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The Historical Perspective of Mystical Music in Kashmir

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Abstract

There is a close relation between human life and music. Music is a sweet art comprising of two parts instrumental and vocal music. The main aim of music is to raise the inner feelings. The state of Jammu and Kashmir possesses different varieties of music. Mystical music, romantic music, Kashmir santoor etc are different forms of music in Jammu and Kashmir. Various musical techniques are believed to be borrowed from Central Asia. Music according to Sufi teachings is known as mystical music. It is an Iranian art comprising of twelve mukams, grouped into six families.

Keywords- *Mystical Music, Cultural Heritage, Kashmir*

Introduction

India has many states. Kashmir is one of them. People consider Kashmir as paradise on earth. Several poets, novelists, story writers and even dramatists have described Kashmir as most wonderful place on the earth. In following lines we get a glance of this notion.

Agar firdous baroya zameen ast
Hamay asto hamay asto hamay ast.
If there is heaven on earth,
It is here, it is here, it is here.

This beautiful land is covered all around by hills and natural decoration is visible everywhere, as Mehjoor rightly said about his mother land:

Aend aend safaid sangar
Daivaar sange mar mar
Manz bagh sabz gowher
Gulshan watan chu souni.
White stones are all around
Like the boundaries of marble
Middle is green bijoux

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Our home land is garden.

In Kashmir music and dance has aged roots we can trace the history of these arts from the oldest historical works like Kalhans Raajtaranjni written in 1149 AD. By its cultural values and traditions the valley of Kashmir earned the name and fame throughout the world. Because of rich cultural heritage and natural beauty the land was ruled by Hindus over 4000 years and 21 dynasties rose their power. Kashmir is the only region which has its unique and rich classical tradition i.e. mystical music, the music of great beauty is also known by the name of classical music in Kashmir. This type of music is the combination of the music of various countries. The amalgamation of the music of Iran, Turkey, and Central Asia gives birth to the classical music of Kashmir. The artists from these famous places entered Kashmir with their musical techniques. This form of music entered Kashmir in 14th century with the advent of Islam .it is a form of music in which more than five to twelve persons sing and play together various musical instruments. Indian classical and folk music was prevalent in Kashmir before the advent of Islam. The process of Islamic speeches began in Kashmir during the reign of Lalitaditya Muktapida. However in 14th century maximum population of Kashmir accepted Islam and with the process of islamization a new musical form began to give its roots called the mystical music of Kashmir. The music of Kashmir was adopted by its citizens. Most popular instruments used in the practice are -Rabab, Sitaar, Santoor, Nagara etc.

Ruled by different dynasties, it is impossible to trace out the actual history of mystical music in Kashmir. But it is quite clear that arrival of islam in 14th century, Lal Ded and Sheikul Alam's (R.A) poetry, Rinchans acceptance of islam and arrival of Syed Ali Hamdani (R.A) became the foundation stone for mystical music.

In the year 1972 one of the great Islamic scholar Syed Ali Hamadani (R.A) with his 700 followers entered Kashmir. These all were religious and skillful persons. They give Islamic knowledge to the people of Kashmir and make them aware of different skills like carpet weaving, wood carving, paper mashie etc. These Persian arts became popular in Kashmir and gave birth to major changes in almost all aspects of Kashmiri people i.e. food, dress, trade, art and music.

The old forms of music take the new shape and new name as mystical music regarded as classical music of Kashmir. The art was initiated by the Muslim rulers and gave full attention towards it. Sultan Shamus Din Shah Mir was the first king who patronized the classical music. Sultan not only encouraged the artists to perform their art but also books were written on music under his guidance. After Sultan Shamus Din Shah Mir more attention was paid towards classical music during the reign of Zain-ul- Abideen. He is also known by the name of Badshah. The period of Zain-ul-Adideen is considered as golden period of Kashmir. Being himself the expert of art and music, he invited great musicians from Iran and

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Turan. After Badshah his grandson Sultan Hassan Shah opened an independent department of music. He invites musicians from all over the world especially from South Asia and Deccan for the promotion of music in Kashmir. Yousuf Shah Chak the ruler from chak dynasty, who ruled Kashmir in 16th century, was the lover of art and music. He encouraged different arts and crafts but the particular attention was given towards music. Kashmiri music touches the sky during the reign of Yusuf Shah.

Mughal's known to the world as the lovers of art also patronized the music of Kashmir. The classical music got more strength during Mughal rule. Abul Fazal in his Aaene-i- Akbari discussed about the seven chords of the music.

1. Shadaj

Taken from the voice of Peacock.

2. Rashab

Taken from the voice of Yellow colour bird.

3. Gandhar

Taken from the voice of Goat.

4. Madham

Taken from the voice of Drake.

5. Pancham

Taken from the voice of koel.

6. Dayoot

Taken from the voice of Frog.

7. Nishad

Taken from the voice of Elephant.

The foundation stone of music SA RAY GA MA PA DA NI are believed to be derived from these sounds. During the rule of Akbar, classical music of India and classical music of Kashmir amalgam with each other. Mystical music primarily originated from Persian and central Asian music adopted some features of Indian classical music also. Almost all mughel rulers were lovers of art and music. They patronized the musicians and rewarded them at different times. Akbar encouraged the musicians from the Kashmir and had a group of Kashmiri musicians at his court. After Akbar, Jahangir and Shahjahan paid serious attention towards art and music but after these mughel rulers it was Aurangzeb who was against the art of music. He discharged the musicians and takes away their musical instruments. Abdul Majeed Matoo writes:

In spite of linguistic difference, the mughals patronized the Musicians and rewarded them time to time. Akbar had a group of Kashmir musicians at his court. Jahangir, Shahijahan and Aurangzeb rewarded the musicians and minstrels at the time of arrival in the Suba. But towards the close of his reign,

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Aurangzeb directed the Subadars to discharge the musicians and take away their instruments.

The decline of mughal rule caused some sort of trouble to mystical music but Sikh rulers show some sort of interest towards the same art. Syed Kaiser writes:

It was the time of Maharaja Pratap Singh, one of the earliest kings of Dogra dynasty, that mystical musicians were called. The court again mystical music thus got a rebirth. Ustad Ramzan Joo's father and uncle became court musicians of dogras. They gave concerts at special ceremonies and in accordance with the wishes of maharaja. Other musicians got associated with the court gradually.

To listen mystical music was the work of almost everyone in Kashmir but due to the change of cultural values and westernization, the mystical music is on its path of decline. Various factors are responsible for its decline i.e., lack of interest among people towards mystical music, lack of communication with Central Asia and Iran, interest of people towards the Rock and Pop music etc . These are the main things that became hindrance for flourishing mystical music in present time's .The western and Indian classical music gave serious blow to the mystical music of Kashmir.

The art was patronized by the Sufi's because they love it from the core of heart. The work was also saved by the mystic poets of Kashmir. The Radio Kashmir and Jammu and Kashmir academy of art culture and languages made serious efforts to preserve this cultural heritage of Kashmir. Efforts are required to revive the tradition of mystical music by introducing the new techniques and new musical instruments into it.

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