

Origin of Indian Instrumental Music

Music is found everywhere in this beautiful world. As every art needs a strong medium to express its apparatus and uniqueness, similarly, a musical instrument is a medium to express the musical 'Nada', which has significance all over the world.

Instrumental Music has an important place in Indian Music. It is one of the threefold aspects of Music (Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, and Dance) also known as 'Sangeet' in Indian Music. The Instrumental Music is known as "Vadhya Sangeet".

From the beginning of Instrumental Music, two components are very important- Instrument and the Instrumentalist or Instrument player (Artist). It is impossible to manifest music art in the deficiency of any one of the component mentioned above. Music is known as a direct way to convey feelings from ancient times. Vocal music consists of strong words of any language and musical notes which are also known as 'Swaras'. While, in instrumental music, Swaras are same but Boles have taken place of any language which consists of words. The boles are played on the musical notes to produce music by Musical Instruments. For instance, in the compositions of plucked instruments, boles are played such as: Da, Dir, Dara etc.

Indian Classical Music, as explained earlier, is primarily individualistic. Our instruments are also, therefore, designed to be played solo. Indian Musician considers music as a medium to reach divinity and he therefore engaged in swara-sadhana (tone-culture) while singing or practicing instrument. He is so engrossed in his practice that he becomes completely oblivious of his surroundings and his personality merges in 'Nadabrahma'. The solo character of our musical instruments is in line with purely individualistic approach. Since, there are no fixed or pre-written compositions in Indian Classical Music. Every instrumentalist

is a composer himself and has absolute freedom to handle the medium of his choice within the boundaries laid down by the exposition of a raga. Attempts have been made in recent times by eminent musicians to use Indian instruments in a group and produce an orchestra effect in the manner of orchestral musical composition in the West, but they have not been very effective. Most of the instruments sound weak and ineffective in a group, since by conception and design, they are meant to be played only in solo and, therefore, are not capable of creating the desired musical impact.¹

History and Development of Indian Instrumental Music

Musical instruments have played a very important role in the evolution and development of Indian Classical Music. There is a vast description available on history and development of Indian Instrumental Music. To understand this enormous depiction, an attempt has been made to divide it periodically on the basis of past, middle, and present period such as ancient time, medieval time, and present time respectively.

Ancient Time: (Pre-Historic / Pre-Vedic period to 1200 A.D.)

- a) Pre-Vedic Period And Post-Vedic Period
- b) Upanishads and Shiksha Granthas
- c) Puranic Sources
- d) Ramayana Period
- e) Mahabharata Period
- f) Buddha and Jain Sources
- g) Panini Period
- h) Gupta Period
- i) Tamil Sources and Kalidasa Works\

¹ Understanding Indian Classical Music, G.N.Joshi, p- 29

a) **Pre-Vedic Period And Post-Vedic Period**

Pre-Vedic Period

Pre-Vedic period is the most ancient time in the history of Indian Music. It belongs to the time about which there are no sequent evidences available today. According to available evidences of this time period, the instruments were mostly being used by humans during the religious occasions.

Mohenjo-daro and Harappa civilisations are known as the most ancient civilisation of India. We can find a lot of pictures and sculptures of musical instruments which symbolize ancient state of Indian Music. In a picture of Harappa civilisation we find a man who is playing Dhol (the percussion instrument) near tiger. In some figures we find a kind of Drum which is seen hanging from the neck of a man. There is also an interesting picture of a woman holding a Drum under her left arm. For the manufacturing of Dhol, the prolonged and constrict skin of animals, which itself had little sound quality, was framed to produce sound of considerable volume.

According to Captain Day, writer of "*The Musical Instruments of Southern India and Deccan*", the people of India have always been conventional in their tastes, and this is more evident in their music and musical instruments. Description of these people is found in many of the old Sanskrit treatises, and shows that forms of the instruments have hardly being altered during the last two thousand years. Old paintings and sculptures, such as those of Ajanta, proves this even more conclusively. There are many musical instruments found among the sculptures existing upon various old cave temples and ancient Buddhist tops and stupas in different parts of India.

The sculptures of musical instruments were also found in Amravati and Sanchi. In Amravati, one of peculiar interest shows a group of eighteen women playing upon drums, a shell trumpet or sankha, one much like a surnai, and two

instruments, apparently qunanuns, of a shape very similar to the Assyrian harps.² At Sanchi, a figure of a man blowing a kind of trumpet-the sringa-of much the same shape as now employed in Bengal.³

Post-Vedic Period

Vedic period belongs to the time in which four Vedas were formed. The literature available firstly, in the vedic period is the main root of Indian Culture. There is a vast description about the music in the vedic times.

All three dimensions of music namely vocal music, instrumental music and dance were popular at the time of *Rigveda*. The employment of music, which has been inseparably connected with the vedic rituals and ceremonies to propitiate God, was conceived even as early as the Indus Civilisation. The Sabarabhashya, a commentary on *Jaiminiya Sutra*, defines the 'Giti' as a *kriya* which is internal and is audible only in the form of *Swaras*. There were a lot of synonyms for Geet like 'Gatha', 'Gayatra', 'Giti' and 'Sam'. *Gayak* (singers) were called as 'Gattuvittam', 'Gayatrin' or 'Gathin'. When the *Richas* of *Rigveda* were formed in musical notation (by *Swaras* / Notes), they were known as 'Stotra'. Vocal music was accompanied by lot of musical instruments in the *Rigveda*. 'Yaga' was the most famous religious ceremony during the *Yajurveda*. For the ceremony of *Yagas*, four people known as four separate *Ritviz*, were fixed, they were called as 'Hota', 'Adhvryu', 'Udgatha' and 'Brahma'. *Veena* was played at the time of *Ashwamedha Yagyas*. There were professional musicians during the period of Vedas, who were specialised in particular instruments, for instance *veena*-players, *tunav*-players, *conch*-blowers, *aghati* players and *kahala* players. *Tunav* was wind instrument while *Kahala* was something like modern *Shahnai*. In the *Yajur-Sanhita*, *veena* has been described as string instrument and the *Vana* was also the biggest form of this *veena*. Other kinds of *Veena*, namely *Aghati*, *Ghatlika* or

² The Music of India, H.A. Popley, p-101

³ Ibid

Apghatika, Kand Veena, Pichchola or Pichchora stambalveena, Taluk Veena, Godha Veena, Alabu, Kapishirshni and Karkari or Karkrika etc., were also used during *Yajurveda*. *Atharvaveda* is specific among all four Vedas. Dundubhi, Aghat and Karkari etc have been described as main instruments of *Atharvaveda*. Also, *Samaveda* is very important in the reference of Indian Music.

According to *Jaiminiya Sutras*, Geeti is known as Sama. Sama can be sung with the help of *Rigveda* Richas. But the original form of Sama is hidden in the Swaras. According to vedic literature, different Samas can be sung on the same Rig, which differentiates Sama and Rig.

Some of the famous instruments of *Rigveda* are Dundubhi, Vaana, Nadi, Venu, Karkari, Gargar, Godha, Ping and Aghati. The sound of Dundubhi has been described as sound of clouds.

Veena was commonly used for the string instruments. Vana was the most popular string instrument of vedic period. Among string instruments we find references of vana in *Rigveda*. In the whole of *Rigveda*, instead of veena, vana has been mentioned which was a bow-shaped harp, which sometimes contains hundreds of strings according to Sayana, the commentator of the vedas. Vana appears to have been of two kinds; 'Greek Aeolian harp' and 'Bow shaped harp'.

Greek Aeolian harp had hundred of strings tuned in unison and sounded by the gust of wind. Sayana, the commentator of Vedas, named it 'Marud-Veena' the veena of the Wind God. Bow shaped harp was played with a curved piece of cane like wood. It is interesting to note that in ancient Sumeria, there was a similar instrument, called Bana. This was also a bow-shaped harp. 'Va' and 'Ba' are frequently interchanged, and so even the name of the instrument was the same both in ancient India and ancient Sumeria. A similar instrument in ancient Arabia

was known as 'Vanna'. Either the instrument travelled from India to Sumeria and Arabia or from Sumeria to India and Arabia.⁴

Another string instrument mentioned in *Rigveda* and *Atharvaveda* is 'Karkari'. Sayana, the commentator of Vedas, said that it was a particular kind of instrument, but does not specify what kind of instrument. Monier Williams, Wilson, and Apte consider it to be a string instrument, but do not specify what kind of instrument. Another string instrument was known as 'Kandveena'. Kandveena was made by combining together bamboo joints and stretching strings on it.⁵

The main musical instruments, which were in use during *Yajurveda*, were Veena, Vana, Shankha, Tunav, Dundubhi, Bhumi-Dundubhi, and Talav etc. Aghati was used as symbol for indicating rhythm. In the *Atharvaveda* it is named as Aghata.

Among percussion instruments, the one most frequently cited in the Vedas is the 'Dundubhi'. Nowadays in Northern India, there has been a slight variation in the type of the instrument, but the general structure has remained the same. In the Dundubhi there were two drums - one big and the other smaller one. It was made by hollowing out a block of wood and stretching an ox's hide over the mouth. It was played with a stick. It was played mostly during wars in the vedic times. Later on, it was played in the king's court and the temples. 'Bhumi-Dundubhi' is another drum mentioned in the vedas. It was an earth-drum which was made by digging a hole in the ground and covering it with hide. It was played with a stick at the time of sacrifice. The stick was generally made of the tail of an ox. 'Vanaspati' was a wooden drum. Another drum that is usually referred to is 'Adambra'. Its exact shape and structure are not known. 'Gargara' was another drum used during the wars. It is an onomatopoeic word. It is used to produce the

⁴ Indian Music, Prem Lata Sharma

⁵ Ibid

sound ‘gargar’.⁶ Among wind instruments we find a mention of Nadi or Nallika. Bakura, Tunav and Shankha (conch) were other wind instruments. Venu or Bamboo flute were also used. Coming to the *Samhita* period (5000-4000 B.C.) when the four vedas were composed, we find information about music in *Rigveda* although Samagana is mainly related to *Samaveda*.⁷ *Taittiriya Brahmana* mentions (3.4.13.1 and 3.4.15.1) Tunva, Veena, Dundubhi, and Sankha. Sayana regards Tunava as Venu and Talava as the one who played Kahala, although Talav appears to be an instrument also. *Aitareya Aranyaka* in a beautiful passage (3.5.11) describes human body as ‘Daivi Veena’ and shows its close similarity with ‘Manushi Veena’ i.e. veena made by man, of wood, tantris etc. Veenas at that time were bow shaped, resembling harp, though some were straight. The lower part of the veena was made of hollowed wood called ‘Ambhana’ whose front part was covered with stretched leather. *Aitareya Aranyaka* called it ‘Lomshen Charmnasspihita’. The bow shaped Veenas were called Vanas and can be seen in Bhahut sculpture.

b) Upanishads and Shiksha Granthas

Upanishads are the main source of Indian Ideology. Upanishads are known as mysterious literature manifested with the retribution of all the *Karmakadas* with the *Gyankandas* of vedic times. Upanishads were created as a form of appendix of *Brahman Granthas*. So, it is a basic necessity to study Upanishads carefully for a deeper insight into Vedic Music.

Samagana is very much admired by Upanishads. Geet, Veena, Panav and Lasit are known as components of the Mantra brahmanopanishad which is related to *Samaveda*.

*“Hasitam Ruditam Geetam! Veena Panavlasitam! - - !
Angani Stev Viddhi Tata!”*

⁶ Indian Music, Prem Lata Sharma

⁷ The Evolution of Indian Classical Music, Neerja Bhatnagar, p-3

The auspicious combination of Rig and Sama is very much appreciated in Vedic tradition.⁸

The Upanishads and Sutras also provide some information, mostly about musical instruments. *Chandogya Upanishad* (8.2.8) indicates the honoured place which Gita and Vadya enjoyed even for the ones who have attained self realisation, and gives a beautiful description of upasna karma on the basis of *Samagana*.

Sankhayana Shrautasutra gives a detailed account of the making of 'Shatantri Veena'. It also mentions some other instruments. Among them was 'Kanda Veena' which was also called Ghatari and was played by plectrum. 'Picchora' was played like a sushira vadya. 'Alabu Veena' had a tumba slightly crooked like monkey's face in the upper part. Many of these instruments were played by women.

Veena has been mentioned in *Chandogya Upanishad*. 'Dundubhi', 'Shankha' and 'Veena' are also found in the literature of *Brihdarnyak Upanishad*.

Shiksha Granthas plays a pivotal role in the form of Vedang literature which has protected the vedic tradition throughout History and maintained it for the study of the vedas. *Naradi Shiksha* of *Samaveda* has a detailed account of Swaras (musical notes) used in *Samaveda*, *Rigveda* and *Yajurvedas*. The sixth section of *Naradi Siksha* provides descriptive information about the Gatra-Veena, Shruti and Vritti of *Samaveda*. In Gaan, two types of Veena have been described: 'Darvi Veena' (or Kashthmayi Veena) and 'Gatra-Veena'.

The Samgana is sung accompanied by 'Gatra-Veena' (which is played by fingers) (1, 6, 1-2). Narada has given the qualities and drawbacks of Vocalist and Instrumentalist in his *Ghandharva Subjective Granthas*.

⁸ Bhartiya Sangeet ka Itihaas, Dr. Thakur Jaidev Singh, Edited by Premlata Sharma, Sangeet Research Academy, Calcutta, 1994

c) **Puranic Sources**

The purans also contain detailed information on Indian music. They give information mostly on creation, dissolution, recreation, divine genealogies, age of Manus, genealogies of kings, philosophy and yoga etc. But some of them contain information on poetry and music also. They are veritable ancient encyclopedias giving information practically on all subjects known to ancient India. Hariprasad Shastri said, "Anything old may be the subject of a Purana, and it covers all the aspects of life." There are eighteen Maha-Puranas and eighteen Upa-Puranas according to the traditional view.⁹ The various Purans were compiled in different periods. The earliest of them was contemporaneous with the *Mahabharata*. Information on music is available mostly in *Vayu-Purana*, *Markandeya Purana* and *Vishnu-Dharmottara Purana*. Harivamsa is, technically speaking, a supplement to the *Mahabharata*. Some include it among the Puranas. A good deal of praise has been bestowed on Harivamsa for a type of musical performance known as 'Chalikya'. It was a Gandharva type of singing accompanied by a number of musical instruments. It is said that the six grama-ragas were implicitly involved in it and it could be acquired only by very arduous practice. Only Krsna and a few gandharvas knew how to stage a performance of Chalikya. There were two types of Chalikya- group 'Chalikya' and 'Solo Chalikya'. It was a type of music accompanied with dance and acting. In later times, the words Chalika and Calita were also used for Chalikya. Veena, Venu (flute) and Mridanga were the instruments of accompaniment that were generally used in Chalikya Music. Krsna is said to be the inventor of Hallisaka group dance which developed into Rasa. In Harivamsa, Krsna is the main center of various musical activities. The following musical instruments were in use - Veena, Vallaki, Mahati among string instruments; Panava, Dardura, Anaka, Muraja, Mridanga and Bheri among membranophone instruments; and Venu among wind instruments. The following musical instruments have been mentioned in *Vayu Purana* (about 500 A.D.):

⁹ Indian Music, Premlata Sharma, p-26

Mardala, Dundubhi, Ghanta, Jharjhara, Sankha, Pataha, Bheri, Dimdima, Gomukha and Tumburu-Veena.

In *Markandeya Purana* (about 900 A.D.) also, there is a reference to the seven notes, grama-ragas, murchnas, seven varieties of vocal music, three varieties of laya (rhythm and tempo), forty-nine tanas, and four varieties of musical instruments (string, membranophone, wind and cymbals). The following instruments are particularly mentioned – Veena, Venu, Dardura, Panava, Mridanga, Patah, Anaka and Dundubhi.

d) Ramayana period

The *Ramayana* was composed in Sanskrit by the great poet Valmiki. It gives a description of life of Rama, the son of king Dashratha of Ayodhya, a kingdom in the North of India. The study of *Ramayana* shows that Indian Music observed great development and a whole science of Gandharva came into existence during that period. The Classical music was called ‘Samgita’ or ‘Gandharva’.

In other words we can say that there were two kinds of music during the Ramayana period i.e. ‘Sama’ and ‘Gandharva’. Samagan was limited to the Yagyas only. The word ‘Atodhya’ which is a common term for all kinds of instrumental music occurs in *Sundarkanda*. We get a reference of Vipanchi Veena in *Sundarkanda*. It was a Veena of nine strings and experts could play it skillfully. Among wind instruments, we have a reference of Venu (flute) in *Kishkindhakanda* and Vamsa (flute) in *Sundarkanda*. Conch (shankha) was frequently blown on auspicious occasions and at the time of wars. Among percussion instruments, we have a reference for Dundubhi, Bheri, Panava, Pataha and Dimdima. Dundubhi is commonly known as ‘Naggada’ or ‘Naggara’. Bheri was a kind of Mridanga, the right side of which was struck with a stick and the left side with hands. Panava was a kind of Mridanga in which there was a hole in

the middle of the instrument, and there strings were laid from one side to another. Pataha was an instrument like the modern Dholaka. Dimdima was an instrument like Damru but a little smaller in size.

Technical terms like kala, matra, samya, pramaya, laya and tala pertaining to the playing of percussion instruments were also found in *Ramayana*. Music played an important part in the life of the people. It was used at the time of religious services, in wars, on the occasions of festivals and other auspicious occasions, in the courts of kings, in dramas and the daily life of people.

When Rama had to go on exile, messengers were sent to call Bharat to Ayodhya. When he came near Ayodhya, he found that Ayodhya which used to resound day and night with Bheri, Mridanga and Veena etc, was plunged in unusual silence (Ayodhya-kanda) and therefore feared that something unpleasant had occurred in the city.

Vocal Music was accompanied by Veena. Dancers also used to perform with Vipanchi Veena. Lava and Kusa, sons of lord Rama, used to sing the *Ramayana* while playing Veena during the Asvamedha Yagya. Ravana chants his Sama to the music of the Veena. As Lakshmana enters the inner apartments of Sugriva, he hears singing and ravishing strains of the music of the Veena and other string instruments. The ladies apartments in the place of Ravana are also full of musical associations. Some of the musical instruments which Hanuman sees there were Madduka (a percussion instrument like Mridanga), Pataha (similar to Khanjira), Flute, Vipanchi, Mridanga, Panava (another variety of Mridanga), Dimdima (a sort of Tabla) and the Adambara (a Kettle-drum). A woman musician lies across her Veena, an image which Valmiki compares poetically to a cluster of lotuses about a boat in a stream.

During the epic period we find many references about music in Valmiki's *Ramayana*. In a beautiful description in *Kishkindhakanda*, the word sangita has

been used for gana, vadya and nritya.¹⁰ There was also mention of Karna in a gana being sung to the accompaniment of Veena¹¹.

In Valmiki's *Ramayana* there is a mention of several instruments such as different kinds of Veenas, Venu, Vamsa, Sankha, Dundubhi which was played on auspicious occasions or at the time of wars, Bheri, Mridanga, Panava, Pataha, Dimdim, Madduka, Muraja, Chelika etc. The occasion was the Asvamedha yagya which Lord Rama was performing and Lava and Kusa (his sons) were to sing Valmiki's *Ramayana*.¹²

e) **Mahabharata period**

The next important epic is *Mahabharata*. It is said that, originally it was consisted of 24000 verses; additions were made multiple times, until it swelled to one lakh verses. There are sufficient evidences in this epic to show that music occupied a very important place in the life of the people.

All the three dimensions of Music (vocal, instrumental and dance) were on the charm. Music was played in the ceremonies to welcome and see off the guests. Panav, Vansa and Kansya Tal etc. were being used with Geet (vocal music). Veena and some other musical instruments were played to accompany vocal music. The term 'Vaditra' was used for four fold classified instruments including Tata, Vitat, Ghana and Sushir Vadyas. Veena was played for the rituals of religious ceremonies like Yagyas and for the simple music, which was a part of people's daily life. Vyas Muni, the writer of *Mahabharata*, has mentioned Veena and Tar Vadya multiple times in literature which signifies that Veena was the most important and popular instrument during the period. The terms used in literature for musical instruments like Ghan Tantri, Vanshi etc evidentially proves that the classification of instruments was in trend in that period also.

¹⁰ Amarkosha, in JDS, 157

¹¹ Uttarkanda, in JDS 71.15

¹² Yuddhakanda 44.12 in JDS, 177-78

The Veena which had been mentioned in the literature of that period was 'Sapta-Tantri-Veena' as '*Saptatantunvitanvana Yamupasanti Yagyika*'.

Bharat had called this Sapta-Tantri-Veena as 'Chitra', which was played only by the fore-fingers of the hand without the use of kona. The skin of ox was used for the making of Avnaddha Vadyas like Bheri, Mridanga and Muraja etc. Shankha was also one of the most important instruments in the Mahabharata period. Lord Krishna and Pandava used to keep their own Shankhas pertaining to their nature.

We can find independent references of Veena and Vallaki, in the *Mahabharata* epic as *Veenana Vallkina Ch: Nupurana Ch: Shinjitae*'.

In the Veena's gravity description, we find that veena was in great use and it was the most popular 'Tantri-Vadya' (string instrument). While, we don't get any firm evidence for Vallaki, yet, it is not wrong to say that Vallaki was 'Minot-Tantri' natured (semi-string instrument).

Dr. Pranjpay has imagined Vallaki as the 'Non-Tantri Veena'. In *Drona-parva*, we find a reference for musical instruments like Mridanga, Jharjhara, Bheri, Panava, Anaka, Gomukha, Sankha, and Dundubhi. In *Shanti-parva*, there is reference for Veena and Venu. In *Virata-parva*, there is reference of Kanya. Some of these instruments have been referred at many places. Of these, Veena was a string instrument, Mridanga, Jharjhara or Jharjhari, Bheri, Panava, Anaka, Adambara and Dundubhi were instruments of membranophone class (drum class); Sankha and Venu were wind instruments. Gomukh was possibly a cow-faced horn or trumpet. Kanya was the cybal. Training in music was considered to be an important part of the upbringing of a person. Arjuna had learnt the art of singing,

dancing and playing an instrument. When he was in disguise in Virata Nagara, he taught these arts to Uttara, the daughter of the king of the Virata Nagara.¹³

Lord Krishna used a Conch called 'Panchajanya' on the battlefield. Arjuna's Conch is called 'Devadatta'. Krishna is constantly associated with the Venu (flute) whose music charmed the Gopis of Brindaban. We therefore, find that classical music was constantly practiced during the Mahabharata age and it had an important place in the daily life of the people. Famous Musical Instruments of Mahabharata Period according to Indian classification are given below:

| Tata Vadya | Sushir Vadya | Avnaddha Vadya | Ghana Vadya |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Yantra | 1.Venu | 1. Panav | 1. Ghanta |
| 2. Vallaki | 2.Gomukh | 2. Mridanga | 2. Mani |
| 3. Veena | 3.Govishan | 3. Bheri | 3. Kiddiki |
| 4. Tumba Veena | 4.Shankha | 4. Pesi | 4. Kanchi |
| 5. Kachapi Veena | | 5. Turya | 5. Parivhatak |
| 6. Mahati Veena | | 6. Adambra | 6. Bhekhla |
| | | 7. Dignidam | 7. Kalaap |
| | | 8. Mardal | 8. Nupur |
| | | 9. Muraj | |
| | | 10. Pushkara | |
| | | 11. Alingya | |
| | | 12. Jharjhar | |

Table 2.1: Classification of Famous Musical Instruments of Mahabharata Period

In *Mahabharata*, there is comparatively less information about music than in *Ramayana*. Instead of the word Sangita, we usually find the word Gandharva in

¹³ Indian Music, Premlata Sharma, P-16

Mahabharata. The Gandharvas excelled in Music (Gita), Nritya and Vadyas as is evident from the fact that the three terms are often mentioned together (e.g. Vaditra, Nritgeetam, Sabha Parva 8.36).

Arjuna himself was described as scholar of Gana, Vadan and Nritya from *Gandharva Chitrasen* which he later taught to Uttara, the daughter of King Virata.¹⁴

f) Buddhist and Jain Sources

Buddhist Sources

The general belief that music was prohibited among the Buddhists is not supported by facts. *Lalita –Vistara*, which gives an account of Buddha's life, says that he was a prince who had received training in playing veena, vocal music and dance. Here, is a description of the instruments which were in use at the time of Buddha-

1. Veena:

Veena in those times had seven strings. It was like a harp in the ancient times and songs were sung in accompaniment to instrument. It was played on open strings. The instrumentalists of those times had developed excellent plucking technique. *Guttala*, the master musician, had practiced the art of strings by damping aliquot parts of it. He keeps on breaking string after string and could play the melody. The string that finally remained was the longest by the above method. It was this technique that enabled Guttala to defeat his rivals.

2. Bheri or Drum:

It was used during Battles and announcing the orders of the King. The Mahajanka Jataka refers to the four sounds (Parma Maha Shabda) that were

¹⁴ The Evolution of Indian Classical Music, Neerja Bhatnagar, p-8

conferred on great persons by the King in their honour. These were the sound of Drum, Horn, Gong and Cymbals. In due course, there were two chariots, first chariot was un-occupied followed by musicians and second chariot on which personage to be honoured was seated. Musicians used to play the above instruments so that the sound produced was like the roar of the sea. The chariot moved slowly round the palace and upon what was known as the 'Kettle-drum road' (bherimarga). The fact that music instruments were selected as symbols of honour is testimony to the esteemed position music held during those times.

Playing of instruments was a respectable profession. It is recorded that *Bodhisattva* himself was a professional player of Bheri (a drum like the modern Dholaka) and Sankha (Conch) in two lives.¹⁵

There were many references to Veena in *Milindapanha*, a dialogue between a Buddhist Monk and a Greek king, Menander (about B.C.).

Bow shaped Veena was used extensively in early Buddhist period. Its hollow belly was known as 'Doni'. It was covered with stretched leather. It had a curved arm known as the 'Belly'. The topmost string was called the 'Bhamara Tantri' (bee-string). The strings passed through holes in the flat surface of the belly and were fastened to its rounded under side. It was held under the left arm or in the lap and was played upon by the finger nails (aggana khehi) of the right hand. The following varieties of Veena are mentioned in the Buddhist references viz: Parivadini, Vallak, Mahatti, Nakuli, Kacchapi and Tumbuveena.

A few other instruments mentioned in the *Jataks* are Adambara, Anaka, Samatala (Cymbals), Kumbhathana (the modern name of Jalataranga), and Sankha (Conch).

¹⁵ Bhartiya Sangeet ka Itihaas, Dr. Pranjape- Jatakas- first part, p.146 / Bheri -Vadaka Jataka and Sankhadhvani Jataka

We get information about Music from the Buddhist sources, Jain sources and also from the Puranas which has been discussed in detail by Dr. Thakur Jayadeva Singh in Chapters XI, XIII and XIV of his book. Among the *Buddhist literary sources*, mainly Sutras and Jataka stories such as Guttala Jataka, Acharya Sutra, Acharangasutra, Lalita Vistara (in Sanskrit), Bodhisatavadankalapalta and Lankavatarasutra are referenced. Among the *Sculptural sources*, those which we find in stupas at Bharhuta, Sanchi and Amravati, besides sculptured scenes at Nagarjuna-Konda are referenced. We get information about various instruments - Veenas, Tunaka (Tunava), Tumba, Vipanchi Veena, Sammatala Venu and Bheri etc.

In *Lankavatara sutra*, the veena which Ravana used to play was without 'sarikas' or 'frets'. It was being played by kona and was probably a 'Chitra Veena'. He was singing gathas while playing the veena. The swaras in his Veena were all shuddha swaras, only Panchama was Kaisika i.e. it consisted of three instead of four srutis and there was *Samveda* between Rishabha and Panchama. He was playing his veena in madhyam grama. From *Guttala Jataka*, we learn that the term murchana was used, and the practice of holding musical competitions was not unknown. In the sculptures we find many instruments, for instance in *Bharhuta sculpture*, Dr. Thakur Jayadeva Singh, considers Ekatantri Veena, Vipanchi Veena, Huddaka, Sankha and Bheri etc. In *Sanchi stupa sculpture*, we find two players playing Vamsis held in a horizontal position and a third vadaka playing two Vamsis together. We also find Mridanga, bow shaped Veena and a woman playing Chitra Veena in *Amravati Stupa sculpture*.¹⁶

¹⁶ Bhartiya Sangeet ka Itihaas, Dr. Pranjpai, JDS; Chs. 86 and 87 of Vayu Purana, and Chs. 18-19 of Vishnudharmottara Purana, give useful information about music (JDS, 212-27)

Jain Resources

Music had an honourable stature in the lives of the Jains. Some of the important books found in Jain Literature as *Raja Prasniya Sutra*, *Nandi-Sutra* and *Anuyogadvara*, contain lots of information on music.

The *Nandi-Sutra* mentions a number of musical instruments, viz; Maddala (Mardala), Kadava, Jhallari, Hudukka, Kansala, Kahala, Talima, Vamsa, Sankha, Panav etc. Out of these, Maddala, Jhallari, Hudukka and Panava were various kinds of drum. Vamsa (Flute), Sankha (Conch) and Kahala were wind instruments. Kansala or Kansya was a Cymbal. Kadava and Tamila types were unknown. Other instruments mentioned in Jain works are Pirapiriya, Dhakka, Bheri, Dundubhi, Muraya (Muraja) and Muanga (Mridanga). In *Vrhat-Kalpasutra*, we find a classification of the various musical instruments for example Alinga (Alingya), Veena, Vipanchi, Vallaki, Mahat, Kacchapi Sughosa, Bhramari, Turna, Diddima (Dimdima).

Among the *Jain literary sources*, Thanangasutta which describes six defects and eight merits (guna) in singing shows the importance of correct use of sura, laya, tala, pada, and alamkara. The work also refers to *Madhyama*, *Dhaivtata* and *Nishada*, the seven svaras, three gramas and their murchnas. We get a long list of musical instruments in *Rayappasenaijja* (p.54), the names of which are in *Prakrata*. Among other Jain works, that give information about music and musical instruments, are Abhayadeva Suri's *Vijahapannatti*, *Ayara*, *Nisiha*, *Angavijja*, and *Sthanangautra* etc. *Rayappasenaijja* classifies musical instruments into eighteen categories. The list mentions sixty three musical instruments. All these instruments were in use during 500-300 B.C. The information given by Malayagiri (in his Tika), Hemachandra (Abhidhana

Chintamani), and in Tivakaram (a Jain kosa which gives some information about ancient music in South India) is very useful.¹⁷

g) Panini period

The *Ashtadhyayi* of Panini is invaluable work of Sanskrit literature. There is a lot of information available about the musical instruments of Vedic times in the *Ashtadhyayi* of Panini. According to *Ashtadhyayi*, all three forms of music (Geet, Vadya and Nritya including Natya) were in trend during Panini period. Panini has mentioned 'Shilp' word for all Fine Arts. Shilp is subdivided in two parts - 'Charu Shilp' and 'Karu Shilp':

Charu Shilp is related to all fine arts such as Music, whereas, Karu Shilp is related to Kumbhkar, Suwarnkaar, and Luhaar etc. Vedic Music was on its charm during the Panini period. Geet (vocal music) and Vadya (musical instruments) both were used.

In *Ashtadhyayi*, 'Geeti' and 'Gay' words were in use for Geeti. Veena was used in the *Katipay-Sutras* as mentioned in *Ashtadhyayi*. Orchestra or Vadyavrinda was known as 'Turya'. Veena was the most popular musical instrument of Turya. 'Veena-vadak' and 'Pari-vadak' both were included in Turyag according to Kashika *Veenavadakparivadkam*. Panini him-self talk about Pari-vadak. He told that Pari-vadak was a group of those veena players who used to accompany the main Veena Player. The sutra given below verifies it:

'Aveevdad Veena Parivadken'

Kalidasa has told about seven strings Parivadini Veena in *Raghuvasha*. The art to accompany someone was known as 'Upveen'.

¹⁷ Bhartiya Sangeet ka Itihaas, Dr. Pranjpay, pp. 246-60 for music in Harivamsa see Ch.X and XI of the above work. It is considered as the remaining part of Mahabharta which was later appended to it.

Gayana (singing) without Veena was known as 'Apveenam'. The sound of Veena (Nada) was called as Kana, Nikvan, and Nikvaan:

'Kvano Veenaya Ch:'

The rest sounds were called as Ghosha:

'Va Ghosha Nishra Shabdeshu'.

In the *Avnadh*, musical instruments like Jharjhar, Dardur, Madduk, Shanav etc. were in use. Dr. Pranjapay has said that 'Dardur' (which was made of soil) was like today's Ghatam musical instrument. The players of these musical instruments were known as Jharjharik, Maddulik etc.

In *Natyashastra*, Dardur is known as 'Dardurik'. The people who used to give Tala with hands were called 'Panigha' or 'Tadagha': '*Panightadgho Shilpini*' (3, 2, and 55).

In Panini's *Ashtadhyayi*, we get some information about the musical instruments such as Veena, Turya, Mridanga, Madduka and Dardura. We also find terms like Giti, Geya, Gayaka, Gayana and Parivadaka as pointed out by Dr. Vasudeva Saran Aggarwal.¹⁸

h) Gupta-Period

Some of the most important granthas were written by music scholars in the Gupta-Period like *Natyashastra*, *Dattilam*, and *Brihadesi* in Hindi Language and *Silppadikaram*, *Tivarkam*, and *Paripandal* in Tamil Language.

¹⁸ Bhartiya Sangita ka Itihasa, Dr Pranjapay

Bharata's *Natyashastra* is not merely 'an elaborate treatise on dramatics', but also is of invaluable importance in understanding the early phase of the development of Indian Classical Music.¹⁹

As noted in chapter IV on Musical Instruments, Bharata's four-fold classification of instruments i.e. Tata, Avnaddha, Ghana and Sushira has been considered as most scientific.²⁰

Bharata had obviously accepted this classification which we also find in Valmiki's *Ramayana*, and the explanation of the term atodyavadyas in Amarkosha has been given earlier in this chapter. The 'tata vadyas' were string instruments (tantri kritam). Among these, Veena was the most important. One view, based on the tuning process described by Bharat, is that Veena was harp based (and not lutes type).

The main Veenas in Bharata's time were Chitra (seven string and played with fingers) and Vipanchi (nine string and played with a plectrum). Others were Kacchapi, Ghoshavati (which according to Sarangdeava was eka- tantri) etc. The antiquity of Saptatantri is indicated by its mention in the epics, Jatakas and Mrchakatikam. Bharata has also described the various strokes (karanas) on the veena and their sequences. According to Abhinavagupta, the collection of svaras that are produced by striking (praharavishsha janyah) the strings of veena in a specific manner is called 'Dhatu'. The four dhatus described by Bharata are Vistara, Karana, Aviddha, Vyanjana, each of which had variations and sub-categories depending on whether the stroke was made on the upper end (uttaramukha) or lower end (adhara) of the veena, number of strokes made on the strings, time span (guru and laghu) and their sequences. Thus, Vyanjana dhattu depended on "fingers and hands" i.e. which of the fingers were to strike the

¹⁹ The Evolution of Indian Classical Music, Neerja Bhatnagar, p-20

²⁰ Bhartiya Sangeet ka Itihaas - Natyashastra, IV, 28, -p.1, Dr. Thakur Jayadev Singh, pp. 302-04

strings. Vipanchi was played in harmony with 'Mukhya Veena' (Chitra Veena) with variations in laya and in guru-laghu sequence.

Abhinava has described in detail the manner of playing Mukhya Veena and Vipanchi Veena together. For instance, in *Rupa* while Mukhya Veena is being played in dviguna laya (double speed) and strokes are in guru-laghu sequence, the Vipanchi Veena plays two laghus and two drutas as mentioned in *Natyashastra*.

It might have been played solo also. In *Rupa*, Mukhya Veena and Vipanchi Veena were played simultaneously, and in *Pratikrta*, Vipanchi Veena follows the strokes played on the Mukhya Veena.

Bharatamuni has described sushir vadyas, rather briefly, in thirteen verses. The flute in his time was made of vamsa or bamboo reed. It has been suggested that till Matanga's time, vamsa were made of bamboo only. Later, flutes were made of various metals also. Bharata has explained the manner of playing seven notes 'according to shruti division of two, three and four (dvishrutika, trishrutika, and chatusshrutika). These were the notes obtained by covering the hole with the finger, by placing a trembling finger and by partially closing the hole respectively'. Flute was played mainly as an accompanying instrument 'in concord with the vocalist and the veena player', states Bharata.²¹

The description of Avnaddha and Ghana vadyas given in *Natyashastra* is very informative. For Avnaddha vadyas, credit is given to a sage Svati who got the idea of these vadyas on hearing the notes emanating from the falling drops of rain on lotus leaves. Bharata used the term 'Pushkara vadyas' for Avnaddha vadya. Among the primary Pushkara vadyas were Mridanga, Panava and Dardura.²² Vishnudharmottara Purana includes mainly Pushkara vadyas among the Avnaddha vadyas (JDS, 226). Literally pushkara means a kind of drum.

²¹ *Natyashastra*, IV, 30.2-10; AP, pp. 284-85

²² *Natyashastra*, IV pp.395-97, 403, vss.2-9,35;

Bharata muni has given the size of the face and tala of the three kinds of Mridanga i.e. Alingya, Annika and Urdhavaka. Annika was to be played in 3/5 tala and diameter of its face was twelve fingers. Darura in appearance was like a ghata, the diameter of its mouth being nine fingers over which a membrane was stretched.²³ Abhinav says that dardura was like a huge water pot (mahaghatakatah). Mention of Panava along with Bheri and Mridanga occurs in *Ramayana* also. Panava, like Mridanga, had two faces covered by membranes. It was played at the time of stuti or deva puja, or during the battle. Nanyadeva goes so far as to say that on hearing the sound of Panava, Lord Shiva himself begins to dance. Panava has sixteen fingers in length and face measuring five fingers. Bharata writes that three wires were stretched inside the belly of the instrument from one face to another set to Shadaja, Rishabha and Gandhara. There is a hole in the middle through which the svaras of the resonating strings are heard loud and clear. Bharata has described in detail the kind of leather to be used and the manner of stretching it over the faces of these instruments. Mridanga, Panava, and Dardura were called 'Pushkara Vadyas'.²⁴

Other Avanaddha vadyas were Jhallari, Pataha, Dimdima and Hudakka. Bharata also mentions about Mardala, Dundubhi and Tripushkara -vadya. Bharata has mentioned Tripushkara at a number of places. Whether it was a single drum with three faces (right, middle and left) or it consisted of three separate drums played together needs to be examined. We find both the forms in ancient Indian Sculpture. South Indian sculptures (for instance at Chidambaram) shows a drummer with two drums one lying obliquely on the lap and the other in an upright position and an Amravati sculpture shows three 'mridanga type drums' two in upright position and one in oblique position behind²⁵.

²³Natyashastra, IV, Adh. 34. vss.255-58, 261-62, and commentary of Abhinava; Anupa Pande, p.286. Abhinava; Anupa Pande, p.286

²⁴Bhartiya Sangeet ka Itihaas, NS, IV, Adh. 34, p.397, vss.11-12; JDS,172-73

²⁵Bhartiya Sangeet ka Itihaas, NS., IV, Adh. 34, p.398-400, vss.15, 23-27, pp.403-405, and Abhinava Gupta's comments on p.402; AP, pp.286-87.

Muraja was similar to Mridanga and Mardala, but a later work informs, that it had a smaller face than Mardala, the left one of eight fingers and right one of seven fingers as compared to twelve and thirteen angula of Mardala. Muraja is mentioned in the Jaticas and the two epics also. Bheri was also a two faced instrument of metal, three span (balishta) along the faces covered by leather kept taut by strings. The best kind of Bheri was made of bronze. The right face was struck by a kona and the left one by hand. Its loud sound struck terror among the enemy.²⁶

i) Tamil Source and Kalidasa Works

In the Tamil book *Purananuru* and *Pattuppattu* written between A.D.100 to 200, the drum has been mentioned in terms of great respect. It enjoyed almost the same respect as a Deity. Three kinds of drums have been mentioned in the above books, viz; (1) the battle drum, (2) the judgment drum and (3) the sacrificial drum. Its capture was considered to be the defeat of the army itself.²⁷

The 'Yala' was the most important musical instrument of the South. Some of the varieties of Yala had one thousand strings. It was like a bow-shaped harp.²⁸

Besides Vocal Music, the Tamil land had developed Veena, Yala, Flute and Drum in Instrumental Music. The Yala was distinguished by the number of strings it contained. The flute was classified into five types- made of bamboo, sandalwood, bronze, red catechu and ebony. There were thirty-one kinds of percussion instruments.

There are references to music in many of the works of Kalidasa. The words Sangita (music), Gana (song), Gandharva (science of music, classical

²⁶ Bhartiya Sangeet ka Itihaas, Jayadeva Singh, pp.172-75; Sangita Ratnakara,III, P. 484 VSS. 1148-1151.

²⁷ Indian Music, p-21, Premlata Sharma

²⁸ Ibid

music), Mridanga, Muraja (a kind of drum), Veena occur at many places in Kalidasa works.

Both the words Veena and Murchana occur in verse ‘twenty six’ in *Uttara-megha*. Kalidasa mentioned, Yaksini who was deeply feeling the pangs of separation from her lord, the Yaksha, tried to tone down the intensity of her feeling by playing on her Veena a song which she had composed and which contained the name of the Yaksha. She required a particular scale for the particular melody of the song, but such was the intensity of her feeling that though she had herself tuned the Veena in a particular scale, she forgets the scale while playing the song. In the context, Kalidasa uses the word ‘Murchana’ for the shifting scale. Murchana was a scale which gave a particular series of notes in ascending and descending order. This was a modal shift executed for getting particular notes for playing or singing a particular tune requiring those notes.²⁹

In *Malavikagnimitra*, Kalidasa refers to Mayuri-Marjana of ‘Puskara’. Puskara was a generic word for drum in ancient times. Marjana was the ancient word for tuning of drums. In ancient times, three drums were played with vocal and instrumental music. Now-a-days only two drums are played e.g., either the tabla and bayan (the drum on the left) or the two faces of mridanga. In ancient times, three drums were played for accompaniment. Mayuri-Marjana is a technical term for a particular kind of tuning of the drum. In Mayuri-Marjana, the left side of the drum was tuned to madhyama.³⁰

Kalidasa mentioned, Mayuri-Marjana of Mridanga resembles the thunder of clouds and is, therefore, dear to the Mayura, the Peacock. Among instruments, we find references to Veena, Vallaki (a kind of Veena), Venu (flute), Sankha (conch) and drums like Murjaja, Mardala and Mridanga.

²⁹ Indian Music, Premlata Sharma, p-33

³⁰ This is according to the Baroda edition of Bharata’s Natya-Shastra. According to the Bombay edition, the urdhvaka was tuned to panchama.

Medieval Time: 1200 to 1800 A.D.

We can also find various famous granthas in the medieval period. *Sangit-Makrand* of Narada was one of the very first literatures available which was written in ninth century followed by other granthas like Nanyadeva's *Bharat-Bhashyam*, Jayadeva's *Geetgovindam*, and Sarangdeva's *Sangita-Ratnakara*.

Sarangdeva's *Sangita Ratnakar* marks the third phase of the evolution of the Indian Music and enjoys a unique place among the works on Indian Musicology. It covers in a comprehensive manner, the state of Indian classical music in the thirteenth century. The work, no doubt, is a landmark in the history of *Sangita-Shastra*.

Sarangdeva calls nada as the very essence of vocal music. He says that instrumental music extends pleasure as it manifests (vyakta) nada, and nritya (dance) followed both by vocal and instrumental music and thus all three depends on the nada.³¹

Medieval period is divided into following categories:

- a) Sultanat Period
 - b) Bhakti-Saint Period
 - c) Akbar Period
 - d) British Period
- a) Sultanat Period**

The foundation of Muslim Sultanat in India can be traced from 1200 A.D. By that year all major Hindu powers of Northern India had lost their independence, and a large part of the country had passed into the hands of the

³¹ Geetam nadatmakam vadyam nadavyaktya prashyate!

Turks. In the next hundred years, Gujarat, Malwa, Rajputana and the Southern States (Devagiri, Warangal, Mabar, Telengana, and places as far as Rameshvaram) were either annexed by the Turks, or were forced to recognize Delhi's supremacy.³²

The Muslims (Arabs, Turks, Persians etc.) had brought with them a well developed music, some new musical instruments, treatise on music in Arabic and Persian, written mainly during ninth to twelfth century under the patronage of the Caliphas, and music influenced by Greek, Byzantine, Spanish, and Indian Music traditions.³³

While Muslims established their rule in India, Indian music had already attained its classical form through the efforts of the Vedic Sages, and later on with the help of work of Bharata, Dattila, Matanga, Narad and Sarangdeva etc.

Some of the Sultans, such as Kaiqubad (1287-90) and Jalal-ul-din Khilji (1290-96), held musical and dance performances regularly in their mehfiles and in their courts. Young ladies and singers became constant companions of the Sultan in his mehfiles. Their sweet melodies sung in high octaves and the tunes of Rabab, Kamancha, Miskal, Flute, Tamburas and the beat of Chang captivated the hearts of the people.

There were also excellent qawwals, singers, and expert instrument players who played on Chang, Rabab, Kamancha (bow shaped), Miskal (a type of Veena) and Naubat.

Muhammad Sana, Barani informs, used to play 'Changi dhol', and Futuha (daughter of Fakai), Nusrat Khatun, Dukhtar Khasa, and Mehar Afroz danced with such seductive charm that the viewers were completely captivated. Amir Khusro, who was the leader of the nadims in Sultan Jalaluddin's mehfiles, recited

³² Taikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Barani, pp. 251-53, 272, 300, 326; Kanhadade Prabandha, Canto II, vss. 62-75.

³³ The Evolution of Indian Classical Music, Neerja Bhatnagar, p- 41

his ghazals praising the beauty, delicacy, and seductive charms of the young dancers, and young boys who were, he says, no less handsome and heart ravishing than the young maidens.³⁴

Amir Khusro has mentioned many musical instruments like, Abarud, Rabab, Tanbur, Nay (flute), Shahnai, Duff (Tamourine), Duhul (drum), and Chang Pakian etc. In one of his sections in *Ijaz-i-Khusrawi*, he writes about music, musicians, and musical instruments of his time.

Here it may be mentioned that Sitar and Tabla are said to be Amir Khusro's creations.³⁵

According to one view mentioned by Wade, the instrument which Khusro is said to have introduced to Indian Classical Music was the Persian Sehtar.

Pandit Ravi Shankar suggests that Khusro 'adapted' probably a 'Tritantri Veena', already known to Indians along with its many variations. Khusro gave it the name 'Sehtar', reversing the order of the strings in the instrument, and placing them in present form i.e. 'the main playing string on outside, and the bass strings closer to the player's body'. This order is opposite to what we find on bin.³⁶ The Persian treatise on music written in Gujarat in 1374-75 A.D. Viz. Ghunyat-ul-Munya does not mention Sitar or Tabla, though it mentions a number of Tat, Vitat, and Sushira and Ghana instruments.³⁷

³⁴ Brarani, pp. 199-201.

³⁵ Cf. Shahab Sarmadee's interpretation, AKMV, 51 with Indian concept of Music. Liberation, and emancipation of people from three fold misery pertaining to physical, mental and spiritual being, is the 'ultimate end' of the art of music in India (see sangita Ratnakara, Vol. I, tr. Shringy, pp.7-8, vss. 13-14)

³⁶ Music in India – The Classical Traditions (Ravi Shankar, My Music, My Life, p. 46; Wade, p. 95. See also Gosvami, Story of Indian Music, p. 301, who points out that documentation of the history of Sitar between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries is lacking. The absence of any mention of Sitar and Tabla in Ghunyat ul-Munya (wr. 1374-75 A.D.) is significant.)

³⁷ Bhartiya Sangeet ka Itihaas, Ghunyat ul- Munya, pp. 52-62, Dr. Pranjpay.

b) Bhakti-Saint Period

Music in India, from its origin to its evolution and growth, needs to be viewed in religious perspective. It is true that in course of time some of the musical forms which developed had little to do with religion or religious rituals, yet a classical musician singing even an improvised *raga alapana* does it “as a ritualistic act in the presence of God, and dedicated to the Supreme Godhead”. As for South India, it is accepted that music has “emerged out of religion, centered in and around the temple, and with worship”.³⁸

In Indian Classical Music, the development of the devotional music and its various forms was work of great significance.³⁹

In Bhajana and Kirtana singing, in the North as well as South, use of musical instruments as accompaniments was an essential pattern. In the South, Sruti-box (drone), Mridangam, Jalra (cymbals), Gejjai (ankle bells) were more common.⁴⁰ In Kirtana, Jalra was often employed to emphasize important beats of talas. In North India, Iktara or Ekatantri Veena, Cymbals, Tambura, Kartal, Drum and Flute were commonly used. Most of these instruments, it may be noted, were simple, and some may be termed as folk instruments. Many of the singers played some instruments or the other while singing a devotional song such as those of Mira and Sur. In the South, some instruments, such as Mridanga, were played invariably by men whereas Sruti box, Tala, Jalra, Gejjai could be played both by male and female singers.⁴¹ The great saint composer Arunagirinatha, who is believed to have lived during the reign of Pratapa Devaraya II of Vijyanagar (1422-1499 A.D.), came from a highly respected family of poets who had been conferred the honour to have Dimdima (a type of drum) played when they appeared in public.

³⁸ Spiritual Aspects of Indian Music, Robert Leopold Simon, (Delhi, 1984), p.3

³⁹ The more common forms are abhanagas, padas, kritis, namavalis, chaupadi, devotional songs, kirtans, pundarikams

⁴⁰ Simon, p. 79, ‘Jalra is ‘good deal thicker than larger cymbals’. See Day, 143.

⁴¹ Ibid, p.80

It is said that, Mirabai, Purandardasa, Tyagraja and Arunagirinath preached through music and condensed philosophies in a song. Dimdima and Mridanga are mentioned among the instruments played by ladies for the pleasure of King Ravana of Sri Lanka. The tenth sarga also mentions Dimdima.

Arungiri drew from the new trends in composition which developed during Eleventh to Fourteenth centuries, e.g. the kirtana form evolved by Haridas of Karnataka and Tallapaka composers of Andhra Pradesh and the Sapta Suladi talas, parallel to the Marga and Desi talas, given in Sangita Ratnakara, adding to these his own patterns.

The seven notes of the gamut, as given in Tamil music works, are indicated in Tiruppugazh Ariyayan Putpikka. Arungiri also refers to gamaks and 'techniques of singing and playing instruments'. He used the term pancham when writing about the instrumental music and mentions a number of instruments.⁴²

The fifteenth century was surprisingly rich in producing saint composers in all parts of India giving rise to what is known as Bhakti movement. The contribution of these saints to music was profound, though in some cases, not at the classical level.

The development of the bhakti revival in North India and Bengal under Chaitanya (A.D. 1485-1533) was accompanied by a great deal of musical activity, and it was at this time that the popular musical performances known as Sankirtan and Nagarkirtan were first started.

c) Akbar Period

There are few better sources to learn about the state of Indian classical music in the sixteenth century than the works of Sarangdeva (whose work continued to influence the authors of various works on the theory of music for

⁴² The account of Arunagirinatha is mainly based on N.S.Ramachandran, Arunagirinatha, DPM, Part-I, pp.117-34. for instruments see p.127

centuries), Subhankara, Ramamatya, Pundrika Vittala, Damodar Mishra, Faquirullah and Abul Fazl's two well known works, *Akbar Nama* and *Ain-i-Akbari* etc. *Ain-i-Akbari* (abbreviated as *Ain*) is the third volume of the *Akbar Nama* by Shaikh Abul Fazl. The second volume is devoted to a detailed history of nearly forty years of Akbar's reign.

Akbar was a great patron of art and literature and fine arts. Abul Fazl in *Ain* has given a list of prominent musicians who adorned Akbar's court. Among those he mentioned Tansen, and his son Tantarang Khan, Baba Ramdas, Subhan Khan, Surgyan Khan, Mian Chand, Vichitra Khan, Bir Mandal Khan (who played on Svaramandal), Sarod Khan, Miyan Lal., Chand Khan and Veena player Shihaba Khan, who were from Gwalior.⁴³

Abul Fazl has given a brief account of chief instrument players also such as:

1. Bir Mandal Khan of Gwalior, plays on Svarmandal.
2. Shihab Khan of Gwalior, performed on the Bin.
3. Ustad Dost of Mashhad, who played on the Nay.
4. Purbin Khan, played on Bin.
5. Shaikh Dawan Dhari, who performed on Karma.
6. Mir Saiyid Ali of Mashhad, who played on the Ghichak.
7. Ustad Yusaf of Hirat, who played on the Tambura.
8. Qasim, surnamed Koh-bar, who had invented an instrument intermediate between the Qubuz and Rabab.
9. Tash Beg of Qipchaq who played on Qubuz.
10. Bahram Quli of Hirat, who played on Ghichak.
11. Sultan Hashim of Mashhad, who played on Tambura.
12. Ustad Shah Muhammad who played on Surna.
13. Ustad Muhammad Amin who played on the Tambura.

⁴³ The evolution of classical music during medieval period, p- 134

14. Ustad Abdullah who played on Qunun.
15. Mir Abdullah who played on Tambura.

Here again we note that the instrument players who came from Hirat, Mashhad, Quipchaq etc., played instruments of non- Indian origin or those which were already popular in Persia and other Central Asian countries such as Ghichak, Qubuz, Rabab, Tambura etc. We also find Qasim being credited for inventing an instrument combining in parts the features of Qubuz and Rabab. Thus, along with instruments of purely Indian origin, foreign instruments also had a receptive audience and an honoured place at the Mughal Court which was natural as the number of nobles of foreign origin was considerable at the Court, and in fact Persians, Turanis, Mughals and other Central-Asians continued to come to India till the beginning of the Eighteenth century, often reaching high positions.

It may be noted that Abul Fazl most likely mentioned only the best known or celebrated musicians and instrumentalists. Among the eminent singers, the largest numbers were from Gwalior, but among the instrumentalists, a large number were from outside India, and the instruments mentioned by Abul Fazl which they played were Surna, Flute, Ghichak, Karna, Tambura, Rabab, Qubuz, Nay and Qanun. It seems that while in the field of Vocal Music, Hindu musical traditions, with the addition of such forms as Tarana and Qawwali were popular at the court, so far as the instruments were concerned, a number of Central Asian and Persian instruments were much in vogue at the Mughal Court.

In the Ain, Vol. II, a list of the following musical instruments has been given, some of which, according to Shamistha Sen were, infact, innovations. The description of the instruments based on Abul Fazl's version is mentioned below:

1. Jantar: It consists of a hollow neck of wood a yard in length at each end of which, halves of two gourds were attached. It had 16 frets, their

disposition producing high and low notes and their variations. Over the frets were five steel wires tied securely at both ends.

2. Veena (Hindi Bin): which resembles the Jantar but had three strings.
3. Kinnaur: The finger-board was longer than bin and it contained three gourds and two wires.
4. Sarbeen (Sar-Veena): It was like a bin without frets.
5. Amriti (Ambriti): Its stem was smaller than that of Sarbeen (Sar-Veena) and had a small gourd below the upper side. It had only one steel wire, upon which all the scales could be played. Its frets, according to S. Sen, were fixed and immovable, the frets, as B.C.Dev writes, could be found and a little deflection or a small pressure would give the minute pitch change so essential in melodic music.
6. Rabab: The rabab had six strings of gut, but some had twelve and others had eighteen strings.
7. Sarmandal: It resembles Qanun or Kanun and had twenty –one strings, some of steel and some of brass and some of gut. Carl Engel calls it a kind of dulcimer and was played with two little plectra which the performer wore on his fingers.
8. Sarangi: It was smaller than rabab and was played with two little plectra which the performer wore on his fingers.
9. Pinak: It was also known as Sur-bitana (Sarbtan). It had a long finger-board about the length of a bow slightly bent was played like ghichak, the strings being of gut. A hollow inverted cup was attached at each end; a small gourd was held in the left hand which was used while playing.
10. Adhati: Had one gourd and two wires.
11. Kingara: It was like bin with two gut strings and smaller gourds.⁴⁴

It may be noted that most of the above mentioned tata vadyas (string instruments) were ploy chords.

⁴⁴ The Evolution of Indian classical Music during the Medieval Period, p-142

The disciples of Tansen divided themselves into two groups, the Rababiyars and the Binkars. The former used the new instrument invented by Tan Sen, the rabab while the latter used the bin, as the Veena is called in the North. Two descendants of these are living today at Rampur, a small state which has been famous for many centuries for its excellent musicians. The representatives of the Binkars are Muhammad Wazir Khan, whose paternal ancestor was Nabi Khan Binkar at the court of the Emperor, Muhhamad Shah; and Muhammad Ali Khan is the representative of the Rababiyas.

After the death of Emperor Akbar in 1605, his son Jahangir became Emperor of Delhi. He was not a lover of music like his father Akbar. He took no interest in musical activities, even then Jahangeerdad Chahhatar Khan, Purvezad and Khurram-dad Makhu, Haurzard Belaokhan were the famous musicians of the court. Two of the most important books of the seventeenth century are *Rag Bibodh* written by Pt. Somnath of Rajmundri (in 1609) and *Sangeet Darpan* written by Pt. Damodar Mishra (in 1625). *Rag Bibodh* describes the various types of Veena and the method of playing, while *Sangeet Darpan* describes the Indian music system.

In the seventeenth century, Shah Jahan, son of Jahangir, became the Emperor of India,. He was an avid lover of vocal and instrumental music. The famous musicians of his court received the title of Kaviraj, Lal Khan and Dairang Khan (known as Gunsamudsa).

Pt. Ahobala, Sri Hridya Narain Deva established the shuddha and Vikrit Swaras on different lengths of strings of Veena.

In the later half of the seventeenth century there was set back to the prosperity of Indian music. The Emperor Aurangzeb was a despotic Mohammadan ruler and hated musical activities and turned out all musicians from the court and ordered the Police to stop such performances and destroy their

musical instruments and bury them so deep into the ground that no musical sound be heard in future. The musical performances again sprouted even in the royal courts. Mohammad Shah Rangeela was a great lover of music. Adarang and Sadarang were two prominent musicians of the court.⁴⁵

d) British Period

According to Sir S.M. Tagore, Muhammad Shah (1719) was the last emperor to have famous musicians at his court. Among them were Adarang and Sadarang, two great Binkars.

The end of the Muslim period brings us to the doorstep of the contemporary scene. As we survey this panorama, once again it becomes evident that the change in Indian Music is about style and presentation only and not of its foundation.

Aurangzeb's death in A.D .1706 set off the rapid decline of the Mughal Empire. The rise of Sikhs and Marathas, invasions of Nadir Shah (A.D. 1729) and Ahmed Shah Abdali (A.D.1747-61) further weakened the empire, and with that ended an era of a giant political power. The Mughals were reduced to the areas around Delhi and Mughal emperors continued to rule, though only in name, until 1857. The advent of Europeans in India marked a new era in the history of India.

With the arrival of the British, people got exposed and responded to the western way of living and modern structure of social organisation, gave importance to education and literacy, and developed contacts with the outside world. As the British annexed the provinces, the spirit of modernisation spread.⁴⁶

In the early British period Indian music was generally confined to the courts of the leading Indian Princes, as most Europeans regarded it as primitive and unscientific. There were however, scholars like Sir William Jones and Sir W.

⁴⁵ Theory of Indian music, p-21, by Ram Avtar 'VIR', Sangeetacharya

⁴⁶ Tradition of Hindustani Music, by: Nivedita Singh, p- 33

Ousley and amateurs like Captain Day and Captain Willard who made a considerable study of it.

In South India, the Maratha king of Tanjore, Tulajaji (1763-1787) encouraged musicians by gifts and grants of land, so that they came to his court from the whole of India, and Tanjore became one of the most important musical centres in India.

The spread of education gave birth to a new literate and self-aware class of Indians. The impact of modern Western culture brought social and cultural awakening. This new educated middle class also played an important role in the restoration of music and musicians. The attention was drawn to the importance of the traditional arts as a binding force in the pride of the nation. The first steps were taken by Raja S.M.Tagore (1840 A.D.)

Sir S.M. Tagore produced a number of important works on music. His work titled “Universal History of Music” is of considerable value. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore exercised the most potent influence upon music in Bengal.⁴⁷

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941 A.D.) emerged as a musical rebel. His creations of poetry and melody later emerged in the form of beautiful *Rabindra Sangeet*.

The emergence of Band music introduced the Indians, for the first time, to western instruments. In order to celebrate the jubilant occasions of the Britishers, the native states were compelled to evolve military and civil bands. The Orchestra according to the Indian system of music was thin and remote thus, with the amalgamation of western music, hybridised tones were evolved. With the growing popularity of the music extravaganzas on the stage, certain western instruments like Violin, Clarionet, Harmonium, Mandolin, etc. were introduced to Indian Music late in the nineteenth century.

⁴⁷ The music of India, H.A.Poply, , p- 24

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the artists settled in small groups in the capitals of some of the erstwhile native states, particularly in North India. Although the days of liberal royal patronage were gone with the Mughals, the devoted musicians adjusted themselves to new circumstances and to whatever support they received from these new patrons and they continued their riyaz (daily ritual of practise) to sustain and preserve their art and also pursue their mission by training and grooming their disciples in accordance with their time honoured tradition.

The places of rehabilitation in different regions of North India were far removed from one another. There were hardly any occasions for the musicians to come together to exchange views and ideas or learn by give and take. The groups of musicians thus settled down in their new homes and eventually came to be known as 'Houses' or 'Gharanas' of different styles of music. Notable among these gharanas are those of Gwalior, Jaipur, Agra, Kirana, Patiala, and Indore, all deriving their names from the names of the respective capitals of the erstwhile states where they settled down with the advent of British rule.

During the last few decades, the scientific study of music in India has made great advancement. Music schools and Associations have sprung up all over the country. Few of them are in Bombay, Pune, Bangalore, Lahore, Gwalior, Baroda, Lucknow, Tanjore, Mysore, Trivandrum, Calcutta, and Madras. The *Gandharva Mahavidyalaya* (Bombay school) was first established in Lahore by Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar in 1901 and then in Bombay in 1908. It was supported by the Maharajas and Government officials. Both vocal and instrumental music are taught, either individually or in classes. The school in Calcutta, under the name of *Sangit-Sangha* is very popular. The experiments are being made along the lines of combining Indian and European systems.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ The Music of India, H.A. Poply, , p- 24

The most noteworthy recent development has been the series of *All- India Music Conferences*, inaugurated in the year of 1916 by Maharaja of Baroda, which led to the establishment of an All-India Music Academy in the year 1919.

An *Indian Music Academy* was established in Madras in the year 1928 and has since been organising Annual Music Conferences in Madras and conducting research, with the aid of music scholars, into the various ragas in use in Carnatic Music. The *Madras University* introduced Indian Music in the University and formed a Department of Indian Music in the University for Teaching and Research work.

The *Bhatkhande University* of Hindustani Music has been established in Lucknow in memory of the late Vidvan N.V.Bhatkhande, as a development of the Moris College of Hindustani Music started there in 1921.⁴⁹

Present Time

The first decade of the twentieth century can be said to be the period of the development of music-notations. The first instance of such a system is found in the work of Dahyabhai of Bhavnagar. Both Bhatkhande (1860-1936 A.D.) and Paluskar (1872-1931 A.D.) evolved their own systems of notation, which was a landmark in the field of music-education. Till then, the only way to learn a composition of other musical nuances was through oral tradition. With the evolution of notation system, musical compositions could be preserved in written form.

After 1930's there was a great upsurge in instrumental music and by 1950's this form of music had established itself parallel to its vocal counterpart. A brilliant group of fine instrumentalists, particularly of the Allaudin Khan Gharana,

⁴⁹ The Music of India, H.A. Poply, , p- 24

rose to prominence in two decades. Pioneers among them were Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, Nikhil Banerjee, and the techniques developed by these great instrumentalists had a wider appeal. The jugalbandi (duet) of various instruments and intricate contest with the rhythmic accompanist received popular success. The setting up of Akashvani Vadya Vrinda (orchestra) gave further impetus to instrumental music. The film music required large number of instruments, and the film- companies started recruiting large number of instrumentalists.

After independence the music gained great popularity. The educated society started to feel the necessity of their children being taught music. It has been now introduced as a special subject in schools and colleges and has become a part of education of the boys and girls. From the K.G. classes to the Graduate and Post- Graduate level, music is taught as a subject. Besides the educational institutions, the music conferences are also held and various academies are functioning well in various parts of the country. Now-a- day's music is getting a charming hold on Film, Television and Radio broadcasting programmes. It is a hope that music, in future, will achieve an appreciable position in culture and will form an indispensable part of public life both in India and abroad.⁵⁰

Courses and diplomas in Indian Music are now available in many universities in India, viz. Madras, Annamalai, Delhi, Travancore, Andhra, Banaras, Allahabad, Lucknow, Punjab and Nagpur.

⁵⁰ Theory of Indian Music, Ram Avtar 'VIR', Sangeetacharya, p-21