

HISTORY CITY OF ODISSI MUSIC

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ABSTRACT: -

The present name Odisha is taken its origin in the corruption form of the Sanskrit word Odra Desa. It takes into it the territories known as Kalinga, Utkal, Tosali, Kangoda, Odra or Odda, Dasarana and Kosala. The names of Utkal and Udra in course of time applied to the whole of coastal Odisha. In the seventh century A.D. Odra dsa or Odrastra came to be identified as Odravisaya and it took the prakrt from Oddavisaya in the eleventh century A.D. which with gradual change of phonetic forms came to be known as Odissa or Odisha in the fourteenth century A.D.

Keywords- Odissi, Music, Antiquity, Dance, Song, Utkal, Gamak, Kalinga, Raga, Saint Poets, Lord Jagannath.

Odras are considered to be the earliest settlers of this region. Originally, the Odras were the Vratyas, the Aryans who did not come to the fold of the Vedic Aryans. The Odras as a race are mentioned in the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Manu Samhita, Several epics, holy text and Natyasastra.

From the first century B.C., many historical documents are found for the research and study of musical tradition of Odisha especially in the stone writing of 'Hatigumpha' (elephant cave) in the third line, which depicts the works of Kharavela in the third year of his reign. Many facts are known about dance and music of the then Odisha., from the Gandharva – Veda – buddhata of Kharavela and from Natya-Gita-baditra-Utsav-Samaj arranged by him it is proved that a great deal is performed about the art of Utkaliya Gandharva or Music.

In later years in the Natyasastra by Bharat muni ample discussion is found about ancient Kalinga, Odra, Tossal and Kosala etc. considering the vastness of the then Kalinga, Bharat Muni had included in both Deccan and Odra-Magadha 'Pravrtti'.

The Gangas brought about the unification of Odisha. It was Chologangadeva (1078 A.D.-1147 A.D.) under whose patronage the religious institutions, art and architecture of Odisha thrived built the famous temple of Lord Jagannath or the lord of the universe at Puri. It is a place of pilgrimage for the Hindus and for centuries it has nurtured a culture of devotion which lives even today in association with the festivals, ritual, celebrations which are observed with much sanctity in the temple and outside by the people of this region glorifying Lord Jagannath. Various rituals have been associated with the temple and the worship the God installed in. in the different forms of Bhakti (Devotion), dance and music have equal importance. The Odissi dance and music, its growth, development and existence have been inseparably linked with temple rituals. This dance and music are performed by the 'maharis' a class of dancers who have kept aloft and alive the traditions in Odisha. A

tradition of young male acolytes dressed as female dancers came into existence during the rising of the cult of Sakhibhava a religious movement in which devotees regarded himself or herself as the consort or spouse of the Lord. The boys clothe in female attire were called 'gotipuas' who performed dance outside the precincts of the temple and the Maharis danced inside it.

Music is one of the vital components of culture. It is the inborn nature of man and fully mingled with society. Therefore, music plays a special role in the cultural developments of any nation. Judged from this angle it is known that there is a long and continued tradition of music and its performances in the rich cultural heritages of Odisha. The art of Odissi has a long history with the all-pervading influence of the religion of Jagannath. The temple bears ample testimony to it in its architecture, sculpture and paintings that upheld it as a living tradition.

No information is available in the Vedas regarding the existence of geographical regions in the name of Odra or Utkal yet the word or name Kalinga is found in a few 'Brahman Granth' written between 3000 to 2000 B.C. The name Kalinga found in the Mahabharat written in 1000 B.C. and the Ramayana too. From all these great epics a lot is known about the richness and integrity of ancient Odisha.

Although the present Odisha has been known as a culturally developed region, no clear record or evidence is available about the dance and music of that time. However, one German archeologist studying some stone pieces collected from Shankarganj of Odisha said that they were the oldest musical instruments of India. They were of 3000/4000 years ago. However, it needs research to prove it is a matter of pride for the history of music of Odisha.

The Natyasastra refers to four vrittis Avanti, Dakshinatyā, panchali and Udra Magadhi, which flourished in the different parts of India. Odra here refers to Odisha. Different regions have different music and dance traditions each distinguished by its nature and technique.

Innumerable inscriptions bear testimony to the fact that dance and music were integral part of the people. The Hatigumpha inscription of the king Kharavela says that he was a musician. The Kesaris were adept in the art of dance and music. Jayanti Kesari took pride in calling him as Nrtyakesari and Gandharva Kesari.

During the time of Anangbhim Deva a king of the Ganga Dynasty Jayadeva, the celebrated poet wrote the great Sanskrit Kavya the 'Gita Govinda' which was regularly recited in the temple and this practice continues to these days by the Devadasis. There are ample references as to appointment by musicians and dancers in the temple of Lord Jagannatha.

The archaeological evidences of Odisha show that music in all aspects was in highly flourished stage and that tradition was kept up through ages. In this way, the present tradition of music and dance of Odisha known as Odissi could be traced back into a long hoary past and is the outcome of continuous evolution. There are evidences in historical chronicles of the existence of various kingdoms and kings who patronized the art between 200 B.C. and 500 A.D. They throw light on the continuity of the tradition in the practice of the dance style.

In course of time the glorious age of development Odissi art and architecture, culture

began. Chiefly during the reign of the Gangas and Suryas along with the development of art and architecture, literature was nourished enriching the great cultural tradition of Odisha. In one side was history written about the dance and music of Odissi in form of carving in the body of the temples and in another side were written volumes of Kavya-Kavita and Chand alankar. However, from the stone pieces to Talapatra from the chisel to lekhani every sphere was dominated by reserberation of music.

In the 15th century after Boudhacary and Jayadeva, saraladas laid the foundation stone of Odia literature. His writings like Chandi Purana, Vilanka Ramayan and other works gave lots of information about music in different chapters. After Sarala Das, the poets of the Panchasakha age there were some poets like Narasingha Sen, Dinakeishna, Upendra Bhanja, sadanandda, Kavisurya Brahma, Abhimanyu samanta Singhar, Brajanath Badajena rendered their works on music, mentioned about the Raga-ragini, tala etc. There is the reflection of music in Odia literature as well as in music in the bodies of different temples beginning from the Parsurameswar of that century A.D. to Konark temple of the 13th century we find in them ample evidence of musical accomplishments from the dancer, drumbeaters and other accompanists of both the sexes with their musical instruments.

Besides literature, there is a glorious tradition of writing music books in Odisha. From 15th to 18th century A.D., there are more than twenty books were written in music, dance, song and musical instruments. Some of prominent books and authors are mentioning here. ‘Sangita Kaumudi’, Sangita Sara of Hari Nayak, Gita Prakas of Brajanath Badajena, Sangita Muktavali of Raja Haricharan, Sangita Kalpalatika of Haladhar Mishra, Gita Prakash Boli of Gadadhar Das, Sangita Narayan of Gajapati Narayan Dev, Natya Manorama & Sangitarnavachandrika of Raghunath Rath, Sanget Sarani of Narayan Mishra, Abhinaya Candrika of Maheswar Mohapatra and Abhinaya Darpana Prakash of Jadunath Singh. Besides them many books like Sangita Sara Boli, Sangita sastra, Swara Sara, tala Nirnay, Tala Sarvasara etc. were written more over vivid descriptions of classics of music found in alankar Granthas of Rasa Kalpadruma and Kavi Kalpadruma etc. Krishndas Badajena, the writer of Gita Prakash achieves the distinction of occupying a place in the royal court of Akbar. The historian Abul Fazal entitled him as outstanding and peerless musician.

Undying love for music of the Gajapati Kings helped to uplift the musical accomplishment of Odisha. By due arrangement of programs on dance and music in the premises of temples the Gajapatits not only encouraged the musicians but encouraged love or interest for music in common people. Gajapati kapilendra Dev the founder of the Surya Dynasty stages the Drama Parsuram Vijaya under his supervision which says about his love for art, Gajapati Purusottam Dev wrote Abhinava Gitagovinda following Gitagovinda, after him Prataprudra Dev stages the drama Lalita Madhaw by Rupa Goswami in the premises- ‘ranga Chakada’ of Srimandira. Gita Govinda singing is compulsory in the Srimandir Strngthened the musical performances on Uccanga Sangita in Odisha. The musician Krishnadas Badajena had a place in the court of Mukunda Dev before he joined the court of Akbar.

Similarly, in the court of Gajapati Narasingha Dev of Khurdha the musician, Pt. Kaviratna Purusottam Mishra rendered his service for 25 years and after the demise of Narasingha Dev, he occupied a place in the court of Gajapati Narayan Dev of Parala and write SangitaNarayan but in the name of Narayan Dev. Following this tradition, the other kings too honoring the musicians in their court developed the music culture of Odisha.

Above all the chief exponent and hero of the Odisha music industry was Lord Jagannath the soul of the Odisha nation. His interest for dance and music described its legends and the appointment of Mahari, Madeli, Bhitara Gauni at his service influenced a great deal to the music of Odisha. Truly, he was the best representative of music culture of Odisha.

In the view of ancient Natyasastra, the ancientness of the musical tradition of Odisha is to be taken into consideration. In later time, the sculpture of Buddhism and Jainism built in different parts the evidences of greatness of art and architecture of Odisha are revealed. The 'Carya Sahitya' of Buddhist written between 9th and 12th century some hints about music tradition of Odisha is found. Most of the writers of the Carya literature hail from Odisha and from the names of the Ragas; it can be said as one of the Ragas; it can be said as one of the ancient signs of Odissi Sangita tradition. Because till now the 'Ragas' are written in the carya literature, still in vogue in Odisha. There 'Carya Gitis' with the mention of Raga are the first and foremost writings of Odisha. The great musical 'Kavya' Gitagovinda is considered as the post musical creation of Carya literature. Jayadev named the Raga and Tala in the beginning of lyric. At places, he wrote the process of the Raga. Although Jayadev is the pride of India, Odisha as his motherland deserved the glory and greatness. It can be hardly exaggerated if it is said his creation is the most valuable contribution of the musical tradition of Odisha to the Indian music.

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