



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Arts

THE EVOLUTION OF FLUTE IN ODISHAN ART AND ARCHITECTURE

KEY WORDS: Flute, Odisha, Art And Architecture, Temple, Culture**Jabahar Mishra**

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ABSTRACT

Music is the art and science of combining vocal or instrumental sounds or tones-varying in melody, pitch, harmony, rhythm and timbre with a view to forming structurally and emotionally expressive phrases as well as compositions. In the history of human culture, music happens to be the earliest fine art to be developed. Music has played an important role in the history of mankind throughout the world. It was an integral part of the lives of the people in every ancient civilization. It is also said that the culture of a nation is best described in music and allied fine arts. Available evidences confirm that each civilization had a great cultural heritage of its own and music was one of the in separable limbs of any culture. India is a land of music and music is an essential part of the life of her people.

The growth of Indian music has been a gradual, continuous process of development from a very elementary stage. Today, it is been considered to be one of the most sophisticated melodic music system in the world of music. Indian music, like other kinds of art forms, has been handed down over hundreds of years with all the respect and love that a great heritage merits. There has been a very long evolution before our tradition achieved maturity and yielded variety. The earliest known evidence of music activity in India was discovered on the walls of cave paintings in several parts of Madhya Pradesh. These caves were occupied by man over 10,000 years ago. Later found in this region was evidence of dance. In India, the most common types of flute are single or double flutes with one hollow tube and finger holes used for controlling the pitch of the note. However, longer horizontal flutes with a larger diameter are used to play slower passages of the lower registers. Also, smaller and shorter flutes are held vertically; they are used for faster pieces and for producing higher pitches. Double flutes are most often played by tribal musicians and are rarely used in concerts or orchestras. They resemble beak flutes and have a narrow opening at one end. References of these flutes have been discovered in the sculptures of the First Century. Each instrument can explain many aspects of the culture in that particular area. For example, the tools and materials that were used can tell a lot; the hair used for a bow, the wood or clay for making the drum, or the animal hide used. Sushira Vadyas and flute play an important role in Odishan folk and Classical music. Especially in contemporary Odissi dance and Odissi vocal music flute plays the most vital role as a blowing musical instrument. Flute is a very well known as well as ancient musical instrument (Sushira Vadya) in Odisha. It has taken a main part in the Odishan folk and classical music thousands years ago. The history of Odishan art can be traced back to the 3rd century B.C. when Odishan formed a part of the Mourya Empire under Asoka the great. The rock edicts of Asoka are engraved on a huge projecting boulder of the Dhauli hill situated 10KM to the east of the Bhubaneswar. The forepart of a huge standing elephant is carved in front of the boulder. This is the first Mauryan art in Odisha. We do not find any musical instrument, posture of dance near that elephant figure. Then the history of Odisha is discovered by darkness. The dark period covers two centuries till Kharavela the king became the Samrat of Kalinga. Khandagiri (Skandagiri on Kumargiri) and Udayagiri are two short hills near Bhubaneswar which are situated to the north of Bhubaneswar. The figure of the musical instruments and dancers are found in caves of Udayagiri which were constructed at about two thousand years before in ruling period of Maha Meghabahan Aira Kharavela, the king of Kalinga in the 1st century A.D.

Bhubaneswar is now the capital of Odisha, it was also the capital of northern Kalinga in the time of King Kharavela under the name of Tosali or Kalinga Nagar. Kharavela has accepted Jainism. So the caves of Khandagiri and Udayagiri were constructed by the king of Jaina saints (Sramana) in the 1st century A.D. There are 115caves (Gumphas) in Khandagiri and Udayagiri. The main attraction of Rani cave which is situated in Udayagiri shoes the musical instrument of ancient Odisha. Ranigumpha is one of the major

caves of Udayagiri. It looks as a stage of performances of dance and music. Dhirendranath Dash has explained in his book that the Rani Gumphas is the most ancient stage of Odisha, where the dance and music was performed in the period of Kharavela. A picture which is carved in the back side wall of Ranigumpha proves it. A dancer with 3 musicians is shown on the wall of this Gumphas. A beautiful dancer is performing and 3 musicians are playing musical instruments near his leg. The king and his two queens are watching this performance. One musician is playing Mujra (one side Drum) another is playing veena and last one is playing Banshi the flute. All three musicians are female. This figure is the most ancient flute figure of Odishan architecture. So it proves the anciently use of the flute in Odisha. This flute has seven holes.

Bhubaneswar may aptly be called a temple city. There are a large number of temples, not less than hundred of varying dimensions in good state of preservation, belonging to different ages and phases of Odishan art and architecture from its genesis to its climax. The figures of Dera Devi, social pictures like Beast and animals, dancers and musicians are carved on the stony walls of the all temples of Bhubaneswar. Bharateswar, Laxmaneswar, Subanajaleswar and Parsurameswar temples are oldest than other temples of Bhubaneswar. The Parsurameswar temple, which is situated near the Mukteswar temple of Bhubaneswar, shows a group of musicians' figures. There is a grill (made of stone) in left side, in front of the main entrance gate of this temple. Three musicians' figures are constructed in this grill, which are playing the musical instruments like Banshi, Muraja and Manjeera. All these postures are established with musical instruments in dance poses. One is staying in Trivangi and playing the Banshi, the flute. Thus the figure of flute is seen in all the temples of Bhubaneswar. On the other hand we find thousands of flute figures here and there in the Nata Mandap of Sun temple of Konark. Shiva temples Shakta temples everywhere you can find a Banshi Vadika (flute player female) or Banshi Badaka (flute player male). So flute is a very useful musical instrument in the Odishan folk and classical music.

The God Lord Krishna is imagined as a Banshi Badaka in Indian mythology. So we see Bansidhari Krishna figures in the temple architecture of Odisha. Bansidhari Mohana, Muralidhara, Benudhara, are the another names of Lord Krishna. So Mohan Banshi, Murali, Benu Murali are another names of Banshi. A large number of Krishna images holding a Banshi are carved on the temple walls of Odisha. In Jagannath temple painting images of Lord Krishna are seen in the Nata Mandira, which are dancing with Murali (flute) in their hands. The flute sound of Lord Krishna was so sweetable that the Gopis of Gopapura were coming towards Krishna and dancing with him herself. Jayadeva the great poet of Odisha has described about flute in his Gita Govinda Kavya. In the 1st Sarga of Gita Govinda flute is described by Jayadeva such as ;

“Song-Dhira Samire Yamuna teere”

Here Krishna is playing the flute and Gopis are giving beats in their hands according to the tala of flute music. In the 4th Sarga of Gita Govinda, Jayadev again says about flute and its sweetable sound.

Then came Riti yuga of Odia poets. In Odia literature, the poets of middle age followed Gita Govinda in their poems. 'Bhakta Charana, Gopala Krishna, Dinakrushna, Upendra Bhanja, Baladeva Rath and Banamali Pattnaiks, all these poets have written about the flute riches in their Kavyas. On the other hand flute is a very simple musical instrument which is made of bamboo stick. It is accompaniment musical instrument which is played in all folk dances of Odisha as well as in the tribal dances in Odisha.

The flutes and trumpets described thus far had no mechanical parts, either to produce the sound or to control its pitch. In the trumpets, horns and conches the lips acted as flute controls and in the flutes the edge of the blow hole or the fipple discharged such a function. We will now turn to wind instruments that do use mechanical vibrators in some capacity or the other. Ancient instruments are seen as an extension of the human body, using sticks and clappers. Fruit or shells may be tied to the waste to produce a rhythm. Hand gestures and chanting are also used. These ancient techniques are also seen in modern years. In Sushira Vadya category, the sound is produced by blowing air through a hollow column. The pitch of the note can be determined by controlling the air flow passages. The melody is played by using the fingers to open and close the air passages along the instrument.

The simplest instrument in this group is the flute, which is generally made of wood or bamboo; however, there is historical evidence of them being made from red sandalwood, black wood, cane, ivory, bronze, silver, and gold. The various categories are based on the distance between the hole of the mouth piece and the first finger hole. The Hindu God Lord Krishna is traditionally considered a master of the bamboo flute. The Indian flutes are very simple compared to the Western counterparts; they are made of bamboo and are keyless. Two main varieties of Indian flutes are currently used. The first, the Bansuri, has six finger holes and one embouchure hole, and is used predominantly in the Hindustani music of Northern India. The second, the Venu has eight finger holes, and is played predominantly in the Carnatic music of Southern India. Presently, the eight-holed flute with cross-fingering technique is common among many Carnatic flutists. Prior to this, the South Indian flute had only seven finger holes, with the fingering standard developed at the beginning of the 20th century.

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