

Evolution of Indian Music and Origin of Musical Instruments

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ABSTRACT

The origin of Indian Music is said to be rooted in the 'Vedas'. As, the Sound which pervades the whole universe is 'Nadabrahma', the origin of Indian Music are considered as divine. It is said that the musician has to cultivate an attitude of self-abandonment, in order to fuse with the divine power, God Brahma who is said to be the author of the four 'Vedas', of which the 'SamaVeda' was chanted in definite musical patterns. Vedic hymns were sung in plain melody, using only three notes. The present article focuses on the evolution of Indian music and its various forms along with the origin of musical instruments.

Keywords: indian music, musician, evolution of indian music, origin of musical instruments

I. INTRODUCTION

God Brahma is deeply concerned in 'Samgana', while, Goddess Saraswati occupies and engaged intensively in musical instrument 'Veena'. If we see the picture of Goddess Saraswati, we can easily make an idea through the accessories like Veena in one hand and book and necklace of pearls in other hands that, Goddess Saraswati represents art and knowledge.

Music is famed as the most abstract and flexible form of all arts which exist as 'Sound'. Sound is the chief medium through which most of the species communicate with ease. Taking the clue from nature, primitive man evolved the sign-language as they found it as the most self-expressive method. The dancer resorts to the physical action while the singer resorts to the medium of human voice. Thus, the sign language and sound language are the earliest natural and common forms used for articulate speech, music and dancing. In the sound language, the complicated and delicate shades of emotions can be brought out with remarkable precision by affecting the musical quality of the vowels. This kind of musical utterance employing modulative changes of pitch and stress was easily understood by all races of mankind, whatever language they speak. The emotional and imitative sounds are the very first source language which proves the great antiquity of music.

Vocal Music is known as the base of all instrumental music according to various scholars. Also, the human throat is known as the very first musical instrument therefore both vocal music and instrumental music are mystically connected to each-other. It is quite appropriate that India, the classical store-house of manifestations of human mind, has kept alive almost all stages of expansion of the art of music.

II. THE ORIGIN OF INDIAN INSTRUMENT

The origin of Indian Instrumental Music goes back to pre-vedic period. However, continuing process of evolution of Indian Classical Music is easily apparent in the Vedic literature, Epics, Buddhist, Jain sources, Panini's Ashtadhyayi, Puranas and the surviving Sanskrit texts in music such as those of Bharata, Narada, Dattila, Matanga, Abhinavgupta, Nanyadeva, Someshvara etc. till we reach the time of Sarangdeva, whose Sangeet Ratnakara (1230 A.D.) contains entire record of evolution of Indian Classical Music in his time. His work epitomizes the typical instance of the Indian Classical Music in comprehensive and accurate manner, thus later works like Sudha Kalasha's

Sangitopanishatsaroddhara (14th century), Maharana Kumbha's Sangitaraja (15th century), Subhankara's Sangita Damodara (15th century), Pundrika Vittala's Sadaragachandrodaya (16th century) and other works have drawn much from Sangita Ratnakara. Indian music has attained its classical form by Sarangdeva's time. Music, like any creative art, is never static. We find that though the basic concepts about the Shruti, Grama, Murchana, Jatis, Svara, Grama-ragas, Gitis, Varna, Tala, Raga, Prabhandas etc. did not change, even from Matanga Muni's time, gram ragas and desi sangeet began to influence Indian Classical Music and as a result new musical forms emerged gradually replacing the older ones.

In the mean time, vageykaras and instrument players continued to create new ragas, music patterns, and instruments to enhance creativity and innovative urge. Thus there was "tremendous upsurge of tala construction" as is evident from the fact that while Bharata Muni mentions only five talas, by the thirteenth century the number had risen to one hundred twenty. With the establishment of the Muslims (Turks, Persians, Khurnis, Taziks, Afghans, and Mughals etc.) in

the era 1200-1600 A.D., a lot of new supplementaries had been introduced to the Indian Music, which was very valuable for the Indian Music. For example, the Muslims had brought with them advanced system of music and number of musical instruments like Rabab, Qanun, and Nay etc. The rudiments of Arab-Persian and Central Asian music were visible at the court of Delhi sultans and in the musical assemblies of the Nobles and Princes.

We find that in the establishment, the interaction was slow, but gradually, for various reasons which have been discussed at some length, Indian Classical Music came to acquire a pre-renowned position. At the same time, Muslim Music, particularly Instrumental Music continued to take delivery of beneficiation of the Sultans, the Mughal Emperors, as well as of such nobles who came to India. It took a long time for music to come to the form found presently in India.

The most important advancement in music was made between the 14th and 18th centuries. During this period, the music sung in the north came in contact with Persian Music and assimilated it, through the Pathans and the Mughals. It is then that two schools of music resulted, the Hindustani and the Carnatic. Hindustani Music adopted a scale of Shudha Swara Saptaka (octave of natural notes) and Carnatic Music retained the traditional octave. During this period, different styles of classical compositions such as Dhrupad, Dhamar, Khayal, etc. were contributed to Hindustani Music, along with many exquisite hymns, bhajans, kirtans, etc

It is very difficult to divide Indian music in various categories. Some most famous categories are:

- Indian Classical Music or Shastriya Sangeet
- Indian Semi-Classical Music or Up-Shastriya Sangeet
- Folk Music or Lok Sangeet
- Religious Music or Dharma Sangeet
- Popular Music or Jana Sangeet

The detail study is given below for various categories.

III. INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC OR SHASTRIYA SANGEET

Indian Classical Music is bound by certain laws. This is also known as 'Art Music' or 'Kalatmak Sangeet' or 'Raagdari Sangeet' or 'Shastriya Sangeet'. In Indian Classical Music, emotions are expressed through a particular raga, though the lyrics or composition has its own importance. This can be effective if the musician renders the raga in its various stages and moods. This is not the case with folk music, where the musical notes have less value and the poetic content has greater impact and rhythm plays a very important role.

IV. INDIAN SEMI-CLASSICAL MUSIC OR UP-SHASTRIYA SANGEET

Indian Semi-Classical or Up-Shastriya Sangeet is also known as 'Light Music'. It is less rigid than classical music and does not require the knowledge of classical ragas and rhythms on part of audience. In such music, there is a proper blend of poetry, tune and tempo. But, less attention is paid to the purity of raga and more towards content of compositions.

V. FOLK MUSIC OR LOK-SANGEET

A reasonable statement that can be made for folk music is that it has no conscious grammar, even if it changes historically like classical music. Folk Music has different forms depending on the region it belongs to. With flexibility in its expression, it is not bound by laws or any set pattern. Folk Music has its peculiar expressions and emotions and has established a tradition of its own. Songs and lyrics of folk music portray the common life of the villagers.

VI. RELIGIOUS MUSIC OR DHARMA SANGEET

Religious Music or Dharma Sangeet in India consists of three subexpressions, described as 'Upasana-Sangeet', 'Bhakti-Sangeet' (Devotional), and 'Goodhatma' (Mystical). Musically, the second sub-expression is more prominent and relevant in the present context.

VII. POPULAR MUSIC OR JANA SANGEET

Popular Music is simple and very easy to understand by an ordinary man. That is why popular music is called 'Jana-Sangeet'. Popular music can be identified as a musical product of numerous subcultures that co-exist in a society. New waves of migraines, temporary or a sudden fascination of the general public with religious cults, changing but fierce commitment to political or social movements, and 'explosive' way to new musical formulae, are some of the more obvious factors responsible for emergence and propagation of popular music. Another important factor is the growing middle class population and acceleration in process of urbanisation. In addition, concepts of leisure time, desire, and capacity for recreation demands a specific kind of music identified as Popular Music. The mass-media functions not only to propagate popular music but also act as a major shaping influence. Hence, media-idioms, time-restrictions / allocations,

available transmission facilities, and other operational features of the media govern the techniques, forms, as well as content of Popular Music.

VIII. ORIGIN OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Musical Instruments have very important role in the Indian Classical Music from ancient times. Whenever we perceive the word, musical instrument, a question that comes in our mind is what is a musical instrument?

Any object which produces musical sound (Nada) is known as musical instrument. In India, 'Vadya' is the most popular synonym of musical instrument. It is a device created or adapted for the purpose of making musical sounds. The human voice, being the most available of all sounds, would be prominent in the music of early times. But still we may be surprised at the degree of importance of instrumental music existed in those times.

Music and Musical instruments have become so sophisticated and specialised now that rarely do we pause to search for their roots. In the simpler acts of life; we take them for granted, but we must ponder over this a little more to understand the deeper relations to social developments. As we probe into this area we begin to see that musical instruments might have had their beginning in nonmusical activities. Now-a-days, musical instruments have become so classy and specific, but the roots of these sophisticated musical instruments are hidden in the simpler acts of life. In the beginning, musical instruments were found in tools and activities. Just as music itself begins in the hazy mists of some rhythmic melodic impulses of man, instruments also have vague origins. Indeed, the first instrument is the human body itself which is used for keeping rhythm: stamping, clapping, and beating the thighs. This was the reason why our ancestors called human voice the Gatra Veena (Body Veena) or the Daivi Veena (God-given Veena) or the Daravi Veena (Veena of wood). The only definition we can think of is - any object which can produce musical sound is a musical instrument. It can be anything from a piece of stone to the most complicated computerized electronic tone synthesizer. All the sounds and noises that we hear around us are complicated, irregular sounds of different pitches within the range of audibility. Therefore, they are called 'noises'.

A musical note is a continuous vibration of constant pitch and can be practically produced, though imperfectly, by several means namely:

- (1) By strings under tension in string instruments
- (2) By reed instruments
- (3) By wind instruments
- (4) By bells
- (5) By percussion instruments
- (6) By the human voice which is a combination of all listed above

According to Sangeet Makranda, there are five types of sound, four of which are put on through Nakh (plucked), Vayu (wind), Charm (membrane) and Loha (metal) and one is natural, i.e. Divine.

The Musical Instruments at the time of Indus-civilisation were underdeveloped. The state of today's musical instruments has observed a series of development. If we analyze the musical instruments of ancient times, medieval times and modern time, we will definitely find that the musical instruments of older times were very simple. As the time passes, they were modified by the scholars according to convenience and manner of artist. The musical instruments were made more attractive and presentable with the help of science and industrialisation. No one knows how musical instruments originated? Though there is no answer to this evidentially, but in literature we find some very significant proclamation about origination.

Long before man evolved words and language for communication, he must have hummed and whistled in moments of elation and broken into primitive sound patterns that marked the beginning of primordial song. Gradually, as he came to associate pleasing sounds with pleasant states of mind, he started making music with conscious effort, drawing instinctively upon the euphonies sounds of nature all round him i.e. the chirping of birds, the gurgling of brooks and the whistling of wind in the reeds that probably was the genesis of tunes.

At the same time the mankind must have also become conscious of rhythm in the staccato tapping of woodpecker's beak on a tree trunk, the cadenced sound of water dripping down a rock face, the rhythm of the waves and his own heartbeat and breath. There must have been times when he felt the urge to make music to a definite beat, slow or fast depending upon his mood.

In the next stage, when mankind began to think about the sounds that his ear and heart enjoyed, and set to add a dimension of skills to divert himself better with song, that was the beginning of art music.

Music of the ancient world has come a long way from its primitive stage. Still it should not be forgotten the titanic struggle of man to relieve music from the clutches of the primitive society, to ascertain its laws firmly on nature, to give it the power and subtlety to express what human beings feel – despair, triumph, love, awe and hope. For the past two or three centuries, scores of philosophers and scientists have attempted in vain to get the truth. Even, science has yet to clear the mist and bring to limelight the earlier centuries that witnessed the shadows of Gods, who in a Supreme act of creation had invented music. Various theories regarding the origin, such as, that singing is an expression whose origin is purely sexual; that it generated from rhythmic movements (rhythm theory) especially from those performed while walking; that it was derived from sounds uttered under the stress of emotions; is an imitation of the cries of animals and

birds and that it evolved from spoken language that has considerable misgivings. However, far back, we trace mankind we fail to see the origin of music.

Discoveries of primitive musical instruments at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa show the remarkable continuity of artistic tradition from the days of Indus Civilisation to the historical period. Despite the vast changes that have taken place in various aspects of life between the ancient civilisation of the Indus valley and the historical period, there appears to be an underlying unity, which is responsible for this continuity of artistic life of music and dance. Music is inseparable and indispensable accompaniment to dancing. It appears that some kind of music was cultivated by the Indus valley people and it seems probable that the earliest specimen of string, wind and percussion instruments were used by them.

Of the three main families of Musical Instruments as mentioned above, the percussion instruments are the oldest and have various types. This group takes us back to more primitive stage of human development. Even, animals make use of the sound by beating with beak or paw on resounding objects, like hollow trees. They do so, in order to notice prey or to frighten away enemies. This is based on the acoustic principle that the vibrating matter when beaten by the impact of some external device, namely hammer, club, stick or fist, produces waves of sound which are carried forth to the receiving ear of the listener. In other words, the capacity of vibration stands in direct relation to the strength of sound. On the basis of these un-identified sounds afterward men understand the concept of laya.

The origin of percussion instrument is linked to God and Goddess, as Shiva used to play Damru (a percussion instrument) and Veena is originated by Goddess Saraswati. But, later on these statements were criticised by some scholars. Man might have heard the rhythmic movements like walking, the sound of hands on his bare body especially on the thighs and stomach, sound of animals and birds etc. and a lot of voices which are unknowingly generated by nature.

The material that was used for the manufacture of percussion instruments was the skin of animals. Even now it is being used. It must be stretched and tightened over a frame to produce a sound of considerable volume. The Indus people must have fully realised these acoustic problems and principles, and thus evolved the tambourine type of drum. Specimens of this variety can be seen in the hands of two male figurines of baked clay. The instrument which is circular in shape is held against the performer's chest by a sling round his neck. It is played by both the hands. Since this is the first result of a long experiment, the instrument naturally appears small and marks the first stage of development in the process of evolution of percussion instruments. Gradually, man started making musical instruments which were of metal.

The specimens of wind group are generally referred to as whistles which are common in Mohenjo-daro. These must have been used by the officials of the place to summon people as also to announce the time of day. These whistles are in the form of bird, pear, jar etc. The bird-shaped whistles are hollow within and with a small hole at the back near the tail, when blown into produces a shrill sound. The pedestal-like bases with which the birds are provided afford stability and allow easy handling. The height of this whistle is 5.7cm. Another variety of the whistle is made of very hard baked pottery. It is crudely made pear-shaped object with a small hole at the top and another on the side. Various modulations of musical sounds can be produced by blowing into the top-hole and using the lateral one as a stop. There is yet a third variety, which is apparently a miniature jar.

Its rim had been rubbed down to enlarge the hole slightly. The second hole is pierced near the mouth-hole. The instrument is bulging in the center like pot with a narrow bottom. From its shape the instrument appears to be the prototype of magudi. The additions of two long tubes, one inserted into the mouth-hole while the other fixed at the bottom of the Indus valley whistle converted the instrument, in subsequent period into a magudi which is commonly seen in the hands of snake charmers.

Round pottery rattles with small pellets of clay inside, are well known to Mohenjo-daro. From the number of these clay castanets discovered in the Indus sites we may very well conclude that they provided additional rhythmic accompaniment along with the drums to the ritual dances. A pair of another type of castanet resembling modern kartala has also been found. Specimens of rudimentary string instruments can be seen in some of the pictographs. If we are correct in identifying certain signs in the script as harps and lyres we may surprise that at least one musical instrument of this kind was in common use.

IX. CONCLUSION

Music is considered as a performing art which is the medium of expressing the feelings of human pleasures. In simple words, we can say that Music is directly related to soul. But, as we refer to the definition of Music, we can say that: "Music is the combination of three fine arts namely: singing (vocal), playing instruments (instrumental) and dance". Music is a gift for all human beings in the form of fine arts. It is said that, God himself is personified as 'Nadabrahma'. Indian Music is among the oldest forms of Music in the world. The present study elaborated the evolution of indina music and types of common musical instruments and their importance.

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