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BRIEF STUDY OF CONTENTS OF SANGEET PARIJAT

The 17th Century A.D. musical treatise 'Sangeet Parijat', that has been written in Sanskrit by Pt. Ahobal, is of great importance. Pt. Ahobal analysis of notes is particularly significant, as it paved the way for the establishment of present day notes. Even though theoretically he gives seven pure (Shuddha) and twenty two modified (Vikrit) notes, he establishes seven pure and only five modified notes on the string of a Vina for practical usage. This not only presented scientific parameters to compute frequencies of notes, but also removed notes that were basically the same but with different names. However, his pure scale is similar to present day Kafi.

The importance of this magnificent treatise can be realized from the fact that it was translated into Persian in the year 1724 A.D., a copy of which is available in the Rampur Raza Library, Rampur.

Sangeet Parijat is an expansive work comprising 708 shlokas. It consists of two portions. The first part is the Raga Gita Vichara Kanda and the second part is the Vadya Tala Kanda.



OBJECTIVE

After studying this lesson, the learner will be able to :

- name the two parts of Sangeet Parijat;
- describe the musical concepts as given in Sangeet Parijat;
- explain the contributions in music of Pt. Ahobal;
- describe the impact of Pt. Ahobal's contributions on present day

8.1 CONTENTS OF SANGEET PARIJAT

Sangeet Parijat consists of two parts comprising 708 shlokas. The first part is



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called **Raga Gita Vichara Kanda** and the second part is called **Vadya Tala Kanda**. Raga Gita Vichara Kanda includes Svvara Prakarana (details of Shruti and Svvara), Grama Lakshana (details of Grama), details of Murcchana, Murcchana and Svvara Prastara, Varna Lakshana (details of Varnas), Jati Nirupana (details of Jati and Raga), Raga Prakarana (description of Ragas) followed by details of Prabandha, characteristics of Vaggeyakara, merits and demerits of singing. Vadya Tala Kanda includes the classification of instruments, their description, method of playing, characteristics of instrumentalists, ancient elements of Tala.

8.2 RAGA GITA VICHARA KANDA

8.2A Details of Shruti and Svvara

He begins the Svvara Prakarana with mangalacharana. Further he states that the effect of music is greater than Yajna or charity. He defines music following Pt. Sharngadev, in which vocal, instrumental music and dance are collectively called music. Vocal music has been considered prominent among them.

Differentiating between Shruti and Svvara, he says that the cause of Shruti is in being heard, but it is not separate from the note or Svvara. The difference between a note and Shruti is like a snake and its coil, where the note is the snake and Shruti the coil. He clarifies further that the Shrutis become notes in Ragas and their cause becomes the Raga, so the term ' Shruti ' is appropriate.

After that he describes the twenty two Shrutis. Then he comes to the notes. He has given seven pure and twenty two modified notes, totaling twenty nine. Sa, ma and pa are of four Shrutis, ga, ni of two shrutis and re, dha of three Shrutis each.

He gives various terms like Tivra, Tivratara, Tivratama, Komala, Purva, Sadharana, Kakali and Kaishik for modified notes. Further, he states the four types of notes Vadi, Samvadi, Anuvadi and Vivadi and also Devata, Kul, Jati, colours, Rasa and Rishi of the notes similar to earlier authorities.

He gives two types of music as Margi and Desi. Further, he mentions the origin of Nada from the nerve centre (chakra) located in the heart by the combination of air and fire. Mandra, Madhya and Tara originate from 'Visuddha chakra' of the throat and 'Sahasrasar chakra' of the brain.

8.2B Details of Grama

In Grama Lakshana, Ahobala discusses 'Grama' . He defines it as a group of notes and has referred to three Gramas, namely - Shadja, Madhyama and Gandhara. For the use of Ragas, only two viz - Shadja and Madhyama have been considered sufficient. The Ragas originate from Shadja Grama.

8.2C Details of Murcchana

He discusses 'Murcchana' after Grama Lakshana. He defines it as the ascent and descent of notes within a Grama. Seven types of Murcchana of Shadja Grama have been given. After that, seven types each of Madhyama and Gandhara Gramas have been given according to earlier authorities like Bharata, Shamgdeva, Matanga and Narada. Therefore, twenty one pure Murcchanas have been given. Their combinations have also been given. Further, he gives the Tanas formed according to Murcchanas.

8.2D Murcchana and Svara Prastara

He describes the Khanda-Meru method of combining notes in this chapter.

8.2E Varna Lakshana

He enumerates the four types of Varnas, namely - Sthayi, , Arohi , Avarohi and Sanchari in this chapter. In Alankaras, he mentions seven according to Sthayi Varna, twelve according to Arohi, twelve according to Avarohi and thirty eight according to Sanchari Varna.

8.2F Jati Nirupana

In this chapter dealing with Jatis, he gives seven pure Jatis, namely, Shadji, Arshabhi, Gandharvi, Madhyama, Pancami, Dhaivati and Naishadi. Then he mentions the various Gamakas. After that he gives the placement of notes on Vina. Further, he gives five Gitis, namely, Shuddha, Bhinna, Gaudi, Vesara and Sadharani. He gives their characteristics. Then he comes to Ragas. He has given 122 Ragas. He defines Raga as a pleasing combination of notes. Then he gives the time of singing the Ragas.

8.2G Raga Prakarana

In Raga Prakarana, he gives the description of Ragas. In the end, he mentions the ten notes that do not come in use in the given Ragas, leaving the number of notes used to nineteen. However, practically, he has used only seven pure and five modified notes, because most of the other notes have same positions but different names.

8.2H Details of Prabandha

After Raga Prakarana, he discusses Prabandha. He enumerates five parts of Prabandha (he refers to them as Bhagas instead of Dhatus), viz., Udgraha, Melapaka, Dhruva, Antara, Abhoga and six elements or Angas, viz., Pada, Tala, Svara, Pata, Tena and Biruda. He describes the three types of Prabandhas, viz., Suda, Ali and Viprakirna. Thereafter, He explains the characteristics of Vaggeyakara and the merits and demerits of singing.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.1**

1. When was Sangeet Parijat written?
2. How many pure and modified notes did Pt. Ahobal establish on the string of a Vina ?
3. The pure scale of Sangeet Parijat is similar to which present day scale?
4. How many shlokas are found in Sangeet Parijat ?
5. Which method of combining notes does Pt. Ahobal discuss in Murcchana and Svara Prastara ?
6. Name the four types of Varnas given in Sangeet Parijat.

**Notes**



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7. How many Alankaras does Pt. Ahobal mention according to Sanchari Varna?
8. Name the seven pure Jatis given in Sangeet Parijat.
9. Name the five Gitis given in Sangeet Parijat.
10. How many Ragas have been given in Sangeet Parijat?
11. What are the five parts of a Prabandha according to Sangeet Parijat ?

8.3 VADYA TALA KANDA

In the second portion, Pt. Ahobal discusses the four different types of musical instruments, viz., Tata, Anaddha, Sushir and Ghana. He discusses eight types of Vina in Tata, i.e. stringed instruments, eight types of Anaddha, i.e. percussion instruments, ten types of Sushir, i.e. wind instruments and twelve types of Ghana, i.e. metallic instruments. Thereafter, he describes the tenfold ancient elements of Tala, Tala Dashpranas, viz., Kaal, Marga, Kriya, Anga, Graha, Jati, Kala, Laya, Yati and Prastara.

8.4 CONTRIBUTIONS OF PT. AHOBAL AND THEIR IMPACT ON PRESENT DAY HINDUSTANI MUSIC

Pt. Ahobal contributed immensely towards the shaping of present day Hindustani music by

1. Doing away with unnecessary notes- He had originally mentioned twenty nine notes. However, many of the notes were on the same position with different names. Thus, from his original 7 pure and 22 flat notes, he has used only 7 pure and 5 flat notes in the description of Ragas.
2. Establishing notes on the string of a Vina - Though not in detail, he demonstrated the position of notes through the medium of a string of a Vina.
3. Presenting scientific parameters for computing frequency of notes - Through the practical demonstration of the distance between the notes, the parameters for computing the frequency of notes could be established.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.2

12. Name the four types of instruments described by Pt. Ahobal ?
13. How many Vinas has he mentioned?
14. How many percussion instruments has he mentioned?
15. What are the tenfold ancient elements of Tala as given in Sangeet Parijat?
16. How many notes did Pt. Ahobal establish on a string of a Vina ?

17. What was the original number of notes mentioned by Pt. Ahobal ?
18. In what way does Pt. Ahobal provide a means for computing the frequency of notes?
19. How many Gramas does Pt. Ahobal refer to ?

**Notes****WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

Sangeet Parijat of Pt. Ahobal is among the important Sanskrit works on music of the Medieval Period. It serves as a connecting link between the music prevalent in ancient and present times. His analysis of notes is particularly significant in the modern context. His differentiation between Shrutis and notes is unique. He has presented important concepts of music in a systematic and scientific manner.

**TERMINAL EXERCISE**

1. How does Pt. Ahobal differentiate between Shruti and Svara ?
2. Discuss the analysis of notes in Sangeet Parijat. How is it significant in the modern context?
3. Discuss the concept of Grama and Murchana as given in Sangeet Parijat.
4. Discuss Prabandha according to Sangeet Parijat.
5. Explain the contributions of Pt. Ahobal and their impact on present day Hindustani music.
6. Discuss the Vadya Tala Kanda of Sangeet Parijat.

**ANSWERS TO IN TEXT QUESTIONS****8.1**

1. 17th century A.D
2. 7 pure and 5 flat notes
3. Kafi
4. 708
5. Khanda-Meru
6. Sthayi, Arohi, Avarohi , Sanchari
7. 38
8. Shadji, Arsabhi, Gandharvi, Madhyama, Pancami, Dhaivati, Naisadi
9. Shuddha, Bhinna, Gaudi, Vesara, Sadharani
10. 122
11. Udgraha, Melapaka, Dhruva, Antara, Abhoga

**Notes****8.2**

12. Tata, Anaddha, Sushir, Ghana
13. Eight
14. Eight
15. Kaal, Marga, Kriya, Anga, Graha, Jati, Kala, Laya, Yati and Prastara
16. Twelve
17. Twenty nine
18. He demonstrates the distance between notes on the string of a Vina
19. Three

GLOSSARY

1. Madhya - obtained from the throat
2. Mandra - obtained from below the throat
3. Mangalacharana - invocation
4. Nada - sound with regular vibrations
5. Raga - musical mode of Hindustani music
6. Shruti - smallest unit of music that can be heard
7. Svara - note, the form shrutis take upon becoming pleasing and resonant when used in a Raga.
8. Tara - obtained from brain