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RESEARCH ARTICLE

EVOLUTION OF MUSIC

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Abstract

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Introduction:-

Evolution of Music:

The tradition of singing in India was born out of a cultural synthesis of several musical traditions: the Vedic chant tradition, the ancient indigenous regional traditions both in the Dravidian region and later the advent of the equally ancient Persian tradition of Musiqi-e-assil, not to talk of myriad folk traditions prevalent in the land of Bharat. India being one of the ancient historical countries, the hoary civilization contained numerous languages and cultures born of out several influences and confluences which position it on a unique firmament on the world map.

Music or Sangeetam as we term it comes under the 'Chatushshasti kala' (64 art forms), also called 'Lalitha kala' or fine arts which come under the 'Humanities' as compared to 'Sciences' of modern branches of knowledge and studies. These art forms essentially appeal to the subtle layers of the refined mind (heart) through the sense organs. Since their essential appeal is on an emotional level, they develop finer sensitivities which in turn make for higher culture and good. Of these, dance, music, drama and certain other forms of story-telling (Harikatha, kathakalakshepa) are termed as performing arts since they are audio-visual and appeal to a large number and are platform, show-worthy.

Music is the language of emotion appealing through the ear. It is universal in the sense, it has its origin in Nature which is omniscient; it appeals not just to human beings but also to all living beings like trees, birds and animals. The fact then, is that music recognizes no boundaries, geographical, linguistic, communal is self-evident. Modern medical research has proved beyond a point that music is therapeutic in as much as it cleanses the mind of impurities like savagery and acts as a curative to many a psychosomatic problem which in turn manifests as physical illnesses. Music being an offshoot of sound in the first place has a power to kindle creative faculties, equanimity, concentration that would go a long way into sharpening the intellect. An intellectual, creative mind is a boon to society and the nation in general. Music in India has always been considered divine and its practice as a spiritual means for Self-realisation. The very early origin of musical notes were drawn by man from Nature's sounds and refined into a coherent melody. 'Shadja madathimayooro; gaavatsrushabhabhaashinah; ajavikanthugaandharam; kraunchahkanatimadhayam; pushpasaadharaney kale pikahkoojathipanchamam; daivathamheshateyvaaji; nishadambhrumhatheygajah||' is the Sanskrit verse which states that origin of the solfa syllables, namely, Shadja (Sa) from the peacock; the Rishabha (Ri) was drawn from the OX; the Gandhara (Ga) emerged from the bleat of a goat while the Madhyamam (Ma) 1* 64 Subjects of study in ancient gurukula system from the heron.

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The Panchamam was the cooing of the kokilabird (nightingale); the neigh of a horse gave rise to the Daivatham (dha) and the elephant's yell gave rise to the Nishadam (Ni). And then came into being the Saptaswara or the seven fundamental sounds that laid the foundation of sangeetam/formatted music. This eventually formed the basis of classical music as we now come to it. It was first formalized in preserving the Sruti texts, primarily the text of four Vedas and the manner in which they had to be read/chanted. Prosody and chanting were thus of vital importance. They were enshrined in the two Vedangas (limbs of knowledge) called Shiksha (pronunciation, chants) and Chhandas (prosody). Till date, these remain as the keys to Brahmanic (Veda parayanam) educational system. Samavedic chant:

Same Veda, the third among the Vedas, is often called the mother of our music. The formal aspects of chanting the Vedas are delineated in the Samaveda, with certain aspects, like the link between chanting and meditation, is elaborated in the Chandogya Upanishad (ca. 8th Century BCE). The priests involved in these ritual chants were called 'Saamans' and a number of ancient musical instruments such as the conch (shankh), the lute (Veena), flute (bansuri), trumpets and horns were associated with this and later practices of ritual singing. smriti). Vedic hymns were chanted in a metrical form and this tradition of recitation was handed down by way of oral teaching and committing to memory (sruti Sanskrit tradition). The Sama Veda outlined the ritual chants for the rites during the yagna offerings to various singing the verses of the Rg Veda particularly Gods. The Sama Bedas proposed a tonal structure consisting of seven notes, named in the descending order as krushta, prathama, dwitiya, tritiya, chaturtha, ma ndra and atiswara. These are supposed to refer to the note of the bamboo (venu), which was the only fixed frequency instrument those days. The second note is called prathama (meaning 'prime', i.e., produced when only the first hole is closed). The topic of music is dealt with extensively, in the Valmiki Ramayana (the first Itihasa or epic in Sanskrit). Sage Narada was said to be an accomplished musician, as was Ravana, the monarch of Lanka. Goddess Saraswathi with her divine musical instrument, the veena, is viewed as the muse of music. The celestial beings, Gandharvas were known to be masters of music and the Gandharvabaani or style looks to music as ethereal. Actually music is also called by the name 'Gandharvagaanam'. It is 2* The third among the four vedas : Rg, Yajur, Sama, 4 Adharva.