



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Arts

ESSENCE OF INDIAN SEMI CLASSICAL MUSIC

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ABSTRACT

Semi classical form of music is a harmonious combination of words and tunes. It is a combination of melodious tunes and emotional expression. Various singing styles found in semi-classical music have originated from the folk-music. For this reason the semi classical songs are natural and easy. The beauty of semi classical music depends mainly on the combination of various 'Raag' and tunes. Semi-classical music varies from classical music as every form of music differs from other form. Semi classical music came into existence, when the singing styles of folk music were recognized with classical status.

The Hindi classical form of music which is prevalent in the Northern parts of India, which is near or closely related to the traditional or classical music, but is not fully confined within the limitation or rules of pure classical music is called semi classical music.

In India, music is considered as a sacred gift from the God and it is regarded as an art, dedicated to the God. The Indian culture has gradually provided such a base for the Indian music for which the people music loving people, here have always been mesmerized with the melodies of the scientific musical tunes. The Indian musicians have made judicious and proportionate divisions among the music, sounds and tunes, according to the seasons, time and months, which are related to human lives minds and thoughts of the humans. It is said that music has always been providing energy to the Indian people in the time of happiness and sorrow as well. For this, India is unique. Here in India there is different music on various occasions. In Indian there are two major forms of music. One is called Hindustani music and the other one is Carnatic music. Here we are talking about the Hindustani music. Hindustani music has three major divisions. Folk music, classical music and semi classical music, though there are some other forms of music like light music, playback music. All these musical forms prevalent in India are the parts of Indian art and culture. Folk music is said to have come up from the heartfelt emotions of the common people. Actually a composition of song or poem comes through the medium of a particular poet or a singer. But when this composed song becomes popular and then the name of the concerned singer or composer is not so important but that particular creation or composition becomes popular and is one which remains in the hearts and minds of the people. Folk music is that which is created by the music loving people, it is meant for the entertainment of the people. It can be sung by the common people. The sounds, tunes, melody of the folk songs reflect various moods and emotions of the people. The purpose of a semi classical song is to clearly express the lyrical word or the concept of the song. This style of music is a beautiful combination of words and tunes along with certain concept.

Though semi classical songs are based on classical 'Raaga' but various tunes are used in these songs. Various metaphors of music like 'Meend', 'Khatka', 'Moorki', 'Kann' etc. are used in the semi-classical songs. In this way the concept of 'Bandish' of the music and also beautifies the song.

Semi-classical music is also called melodious or fine classical music. It is because the words used in these songs express the feeling in a simple and clear manner. Semi classical music is loved by one and all irrespective of their knowledge regarding music. Sometimes semi classical singers use to sing their own 'Bandish' lines, still, the audience enjoy those performances. This is because the use of 'Raag' along with the singing style which amuses the audience. But this does not happen in the singing of semi classical songs, as a singer of semi-classical song chooses the 'Bandish' lines from a folk or traditional style which cannot be changed. The lyrical stanzas

composed by Meera Bai, Soor Das, Tulsi Das cannot be modified. 'Kajri', 'Chaiti', 'Thoomri' etc. are traditional ones. Though some 'Thoomri' lines are composed in unconventional way.

The changes and modification of musical form is a continuous process which goes on and on. But this has not happened with the semi classical music, as the above said styles or forms are still prevalent in the folk music. In the composition of folk music the tunes are kept intact. Folk music is not confined with conventional rules, as per the tradition lyrics as well as the tunes of folk songs are done orally. There is a deep impact of regionalism on the folk music. For this, the folk songs enchant one and all. Even when a musician of classical music listen any folk song, he also wishes to sing that song. It would be appropriate to say that semi classical music is also the folk music and a singing style, if examined through the view of classical music.

If we go through the traditions of Hindustani music, then we come to realize that both classical music and semi classical music have their own significance. Both of these forms of music have been developed and modified in course of time. By going through the history, we come to know that the semi-classical music has mainly evolved in the form of 'Thoomri' and 'Tappa'.

'Thoomri' has been recognized as the main singing style of semi classical music. Now a days during the classical music programmes, this is also performed on the stages along with 'Khayyal' songs. All credit goes to the great talented singers who after adopting this singing style, have added their own creativity in 'Thoomri'. Due to their creative innovations in this direction, 'Thoomri' form of music has gained much popularity. If we go through our history, then we come to know that earlier, this art of singing was applied along with the performance of dance and acting. In course of time, 'Thoomri' has undergone various changes, modifications and finally has established itself as a specific form of singing in the Indian-music.

Various semi classical singing forms prevalent in any period or era have been influenced with one and other. The impact of 'Dhrupad' and 'Tappa' singing styles are found on the 'Thoomri' singing form. 'Bol-Baant-ki-Thoomri' songs are also sung by some singers in 'Laya' of 'Dhrupad' style and also in the 'Tappa' style. When we view it from 'Laya' angle, then we find that 'Bol-Baant' style of 'Thoomri' songs are sung in 'Madhya' (medium) Laya or else in 'Drut' (speed or fast) Laya. These 'Thoomri' songs are mostly sung with the use of 'Teen-Taal' 'punjabi-Adda' or 'Sitarkhani'. Sometimes the 'Thoomri' songs are found entwined with 'Roopak', 'Jhaptal Ektaal',

'Aada Taal' but these types are very few in number. Usually these type of 'Thoomri' songs are sung these days, in 'Teen-Taal' and 'Ek-Taal' process. The language in which the lyrics of these 'Thoomri' songs were written is mainly Brij Bhasa (a dialect prevalent in Uttar Pradesh state). The literary contents of these songs are 'Radha-Krishna-Leela', 'Braj-Chitran', romantic stories related to Men-women, shringar (beauty) etc. Indian semi classical music has always been open to inspiration from other forms of music, and classically trained musicians through the ages have embraced literary tradition and folk music forms and put them through the rigors of classical music. Semi classical repertoire is an important component of semi classical tradition and folk culture, which originated among the people of a country, community or area, passed by oral tradition and regional literature from one singer or generation to the next, often existing in several versions, and marked generally by simple, modal melody and stanza or narrative verse. The style of singing a verse or lyric decides the type of semi classical repertoire whether it is folk or classical. When semi classical repertoire becomes popular and chosen up by the school classical music, and presented in the style of classical and semi-classical song nationally or internationally, it get status of semi-classical song. Semi classical songs is traditional, community and region or area specific, and has a unique style of singing a verse or lyric. These songs are simple and associated with culture and day to day life events of people of the culture they belong to. When this genre of song becomes popular and picked up by classical musicians, they perform it in a complex manner in their own style adding components of classical music. In this process these songs are recognized as semi-classical music and performed by the skilled music professionals on stage. In this way many semi-classical music originated from popular folk songs. Some of the semi classical songs became very popular because of its traditional literary value, its relevance to social activities and beauty of its simple melody attracted both the audience and the classical musicians in particular. They picked up some of the semi classical songs and started presenting in classical form adding the elements of classical music. This is also a process of evolution through which semi classical songs, Kajri and Chaiti in particular got important place in the repertoire of semi-classical music and thereby reached to the concerts at national and international level. The tradition of semi classical music in India is indeed great due to its literary value. Semi classical music is closely associated with regional literature and evolved to alleviate the hardship and break the monotony of the routine life. Semi classical songs were also used to pass on prominent information through oral literary tradition from one generation to another. Since people did not have a solid material to preserve ancient information, passing down important information in the form of songs became utmost important. Hence semi classical songs were revered by people as it not only provided musical entertainment, but also imparted regional literary traditions. Semi-classical music is a kind of music which has a standard, style, grammar, norms, and performed by skilled musicians. Even the audience requires some knowledge and understanding about the style to perceive and enjoy the song. On the other hand folk music is a kind of traditional music of common people of a particular community mostly to narrate a lyric.

A semi classical song is some sort of story from the past. By creating a song out of an event, it makes it easier to remember. Most semi classical songs are of difficult or troubled times, but there are some that celebrate or commemorate times of happiness.

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