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COMPOSITIONS IN MAHABHARATHA

Dr.V. Janaka Maya Devi¹**Abstract**

Mahabharatha (1000 B.C and 700 B.C.):Mahabharatha is a great Epic of India. It is the milestone in the history of India that a demarcating line had been drawn between Vaidika -sacred musical form (Compositional types) and laukika-secular musical form in this period. This research work posturized the various important evidences regarding Compositional types in Mahabharatha, which will be useful to the music students, teachers, research scholars, music lovers, historic analyzers and so on.

Keywords: Compositions, Mahabharata, musical forms, history, India(Footnotes)

Introduction:

Music has its own credit and has its presence in varied forms and format. Since it has been formed (composed), it is termed as music composition or musical form. Mahabharatha period (1000B.C. and 700 B.C.) of Indian history is dated several centuries before Christ. On the other hand, Mahabharatha is marked in the Indian history as ancient period. The study of musical composition in this period is an important milestone in the history, because the traditional form Saman was not ruled out and also a newly devised Gandharva type was in-practice. The Compositional types are the vital part of our South Indian Karnatic music. These are the sources which give shape to music. To form a composition, three elements are needed. On the other hand, to attain the status of a composition - raga, tala and words are essential.

This study throws light on the following:

I. Compositional types, II. Sacred (Vaidika) Musical form, III.Secular (laukika) Musical forms,IV. Gandharamurchana and V.Tala (rhythm)

To trace the sources, it is necessary to list out the chapters in *Mahâbhârata*.

In it's present form, the *Mahabharata* has eighteen parvas (chapters or books).

1. Adi, 2. Sabha, 3.Vana, 4.Virata, 5.Udyoga, 6.Bhishma, 7.Drona, 8.Karna, 9.Salya
10. Sauptika, 11. Stri,12. Santi, 13. Anusasana, 14.Ashvamedhika, 15.Ashramavasika
16. Mausala,17. Mahaprasthanika, 18.Svargarohana

I. Compositional types: Gaandharvamusic : It is believed that Brahma, the pioneer dramatist and musicologist sought out and collected material under this Gaandharva music. This Gaandharva music was also termed as Maarga. Gaandharva music was developed from Sama Gana. The following sloka is the evidence that Gaandharvamusic was adopted in *Mahabharata period*.

**Gaandharvasastramcakalaa : parigneyaanaraadhipa |
puraaGa miaasaascatahakhyaanaaniyaanica ||**

-Anusasana -104Adhyaya- 148 sloka

II. Sacred (Vaidika) Musical form : Sama gana

There are so many references, regarding Sama ganain *Mahabharata*.

TatrasmagaaathaagaayantiSaamnaaparamavalgunaa |

Gandharvaastumburusreshthaa: kusalaa gita Saamasu||

-Vanaparva 28th sloka-43rdAdhyaya

-Gandharva, Tumburu and kusala sang Sama gana.

AtraSaamasmagaayantiSaamagaa : punyanisvanaa :

| -Vanaparva -6thsloka- 142 Adhyaya

According to the following reference -

"samabhirye cha gayantisamagahsuddha- bhuddhayah"-

Saman was sung in a pure mind at the time of *Mahabharata* also.

The following sloka conveys that,

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Satyenacaagnirdahatisvarga :satyepratishtita : |

Satyam yagnastapoovedaa: stoobhaamantraa: sarasvati ||

-Santi parva- 199th Adhyaya-68thsloka

While talking about satyam (truth) **stobhas** were mentioned as a mantra. In Vedic period, **Stobhas** have no particular meaning; they attained this highest status, because they are utilized in Sama gana.

III. Secular (laukika) Musical forms:

Gita: Gita is a general term used to indicate musical compositions (form).

Gitaanaamsamataa7aanaamtathaaSaamnaamcani:svana:|

-VanaParva-158thadhyaya 97thsloka

Sama Ganam and the musical form -Gita were sung.

Sasikshitoonrutyagunaananeanvaaditra gitarthagunaamscasarvaan /

-Vanaparva -44thadhyaya-11thsloka

Visvaavasoostutanayaad gitamnutyamcasaamaca |

Vaaditramcayathaanyaayampratyavindadyathaavidhi ||

-Vanaparva -91stadhyaya-14thsloka

Divya Gita & Mangala Gita :

Sa tad divyamvanampasyanDivya Gitaninaaditam|

-Vana Parva-43rdadhyaya -7thsloka

In the above sloka **Divya Gita** was mentioned. It is a doubt that whether it was a separate composition or one of the varieties in **Gita**. The term 'Divya' means-divine, brilliant, charming and so on. Likewise there is a reference on '**Mangala Gita**' (Dronaparva 5/41,69/11) also .In this context, mangala denotes a kind of auspicious song . The above terms confirmed that songs were composed according to the situations and sang.

There are so many references about singing, dancing and playing instruments and so on. It shows in Mahabharata period varieties of compositions were in practice.

IV. **Gandharamurchana**:After the pre-historic period, in Epic period -Murchana system evolved.From Sama Gana, taking Ga as the tonic note GandharaGrāma was evolved. By the process of model shift of tonic from GandharaGrama seven jatis (ragas) were yielded and it is a record in the history of South Indian Music. In *Mahabharata*, there is information on *Gandharagramamurchana*.

VeeneevamadhuraalaapaaGaandhaaramsaadhumurchati|

-Virata parva-17thadhyaya -14thsloka

Here the **Murchanas** of the Gandharagrama is mentioned .The later period, treatises conveyed that through the **Murchana** system, seven jatis (ragas) were evolved. These were termed as GandharaGramaMurchana.

V.**Tala(rhythm)** :When a song (music composition or musical form) is governed by time-measure, it is termed as **tala**(rhythm). The tala system is the most complicated system of South India. In Mahabharata period there are references that various talas were in practice. The following slokas will convey the rhythmic oriented points in the Mahabharata.

a)**Samatala** :

GitaanaamsamataalaanaamtathaaSaamnaamcani:svana:|

-Vana Parva-158thadhyaya -97thsloka

Both the musical form-Gita as well as Sama Veda were sung in Sama tala .

b)**Dattatala**:

Bhakshayitvaacamaamsaanimaanushaanam prakaamata: |

Nrutyavaasahitaavaavaamdattatalaavanekasa : ||

-Adiparva -151 adhyaya-14 sloka

-Hidimba and Hidimbini discussed with each other that after eating Pandavas, they wanted to dance in Dattatala .

c) **Maasatala**:

Yatramaamsaadamrushabhamaasasaadabruhadratha : |

Tamhatvaamaasatalaabhistirtrobherirakaarayat |

|-Sabhaparva -21stadhyaya -16thsloka

d) Divyatala :

Gandharvaapsarasascaiva gita vaaditrakoovidaa :

Divyataaleshugaayanta :stuvantibhavamadbhuta ||

-Anusasanaparva -14thadhyaya401 sloka

-Gandharvas and Apsaras sang and played instruments in praise of Lord Siva in Divyatala. So in ancient period itself singing was taken place with the pakkavadhyas. Apart from these talas Panitala, sutala and Sampatala were also mentioned (AnusasanaParva-19thadhyaya-18thsloka). There is no reference that how to reckon these talas. But the talas names assured that music was rendered and reckoned with talas only.

To sum up in *Mahabharata*, in many places singing, dancing and playing musical instruments were together took place. In few places Vadyaghosa were mentioned to indicate some specific situations like army march, after winning the march and so on. There are references in so many places regarding the court musicians Suta and Magadha; dancers, instrumentalists, talala reckoners a spanivadakas and so on. It is the milestone in the history of South Indian music that the very first source received about the names of present day saptasvaras (seven notes)-

Shadja, Rishabha, Gandhara, Madyama, Panchama, Dhaivata and Nishada- taken place in *Mahabharata* only.

There is no information regarding the names of the jatis (ragas) or the method of singing the jatis or the method of singing the musical forms. But the later treatises dealt with these grama ragas in a detailed manner. The compositional types utilised were Sama gana, Gita, Divya Gita and Mangala Gita. It is quite interesting to note that Gana Kala that is specific time was allotted to singing purpose. Likewise so many information on talas name sand various situations they sang, danced, and played the instruments and so on are the sources proved that music not only took a predominant role but also took part in the day today life.

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