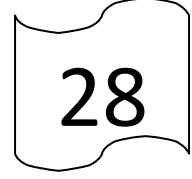


Significance of Music, Drama and Culture through History Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata References

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Aim:

Research in Music, review and article on the aspect of significance through history Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata.

The main purpose of Ramayana is to demonstrate the righteous path (dharma) for all living creatures on earth.

The Mahābhārata teaches us lessons on forgiveness, remaining focus on our goals, and fighting for what is right.

Abstract:

Carnatic music means sacred music and fosters an ambience for an all round development of a good human being. Music is an integral part of our life. It is known fact that music does influence people. Musical preferences are usually determined by one's background, personality, mood and situation. Music impacts the listeners in a compelling manner. The adolescents are very impressionable since they concentrate on the melody and lyrics and their attention span is longer. Vedic knowledge is the knowledge which transcends us to higher echelons of spirituality.

Vedic knowledge can be imparted to lay emphasis on psychological evolvement through the teachings of moral values and ethics. Vedas have influenced both Philosophers and artists. Spirituality is more than a life style change. It is an effort to make an improved version of ourselves. Epics have guided people in finding the right path in life and the right way to live. Epics depict our history and culture. They are the stories of courage which inspire us with confidence. Epics not just taught us humanity but also to become good citizen. It is often said that some of the greatest lessons for the future are to be found in the past.

1. Introduction:

Classical music has played a significant role in preserving, promoting and protecting great heritage of the nation. Diverse deliberations can be made when we try to trace out the origin of music. There are literary records and historical evidences to help us unravel and to contemplate the origin of music. There has been a complete study of the great texts on music and thereby society. Epics have guided people in finding the right path in life and the right way to live. Epics depict our history and culture.

2. Origin of music from Vēdā's:

Nādōpāsanayadeva Brahma viṣṇu Mahēśvarah¹

Since the Triad of Gods is embodiment of Nāda, the best way to worship them is with Nādōpāsana.

The science of music was amassed from the Sāmavēda by the God Brahma himself. Sāmavēda is



believed to be the starting point of all the music which was said to be born out of the manifestation of the sun-god, Āditya². Indian music has its origin in the Vēdā's³. Hence we can surmise that music is divine.

3. Music in Rāmāyaṇa:

Music was referred to as Gandharva Vidya. One can find reference to music in the epic Rāmāyaṇa written by Vālmīki where one could find slokās adhering to metrical compositions and also ideal for verbal rendition and suitable for narrative style. Probably more than any other epic Rāmāyaṇa's allegiance to music is profound.

3.1: Vālmīki⁴: The first Indian epic (Ādi-kāvya) Rāmāyaṇa, was narrated by the sage ĀdiKavi Vālmīki. He narrated the Rāmāyaṇa in 7 khnadās. 1. Bālakānda, 2. AyōdhyaKānda, 3. Araṇyakānda, 4. KiṣkindhaKānda, 5. SundaraKānda, 6. YuddhaKānda, 7. UttarāKānda. There are 24000 slōkas in Rāmāyaṇa including Uttarakānda.

He wrote The Epic Rāmāyaṇa very beautifully, sensitively and lyrically. He narrated Rāmāyaṇa in musical forms. The Indian people listening this epic with joy, and rendering of Rāmāyaṇa as musical discourse, to reading the epic themselves.

Vālmīki is a Rajarṣi, Rasa Rajarṣi, who created poetic virtues with rasās, sundara, vīra, bhībhatsa, karuṇa, viṣādain his kāvya.

Vālmīki had instructed his students thus "You narrate the story of Rāma by singing, you sing near dwellings of riṣi's, you sing near the residences of Brāhmiṇs, you sing on the streets, you sing in the Royal palaces, you sing on the threshold of Rāmā's abode, you sing in the constituencies where the Aśvamēdhayāga is being performed.

Vālmīki also talks about the fruits which are available in the villages on the consumption of which the 'tenor of your voice will be refined and shall fall pleasantly on the ears of Rāma and the risi-s who shall be in the audience. Sing beautifully with the accompaniment of the Vīṇa".

Rāmā's story was rendered in songs by his two sons' Kuśa and Lava. Kuśa Lava were well trained in the Gandharva music ; sung with the seven suddhaswarāṣṣadja, riṣabha, gāndhāra, Madhyama, paṇama, dhaivatha and niṣādha.

There are numerous events narrated in Rāmāyaṇa where Music was sung or played.

Rāmāyaṇa was played by music for entertainment and in celebration at the weddings and other auspicious occasion.

Music was played in the festivities to welcome and see off the guests. Music was thus a part of social fabric for the society as described in Rāmāyaṇa.

3.2: Instruments mentioned in Rāmāyaṇa: Drum conchs, horns and trumpets.

Whenever newlywed couples are blessed, they are wished to be ideal couples like Rāma and Sīta. It means they have to live happily with each other whether in a palace or in the jungle.



3.3:In Bālakānda : when ŚrīRāma and his three brothers took birth, the gandharvās sang cheerfully, apsaras danced with great delight, the devas played on the drums.

3.4:In AyōdhyaKānda: He describes the city the best city on earth.The city resounding with the rhythmic drums beat, melodious tunes of string instruments. When Rāma and Lakṣmanameet the vānara king Sugrīva in his court there the music plays on veena and other string instruments.

3.5: In SundaraKānda :Vālmīki mention about Rāvaṇa was very fond of music and music was played in his palace.

When Hanumān enters the city of Lanka, heard the three swarāsMandra, Madhya and Tārāsthāyi. Hanuma wandering at night to search SītheDēvi, heard musical notes coming from stringed instruments. In Rāvaṇā's palace sleeping groups of women, adorned with rich and sparkling ornaments, and who were skilled in dance and music.

Rāvaṇā himself was a reputed singer and well -known player of veena . Rāvaṇā's proficiency in music was a legend. There is reference of VipañcīVīṇa in Sundarakānda, which is a vina of nine strings. Rāvaṇā was considered a great musician.

Many music terms are mentioned in Rāmāyaṇa, whatever musical elements mentioned therein is incidental to the narration of the story⁵.

Music was very much a part of the social and personal life.

4. Music in Mahābhārata:

Mahābhāratais also called PañcamaVēdha⁶, Mahākāvya.

4.1:Kṛṣṇadwaipāyana : another name of Vyāsa who wrote Aṣṭādaśa Purāṇās and also composed the epic Mahābhārata. Mahābhārata in 18 parvas. In Mahābhārata vyāsa refers to classical music as gandharva vēda and considers Viṣṇu as creator of this art. And Nārada, the celestial musician, through the art might have spread to the world.

Human life had become more complex and problem ridden during the time of the Mahābhārata, leaving less time for music.

Mahābhārata used the term gandharva instead of music. The science of music was called gandharva śāstra.

The music, at the highest level was called Dēvagandharvam was sung by gods like Śankara, Brahma, and Indra sages like Nārada, Tumburu, and semi-gods like apsarās, gandhrvās, viśvavasu, kinnaras and others. Arjuna, one of the pāndavās had learnt these musical arts from Çitrasēna gandharva.



In Mahābhāratha less information about music was found, although music plays an important place in some parvas in Mahābhāratha.

4.2. shanthi parva :In shanthi parva there are references to veena and flute. In yajnas they played these instruments.

4.3. Drōṇa parva :In Drōṇa parva, the instruments like mṛdanga, bhēri, dundubhi were played during battle field.

4.4. Virāta parva : Especially in Virāta parva Arjuna plays an important role to teach dance and music to Virāta Rājā's daughter named Uttara.

To refer to a song Vyāsa uses the terms, gīta, sam, gēya, gadhika, stava, gādha and śruti. Most of the these terms though denote a particular type of composition, according to commentators, and have been used by Vyāsa only in general sense which includes hundreds of songs dealing with various sentiments like raudra, vīra, karuṇa, kāma, sānta, bhakti.

A traditional concert is suggested through the metaphorical description of the sangīta of the Mahāvana which follows:

Mēgha Turyaravōddama

Madanakulitan Bhramam

Kṛtvaivakēka madhuram

Sangītam madhruasvaram

“Inspired by the notes of the cloud-trumpets, the passionate peacocks begin a melodious concert through their sweet voices”.

A colourful description about the gandharva of the battle field found in Mahābhārata as well as in the Harivamśa in almost identical terms also is worth:

Dhanurjya tantri madhruam

Hikka tala samanvitam

Arttasvanita ghōṣādhyam
Yudham gandharvamababhau

“The battle field concert, consisting of Jya - the stringed instrument, hikka – the rhythmical accompaniment and the arttasvara – the song proper, was in full swing”.

5. Conclusion:



Vēdic knowledge is the knowledge which transcends us to higher echelons of spirituality. Vēdic knowledge can be imparted to lay emphasis on psychological evolvement through the teachings of moral values and ethics. Vēdā's have influenced both philosophers and artists. Spirituality is more than a lifestyle change; it is an effort to make an improved version of ourselves. The influence of mythology on music has been undeniable and extensive. We do not just tell stories about our gods and heroes, but sing them, for music is divinity manifest.

The Hindu epics, Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata and Bhāgavata are about the concept of God in human form. Epics have guided people in finding the right path in life and the right way to live⁷.

Sangītavijnānamokkate dharmārdha kāma mōkṣmūla niṣṣunu

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