

Contributions of Jayadev to Odissi Music



ARTS

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ABSTRACT

The quintessence of Odissi music is discerned in the intrinsic vision of the learners and listeners, who repose in Gitagovinda, for its traits like composition, improvisation, raga repertoire, treatment of rhythms and rhymes, usage and genre. Sri Jayadev has not only originated a specific music tradition, systematic form and definite melodic pattern, raga-tala repertoires but also built a socio-cultural community. The purity, sanctity and characteristic features of Odissi music have been enriched, refined and pervaded its horizon through Gitagovinda of Sri Jayadev. We have the first evidence of Odissi music in an articulated and systematic form from the versifications of Gitagovinda. Gita Govindam is best characterized as a dramatic lyrical poem. It is expressed as a cycle of songs interspersed with recitative metrical forms of classical Kavya verses functioning as independent grammatical and esthetic entities. Some of the descriptive verses stand out as exquisite paintings that stand on their own. Some contain dense descriptions and complex ideas. Alam-kara or classical ornamentation is used to expand meaning. Alliterations (Anuprasa) and end-rhymes (Ant-AnuprAsa) occur occasionally.

There is a glorious tradition of music in Odisha. The standard of music in Odisha during the earliest period cannot be traced. From sixth century to eleventh century Odisha witnessed unprecedented cultural activities both in field of music and architecture. Poet Jayadeva composed Gitagovinda and for the first time in Odisha lyrics were composed by applying tune. Gitagovinda was performed by Devadasis in temple in honour of Jagannath and the form of music which has been sung in the world famous Jagannath temple at sacred Puri-Dham as a part of the temple services gradually took the form of traditional Odissi music as known today

It is the most developed and systematized form among all the varieties of Odishan music existing now-a-days. Mostly it is performed in shape of Raga-Ksydrageeta-Prabandha-Gana, a form of Indian classical music evolved by the celebrated poet-singer Sri Jayadev. Jayadev ushered a new era in the history of Indian Classical music, which can be rightly identified as Jayadev music. This great composer, musician, a saint-poet of Odisha was a great devotee of Lord Jagannath. He was born in first half of the 13th century A. D. in village Kenduli in Puri district. He gave a new shape, taste and color to Indian classical music through his ever glittering and incomparable composition of Gitagovinda. The ingredients of the classical music like Raga-Tala-Geeta and Chhanda of Jayadev was introduced in the services of temple of Lord Jagannath and was accepted as temple music of Odisha.

Sri Jayadev has composed this illustrious Gitagovindas as per the specifications of Udramadgathi prabritti, Ardha magadhi Padasrita giti, Bhinna swarasrita giti and navatalasrita giti. The songs of Gitagovinda are set to talas (rhythms) such as Rupaka Nisarah Jati Astatala, & ekatali, which are included in navatalas, commonly used in Odissi till to-day. The raga repertoire used in Gitagovinda such as Malava, Gurjjari, Vasanta, Ramakiri, Malavagouda, Gundakiri, Karnata, Desakhya, Desavaradi, Bhairavi, Varadi etc. The poetic compositions of Jayadev was so rich and superb that it had a perpetual influence on the composers of Odisha in the medieval and even in modern period. In course of time Bhajan, Janana and Oriya songs under light classical groups were accepted as traditional music of Odisha.

In Odissi, the words used in Drutala (speedy rhymes) are called padis. Its use is the special feature of Odissi music. Use of Navatala (nine rhymes) is also famous in Odissi music. Besides, Dasatala (ten rhymes) and Egaratala (eleven rhymes) are commonly used in Odissi music.

Associated with the popular dance form of Odissi, the Odissi music is a distinct form of Indian Classical Music. In fact, it is an outcome of the continuous evolution of earliest Indian classical music. Like Hindustani and Carnatic systems, Odissi music is a separate system of Indian classical music and has all the essential as well as potential ingredients of Indian Classical form. Odisha could imbibe all the waves of classical music beginning from 'Sama-Gana' to Raga 'Prabandha Gana', but finally it assumed the present form of "Ragaksyudra-Geeta-Pravandha-Gana". This system is popularly styled as traditional Odissi music.

The Sovaneswara and the Brahmeswara and the Madhukeswar temple inscription reveal that dance and music was introduced in the temples as a part of daily rituals. Music tinged with religion, attained mass appeal and royal patronage. As such the royal patronization of Art and Culture made the Oriya music developed and enchanting for enjoyment of both Gods and Goddesses and human beings. This tradition is still continuous in its different manifestations. Further historical evidences suggest the existence of by- music in Odisha existing in the form of Triswari, Chaturswari, and Panchaswari, that was modified into the classical style in 4th century A.D. From 16th century onwards treatises on music began to be compiled in Oriya. They were Sangitamava Chandrika, Gita Prakasha, Sangita Kalalata and Natya Manorama. Sangita Sarani and Sangita Narayana were written in the early 19th century.

Style of Music

The Odissi 'Sangeeta' (music) is composed following the styles ('Riti') of four classes of music such as 'Dhrubapada', 'Chitrapada', 'Chitrakala' and 'Panchali':

Dhrupada:

The Dhrupada or "Ghosha" meaning the first line or lines to be cited repeatedly has importance in Odissi music.

Chitrakala:

The use of art in music is called "Chitrakala". Kavisurya Baladeva Rath, the renowned Oriya poet wrote lyrics which are the best examples of chitrakala.

Chitrapada:

Chitrapada means the arrangement of words in an alliterative style.

Panchali:

Panchali means multi-lined lyric ('Bahupadayukta Gita'). It is divided into two types - 'Adhruva' and 'Sadhruva'. In 'Sadhruva Panchali' there is a Ghosha (The first line or lines to be cited

repeatedly). Odissi 'Choupadis' (Quadrants) are the best examples of Sadhruva Panchali. 'Choutisha' belongs to the category of Adhruva Panchali.

Another unique characteristic of Odissi music is the use of Chhanda. Chhanda (metrical section) contains the essence of Odissi music. The chhandas are composed combining bhava (theme), kala (time), and swara (tune). The chaurisha represents the originality of Odissi style. All the thirty-four letters of the Oriya alphabet from 'Ka' to 'Ksha' are used chronologically at the beginning of each line. A special feature of Odissi music is the padi which consists of words to be sung in druta tala (fast beat). Odissi music can be sung to different talas: navatala (nine beats), dashatala (ten beats) or egar tala (eleven beats).

Just like Hindustani & Karnatic music, traditional Odissi music has its own Melas, Ragas, Talas and Aravandhas, which are rendered in different styles. Some characteristic features of these are as follows:

Saras and the Shuddha-Swara-Saptaka

The tonal arrangement of the Nishada-Murchhana of the Saraj-Grama is accepted the Sudha-Swara-Saptak or the natural scale comprising 22 Srutis set in an ascending order. Among these 22 Srutis, the seven Suddha Swaras are practically used.

Besides these there are also five Vikrita Swaras. The seven notes in an ascending order are known as Saptak.

Melas:

Thirty-two Melas have been introduced in this system for classification of the Ragas.

Ragas:

Ragas have been divided into five groups such as Group A to Group E.

Talas:

Already twenty Talas are found to be in vogue in this system and most of them are having similarities in their matras with those of Hindustani and Carnatic Talas but having difference in their rhythmic structures or compositions and names.

Pravandhas:

Compositions used in classical music especially in vocal music, are known as Pravandhas. The compositions of Shree Geeta Govinda & other Sanskrit works are categorized under two types of Pravandhas such as: Divya Alikrama, Chitrapada and Ksyudra-geetaPravandha.

The evolution of Odissi music owes a lot to Jayadev and his composition the "Geeta Govinda". The compositions of Geeta Gobinda were written with an object to be sung. As such they were musical to start with. In addition he indicated the classical ragas prevailing at the time in which these were to be sung. Prior to this, there was the tradition of chhandas which were simple in musical outline. Ingredients of classical music like Raga, Tala, Geeta, Chhandas etc of Sri Geeta Govinda were introduced in the services of the temple of the Lord Jagannath and accepted as the temple music of Odisha. This, over a period of time, led to the culmination of Odissi that we know today. In Gitagovinda Sri Jayadev has not only embellished his lyrical poems with music and melodious versifications but also with philosophy, metaphysics, ontology and mysticism. His music is meant not only for the purpose to please but to enlighten through entertainment creating aesthetic emotions, a sense of spiritual love, supreme beauty and perpetual peace. Therefore Gitagovinda has maintained ascendancy since it is written.

Gita-govinda was composed at a time when Indian classical music was not divided into two regional streams, namely Hindustani and Karnatic, and thus was one single tradition. The oldest manuscripts of Gita-govinda prescribe the eleven ragas (mentioned earlier) to the twenty four songs. But none of them offer any kind of notation by which the exact music may be rediscovered. There is also no record of any traditional system of transmission, i.e. from guru to shishya. Thus, there is perhaps no means of tracing the original musical structure of the Ashtapadis. Some of the ragas have faded with time (lupta raga), and others have lost their original nature. The Gitagovinda Seva was being performed for centuries by the Maharies/Debadasis. The tradition of dance and music performing in temples is very ancient in India, particularly in this region, as can be seen from the Udayagiri Cave inscription of Kharvela in 1st century BC. Debadasi/Mahari is a local term used specifically for the women, who performed music and dance in the temples.

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