CHAPTER 5

BHARATA'S CONTRIBUTION TO INDIAN MUSIC
Music is an art of arranging sounds of voice or instruments or both in a pleasing sequence. Music is of two kinds, harmonic and melodic. Any combination of notes sounded simultaneously in harmonic music. In this, the vertically represented structure of a piece of music and the art or science concerned with the structure and combinations of chords. Harmony is an expressive means in music, based on the combination of musical sounds in consonances and progressions in the musical context of mode and tonality. Melody means tunefulness or the arrangement of musical notes in an expressive order. The music of India is essentially melodic. India is a country which can claim a noble enriched and unique musical tradition of its own. Each region of this land belongs to Arṣa culture, spreading from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari, has helped to prosper the merits of this original music. Classical music, Bhajans, Ghazals, Qawwals, Sufi music, Film music, Pop music, Rock music, Folk music, Indian fusion music are powerfully existing in India. Though it has its own wide regional varieties, its roots are the same. In the Vedic and Brahmanic periods, the people of India developed the art of music and dancing as an essential part of culture and civilization. The Vedic chants were said to melodies and known as Sāmagāna. It is characterised by a downward movement of notes, which numbered from two or three to seven. During the period creating period of Nāṭyaśāstra the pre-dominant musical
foundation was based on Jāti. After Bharata, Matarṅga introduced Rāga system and Gāndharva music was flourishing in popularity. The Dēśī music became popular in this era. At the time of Afghan invasions, Northern culture was closely embraced and its influences were coming from Persian and Arabian melodies. But southern regions remained comparatively changeless. Now two entirely different systems of music arose in India, the Hindustani system of north and Karnatic of the south. South preserved the purity of the old music and the north combined the Muslim and Indian music both. Some of the very sweet Rāgas of the Karnatic system came from North, but the difference between the two systems is found in the presentation and approach to the music, and both the groups were equally rich in their qualities. During the Mughal rule (1526-1857) about three hundred and fifty years ago, a large number of well-known Persian and Arabian musicians had been invited to the royal Mughal palaces in Delhi. Naturally, a fusion and mingling of the Indian with the Persian-Arabian styles took place, which gave birth to a new style, the Hindustani music. It is in the 'Saṅgītasudhākara' of Haripala Deva that the two classifications, the Karnatic and Hindustani are recorded for the first time. It was Amir Khusro, who made a fusion of the Persian with the Indian and brought about a new style here. There are many Rāgas which are commonly accepted and applied in both the above mentioned styles. There are Rāgas similar to Ābhōgī, Desh, Hindola,
Kalyāṇī, Šubhapantuvarāli, Mohanam, Haṃsadhvani, etc. in Hindustani also. In it Hindolam is known as Malkaush; Mohanam as Bhoop; Šubhapantuvarāli as Todi and Mayamalavagowla as Bhairava.

In Karnatic music Kriti, Keertana, Pada, Jávali, Dāru, are important melodic compositions will be useful at the stage. The technical compositions are Geetham-Lakshnageetha and Ghanarageethetha; Varna-Chowka varṇa, Tānavarna; Svarajati, Jatisvarama and Rāgamalika.

Karnatic music have three parts to their body. The first two lines of the song (sometimes-just one) are called Pallavi. They occur over and over, especially after each stanza. Usually the Pallavi is followed by two more lines or sometimes just one more. This portion is called Anu Pallavi. This is sung at the beginning for sure, but sometimes even during the end of the song, but not necessarily after each stanza. The stanzas of a song are called 'Charanam'.

In Hindustani music, there are ten main forms of styles of singing and compositions: Dhrupad, Dhamar, Hori, Khayal, Tappa, Chaturang, Ragasagar, Tarana, Sargam and Thumri. Nowadays Ghazals have become very popular as the 'light classical' form of music should not be used consecutively (exceptions). Rāgas in Hindustani Classical Music can be seen as the designs created out of Saptaswaras simply by shifting the Shadja on different shrutis. A Rāga is described by its ascent-descent pattern (Aroha-Avaroha) from middle Sa to high Sa.
The basic principles of both are Rāga and Tāla. The Saptasvaras Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni and their intensely aesthetic 'Sthāyī' (strong) divisions and the shapes are the basic elements and they are of supreme importance. The Tala system of both the Northern and Southern, is the same. It is the expression of it, the styles of singing (Ālāpana) that brought independent identities to each of them. Both these have established different genuine styles in the aspects of singing and the application of Gamagas.

1. Śruti

The concept of Śruti is the most significant but yet the most baffling aspects of Indian music and there are as many opinions as there are writers on the subject. For the present purposes a Śruti to be a unit of measurement of the relation of notes in an octave. In Indian music Śrutis are extremely important and significant. Besides that, it is with the help of these twenty two Śrutis that Indian music expresses its 'Gamakaviśeṣas' properly and correctly. Certain Rāgas consisting of the same Svaras are creating ever new and different expressions and at the same time capable of keeping up their own independent identity. The reason behind it is only the greatness of the Śrutis. The Śrutis in a Rāga have to be aptly and correctly executed to bring out the underlying Rāgabhāva clearly. The Rāgas can be sung as ever-fresh and with novelty and vitality because of the great quality of the Śruti beautifully merged in each Svara. The term Śruti has often found different definitions and explanations. Mataṅga the author Brhaddeśī calls it a sound
which can be grasped by the ear. Any audible sound is considered as Śruti now.

The depth of Bharata’s knowledge about the intervals Catuśruti (major tone), Triśruti (minor tone), and Dviśruti (semi tone) of Svarasaptaka in Śadjaṅgāma, consisting of pure Svaras is amazing. Based on the notes of Śadjaṅgāma Bharata had suggested a very informative experiment about the interval of Ekasvara.

The successors of Bharata had explained the Dhruva-Cala Viṇā experiments and this is the same that Bharata had suggested. They had placed Sadja note in the last one of the fourth position. Madhyaṣaḍja is situated in Chandovati among the Tīvrā, Kumudvatī, Manda and Chandovati Śrutis. Ratika-Ṛṣabha, Kṛodha-Gāndhāra, Mārjanī-Madhya, Ālāpinī-Pañcama, Ramyā- Dhaivata, Kṣōṇī- Niṣāda etc are all ancient pure-Saptaka (seven notes) of the Niyata (concerned) Śruti. They are graphically presented as in the twenty two Śrutis. A graph is in evidence of
Bharata's Śruti experiment is attached in the index.

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The other Svaras that originated from the remaining Śrutis were later labelled as Vikṛtasvaras. Ahobala introduced first values of notes on terms of the speaking length of the string in the Vīnā. He had lived around in 1650AD and had accepted the style of placing Śuddha-Vikṛta notes with different measurements in Saptaka in the Vīnā strings. According to the modern style the frequency of Madhyaśādja is one. As a result the Śadja-Pañcama of the twenty two Śrutis is kept steady or immovable or inactive, and on the remaining Ri, Ga, Ma, Dha, Ni for Śrutis each is added and regulated.

Dr. L Muthayya Bhagavatar revealed in his book named Mēlādhikāralakṣaṇa that only twenty four Śrutis can be felt on Vīnā but not so of throat. Śāriṅgadēva, Vēnkatamakhi, had followed Bharata in this case. Twenty four Śrutis are discussed in the text Saṅgītasārasaṅgraha. Sage Nārada points out his view in Saṅgītasamayasāra as

ते तु द्वाविशिष्टिनांद: न कष्ठेन परिस्फुटाः ।
शक्यं दर्शयितुं तस्मात् वीणायां तत् निदर्शिनम्।

2. Svara

There are seven Svaras viz. Śadja, Rṣbha, Gāndhāra, Madhyama,
Pañcama, Dhaivata and Niṣāda. They are of four kinds in accordance with their relation to an interval of Śrūtis as Vādī (sonant), Saṃvādī (consonant) Vivādī (Dissonant) and Anuvādī (assonant). These types notes provide the bases for melodic state and punctuations. They thus determine to a large extent the ethos as well as the structure of the Rāga. Vādī, the word clarifies Rāga, and which gives it a colour of its own. The word Vādī means one that speaks - being the most important note, it is called the King of the Rāga. A note that is frequently used, or that is held for a long duration is usually referred to as the vādī. Strong note at a perfect fourth or fifth from the vādī which is called the saṃvādī ('consonant'). There may be disagreement about which note-pair should be sonant-consonant in a given rāga. So we use terms such as 'important', 'strong' and 'weak' to denote musical functions of tones. A rāga must evoke a particular emotion or create a certain 'mood'. Each Rāga has a name.

Bharata mentioned the importance of Vādī, Svaras with explanations in Jāti discussion. The Kākaliniśāda and Antaragāndhāra belong to the Sādhāraṇāṅkrtṛa Category. Vādī, Saṃvādī, Anuvādī and Vivādī forms are so important in both the Rāgas Karnatic and Hindustani music. He also referred to Sādhāraṇaśvaras, these are as a transition in between two Svaras.

Sādhāraṇa means overlapping notes or common notes, those occurring between two consecutive notes. They are produced in between two
notes as in the transition of a season. There are two kinds. Kākali and Antarasvaras are Svarasādhāraṇas.

3. Use of Svaras in different Rasas

The seven svaras are Saḍja, Rṣabha, Gandhara, Madhyama, Paṅcama and Niṣāda. They are employed approximately to particular Rasas means sentiments. The Madhyama and Paṅcama are to be employed in relation with Hasya(comic) and Śṛṅgāra(erosive). Saḍja and Rṣabha are for Vīra(herculean), Raudra(terrible) and Adbhuta(wondership). Gāndhāra and Niṣāda are for Karuṇa(Pathos) and Dhaivata for distinguishing and Bhayānaka(terrible).

4. Mūrcchanās

The term Mūrcchanā means swooning, a kind of fall. Each note in a Grāma is taken as 'Sa', the succeeding notes becoming Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma, Ga, Ri in a descending order. It is because these new scales were produced by descent they were called Mūrcchanas.

क्रमयुक्ता: स्वरा: सप्त मूच्छनेत्यभिभिजितः।
पद्धपश्वरकासतानाः: याधवोधिविदाश्रयः।

The use of the seven Svaras in sequence in the ascending or descending order is named as Mūrcchanās. Thus combining of fourteen Mūrcchanās with seven Svaras is named as Sampūrṇamūrcchanās (heptatonic). When a Mūrcchanā has only six Svaras it is called Śādava Mūrcchanās (hexatonic). One of the Tānamūrcchanās with five Svaras only is called Auḍāvita Mūrcchana(pentatonic). The Śādavamūrcchana and Audavamūrcchana are also called Tānas. Variety of Tānas and Mūrcchanās gives enjoyment to the
producer as well as to the listener. Tānas are still being used in Karnatic and Hindustani music, but its structures are modified. Tāna is yet another style of melodic improvisation in free rhythm. Pallavi is short pre-composed melodic theme with words and set to one cycle of Tala.

5. Jātis and Grāmas

Bharata gives an elaborate description of Jātis with characteristics

प्रहांशो तारमन्द्रो च न्यासापन्यास एव च।
अल्पत्वं च बहुत्वं च पादवङ्गिते तथा॥

Bharata had used the term Rāga five times. Sage Bharata describes two standard scales named Grāmas. Grāma literally means a village or a gregarious habitation. By a transference of meaning in music it come to mean a group of notes. Grāma is a name that refers to a human society related to its life and activities. Just like that in Saṅgītaśāstra Grāma is the name applied to a Svara-society. It is the basic Svara group for Mūrdhāṇa, Tāna, Varna etc. Bharata makes reference the two Grāmas- Śaḍjagrāma and Madhyamagrāma. A third Grāma named Gāndhāragrāma is mentioned in Mataṅga’s Bhaddēśi, Ahōbala’s Saṅgītapārijāta and in Vēṅkaṭamakhi’s Caturṇḍṇṭįprakāśika. But L Muthayya Bhagavathar analyses that Gāndhāragrāma is sung only by seven notes of Tārasthāyī (high pitch), which is not prevalent in this earth. The conviction further he adds that it is taken for granted that Madhyamagrāma has already merged into Śaḍjagrāma and only Śaḍjagrāma exists today. Six perfect Rāgas and another Rāgas;
and another Rāga consisting of two Madhyamas without Pañcama are formed from Saḍjaṁrāma. The first six among these are the basic elements of Karnatic music. A variety of Gītas, Varṇas, Kīrtanas, etc have been formed from the vital characteristics of the six mentioned above (1). The last Rāga in Saḍjaṁrāma or Anyadēśarāga. Venkatamakhi refers to this as Bhāṣāṅgarāga. Two varieties of a single Svara are made use of in the Rāga Hamīrkalyāṇi of Hindustani music and the Rāga Dvijāvanṛī of Karnatic music.

6. Alaṅkāras

Alaṅkāras based on Varṇas, are employed in Gītīs like ornaments on women. Without Varṇa Gītīs lose their liveliness like a night with out moon, a river with out water and a creeper with out flowers. The Alaṅkāras that could be made based on the Varṇas- Sthāyī, Ārōhī, Avarōhī and Saṅcārī are not likely to be confirmed as to the types or the number related to it. In the Nāṭyaśāstra itself the names of all the Alaṅkāras referred to earlier are also not well-explained with the Lakṣāsanas concerned by the author. The great authors upto Vēnkaṭamakhi, who had contributed abundantly to Saṅgīta Śāstra are all theoretically following Bharata, but often nominally, because all of them had effected changes practically in the Ālāpa order.

The Alaṅkāras mentioned in the Caturḍaṇḍīprakāśika are the ones generally found prevalent. All of them are put into use according to Tālas. Vēnkaṭamakhi is of opinion that there are eight types of Alaṅkāras which can be made practicable. Even now Alaṅkāras use both in Carnatic and Hindustani music and the term 'Palttey' in Hindustani.
7. Tāla

Tālas are classified into four Tryaśra, Caturaśra, Miśra and Saṅkīrṇa. The first two are the same in the case of Laghu, Guru and Pluta. The Caturaśra group has four corners and Tryaśra, the second has three corners. Five Nimēṣas make a Mātra and Mātras join to make Kalā. Kalā is of three types—those having two Mātras, four Mātras, eight Mātras and so on. After elaborating all the terms related to Tāla; the types of applications of Tāla in Purvarāṅga, Gītaka, Dhruvā songs etc are also minutely analysed by the author. Yati, Pāṇi and Laya are the divisions and Layas are three fold as- Druta, Madhya and Vilambita. Yati is of three kinds - Śrōtōgata, Gōpucca and Samā. This is dependent upon the letters and syllables of a song and applicable to both Gīta(songs) and Vādyā(instruments). The equanimity metre, Pādas of a extends upto the portion where a Kalā. Pāṇī is of three kinds as - Samapāṇī Avapāṇī and Upapāṇī. The instruments begin with Laya in the Samapāṇī. Avapāṇī starts just before the Dhruvavasthāna of Laya and occurs only in a Drutalaya.

Both Karnatic and Hindustani music follow these theories and basic principles of Bharata. The fundamental unit of time in North- Indian music is mātra, which is equivalent to the Audava or Akṣara of the south- Indian Music. Again the Mātra is of an arbitrary and subjective time value. In Karnatic music the proportion of the three Layas is kept. Vilambita correctly doubled becomes Madhyama Laya, and Madhyama correctly doubled
becomes Druta. But these strict elements are not followed in the present style. kheyal style and no playing of instruments also is there in North-Indian music.

8. Musical instruments

Bharata refers to four types of musical instruments relating to Nāṭya. Stringed instruments, percussion instruments, solid instruments and hollow instruments are the four instrumental groups.

'तत् वैववनद्यं च घनं सुषिरमेव च।' 16

Ātōdyā, means instruments, Ghana' means solid material which is made out of metals and it is also a set of special instruments in music. Stringed instruments are like Vipañcī and citra. All of the covered instruments are grouped under Avanaddha. There are three types as Āṅkya (like Mṛdaṅga to be placed on the lap), Āliṅgya (like Maddala to be lifted up and played) and Ārdhvaka (placed on earth for playing) The name explains the style of playing, keeping it against face and striking. A story related to the origin of the instruments like Mṛdaṅga is given below.

One day, when the atmosphere was dark and cloudy, the sage Svati went to fetch water. Indra showered heavy rains on the lake as if he was going to fill the earth with water. The rain drops lashed heavily on the lotus leaves and it created different melodious notes. Listening to these sounds of rain drops falling on the leaves, he keenly perceived the underlying music. The sounds which were produced by rains on the thick, slender and tender
leaves captured his imagination. Then his mind worked on the moulding the shape of a mṛḍaṅga (a kind of drum). Later, with the help of Visvakarma, he made three types of Mṛdaṅgas ie, Puṣkaravādyā (wooden drum), Paṇava (tabor made of wood), and Dardara (one side which covered by leather). Perceiving the Dundūbī of gods (a large kettle drum) he also created Muraja (a large drum).

The Mṛdaṅga is the rhythm instrument used to maintain the Tāla, of the recital in the Kāmatic music. The word Mṛdaṅga means the body of clay. It is most ancient of all percussion instruments. It is a double sided drum with the body of the instrument made of one piece of wood. It has the shape of barrel with the bulge slightly to one side and the right face is smaller than the left.

Pakhawaj is an ancient barrel shaped percussion instrument with two playing heads. It is essentially a north Indian version of the Mṛdaṅga. The Pakhawaj is mainly used for the accompaniment of Dhrupad and Dhammar singers. It is also very much used in Orissi dances and occasionally for the kathak. Tabala, Dhap, Chenda, Dholak, Nagara, Khol, Madal, Tavil, Damroo, Dhol, are the famous percussion instruments use now a days. Ghatam, Jal-Tarang, Kanch-Tarang, Kasht-Tarang, Jhanj, Khartal, Piccolo, Tic-Toc, Tong, Tasha, Kartal, Stirdrum, Kabbas, Moracus, Talam, Agogo and Chimta are some of the Ghana Vādyas. Citra, Rudra, Vicitra, Saranī, etc are the important Vīṇā varieties. The instruments Mizzav, Chenda, Edakka,
Thudi, etc are prominently prevalent in Kerala.

9. Production of musical instrument

Different qualities of earth used for applying to hide of Mṛdaṅga. The blakish mud from the river bank with a sweet taste drained and smooth should be used for the plastering. While black, thick, hard, mud full of husks could not produce desirable notes. But the mud with a blue colour could produce sweet notes. The powder of wheat and Yava may be mixed into paste and applied as a paint for plastering.

Hides should not be of cow afflicted by fever, torn or pecked by crows, drenched by water or solid by smoke or fire and its colour of tender twings of mango, which is as white snow, jasmine or camphor and free from flesh is to cover the mouth of the instruments.

10. Merits and defects of artists

Bharata makes skilful references to those artists who deal with four types of instruments, and the essential qualities of these persons. The important qualities a singer should have five likely defects throats may have, so on and so forth. These point to invaluable treasures of information which give and inspiration to musicians, and those scholars who attempt authoring music-related scientific works, for ever, since Bharata's life time. Bharata had conducted deep informative studies on the merits and demerits of song and instrument. While discussing the qualities of male and female singers,
Bharata specifies that women are suitable as singers, and men are nobly suited to instrument-playing. Another notable subject dealt with by the author is the description of the merits of the Saṅgītācāryas (Music teachers), and their disciples respectively. There are six qualities each specified for both these classes. The throat of the singers also receive special mention as their qualities- the positive and the negative.

Highly informative analyses and studies are given about Svara, Varṇas, Alaṅkāras, Mūrchhanas, Jātis, etc which are basically music, related to Nādas produced by the throat. Description about two types of Vīṇā- Citra and Vipañcī the rules to be followed in Vīṇā playing; and sub-divisions like Kaccapi, Ghōśaka are all included in this. The application of Jātis in Vīṇā; Rasa system Jātis; the Rāga system of Svaras; the four Varṇas- Ārōhī, Avarōhī, Sthāyī and Saṅcāris, Gītis, Dhātus ( four Dhātus), fourteen Vistāras, five Karaṇas, five Āviddhas, ten types of Vyaṇjanas etc are all explained in detail. Three Gatis in the application of Dhātus as Tatva, Anugata Ōkha and Rūpakṛta which are the Karaṇas in Vīṇā playing, the special aspects in Vipaṇici playing etc are elaborately described in the context of the use of Vīṇā.

The argument that the term Rāga was first suggested by Matanga is not likely to be true. Bharata had used the same term Rāga about five times in the context of describing the characteristics of Amsa-Graha of the Svaras.

The Amsa Svara- Graha Svara system which fully brings out and expresses
the Bhāvas of Rāgas still exists. This can be clearly read as the extension of the Jāti Laksṇas already established by Bharata. The Sampurna and Apurṇa Rāgas must have taken birth following the Mūrcchanas Śādava and Audava.

11. Dhruvās

Bharata referred almost eighty five varieties of Dhruva songs, which were prevailed in that period. Indian folk music diverse because of India's vast cultural diversity. It has many forms including Bhandra, Lavani, Dandiya and Rajastani. The arrival of movies and pop music weakened folk music's popularity but cheaply recordable music has made it easier to find and helped revive the traditions. Folk has been influential on classical music which is viewed as a higher art form.

The approach of Bharata to music has highly influenced the classical Sanskrit literature. Which is very evident from the works of Bhāsa, Kālidāsa, Bhavabhūti, etc. In the Mālavikāgnimitra of Kālidāsa we get an example for how this Māyūrī Mārjanā attract the mind of the connoisseur, the conversation between Agnimitra, Paṇḍītakauśikī and Dhrainīdēvī

जीमूतस्तततविनिश्चितनिमयूर्वरुपोरुपुरुसितस्य पुष्करस्य।

निहारितिन्युपहितमध्यमस्वरोत्त्वा मायूरी मदयत मार्जना मनोसि।।

According to Bharata there are three Mārjanās in the application of the drum, based on the Svaras. They are Māyūrī, Arddhamāyūrī and Karmāravī. Of the three Māyūrī-mārjanā is applied in Madhyamagrāma. It is to be specially noted that Kālidāsa had quoted this theory of Bharata as it is, in his
Bharata’s great theories of music are definitely, and beyond doubt, his contributions to Indian Music. As each of these music-related theories is getting explained, it is amazing that it demands deeper explanation as to its internal details. This chapter is a humble attempt to understand how the modern world of music approaches and evaluates these sacred music thoughts of Bharata. In the all rapidly growing art forms we can find Bharata’s signatures. Whatever growth and changes happen in the world of art according to the levels of variations of people times and related classifications, it is definite that the world of art is getting closer and closer to Bharata. Following the theories of Bharata the chief music currents of India have advanced considerably in both branches Hindustani and Karnatic.

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Foot notes

2. Ibid 570
3. Ibid 775
4. Dr. Svantra Sharma, A comparative evolution of music in India and the West, P 8
5. Ibid
6. T V Vasudevan, Karnatic music composers, P 18-26
7. Śloka 25/ 28, Nāṭyaśāstra Ed. R S Nagar, P 18
8. Ibid
9. L Muthayya Bhagavathar, Sangeetha Kalpadrumam, P 43
10. Ibid
11. Śloka 32/ 28, Nāṭyaśāstra, Ed. R S Nagar, P 24
13. L Muthayya Bhagavathar, Sangeetha Kalpadrumam, P 81
14. Ibid, P 82
15. A K Ravindranth, Dakshinendyan Sangeetham-Part 2, P 28
16. Śloka 94/ 28, Nāṭyaśāstra (En. Trns N P Unni.) P 749
17. Ibid 21, Kālidāsa, Mālaviśāgnimitra, P 32