad district of West Bengal, where his early musical influences were his father and wandering Baul singers.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:54)

## 

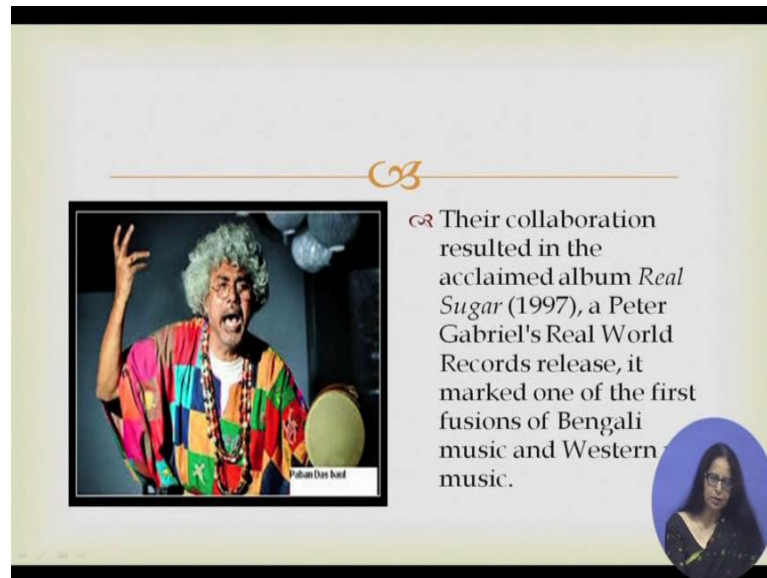


In 1988, Das Baul started collaborating with Sam Mills, a London-born guitarist who had performed with experimental, avant garde group Skidoo between 1979 and 1982.



In 1988, Paban Das Baul started collaborating with Sam Mills, a London born guitarist who had performed with experimental, avant garde group Skidoo between 1979 and 1982.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:14)

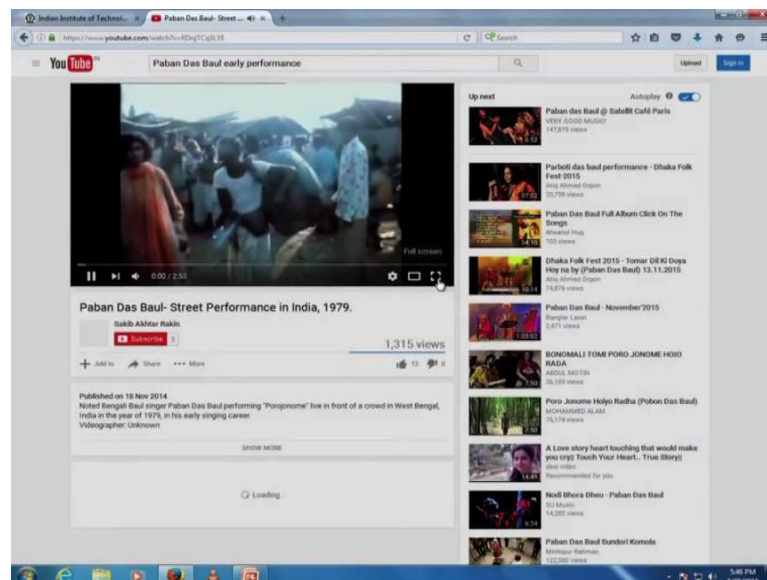


The slide features a central photograph of Paban Das Baul, a man with a white beard and a colorful, patterned shirt, performing. To the right of the photo, there is a decorative flourish and a paragraph of text. A small circular portrait of a woman is visible in the bottom right corner of the slide.

Their collaboration resulted in the acclaimed album *Real Sugar* (1997), a Peter Gabriel's Real World Records release, it marked one of the first fusions of Bengali music and Western music.

And, the outcome of this collaboration was an acclaimed album *Real Sugar* in 1997, a Peter Gabriel's Real World Records release; it marked one of the first fusions of Bengali pop music with western pop music. Let us listen to a Paban Das Baul and to *Real Sugar*.

(Refer Slide Time: 13:01)



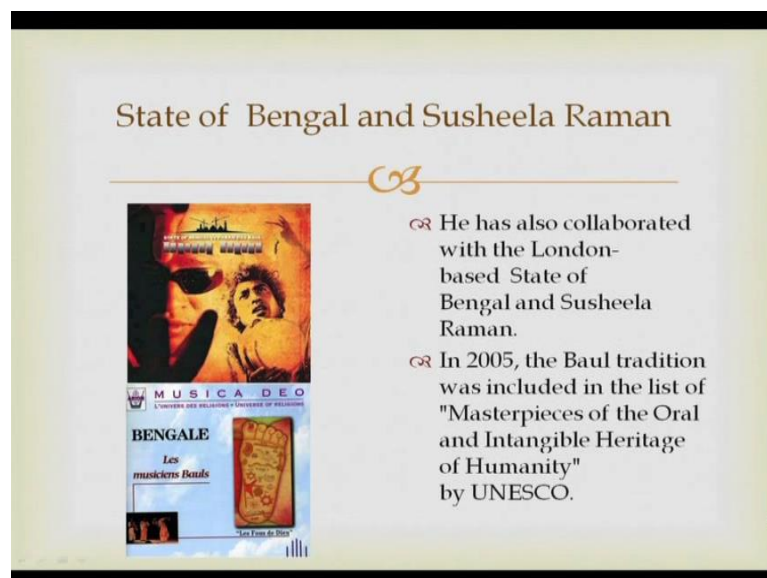
The screenshot shows a YouTube video player with the title "Paban Das Baul-Street Performance in India, 1979." The video is by Sakib Akhtar Rakin and has 1,315 views. The video description states: "Published on 18 Nov 2014. Noted Bengali Baul singer Paban Das Baul performing 'Pongonome' live in front of a crowd in West Bengal, India in the year of 1979, in his early singing career. Videographer: Unknown." The right side of the page shows a list of recommended videos, including "Paban Das Baul @ Sateff Cafe Paris VERY GOOD MUSIC" and "Paban Das Baul Full Album Click On The Songs".

Let us look at his early performances first. And that is Paban Das Baul performing. And, I must point out to you that these are the other context in which Baul music was performed in the past. And, it continues to be performed even today. If one were to go to the Shantinikethan, one would find Baul minstrels performing on the streets and

trains and begging for alms. So, here we have an early performance by Paban Das Baul, where he is performing in the traditional context of (Refer Time: 13:43), not in the stage. Like Sufi faqir, it is begging for alms is sung by lots of self, lots of ego, rather than (Refer Time: 14:07). That would be the context in which they would perform music in as a street performance in 1979, almost thirty-seven year ago. And, we see a much younger Paban Das Baul.

Let us move on to the next performance, where he performs with in, along with his collaborator in “Real Sugar”. And, see how the music gets mixed. So, let us listen to Paban Das Baul and his album “Real Sugar”. See that is Paban Das Baul and Sam Mills in say Real Sugar.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:35)



State of Bengal and Susheela Raman

- ✧ He has also collaborated with the London-based State of Bengal and Susheela Raman.
- ✧ In 2005, the Baul tradition was included in the list of "Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" by UNESCO.

And, now let us move on to the next album. He has also created; more recently collaborated with the London-based state of Bengal and Susheela Raman. And, in 2005 the Baul tradition was included in the list of masterpieces of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity by UNESCO.

Let us look at the more recent versions with the state of Bengal, which brings him in to the sonic scape of, which brings him to the sonic scape of UK and to a new generation of listeners. This is a (Refer Time: 17:20) which emerged him in the eighties in the UK around the same time as (Refer Time: 17:25) and we here, we have the state of Bengal collaborating with Paban Das Baul. And, with Susheela Raman, let us try the

collaboration with Susheela Raman. And, this is how Paban Das Baul looks now. We met him much earlier. He is performing now with Susheela Raman here, in another context, where it is enforced to kind of extra scene. Similar to the extra scene induced by Sufi music in Qawwali. And, this in a different context in a concert, and yet we find it simulates environment of participative performance.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:26)



**Kartik Das Baul**

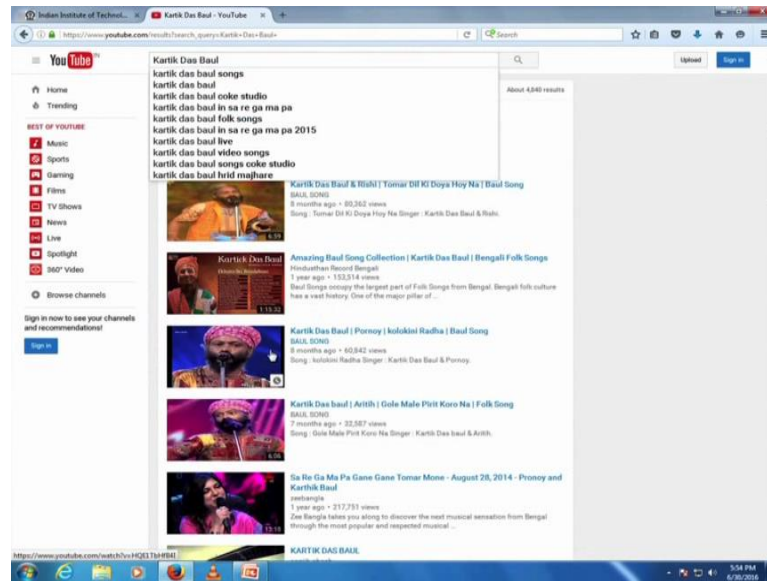


- ↳ Kartik Das Baul, performing with Taal Tantra, “floored” German guitarist Matthias Muller, says fusion maestro Tannoy Bose.
- ↳ Kartik started his international career in the US in 1985, and hasn’t looked back since.
- ↳ From mesmerising the Dalai Lama in Bangalore to entertaining the Japanese and the Taiwanese, he’s been there, done that.



From Paban Das Baul, we will move on to Kartik Das Baul. He is newest star on the Baul’s universe. And, he is claimed to fame. He has been performing much earlier, but he became a (Refer Time: 19:44), when he performed in the film, the “NameSake”, people came to know about his music. And, once again Kartik Das Baul is from Shantiniketan from Bolpur. He performed; he was, his performance with Taal Tantra “floored” German guitarist Matthias Muller. And, he started his international career in the US in 1985, and has not looked back since. From mesmerizing the Dalai Lama in Bangalore to entertaining the Japanese and the Taiwanese, he has been there, done everything. Now, let Us listen to Kartik Das Baul performing.

(Refer Slide Time: 20:39)



This is one of his best known songs. Let us listen to this. Let us look at some more performances by Kartik Das Baul. I cannot find his performances overseas, but let us look at this. From then again Vidhyasagar sethu and again Skala and Kolkata, we have Kartik Das Baul performing this music.

(Refer Slide Time: 22:37)



Now, Kartik Das Baul in concerts; I have heard even his concert with Bonnie in Bangalore in the Fire Flies Music Fest with the group Oikotan. And, I must tell you that he was one most popular member of the band. Already, he was the most popular member



of the bands, but he was, he had the audience spell bound with his (Refer Time: 22:56) are his involvement skills. He put everyone else, and Shadow Crow Heads landmark performance. Ok.

Now, with this I come to the final performance, in where we have we have a woman. Sorry, I wanted you to listen to the number from “NameSake”, which must be familiar to most people. This is the number which brought him celebrity status. The song he sung in the Namesake, I am afraid I cannot find it on YouTube.

Now, what interest me with Kartik Das Baul, who I interviewed myself was that Kartik Das Baul had absolutely no (Refer Time: 24:39) about performing in concerts or musical concerts or in films; because he said, “Like you, even I need to make a living”. But, the other side of Kartik Das Baul is that when one travels in to Shantinikethan, one can still find him begging for alms in the, singing and begging for alms and in the train to Bolpur. So, while preserving his musical authenticity and while still remaining part of the Baul side, Kartik Das Baul has been able to lend his music for commercial purposes while recognizing the need, the pragmatic need for a earning a living, and yet not compromising with his music.

(Refer Slide Time: 25:32)



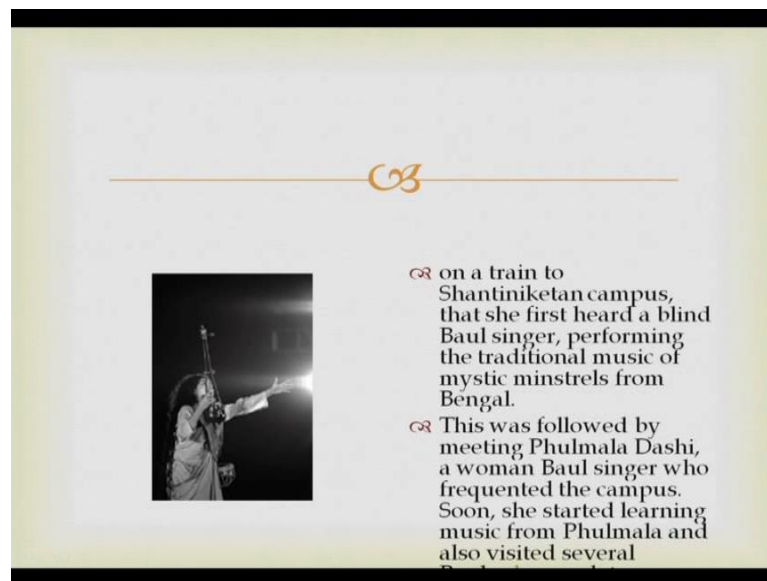
Parvathy Baul (born 1976) is a Baul folk singer, musician. One of the leading Baul musicians in India. Trained under Baul gurus, Sanatan Das Baul, Shashanko Goshai Baul in Bengal, she has been performing both in India and other countries since 1995.

With this, I will move on to the final example or case study of the globalization and transformation of devotional genre into world music is a female singer. This example is

interesting because we have a, female singer; and b, a female singer, who comes from a very middle class, instead of Baul background, unlike the other Bauls we met.

She is a Baul folk singer and a musician. And, one of the leading musicians in India, who trained under Baul gurus, Sanathan Das Baul, Shashanko Goshai Baul in Bengal and she is been performing both in India and other countries, since 1995.

(Refer Slide Time: 26:26)

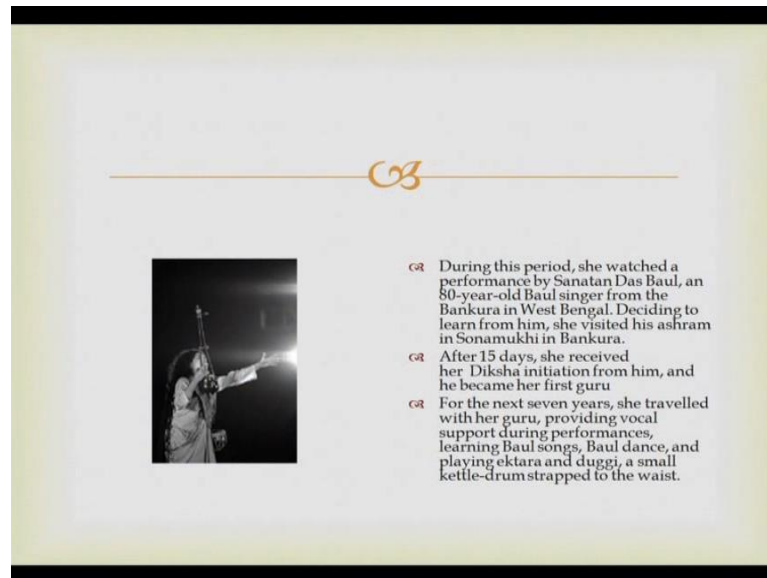


on a train to Shantiniketan campus, that she first heard a blind Baul singer, performing the traditional music of mystic minstrels from Bengal.

This was followed by meeting Phulmala Dashi, a woman Baul singer who frequented the campus. Soon, she started learning music from Phulmala and also visited several

Now, she was on a train to Shantiniketan campus as a student, like she first heard a blind Baul singer that is one of the places that everyone can find Bauls today, performing the traditional music of the mystic minstrels of Bengal. This was followed by meeting with Phulmala Dashi, a women Baul singer, who frequented the campus and she soon started learning music from Phulmala and also visited several places of Baul, where Bauls were located.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:07)



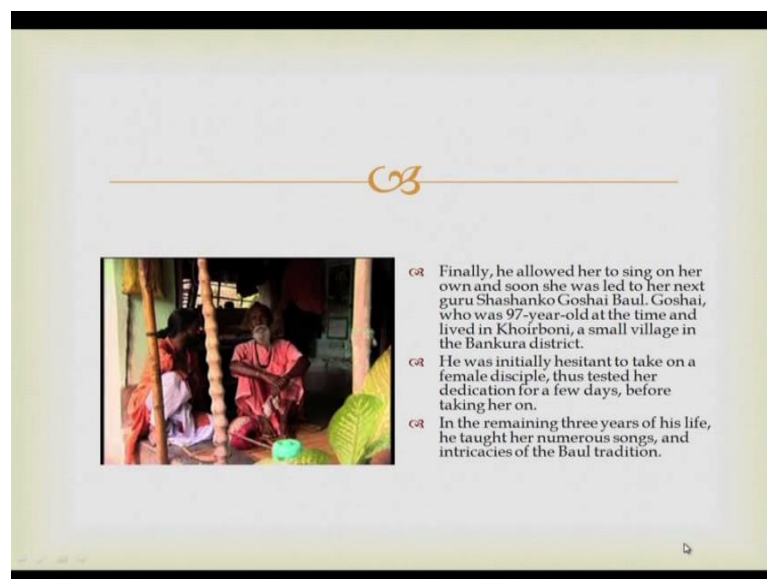
During this period, she watched a performance by Sanatan Das Baul, an 80-year-old Baul singer from the Bankura in West Bengal. Deciding to learn from him, she visited his ashram in Sonamukhi in Bankura.

After 15 days, she received her Diksha initiation from him, and he became her first guru.

For the next seven years, she travelled with her guru, providing vocal support during performances, learning Baul songs, Baul dance, and playing ektara and duggi, a small kettle-drum strapped to the waist.

During this period, she watched performance by Sanatan Das Baul, 80 year old Baul singer from the Bankura district in West Bengal. Deciding to learn from him, she visited his ashram in Sonamukhi district, Sonamukhi village in Bankura district. And, after 15 days she received the Diksha initiation from him, and he became her first guru. For the next seven years, she travelled with her guru providing vocal support during performances, learning Baul songs, Baul dance and playing ektara and duggi; a small kettle drum strapped to the waist.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:48)



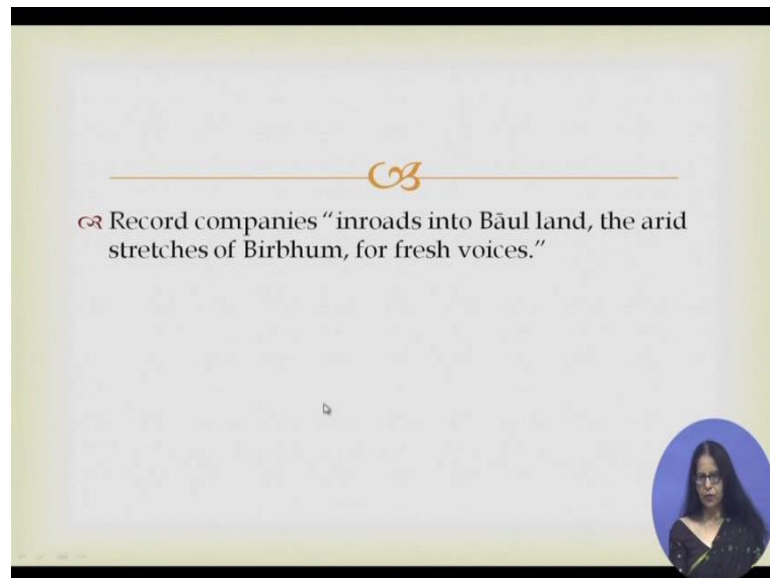
Finally, he allowed her to sing on her own and soon she was led to her next guru Shashanko Goshai Baul. Goshai, who was 97-year-old at the time and lived in Khoirboni, a small village in the Bankura district.

He was initially hesitant to take on a female disciple, thus tested her dedication for a few days, before taking her on.

In the remaining three years of his life, he taught her numerous songs, and intricacies of the Baul tradition.

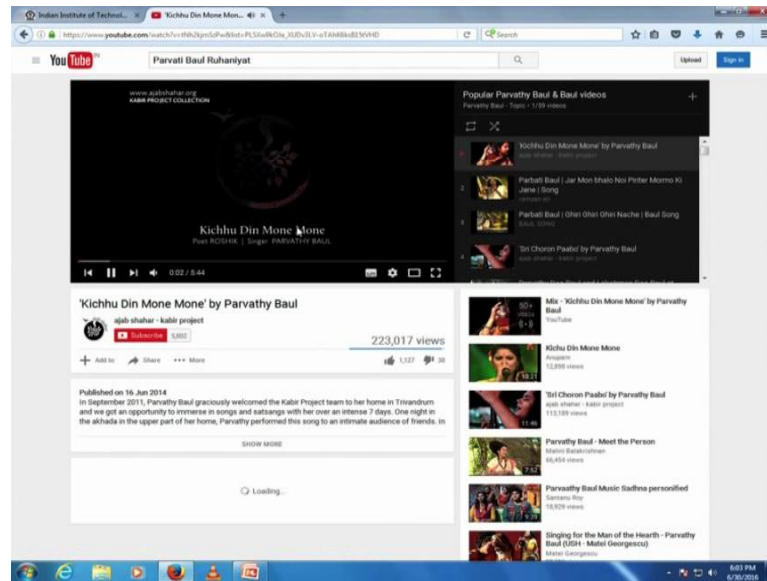
Finally, the guru allowed her to sing on her own and soon she was led to her next guru Shashanko Ghosh Goshai Baul. Goshai, who was 97 years old at that time and lived in Khoirboni, a small village in the Bankura district was initially hesitant to take on a female disciple because the Baul sect is still a very male dominated sect. Thus, he tested her dedication for a few days before taking her on. In the remaining three years of his life, he taught her numerous songs and the intricacies of the Baul tradition. So, this was Parvati's journey from a middle class young women, born in a middle class family and little educated middle class family, a student in Vishwa bharthi to having become a Baul, herself.

(Refer Slide Time: 28:49)



Now, since then record companies have been making companies “inroads into Baul land, the arid stretches of Birbhum, for fresh voices”. And, the consequence of that is the emergence of a number of fusion bands, Baul bands. I will not have to time to go into the fusion Baul bands, since we have been focusing largely on Baul's transformation from devotional music to world music. We will leave the popular music segment for another time.

(Refer Slide Time: 29:31)



But, let us listen to Parvati Baul. She often performs in India and in the Ruhaniyat festival. And, she is invariably the star of the show. Let us listen to her. So, that is one of Parvati Baul's albums. Let us see if we can find Parvati Baul performing live.

(Refer Slide Time: 31:00)

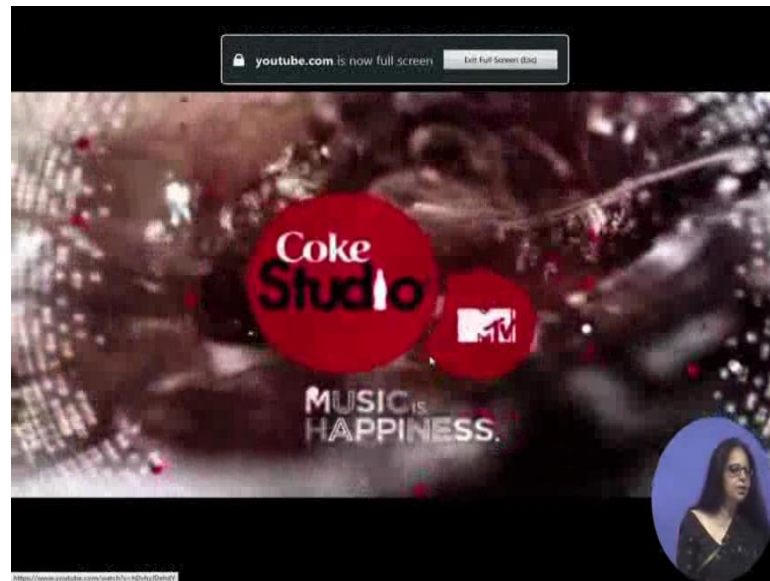


Let us see her performing live. So, what interested; this is Ruhaniyat 2014, when she is always one of the stars in the Ruhaniyat festival. Let us see her talking about journey to Baul music. (Refer Time: 32: 25) middle class women learned the Baul music and

became one (Refer Time: 32: 30) breaking into the monopoly of male dominant space, male dominated space and carving an (Refer Time: 32:39) for herself.

So, I will not have time to go in to. I wish I could play something from the fusion, Baul fusion bands, but I do not know whether we have any time.

(Refer Slide Time: 32:49)



So, let us look at some of the new fusion bands, which we were using for music. Just to give you the taste of Baul; the youth had now turned to Baul music because of the popularity enjoyed by Baul musicians across the world. And, this beat Moner Manush by Satyaki Banerjee and Babul Supriyo, which is recorded. It is not the best known examples, but am just giving you it because the Coke Studio as recorded it. So, Coke studio, which claims to make a (Refer Time: 33:40) preservation of traditional music has now taken the initiative of recording this music. And, here is a Moner Manush between Anupam Roy, Satyaki Banerjee and Babul Supriyo. The song was originally composed by Lalon Fakir. And, it is translated by Javed Aktar.

So, what I am trying to say is that lie, it is a just the popular and folk music that gets globalized, but some of the devotional musics, some the classical musics have also travelled on the different labels. If Bangda turn in any music in UK music such as Baul music corroborated the oriental (Refer Time: 34:39) of India as a mystical spiritual land through the marketing, through the recording and marketing of devotional music such as Qawwali and Baul song as world music. Though music does not seem to have any



boundaries in all music from the non-west is now available for the consumption of the west. And, it is repackaged and sent back to India and inspires coke studio to produce some of, to produce an album based on Lalon Fakir, who is the father of Baul music, who is, who is one of the legendary Bauls, whose songs are sung to the state in both parts of Bengal.