

## Music in Sanskrit Literature

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Sanskrit is not only the mother of languages and the repository of ancient thought and wisdom but also the mother of arts. Along with every branch of intellectual achievement in ancient India, the field of fine arts was also comprehended in the activity of the ancient Sanskritists. Music forms a precious part of the Indian heritage. Its sources and materials, which have relevance to its ancient history and long and continued development right upto modern times, are to be found to some extent in sculpture and in the folk traditions which are still in vogue but they primarily lie in the Sanskrit treatises devoted to dance, drama and music and the arts as practised in both the Northern and Southern schools. In fact, glimpses of even the folk tradition (in these arts) can be gleaned from the Sanskrit texts, which did not ignore them: after absorbing all that nebulous material, the texts refined and defined it, placing it in the body of the main tradition of art. It is well-known that old musical texts have two terms of multiple significance—*Marga* and *Deshi*, which, on the one hand, refer to the classical and popular, the sophisticated and the simple and natural, the more systematised and the less systematised, the chaste and the mixed; and on the other hand, hold within themselves data of historical and anthropological nature pertaining to the evolution of music. How these traditions have been synthesised into the grand pattern of harmony and beauty, I have discussed in my articles *Variety and Integration in the Pattern of Indian Culture*<sup>1</sup> and *The Popular and the Classical in Indian Music*.<sup>2</sup>

As I explained earlier on, it is in Sanskrit literature that the art, the science and the history of Indian music are mainly embedded and a knowledge of Sanskrit and a study of the texts in that language are essential for any serious student of Indian music. The body of Sanskrit literature, which has this kind of importance for music, is twofold. We have, on the one hand, the general literature which, since it reflects the various aspects of life, also sheds side-lights on the art, its components and practice. We have, on the other hand, the actual technical treatises which deal with this art, starting with Bharata's *Natya Shastra*. Here again we have composite treatises dealing with all the three branches of music, dance and drama, and separate treatises dealing exclusively with music. The literature is indeed large and in my papers on Sanskrit Sangita literature (*Some Names in Early Sangita Literature*<sup>3</sup>, *Later Sangita Literature*<sup>4</sup>, *An Outline Literary History of Indian Music*<sup>5</sup>), I have surveyed the Sanskrit literature on music of the first as well as the second type. I have in these papers commented on as many as 250 works and authors in this field.

It will not be possible, however interesting it might be, to include here a review of this literature. Some salient points may be noted regarding its emergence and its coverage of the subject. These works were always sponsored by kings and composed by court musicians or scholars, who wrote them either in their own names or ascribed them to their patron-kings. This fact is important because it shows the close connection of these texts with

the active patronage enjoyed by musicians and the practical basis of this activity was set forth in them. There is the unique example of the *Sangita Shiromani* which was the result of a seminar of music scholars brought from the east, south, west and north of India by the Sultan of Kadhah<sup>6</sup>. Secondly, music is a performing art and, in the historical flux and the diffusion of the art to widening areas, it came into constant contact with local traditions and practices or with other varying systems and theories. Hence the periodical undertaking of technical treatises in the art was necessary and almost every writer started his work with the statement that he would try to reconcile theory (as handed down to him) and contemporary practice, *Lakshana* and *Lakshya*.

The range of topics in these texts is quite comprehensive. They start with the very basic concept of *Nada* and then, proceeding from the subtle microtones (*Shruti*-s), deal with the seven notes (*Svara*-s), their groupings, the resulting melodic phrases and sequences, and the further development of primary and derivative melodic modes—*Grama*, *Murchana*, *Jati* and *Raga*. The *Jati*-s are the more ancient forms of melodic moulds in which the oldest song-materials that we know were sung. For instance, the *Ramayana* was recited by Kusha and Lava to the 7 *Jati*-s, and the whole body of songs known as *Brahma-gita*-s were also sung to the *Jati*-s. The concept of *Raga* was a natural emanation from the *Jati*-s. While the *Jati*-s were given a sacrosanct status and had a strictness of rendering comparable to that of Vedic recital, the *Raga* was not subject to this rigidity, although it had its own larger definitive character. The two were contrasted as the *Marga* and *Deshi* and *Gandharva* and *Gana*. While Bharata and earlier writers dealt with the former, it was left to Matanga to codify all the accumulated materials of the *Raga*-s and *Gana* or *Deshi* music in the *Brihaddeshi*. In course of time *Marga* became obsolete and the *Raga*-s took over the elements of discipline associated with *Marga* music and became the core of Indian music. The Sanskrit texts also reveal the interesting line of the codification of the *Raga*-s which was taken by the theorists on the linguistic analogy of Sanskrit and Prakrits of primary, secondary and tertiary nature, the groups of *Raga*-s being given the names *Raga*, *Raganga*, *Bhashanga*, *Vibhasha*, *Antarabhasha*. The *Raga*, of course, continues to be the most important and characteristic aspect of Indian music to this day, distinguishing it from other systems of music of the world. Next in importance is *Tala*, where again the texts disclose the changeover from old rhythmic patterns to a highly evolved system of 108 *Tala*-s of the medieval period, followed by the modern period and its few surviving *Tala* patterns.

The *Raga*, the most distinguishing feature of our music, is seen in two aspects: in its pure form called *Alapa* and, as forming the basis, along with the *Tala*, of a composed song, the two forms being contrasted as *Anibaddha* and *Nibaddha*—unbound and bound. Therefore, the third important aspect of music is the compositions, the *Prabandha*-s or *Gita*-s. The natural practice among the folk and the literary evidence in dramas points to the use of Prakrit as the medium for songs; but there has been, from the most ancient times of the *Samaveda*, an unbroken tradition of Sanskrit as a medium for musical composition. In fact, the *Saman*, which is just the *Rigveda* hymns set to music (*Gitishu Samakhya*), is mentioned in all the treatises and remembered in the entire tradition of Indian music as the ultimate parent-source of the art. Music

is deemed a second *Veda*—the *Gandharva Upaveda*, attached to the main *Samaveda*. Apart from the tradition, a study of the technique of *Saman*-singing convinces one of the close relation that exists between *Saman*-singing and several practices of later classical music. I have given a succinct presentation of the subject in a paper called *Samaveda and Music*.<sup>7</sup> Next to the *Samaveda* is the body of Sanskrit songs called *Brahma-gita-s*, already referred to, which are all hymns and prayers to Shiva ascribed God Brahma himself, the texts of which are to be found in the *Natya Shastra* and in the *Bharata Bhashya* (of King Nanyadeva of Mithila), with the *Svara*-notations, and in the opening chapter of the *Sangita Ratnakara* of Sharngadeva of Dev-giri, who draws upon Nanyadeva. The music notation of this body of songs is unalterable and its singing is of special religious merit and on both these counts this corpus of songs is placed on a par with the *Veda*. The following is the first of the *Gita-s* in the first *Jati* called *Shuddha Shadji*<sup>8</sup> and it may be noted that it is on the Deity Agni, the subject of the very first hymn of the *Rigveda*:

तं भवललाटनयनाम्बुजाधिकं  
नगसूनुप्रणयकेलिसमुद्भवम् ।  
सरसकृततिल (क-पङ्क- )कानुलेपनं  
प्रणमामि कामदेहेन्धनानलम् ॥

Included in the corpus are different types of songs having names: *Rik*, *Saman*, *Gatha*, *Panika*, *Aparanta*, *Ullopya*, *Madraka*, *Ovenaka*, *Rovindaka*, *Kapala*, *Kambala* and so on. All of these must have survived till the later classical ages; some of them occur even in the derived Tamil material on music. The first two, *Rik* and *Saman*, are non-Vedic counterparts of the Vedic hymns of those names. In his well-known lines on the spiritual efficacy of music, singing and playing music instruments, Yajnavalkya mentions, in his *Smriti*, some of these. The third important song material of ancient India in Sanskrit is represented by the two epics, *Itihasa-s*, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, as also the *Purana-s*<sup>9</sup>. There was the institution of the *Suta-s*, minstrels, who were not only peripatetic singers but also attached to particular courts; they sang to the lute the ancient sagas which included the main epic, as also several *Akhyana-s*, many of which are preserved in the *Mahabharata*.

The fourth Sanskrit musical composition is represented by a class of *Kavya* composed for the purpose of being sung by gifted singers and called *Kavya* or *Raga Kavya* and *Akhyana-s* which Abhinavagupta and Bhoja describe in their respective works, the *Abhinavabharati* (on the *Natya Shastra*) and the *Shringara Prakasha*<sup>10</sup>. These poems, which were sung, were further rendered into gesture (*Abhinaya*). Abhinavagupta mentions the *Raghavavijaya* which was sung all through in *Takka Raga* and the *Marichavadha* in *Kakubha Raga*. From these developed the *Chitra-raga-kavya* which employed different *Raga-s*. Thus it is easy to see the link leading to the appearance of the *Gita-govinda* of Jayadeva which is at once a masterpiece of poetry, music, dance and religious mysticism. The *Gita-govinda* stands

out as a landmark, the great divide between the earlier and the later ages of our music; and all the later music and dance, and compositions take their inspiration directly from Jayadeva. Several compositions in Sanskrit on the model of the *Gita-govinda* were produced in large numbers all over the country and to this day, as I have shown elsewhere,<sup>11</sup> a few of the South Indian productions of this class still enjoy vogue in concerts. In Orissa, particularly, where the arts of music and dance were kept alive in the later centuries and the momentum given by the *Gita-govinda* was in force for a long time, two types of story-compositions in music were produced in an appreciable number, adopting both modes, *Prabandha*-s in different *Raga*-s and those in a single *Raga*, the *Shuddha Prabandha* and the *Sutra Prabandha*; several of these are known from the Sanskrit music texts written by King Narayana of Parlakhimudi and the poets and musicians attached to his court.<sup>12</sup> In South India, Sanskrit music compositions on the model of the *Gita-govinda* (for example, the *Krishnalilatarangini* of Narayana Tirtha) form part of the heritage of the modern singer. In Kerala *Krishna Giti* or *Krishnatam*, a composition of the Zomorin of Calicut, Manaveda, on the model of the *Gita-govinda*, was the forerunner of modern Kathakali. In the field of Karnatic music of the modern period, there has been a galaxy of Sanskrit composers. Of the great music Trinity, Muttusvami Dikshitar composed his *Kirtana*-s, with the exception of just a few, in Sanskrit. Even the great Tyagaraja, whose medium was Telugu, handled Sanskrit in many of his pieces.<sup>13</sup> It was from the original Sanskrit medium that the third member of the Trinity, Shyama Shastri, switched over to Telugu. Before them there was the pioneer Margadarshi Sheshayyengar and just after them, their younger contemporary, the prolific royal composer of Travancore, Shri Svati Tirunal.

The history of Sanskrit music composition is not exhausted by this. The *Prabandha* chapter of every work of Indian music reveals to us the large variety of compositions that existed. The *Prabandha* chapters describe a very large spectrum of songs in Sanskrit as well as in the Prakrit and local languages. The structure and the components of each of these compositions are analysed and set forth in great detail in the *Prabandha* chapters of the treatises in music. The occurrence among these numerous varieties of composition of names of Sanskrit metres reminds us that, apart from several metres of a prominently rhythmic character (which openly invite one to sing them), Sanskrit poetry and all its metres, and even prose (*Gadya*), counted in the above-mentioned treatises as a variety of *Prabandha*, to be always sung in specific tunes, if not in full *Raga*-s.<sup>14</sup> Sanskrit, the language itself, is rich in musical character, and there are possibilities for sonorous or mellifluous effects.

This brings us to the Sanskrit drama, which, as I have shown in my study on *Music in Ancient Indian Drama*,<sup>15</sup> was produced with music, of both voice and instruments, and dance. In addition to the verses of the play, which were sung and rendered in gesture,<sup>16</sup> complete musical scores were composed by stage-musicians, which included songs in Prakrit called *Dhruva*-s for Entry, Exit etc., and instrumentation for the diverse movements of the characters. In addition, music and dance were also introduced as motifs, forming part of the plot, as in *Malavikagnimitra* and *Nagananda*. In the sculp-



tures and in museum collections (in the Anthropological sections), we do find a wealth of Indian musical instruments. But a description of these instruments and their structure and playing, as also of some instruments not traceable, is to be found in the *Vadya*-chapters of the music treatises. In addition to the above subjects, these works also devoted attention to various types of musicians and their equipment; to the composer and his qualifications; to the voice and its qualities; to the merits and the flaws to be detected in singing; to the aesthetics and norms of appreciation of music.

While all this represents textual study, it can be checked and completed by contextual studies, that is by the references to and descriptions of music in different contexts in Sanskrit literature. The *Veda*-s themselves, apart from the evidence of the *Samaveda*, refer to several music instruments, string and percussion, and of the former, to several varieties. The leading Vedic institution of Sacrifice, like the *Ashvamedha*, had music as part of the ritual. Two Brahmans played on the Vina and, as entertainment and edification for the large concourse of people that gathered, epic rhapsodies were recited to the accompaniment of the Vina by the *Suta*-s and *Kushilava*-s, as in the case of Rama's *Ashvamedha* and the *Ramayana*. In the *Ramayana*, we are told that the epic was sung to the seven *Jati*-s and to the accompaniment of the Vina. [*Valmiki Ramayana*, I. 4.8.] Among other references to music in the epic, those mentioning different kinds of Vinas<sup>17</sup> and drums, in the description of Ravana's *Puspaka* and his harem (in the *Sundarkanda*), are important. In the *Purana*-s, textual and contextual accounts of music occur.<sup>18</sup> Technical treatises like the *Arthashastra* and the *Kamasutra* refer to musicians and dancers and their shows on the stage and the occasions for their employment are to be met with. But it is in classical Sanskrit poetry, prose, *Champu*, drama and story (*Katha*) that we have the most interesting and valuable side-lights on the art. Let us start with Kalidasa. Without considering for the time being the allied arts of dance and drama, let us concentrate on the data bearing on music as expressed in his poems and plays.

### Flute

We begin with this wind instrument, which appears to be the most ancient and one directly related to Nature and the phenomena of the wind blowing into caves, narrow passages and holes bored on bamboos. The flute, which evolved from this, played an important role in the ancient phase of Indian music as the base or *Adhara* of vocal singing. It is with the notes of the flute that the *Narada Shiksha* identifies the notes of *Saman*-singing i.e. the names *Prathama* (First), *Dvitiya* (Second) etc. in terms of *Madhyama*, *Gandhara* etc.

यः सामगानां प्रथमः स वेणोर्मध्यमः स्वरः ।  
यो द्वितीयः स गान्धारस्तृतीयस्त्वृषभः स्मृतः ॥१॥

[*Narada Shiksha*, I.V.I.]

The flute supplied the pitch note to which the human voice sang, that is it performed the function of the drone or *Shruti*, a role which in later times was

taken over by the stringed instrument, the *tanpura*. This role of the wind instrument is borne out by descriptions in Kalidasa's poems. In the *Kumara-sambhava*, Kalidasa says that the wind which blew from the mouths of the caves and filled the holes of bamboos bored by bees supplied the *Tana* or *Sthana* for the *Kinnara*-s who wanted to sing:

यः पूरयन्कीचकरन्ध्रभागान्दरीमुखोत्थेन समीरणेन ।  
उद्रास्यतामिच्छति किंनराणां तानप्रदायित्वमिवोपगन्तुम् ॥८॥

[*Kumarasambhava*, 1.8]

It may be noted that Kalidasa's text has used (for the sound of the flute in this role) the term *Tana*, which has the other reading *Sthana* in another manuscript. Both these are, however, correct in the context. *Tana* is used by authorities in this field. in the sense of the *Amsha-swara* of the *Raga* and also as the act of supplying on the flute the note which the singer takes<sup>19</sup>. *Sthana* is of course more explicit and is authenticated by other references as well, which have a bearing on this point. In the *Raghuvamsha*, Kalidasa gives a more specific description of the bored bamboos filled with wind, discharging the function of the flute (*Vamsha-krtya*) for the *Vanadevata*-s who were singing Dilipa's fame in the bowers of the forest:

स कीचकैर्मारुतपूर्णरन्ध्रैः कूजद्विरापादितवंशकृत्यम् ।  
शुश्राव कुञ्जेषु यशः स्वमुच्चैरुद्गीयमानं वनदेवताभिः ॥१२॥

[*Raghuvamsha*, II, 12]

The *Vamsha-krtya* or the role of the flute is, among other things, to give the *Sthana* or pitch to the singer.

गातॄणां तान(स्थान)दायिता ।

[*Sangita Ratnakara*, VI, 664]

And Bharata also says:

यं यं गाता स्वरं गच्छेत् तं तं वंशेन वादयेत् ।  
शारीरवैणवंशानामेकीभावः प्रशस्यते ॥११॥

[*Natya Shastra*, XXX.11]

Kalidasa's description of the wind blowing at the mouth of the cave as providing the *Tana* or *Sthana* for the singing of the *Kinnara*-s, is after a similar description in the *Ramayana*. Valmiki says, in the course of his

description of the Pampa lake and the forest on its banks, that the wind blowing from the caves and into them, along with the warblings of the cuckoos, seems to provide the music for the dances of the trees.

मत्तकोकिलसंनदैर्नर्तयन्निव पादपान् ।  
शैलकन्दरनिष्क्रान्तः प्रगीत इव चानिलः ॥

[*Valmiki Ramayana*, IV. 1-15.]

Commenting on this, Udali Varadaraja says that the comparison meant here is between the wind and the dance-master who is teaching dance (*Nattuvanar*) and adds that the cave and the wind emerging from it supply the music of the *Mukha-vadya*.<sup>20</sup>

The two prose works of Bana, universal in their sweep, have naturally noteworthy musical material. In the *Kadambari*, the poet tells us in his description of the mansion of Kadambari that a *Kinnara* couple with two flutes, which hummed sweetly like bees, supplied the *Tana* or the *Sthana* to the daughter of Narada, who was reading musically the *Mahabharata* before Kadambari.

पृष्ठतश्च समुपविष्टेन किन्नरमिथुनेन  
मधुकरमधुराभ्यां वंशाभ्यां दत्ते ताने (स्थाने)  
कलगिरा गायन्त्या नारददुहित्रा पथ्यमाने च  
सर्वमङ्गलमहीयसि महाभारते दत्तावधानाम्

[*Kadambari*]

In *Ucchvasa* 3 of his historical work *Harshacharita*, Bana in the prelude to his account of King Harshavardhana and his ancestors, introduces the description of a day in the life of the Brahmins of the *Agrahara* and the daily routine in Bana's own home. It was the practice in the afternoons to have the *Itihasa* or *Purana* read out by one gifted in music. In a picturesque description of this routine, Bana says that Sudrishti, the reader of the manuscript, came, sat and took up from the book-rest the portion of the manuscript which was to be recited, and behind and close to him sat two flutists, appropriately called *Madhukara* and *Paravata* (Bee and Dove), well-known for their humming and cooing, giving the reciter Sudrishti the tonic note on which he was to recite.

पृष्ठतः सनीडसन्निविष्टाभ्यां मधुकरपारावताभ्यां दत्ते स्थानके...  
गमकैर्मधुरैराक्षिपन्मनांसि श्रोतॄणां गीत्या पवमानप्रोक्तं  
पुराणं पपाठ ।

[*Harshacharita*, *Ucchvasa* 3.]

As Sudrishti was thus reading the *Vayupurana* with sweet graces, the minstrel, Suchibana, who was sitting nearby, sang two Arya-verses in a voice which was in a high pitch but sweet. The word used in this description without any variant is *Sthanaka*. Damodaragupta, Minister to Jayapida of Kashmir, in his *Kuttanimata*, (which is a mine of information on the condition of the arts and related subjects in that part of the country and during that period) provides us with a unique description of the enactment of the play *Ratnavali* of King Harsha. The description progresses step by step from the very beginning and is the sole graphic description of an actual performance of a Sanskrit drama found in a non-technical work. It speaks of the flutist as giving the start to the music with the supply of the *Sthanaka* or the *Shruti*:

वांशिकदत्तस्थानकतद्भावितभिन्नपञ्चमे सम्यक् ।  
प्रावेशिक्यवसाने द्विपदीग्रहणान्तरेऽविशत् सूत्री ॥८८१॥

[ *Kuttanimata*, 881 ]

In the above line in the *Kuttanimata*, it is said that with the singing of the melody *Bhinnapanchama*, the Sutradhara entered. If we turn to Matanga's *Brihaddeshi*, we find *Bhinnapanchama* as the *Raga* for the entry of the Sutradhara, that it has *Dha* as its *Amsha*, *Panchama* as its end-note (the *Nyasa*), and that it belongs to the *Madhyama-grama*.

शुद्धपञ्चमवत् प्रोक्तः (स्वरन्ध्रैः जैर्भिन्नपञ्चमः) ॥३२५॥  
धैवतांशः पञ्चमान्तः सूत्रधारप्रवेशने ।

[ *Brihaddeshi*, TSS, p. 89 ]

It may be noted that Matanga is mentioned in the *Kuttanimata* (877) as an expert in the art of the flute; but unfortunately we do not have the full text of Matanga's work.

Another reference to the flute giving the *Sthanaka* is in the description of the performance of the Gondali-dance in the *Sangita Ratnakara*:

दत्ते स्थाने च वांशिकैः ।

The flute, as an accompaniment in drama and in vocal music, is referred to in technical literature as well as in the tradition of these arts as practised right down to modern times. Although we have stories of the independent music of the flute (for instance, in the Krishna legend) till very recently the flute played a subsidiary role in concerts. In fact, it is by long cultivation and perfection that an instrument reaches a height of artistic excellence in the hands of some performer of genius and through him attains the status of an independent concert instrument. It may be noted that Bana always

refers to two flutes for the drone, a practice which survives in the two tan-puras used by North Indian musicians.

In an instrumental ensemble, the flute, with its high pitch, dominates and leads as it were. Poet Magha refers to this in his poem *Shishupalavadha*, using it as a comparison for the victorious overlord surrounded by his vassals.

अनल्पत्वात्प्रधानत्वाद्द्वंशस्येवेतरे स्वराः ।  
विजिगीषोर्नृपतयः प्रयान्ति परिवारताम् ॥९०॥

[*Shishupalavadha*, II. 90]

There is one more context in Bana's *Harshacharita*, describing music as such, as accompanied by the flute (*Vamshanugam*). The verse is worth noting for the technical terms of music occurring there.

वंशानुगमविवादि स्फुटकरणं भरतमार्गभजनगुरु ।  
श्रीकण्ठविनिर्यातं गीतमिदं हर्षराज्यमिव ॥४॥

[*Harshacharita*, *Ucchvasa* 3]

The verse speaks of the origin of music from Shrikantha or Shiva and as part of the tradition promulgated by sage Bharata. It is free from *Vivadi-dosha* among the *Svara-s* and its *Karana-s* are clear (*Sphutakarana*). Here the expression *Sphutakarana* is from the *Natya Shastra*.

समपाण्यवपाणियुतं स्फुटप्रहारकरणानुगं चैव ।  
गेयस्य च वाद्यस्य च भवेदवघाताय तदनुगतम् ॥१३७॥

[*Natya Shastra*, XXXIV. 137]

*Karana* is one of the four *Dhatu-s* or modes of playing on the stringed (or percussion) instrument and is itself of six kinds (*Natya Shastra*, XXXI; *Sangita Ratnakara*, VI). There is a further use of the term *Karana* in the *Tala* Chapter XXXIV of Bharata which refers to the sound-syllables of the percussion instruments, the *Sol* or *Bol*; and the recital of these by word of mouth is called *Vak-karana*, or *Konippu* or *Konnakkol* as it is called in Karnatic music.

*Vina*

There are several references in Kalidasa to the stringed instrument, *Vina*. The most memorable picture is that of the forlorn wife of the Yaksha (in *Alaka*) in the *Meghaduta*. In a series of descriptions the Yaksha tells the cloud of the different ways in which his wife must be spending the period of their separation. The cloud, at the time of its arrival, might see her in any



one of these different occupations. Then Kalidasa has this portrait of the Yaksha's wife with a Vina on her lap and eager to sing a song composed by her on the Yaksha.

उत्सङ्गे वा मलिनवसने सौम्य निक्षिप्य वीणां  
मद्गोत्राङ्गं विरचितपदं गेयमुद्गातुकामा  
तन्त्रीराद्री नयनसलिलैः सारयित्वा कथंचि-  
द्भूयो भूयः स्वयमधिकृतां मूर्छनां विस्मरन्ती ॥८३॥

[Meghaduta, 83]

The second half of the verse deserves the notice of one interested in the structure of this stringed instrument. The poet reveals that as the lady started singing each line, tears streamed forth from her eyes and drenched the strings of the Vina, so that she had to re-arrange the *Mela* of the strings which had been disturbed. This suggests an important feature of the structure of the ancient Vina: it had an open string-board, or one without any fixed frets, as some of our stringed instruments continue to have even today; and every time a new *Raga* was to be played, the *Mela* or the *Sarana* appropriate to the *Raga* had to be done.

*Drum*

Not less important are Kalidasa's references to the drum: *Pataha*, *Mridanga* or *Pushkara*. In the *Meghaduta*, the Cloud is asked to wait at Ujjain till evening when, with its rumbling, it can provide the drum (*Pataha*)—accompaniment for the evening service of Shiva Mahakala:

कुर्वन्संध्यावलिपटहतां शूलिनः श्लाघनीया-  
मामन्द्राणां फलमविकलं लप्स्यसे गर्जितानाम् ॥८४॥

[Meghaduta, 34]

The *Pataha* was of two kinds, *Marga* and *Deshi*, and played by hand and stick. The rhythm-syllables (*Pata-s*) of the *Pataha* were deemed to have come forth from the five faces of Shiva and promulgated by Nandikeshvara. (See Chapter Six on *Vadya* in the *Sangita Ratnakara*).

The comparison of the rumbling of the clouds with the deep sounds of the *Mridanga* occurs frequently in the works of Kalidasa. In the *Meghaduta* again the poet asks the Cloud to supply the drum-accompaniment to the dance of Shiva.

निर्हादी ते मुरज इव चेत्कन्दरेषु ध्वनिः स्या-  
त्संगीतार्थो ननु पशुपतेस्तत्र भावी समग्रः ॥५६॥

[Meghaduta, 56]

## संगीताय प्रहतमुरजाः स्निग्धगम्भीरघोषम् ।

[Meghaduta, 64.]

In the *Malavikagnimitra* (I.21) where the drum is sounded as a preliminary to the dance of Malavika, Kalidasa has a description of the *Pushkara*, embodying some of the technical terms of the playing and the sound of the drum. Here, too, he refers to the sound of the drum as *Nirhradi*, as produced by the *Madhyama-svara* and technically one of the three *Marjana-s* known by the name of *Mayuri*, the full meaning of all of which will be clear to those who have studied Chapter XXXIV (on the drum) of Bharata's *Natya Shastra*. The *Pushkara*-drum refers to the one having three faces and is, therefore, called *Tri-pushkara*. The central face was tuned to *Madhyama*, the left to *Gandhara* and the right to *Shadja*. The *Mayuri*, for which the notes of the three faces are thus tuned, belongs to *Madhyama-grama* which is, according to Bharata, the *Grama* proper for the opening of a dance or drama. The other two *Marjana-s* are called *Ardhamayuri* and *Karmaravi* (*Natya Shastra*, XXXIV. 118-123). The comparison with the rumbling of the clouds will also yield further meaning when we find Bharata mentioning clouds in different stages of density and action. According to Bharata, the three faces of the *Pushkara* were similar in sound to three kinds of clouds called *Vidyujjihva*, *Airavana* and *Kikila* or *Kokila* (*Natya Shastra*, XXXIV. 287-9). Apparently this seems to be a poetic description; nevertheless these verses of Kalidasa contain technical and artistic information, which is evident to the knowledgeable reader.

When the drum is played solo, and not as an accompaniment to vocal singing, the procedure is called *Shushka*; when it accompanies singing, the procedure is called *Gitanuga*. Kalidasa uses the word *Gitanuga* in the *Raghuvamsha* (XVI. 64).

तीरस्थलीवर्हिभिस्तुक्लापैः प्रस्निग्धकैरभिनन्द्यमानम् ।  
श्रोत्रेषु संमूर्च्छति रक्तमासां गीतानुगं वारिमृदङ्गवाद्यम् ॥

In *Kumarasambhava* (VI. 40), he mentions the *Karana-s* which refer to certain kinds of playing on the drum or other instruments, as has been indicated above in the references from Bana.

In my article, 'Why is the Mridanga so called?' I had drawn attention to Bharata referring to the application of soft dark mud to the faces of the *Pushkara* and the practice of applying thick dark material to the centre of the right face of the present *Mridanga* of the south. Bana mentions in his *Kadambari* to an application, which is fresh and still moist:

अनुलेपनार्द्रमृदङ्गध्वनिधीरेण

This must refer to the flour paste which is applied, at the time of playing, to the left face of the *Mridanga*. This is what is referred to in the well-known anonymous *Subhashita* as *Pinda*:

अहो प्रकृतिसादृश्यं मृदङ्गस्य खलस्य च ।  
यावन्मुखगतं पिण्डं तावन्मधुरभाषणम् ॥

On the subject of compositions, Kalidasa's description contains information which could be collated with what the technical texts say. *Pada* is the name that he applies to the composition in the *Meghaduta* verse referred to above. This ancient name continues to this day. In the *Kumara-sambhava* he uses the terms *Varna* उपात्तवर्णे चरिते (V. 56) to refer to the *Kinnari*-s singing the glory of Shiva. The same *Varna* is used in the song of Hamsapadika in the opening of Act Five of the *Abhijnanashakuntala*. The poet says, in this latter context, that Hamsapadika was practising *Varna* and singing *Svara* to the composition, all of which she was doing with sweetness and clarity:

कलविशुद्धाया गीतेः स्वरसंयोगः श्रूयते ।  
जाने तत्रभवती हंसपदिका वर्णपरिचयं करोतीति ।

[*Abhijnanashakuntala*, Act V]

The *Varna* is a major term which has diverse but related meanings that developed during the long history of the art. According to its oldest definition, *Varna*, as such, is the singing of four kinds of the *Svara*-s; steady, ascending, descending and involving all the movements, *Sthayin*, *Arohin*, *Avarohin* and *Sancharin* (*Natya Shastra*, XXIX. 14-17). It is the whole act of singing, *Ganakriya*. From Kalidasa's expressions here, *Varna-parichaya* and *Svara-samyoga*, scholars who had commented on this context had assumed that the poet was speaking of the singer practising *Svara*-s in single progression or in two-s, three-s and so on,—a practice which has come to be called *Sarali* or *Svaravali*, *Janta-varishai* and so on. But the poet says that Hamsapadika sang a song and that her singing overflowed with melody.

राजा—अहो रागपरिवाहिनी गीतिः!

It is also stated here that she sang the *Giti* which has been interpreted by commentators like Raghava Bhatta as one of the five kinds of *Gita*-s or songs, the type called *Shuddha*, because the poet qualifies it as *Kalavishuddhaya giteh*. If the song-type called *Shuddha gita* is meant here, the word *Shuddha*, not *Vi-shuddha*, and that, too, without the further adjective *Kala*, ought to have been used. Apart from this it is the song-text and its meaning that are especially significant in the context, since the king surmises from it her legitimate grievance: he says that through the imagery of the bee seeking fresh honey, she has administered a rebuke to him. Therefore the point is not the singing of the *Svara*-s. What the poet means by *Varna* and *Svara-samyoga* is simply 'singing'. It is not possible to say that the singing of *Svara*-s or their practice is flowing with the *Raga* and that this affects the king and awakens bygone and slumbering impressions in his subconscious.

We stated in the beginning that the *Raga* was most important in our music. Even as the *Nati* was singing a song on the summer season in the prelude to the *Abhijnanashakuntala*—a beautiful piece of poetry on that season—Kalidasa observes that it is the *Raga* of the singing that made the whole audience sit absorbed like figures drawn in a picture.

अहो रागबद्धचित्तवृत्तिरालिखित इव सर्वतो रङ्गः !

[*Abhijnanashakuntala*, I. 4/5]

The *Sutradhara*'s further observation on this song indicates that it is the *Raga* that carries him away by force.

तवास्मि गीतरागेण हारिणा प्रसभं हृतः ।

In the song of *Hamsapadika*, already referred to, although it was clearly the symbolic meaning of the song that carries dramatic relevance, King *Dushyanta*, who hears it, says that he is affected by the flow of the melody of the *Raga*.

बलवदुत्कण्ठितोऽस्मि ।

[*Ibid.*, 1/2 ]

We also know from *Kalidasa* how music was harnessed to drama. In the *Kumarasambhava*, on the occasion of the marriage of the divine couple, the *Apsarasas* produced a play in the *Lasya*-dance style and the poet says there that different *Raga*-s were handled to suit the different *Rasa*-s.

तौ संधिषु व्यञ्जितवृत्तिभेदं रसान्तरेषु प्रतिबद्धरागम् ।  
अपश्यतामप्सरसां मुहूर्ते प्रयोगमाद्यं ललिताङ्गहारम् ॥९॥

[*Kumarasambhava*, VII. 91 ]

As the theme takes fresh turns and develops at each of the five junctures (*Sandhi*-s) of the plot, the tempo or style of presentation (*Vritti*) changes; the *Vritti*, referred to here, being *Bharati*, *Kaishiki*, *Arabhati* and *Sattvati*. Similarly when the course of emotion also varies, *Raga*-s suitable to the situation should be used. (I have dealt with this subject of *Rasa*-s and *Raga*-s in my paper on 'Music in Ancient Indian Theatre', already referred to.)

In the light of what history reveals about the concept of *Raga*, it is significant to note that the concept of *Raga* had come into its own in *Kalidasa*'s times, as is clear from the above descriptions of *Raga* by the poet. Indeed he refers in the *Kumarasambhava* to a particular *Raga* called *Kaishika*, which was an auspicious one sung at dawn. The *Kinnara*-s are said to wake up *Shiva* with this *Raga*:

स व्यबुध्यत बुधस्तवोचितः शातकुम्भकमलाकरैः समम् ।  
मूर्च्छनापरिगृहीतकैशिकैः किन्नरैरुषसि गीतमङ्गलः ॥८५॥

[*Kumarasambhava*, VIII. 85 ]

Although *Kaishika* was also the name of a *Jati*, it is the *Raga* of that name that Kalidasa refers to here. Perhaps it is this *Raga* which is mentioned in Shudraka's *Bhana* (the *Padmaprabhrtaka*) as a synonym for wailing:

कैशिकाश्रयं हि गानं पर्यायशब्दो रुदितस्य ।

Evidently the *Kaishika* must have been a very plaintive *Raga*. The singer of the *Raga* in the *Bhana* is a lady separated from her beloved.

About *Svara* we may also note an important reference that occurs in *Raghuvamsha*, where King Dilipa and his Queen on their way to Vasishtha's *ashrama* are familiar with the association of the seven notes with different birds and animals and the peacock is associated with the *Shadja* note:

षड्जं मयूरो वदति गावो रम्भन्ति चर्षभम् ।

With reference to this Kalidasa says that the *Keka* of the peacocks sounded the *Shadja* of a two-fold character.

षड्जसंवादिनीः केका द्विधा भिन्नाः शिखण्डिभिः ॥३९॥

[ *Raghuvamsha*, I. 39 ]

Of the seven notes, it is well-known that the *Shadja* and the *Panchama* are constant, while the other five have *Vikriti*-s or varieties. However it should be noted that the *Svara* represents a range or an interval between two points and that the point just below which leads on to a note could also be designated by the same name, but with a qualification about its being in the place just next, below it. In this manner in the ancient nomenclature, the *Kakali*-variety of the *Nishada* was called *Chyuta Shadja* and *Sa* itself *Achyuta Shadja*. This is the meaning of the two-fold *Sa* mentioned by Kalidasa.

In Act II of the *Malavikagnimitra*, the poet features the dance recital of Malavika as part of the plot. The context is of great significance for dance and its criticism but it has also certain points of interest to music. We have already noted the importance of the *Pushkara*-drum and its playing as a prelude to the performance. Before Malavika begins to dance she sings (*upaganamkritva*), which shows that all dancers sang the pieces which they danced. Already composers of songs, and especially for dance, were known, for Kalidasa mentions the song to be rendered by Malavika as the composition of Sharmishtha. The song had four themes (*Chatushpada*) or sections of the text (*Vastu*), and the song was set in medium tempo, *Laya-madhya*; it was its fourth *Vastu* that was sung and danced to.

In the last canto of his *Raghuvamsha*, Kalidasa describes the pleasure-loving King Agnivarna as proficient in music and dance. Here Kalidasa mentions the Vallaki (Vina) held on the lap (*Ankya*) (XIX. 13); he refers to the *Pushkara* drum with which the king accompanied the female dancers, checking them when they faltered (19) and female artistes playing the flute and Vina (35).

A great deal of interesting data about dance could also be gleaned from the works of Kalidasa which are a fine synthesis of all that was best in



Indian thought and culture. Besides, all this knowledge emerges effortlessly in his poetry.

Ashvaghosa, although by tradition reported to have been qualified in music, offers in his two *Kavya*-s, the *Buddhacharita* and the *Saundarananda*, only a moderate amount of music material, and mostly of a general nature. Next to Kalidasa the most interesting writer (in the context of our subject) is Shudraka, the author of the *Mrichchhakatika*. Shudraka's versatility is in perfect consonance with the variety and richness of his theme and the society and characters which he handles. His hero Charudatta was endowed with artistic accomplishments and was a connoisseur of music. Here we shall confine ourselves to two references. In Act Three of the play, Charudatta is seen returning after a concert of the musician Rebhila. Rebhila sang to the accompaniment of a Vina, which Charudatta describes as a precious jewel and an incomparable companion to man or woman, whether in union or separation.

चारुदत्तः— अहो, साधु साधु रेभिलेन गीतम्! वीणा हि  
नामासमुद्रोत्थितं रत्नम्। कुतः,

उत्कण्ठितस्य हृदयानुगुणा वयस्या  
संकैतके चिरयति प्रवरो विनोदः।  
संस्थापना प्रियतमा विरहातुराणां  
रक्तस्य रागपरिवृद्धिकरः प्रमोदः ॥३॥

[*Mrichchhakatika*, Act 3.]

The Vidushaka, echoing a sentiment expressed by Bharata himself, interrupts and says that it is difficult to find sweetness in the music of a male singer, inferring it to be the exclusive province of woman. He says:

विदूषकः— मम तावद्द्वाभ्यामेव हास्यं जायते - स्त्रिया  
संस्कृतं पठन्त्या, मनुष्येण च काकलीं गायता ।

[*Ibid.*]

This reminds us of Bharata:

प्रायेण तु स्वभावात् स्त्रीणां गानं नृणां च पाठयविधिः ।  
स्त्रीणां स्वभावमधुरः कण्ठो नृणां बलित्वं च ॥  
यद्यपि पुरुषो गायति रूपविधानं तु लक्षणोपेतम् ।  
स्त्रीविरहितः प्रयोगः तथापि न सुखावहो भवति ॥

[*Natya Shastra*, XXXIII. 5 & 6]

There is no *apasvara* when women sing and the sweetness of the music they create is inaccessible to male singers.

अवैस्वर्यं भवेत् स्त्रीणां गानवाद्यक्रियास्वथ ।  
न हि तत् कर्णमाधुर्यं पुरुषेषु भविष्यति ॥

[*Natya Shastra*, Kashi edition, p. 428]

But Charudatta reiterates: "Friend, Rebhila did sing exceedingly well, although you do not seem to be satisfied. His music was full of melody, sweet, even, clear, full of feeling, with flourishes; it was captivating. Why add anything more? I think a woman was concealed within Rebhila. The passing from note to note, the softness of the enunciation, the cohesion with the sound of the strings, the variations of the *Svara* patterns quite within the range of the phases of the *Raga*, soft at the finish even when reaching the upper octave, with delightful flourishes and yet restrained and with due emphasis on the *Raga* brought out by repetitions—indeed, even after the concert is over, I feel I am listening to it even as I walk". We have here an example of music criticism or appreciation, like the one on the *Raga* in the *Abhijnanashakuntala*.

चारुदत्तः- वयस्य, सुष्ठु खल्वद्य गीतं भावरेभिलेन । न च भवान्परितुष्टः ।

रक्तं च नाम मधुरं च समं स्फुटं च  
भावान्वितं च ललितं च मनोहरं च ।  
किं वा प्रशस्तवचनैर्वहुभिर्मदुकै-  
रन्तर्हिता यदि भवेद्वनितेति मन्ये ॥४॥

तं तस्य स्वरसंक्रमं मृदुगिरः श्लिष्टं च तन्त्रीस्वनं  
वर्णानामपि मूर्च्छनान्तरगतं तारं विरामे मृदुम् ।  
हेलासंयमितं पुनश्च ललितं रागद्विरुच्चारितं  
यत्सत्यं विरतेऽपि गीतसमये गच्छामि शृण्वन्निव ॥५॥

[*Mrichchhakatika*, III. 4 & 5]

The qualities *Sama* and *Rakta* occur in Bharata (*Natya Shastra*, XXIV. 183) and *Rakti* is also mentioned by Kalidasa.

Charudatta was not just a passive connoisseur of music; he was an active participant in the art in all its aspects. When Sharvilaka, who had cultivated theft as an art, breaks into Charudatta's house, he sees the music instruments lying there and exclaims that he has come to a musician's house. He mentions here the *Mridanga*, *Dardura*, *Panava*, three kinds of drums, the *Vina* and several flutes (*Mrichchhakatika*, III. 18-19).

The second reference in the *Mrichchhakatika* occurs in the concluding verse of Act Five. It is late evening on a rainy day. Vasantasena had called on Charudatta and as the two were moving into the house from the garden, the rain falls on different kinds of surfaces, producing a variety of sound effects. Charudatta, connoisseur that he was, he captured all these marvel-

lously in verse. He compares the rich sharps and flats and the rhythms of the showers to the playing of stringed instruments, as in the fast tempo called *Druta Tana* in the South and *Jhala* and *Jod* in the North.

तालीषु तारं विटपेषु मन्द्रं शिलासु रूक्षं सलिलेषु चण्डम् ।  
संगीतवीणा इव ताड्यमानास्तालानुसारेण पतन्ति धाराः ॥

[ *Mrichchhakatika*, V. 52 ]

King Harsha opens the play *Ratnavali* with the spring festival and the *Charchari* and *Dvipadi Khanda* songs sung and danced by women-folk. In his *Nagananda*, Harsha has the hero and heroine meet in an *ashrama*, the music of the Vina played by the heroine being the cause. In this opening scene, the author has the hero speak two verses and some prose of appreciation of the music in which some of the technical terms of Vina-playing occur: *Sthana* (the three places of articulation *nabhi*, *hrit* and *kantha*), *Gamaka* (graces), the lower and higher registers, *Mandra* and *Tara*, the softness of the playing and its sweetness. The *Nayika* was singing and also playing on the Vina and, therefore, the clarity and the grace of the enunciation of the words of the song are also referred to.

स्थानप्राप्त्या दधानं प्रकटितगमकां मन्द्रतारव्यवस्थां  
निर्ह्रादिन्या विपञ्चया मिलितमलिरुतेनेव तन्त्रीस्वनेन ।  
गते दन्तान्तरालस्थिततृणकवलच्छेदशब्दं नियम्य  
व्याजिह्माङ्गाः कुरङ्गाः स्फुटललितपदं गीतमाकर्णयन्ति ॥

[ *Nagananda*, I. 12 ]

The hero observes further that as the strings are lightly touched, their sound is not clear enough; the singing, too, is *kakali-pradhana*, it must be a woman who is singing:

नातिस्फुटं कणन्ति तन्त्र्यः तथा काकलीप्रधानं गीयत इति तर्कयामि ।

*Kakali* here is taken by one commentator as *Kakali Nishada* but it may also mean just sweet and minute (*Kala-sukshma*).

In the next verse of appreciation, more technical terms of Vina-playing are used: *Vyanjana-dhatu* of ten kinds, the three *laya*-s, the three *Yati*-s, and the three forms of playing called *Tattva*, *Ogha* and *Anugata*.

व्यक्तिर्व्यञ्जनधातुना दशविधेनाप्यत्र लब्धामुना  
विस्पष्टो द्रुतमध्यलम्बितपरिच्छिन्नस्त्रिधायं लयः ।  
गोपुच्छप्रमुखाः क्रमेण यतयस्तिष्ठोऽपि संपादिता-  
स्तत्त्वौघानुगताश्च वाद्यविधयः सम्यक्त्रयो दर्शिताः ॥

[ *Nagananda*, I. 15 ]

*Dhatu* is the name of the *Svara-s* as they emerge through particular kinds of finger strokes (*prahara-s*) on the strings. These are of four main kinds, each of which has many sub-varieties. The fourth *Dhatu* is *Vyanjana* which is of ten kinds: *Pushpa*, *Kala*, *Tala*, *Bindu*, *Repha*, *Nisvanita*, *Nishkotita*, *Unmrishhta*, *Avamrishhta* and *Nibandhana*. The three *Yati-s* are: *Sama*, *Srotogata* and *Gopuccha*. The first is of even tempo all through, whether the tempo is slow, medium or fast; the other two result from different kinds of variations of the tempo and their names speak for themselves. *Srotogata* indicates a sequence of slow, medium and fast or slow, fast and medium and *Gopuccha* refers to one in which the last is always slow. The three methods of playing referred to at the end are *Tattva*, *Anugata* and *Ogha*. The first is appropriate in the slow tempo, the second in the medium and the third in the fast. The first brings out exactly the features of what is sung, the *Tala*, the words etc., that is an underlining of the song in every one of its aspects; *Anugata*, as its name suggests, means following the song (the *Gitanuga* mentioned already), with pauses, as in the singing; *Ogha* means the overriding play of the instrument or the independent playing after the singing stops, both of which display all the skill of the player, comparable to the opportunity for solo (*Tani Avarta* playing) given to the accompanists today.

The several descriptions of Vina-playing that we have referred to indicate that it was most common for vocal music to be sung to the accompaniment of the Vina.

The 11th Canto of Poet Magha's *Shishupalavadha* describes dawn and Lord Krishna awakened from sleep by the minstrel. The opening verse of the Canto is important in the context of music. The poet describes the minstrel as possessed of a voice free from defects and endowed with positive merits. The voice of a musician should be of a fine texture, audible, and should not lose its sweetness of tone or show any distortion when it is raised to a higher pitch.

श्रुतिसमधिकमुच्चैः पञ्चमं पीडयन्तः  
सततमृषभहीनं भिन्नकीकृत्य षड्जम् ।  
प्रणिज्जगदुरकाकुश्रावकस्निग्धकण्ठाः  
परिणतिमिति रात्रेर्मागधा माधवाय ॥१॥

[*Shishupalavadha*, XI.1 ]

The qualities of voice mentioned here are the same as defined by Bharata and the words are almost identical.

श्रावकमधुरस्निग्धो

and

श्रावको(णो)ऽथ घनः स्निग्धो मधुरो ह्यवधानवान् ।  
त्रिस्थानशोभीत्येवं तु षट् कण्ठस्य गुणा मताः ॥१२॥

[*Natya Shastra*, XXXIII.9.12 ]

The *Raga* which they used for the morning song may be made out to be *Bhinna-Shadja*, in which *Pa* and *Ri* were dropped, it was thus an *Audava* or pentatonic mode. The details mentioned by Magha for the notes of this *Raga* agree with its description in Matanga's *Brihaddeshi*

धैवतांशो मध्यमान्तः पञ्चमर्षमवर्जितः ॥३२४॥  
षड्जोदीच्यवती (जमा? जातो) भिन्नषड्जः स्मृतो बुधैः ।

[*Brihaddeshi*, TSS, pp.88-9.]

The above description of the minstrels of the dawn is repeated by Bilhana in his *Vikramankadevacharita* (XI. 73).

Magha, in Canto II of his *Shishupalavadha*, packs his verses with technical ideas from different branches of knowledge. Two verses here have a bearing on music. One is on the dominant character of the flute-sound and has already been cited. The other is as follows:

वर्णैः कतिपयैरेव ग्रथितस्य स्वरैरिव ।  
अनन्ता वाङ्मथस्याहो गेयस्येव विचित्रता ॥७२॥

[*Shishupalavadha*, II.72]

This verse compares speech or writing to music and the infinite variations which can be produced in both of them out of a limited number of letters and notes.

The *Haravijaya* (K.M. 22, 1890) of Ratnakara of Kashmir (who lived in the ninth century) is a stupendous poem and replete with technical terms from the arts of music, dance and drama. The author has a thorough knowledge of Bharata's *Natya Shastra*. We might mention here some of the more relevant references to music in this work. These are mostly included in the descriptive verses through *Shlesha* or *double entendre*, and occasionally also directly as descriptions of music. While describing the Himalayas and the deer of variegated colour (*Varna*) there, Ratnakara introduces through *Shlesha* the musical form *Varna*, meaning the singing of the *Svara*-s, comprising *Sthayi*, *Arohi*, *Avarohi*, and *Sanchari*, stationary, ascending, descending and moving in different ways (*Natya Shastra*, XXIX. 14-16). In the same work (XVII.81), Ratnakara has a description of women enjoying themselves, where he speaks of their singing and refers to the *Mayuri Marjana*, already explained in the context of Kalidasa earlier on. In Canto XXVI. 84-6, Ratnakara describes the singing of women with instruments, with the flute and different kinds of *Vina*, *Vallaki*, *Vipanchi*, *Kurmi* (87) and *Alabu Vina* (88). In Canto XXVI. 89, the poet says that because of their intoxication, their articulation of the words in the song (*Prabandha*) was blurred or inaudible, while the sound of their instruments was quite pronounced; this, he says, gave the effect of *Shushka* music. *Shushka* is pure instrumentation, not accompanying vocal singing. That which accompanies vocal singing is (as already mentioned by Kalidasa) called *Gitanuga*. Again in Canto XXXII. 73, Ratnakara speaks of this same instrumental display without the song, *Shushkam geyami-*



*vaapadam*. Mention of the *Madhyama Grama* and *Raga Pauravi* occurs in Canto XXXII. 5. Canto XL. 39 shows the poet's minute knowledge of Bharata's *Natya Shastra*; the description of the cavalry here is given through *Shlesha* with the playing of the stringed instrument, and mentions *Vistara*, *Kritarupa*, *Varna*, *Aviddha-Karana*, *Vyanjana*, *Dhatu*. These terms refer to the different *Karana*-s of playing on the type of Vina known as *Vipanchi* (*Natya Shastra* XXIX. 112-116). The *Grama Raga Sauvira*, with *Sa* as its *Nyasa*, is referred to in Canto XLIII. 50.

The survey could be extended not only to the works of the later period, but also to other forms of literature like story-telling and valuable data gleaned with respect to the history of the arts. For example, in seventeenth century Tanjore, in the *Sahitya Ratnakara* (a biographical poem on King Raghunatha Nayak) by Yajnanarayana Dikshita, there is a detailed description of the first Vina performance which young Raghunatha as Prince was asked to give in the court.

The author was the eldest son of Govinda Dikshita, author of the *Sangitasudha*, and the elder brother and teacher of Venkatamakhin, author of the *Chaturdandiprakashika* and the 72-Mela Scheme. Canto VI of the *Sahitya Ratnakara* (Madras University, 1932) describes the debut of young Raghunatha Nayak playing on the Vina. Verse 3 of the Canto describes the parts of the Vina which is the *Raghunatha-mela-Vina*, whose frets were fixed to enable the playing of all the *Raga*-s, mentioned by the author's father, Govinda Dikshita, in the latter's *Sangitasudha* (Music Academy, 1940, p. 5, l.65). The parts mentioned (V.5) are *Kakubhā* with gold-work, *Upamaha*, *Pravala*, *Parva* fixed with wax, *Kolambaka* tied over with cloth of variegated colours (V. 3). Mention is also made of the oily substance, in this case fragrant musk, with which the player moistens his finger-nails before and during playing (V. 5). That the Vina is the *Raghunatha-mela-Vina* is again seen in the epithet *Vividha-raga-vatim* given to it in another verse (V. 6). Prince Raghunatha then tests each string, tightens the pegs and adjusts the *Shruti*-s (V. 8). The first *Raga* he plays is *Nata* (V.9). The *Raga* is described as taking *Satshruti Ri* and *Dha*, *Antara Ga*, *Kakali Ni* and the rest as *Shuddha svara*-s and this accords with what the author's father sets forth as the *lakshana* of *Nata* in his *Sangitasudha* (Chapter on *Raga*, 455-6). The Prince developed the *Raga*, playing at *Sa*, *Ma* and *Pa*, displaying *Sphurita*-s, deep and sonorous (V.11). The last was especially appreciated by the listeners. He began with *Tara Sa*, then came down to *Madhya Ri*, then went up to *Tara Sa* again, played *Tana*-s, finishing at *Tara Sa* (V. 15). The next verse describes the *Tana* beginning with *Madhya Pa* and ending with *Madhya Sa*. After one more *Tana*, finishing with *Sa*, the grace called *Dhala*, the rolling so to speak of the sound on the string, resembling a pearl-necklace stirring on the chest (V. 18). *Panchama-sthayi* was played next and a song in honour of his father was then sung (V.19). The grace *Kampa* is mentioned in V. 22.

The foregoing survey will convey to the reader some idea of how valuable Sanskrit literature is for the study of Indian Music and on how the scientific treatment found in the treatises on the art is supplemented by the side-lights which creative literature (in the form of poems, plays and prose works) sheds upon this subject. Finally, it must be emphasised that all this

material contained in the old treatises or in Sanskrit literature should not be regarded as belonging to the past and, therefore, neglected. A careful study of all this rich material will reveal that the ideas or concepts underlying it continue to this day since they are musical facts or phenomena though the nomenclature and the orientation have changed. Many lessons can still be drawn from a study of all these sources.

## References:

1. *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, U.S., XV.iv, August 1956, pp. 497-505.
2. *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras, XXVIII, 1957, pp. 100-106.
3. *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras, III, 1932, pp. 11-32; pp. 94-102; *Sangeet Natak Akademi Bulletin* No. 5, 1956, pp. 19-28; No. 6, 1957, pp. 23-30.
4. *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras, IV, 1933, pp. 16-24; pp. 50-84; *Sangeet Natak Akademi Bulletin* No. 17, 1960, pp. 1-24; No. 18, 1961, pp. 1-18.
5. *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras, XXIII, 1952, pp. 64-74.
6. Refer to my *Later Sangita Literature*, *op. cit.*
7. *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras, XXXIII, 1962, pp. 127-133.
8. See Nanyadeva, *Bharatabhashya*, Vol. II, pp. 24-32. Sharngadeva notes here that in terms of later *Raga*, *Varati* or a shade of it is seen in the *Shadji*.
9. See below Bana mentioning the *Mahabharata* and the *Vayu Purana* being recited or read with music.
10. See my *Bhoja's Shringara Prakasha*, 1963, pp. 549-551; 1978, pp. 532-534.
11. 'In the Footsteps of Jayadeva', *The Hindu*, Madras, August 16, 1936, p. 10.
12. See my *Later Sangita Literature*, *op. cit.*
13. See my 'Sanskrit Compositions of Tyagaraja', *Souvenir of the 34th Conference of the Music Academy*, Madras, 1960, pp. 29-32.
14. Rajashekhara notes in his *Kavya-mimamsa* that in the Dravida country they always sang their poems with music: *Geyagarbhe sthitah pathe sarvopi dravidah kavih*. There were customary styles of reading of verses in different metres of reading epics or reciting hymns with shades of *raga*-s and also reading prose to *Raga* Arabhi. See below the reading of the *Vayu Purana* with flute mentioned by Bana. Abhinavagupta also mentions the reading of texts with *Raga* (*Abhinava Bharati*, IV, p. 235).
15. *Indian Art & Letters*, London, XXVIII, 1954, pp. 10-18; *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras, XXV, 1954, pp. 79-92; *Sangeet Natak Akademi Bulletin* No. 4, 1956, pp. 5-12.
16. That the prose-portion was also delivered with some music could be seen from the tradition of the Kudiyaattam.
17. See my article 'The Vina', *Souvenir of the 20th Conference of the Music Academy*, Madras, 1946, pp. 50-58.
18. See my article 'Music in *Linga Purana*', *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras, XIX, 1948, pp. 203-205 and 'Music in the *Brhaddharma Purana*', *Ibid*, IX, 1938, pp. 37-39. The *Vayu Purana* has a section on Music. See my article *Some Names in Early Sangita Literature*, *op. cit.*
19. Bharata has the following on the *Amsha-svara*, which Abhinavagupta equates with the *Tana*.

रागश्च यस्मिन् वसति यस्माच्चैव प्रवर्तते ।  
 [नेन वै तारमन्द्राणां योऽत्यर्थमुपलभ्यते ।]  
 मन्द्रतारविषया च पञ्चस्वरपरा गतिः ॥७६॥  
 अनेकस्वरसंयोगे योऽत्यर्थमुपलभ्यते ।  
 अन्यश्च बलिनो यस्य संवादी चानुवाद्यपि ॥७७॥  
 ग्रहापन्यासविन्यासन्याससंन्यासमोचरः ।  
 परिचा(वा?)र्यं स्थितो यस्तु सौऽशः स्याद्दशलक्षणः ॥७८॥

20. By *Mukha-Vadya*, he seems to refer to the bagpipe-like goatskin (*Turutti*) which used to be employed as a drone (*Shruti*) for the Nautch and the Bhagavata plays till sometime ago. The oral recital of the sound-syllables of *Tala* is also called *Mukha-Vadya*, that is employing the mouth or the voice as an instrument. In the verse from the *Ramayana* (quoted above) where the cuckoos, with their voices, supply as it were vocal music; the gusts of wind, blowing from the mouths of caves, make it appear that the hill is singing and conducting the dance of the trees. In his comments on this passage Udali Varadaraja says that the comparison here is between the wind and the dance-master who is teaching dance through the oral recital of the rhythmic syllables, *Sholkattu*. (*Mukhavadyena*) *natyeshu nrttashik sham prayojayatah nartakasya vayos cha sadharmyam uchyate*. Bharata refers to this oral recital of rhythm-syllables as *Vak-karana*, *Natya Shastra*, XXIV, 32, 33, 47. It is this oral recital of the rhythm syllable-passages (*Jati-s*) that Valmiki refers to in another verse as *Kantha-tala*. In his description of the rains, Valmiki conveys the picture of a dance-recital; the humming bees supply the music of the strings, the monkeys provide with the noises of their throats the rhythmic syllables (*Kantha-tala*), the clouds communicate the sounds of the drum.

पदपादतन्त्रीमधुगामिभानं  
 प्लवंगमोर्दितकण्ठतालम् ।  
 आत्रिष्कृतं मधुमृदङ्गनादः  
 वनेषु संगीतमिव प्रवृत्तम् ॥

[*Ramayana*, IV. 28, 36]

21. Also refer to my article 'Music and Dance in the Deccan and South India'. *Bihar Theatre*, No. 7, Patna, 1956.  
 22. See my 'The Multi-faced Drum', *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras, XXV, i-iv, 1954, pp. 107-108.  
 23. *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras, XXIV, i-iv, 1953, pp. 135-136; X-XVI, i-iv, 1955, p. 148.  
 24. Could this be the precursor of *Mangala-kaishika*?