

Analytical study of Marāṭhi Lāvaṇī from period of Tanjore kings

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Abstract— Classical and Folk dance styles also emerged from time to time. Some came into the limelight some became popular and some faded away by time. The Researcher has delved into the past and present trends of folk arts and classical dances to find out knots that were and are in practice. With the contemporary thoughts, classical dance forms adopted many new changes to their style, structure, ornamentation, presentation and compositions as well. While witnessing history through glimpses researcher came across two dances that were used to perform in the same ambience and front of the same audience in the same language. Today, only one of them is performed and the other finds a lack of attention paid due to the image of the dance form in the society. Marāṭhi literature and compositions were given priority during the Marāṭhā rule. Marāṭhās not only promoted southern languages but also preserved their mother tongue. Prabaṅdhas, Nirupaṅas, dance dramas, Lullaby, Abhaṅgas, and Bhajans got popularity through many practitioners but traditional folk art of the same period got very little attention. Since Lāvaṇī and sangeet padas were used to perform in the same language and for the same purpose during the Marāṭhā rule, many scholars put forward Marāṭhi compositions and many have researched other Marāṭhi literature but not the folk culture of Marāṭhi lavani in the period of Marāṭhās. Here, the researcher spotted a lack of attention. Hence, this paper brings lime light on the selected Marāṭhi Lāvaṇī from Tanjore Marāṭhi Lāvaṇī Vāṅgmaya with respect to their theme and the compositional structure from the period of Tanjore kings.

Index Terms— *Lāvaṇī, Marāṭhā kings, Marāṭhi literature, Tanjore .*

INTRODUCTION

Tanjore has a well known cultural heritage and considered as a seat of music during the period of 16th to 18th century. The rulers of Tanjore such as - Śahāji, Sarabhoji-1, Tulaja-1, Ekoji and Pratapsimha were great admirers of music, dance and other art forms.

Each one of them have contributed in a unique way to the field of fine arts. Shahaji also known as Abhinavabhoja was famous for his dramatic and poetic works, musical compositions in praise of Sri Thyageśa of Thiruvārur. Sarabhoji-1 was titled as Vidyā bhoja equally contributed by composing padas and padyas. Tulajā -1 was the great author of monumental work Sangita sārāmrita and Salāmu darus, padyas and swarajathis bear testimony to his musical attainments. Ekoji had great dancer named Muddamanga in his court and his Marāṭhi padas are master pieces of his time. These kings not only contributed to field of fine arts but also promoted many other musicians and singers, dancers in their court.

Bhajan Bhāruḍ, Gondhaḷ, Kīrtan, Powāḍā, Śāhirī, Abhaṅga, Laḷita, Tumbāḍī, Tamāśā are the forms of community entertainment based folk songs which are based on folk music found in Mahārāṣṭra. In Marāṭhi literature, Śāhirī Vāṅgmaya has secured a safe place without any doubt. Regarding the same many scholars have studied and performed a lot of research on it. The Śāhirī composers were named patriots. Later on, the fame around these Śāhirī composers started diminishing. Śāhirī literature has become an area of keen interest by many researchers and in comparison, to this Lāvaṇī composers were treated like selfish and a rumor had been spread across the country about Lāvaṇī artists that they compose only for the purpose of their bread and butter. Regardless an interesting fact about Lāvaṇī is that the process of composing Lāvaṇī never stopped. There was no respect in society for this folk-art form but it never had been banished from practices. Till date whatever studies about Lāvaṇī art have been undergone were related to its origin, figuring its social picture, content delivered from it, religious thoughts it expressed, the vulgarity of Lāvaṇī, and many more.

It has been a good fortune of Tanjore that a large number of composers, musicians, dancers and artists have flourished in its soil continuously for over two centuries and there by Tanjore as a real seat of music and other art forms. Many researchers and scholars have studied different compositions, literary works of the era but a few only focused on Marāṭhī folk music such as Marāṭhī Lāvaṇī of the same period. The periodic other compositions like Marāṭhī padas, Nirupanas, Abhangas, Dramas, Palanas got more attention than Marāṭhī Lavanis due to its diminishing societal status. Very few researchers and scholars provided new perspectives on Lāvaṇī studies and hence there is a need for study and research on the Lāvaṇī art form its literature and its values to society.

MARATHI LĀVAṆĪ

A. Existence

Among Marathi folk music, Lāvaṇī has attained highest popularity during the period of 16th to 18th century. Lāvaṇī are ballad like compositions made for the only purpose of enjoyment of the lay people. According to its practice studies the motive behind the composition of Lāvaṇī songs was not only for entertainment purpose. It has been an interesting method for social enlightenment and religious instruction through sawal jawab. The term Lāvaṇī means off shoot or beauty. It refers to on the spot creation of music. In Tamil, it was also known as NiLāvaṇī

The earliest composer of Lāvaṇī was Saint Samartha Ramadas, the preceptor of Shivaji the great. Honnaji Bal, Ananda phandi, Madhvamuni, Kalgiwale Shahir such as Vandkar, Kasha husaini, Kashinath, Hunnaji, Bal Bhairav were the famous Lāvaṇī composers in the period of Tanjore Kings. Tanjore Marathi Lāvaṇī Vāṅgmaya songs by Dr. Vivekananda Gopal Emphasises the Lāvaṇī composers from Maratha kings period in his collection of Lāvaṇīs taken from Manuscripts Of Saraswati Mahal Library.

B. Structure of Lāvaṇī

The structure of these Lāvaṇīs were simple, catchy and easily enjoyable. Composers found this musical form highly attractive for the purpose of religious and social instructions. According to Marāṭhī grammer these compositions are measured in vrutta. There are three types of vrutta.

Lāvaṇīs are long pieces mostly with Dhruvapadas. It has one pallavi and many charanas where the pallavi is repeated after every charana. Every Lāvaṇī has its own meters of singing as that of Marāṭhī vritta structure. There are various themes observed in the Lāvaṇī compositions from the period of Marāṭhā rulers such as- Philosophical, historical, devotional, erotic, scientific, societal and nature. This implies that Lāvaṇī was not only a medium of enjoyment and entertainment but also a medium for societal enlightening.

C. Selected Compositional studies

- *Ādi pāsuni aṅḍa raćanā*
- *Ādi māye praṇavākaārī*
- *Kaṭu kaiśi mī rāta*
- *Sāsuraći jāćanī soṣenā*
- *Soḍire soḍire padara Sri Kriṣṇa*
- *Narakaćaturdaśī saṇa ājī*
- *Visaru nako ga*
- *Śaśivadane pāhuni tuja mana mohilo*
- *Koṇa savata japata hoṭī yālā*



FIG-01-LAVANI-GHEER AND DANCER

ANALYSIS

The Marāṭhī Lāvaṇī vaṅgmaya is the collection of Lāvaṇīs which belong to various categories and themes. Lāvaṇī was not only limited or restricted to only purpose of entertainment, it was a better medium for solving religious, scientific or social issues through the medium of its sawal - jawab. The study also brings light on the different themes and areas which Lāvaṇī compositions have covered. There were many other topics which are covered through medium of Lāvaṇī compositions-

1. Samvatsara Lāvaṇī - providing list of names of years
 2. Varsha ritu Lāvaṇī- explaining about varsha ritu
 3. Ramayana Lāvaṇī- ramayana tails are explained in this composition
 4. Lāvaṇīs glorifying great saints and the deity.
 5. Ādi pāsuni aṇḍa raćānā- Explains about science behind birth
 6. Ādi māye praṇavākaārī- Devotional
 7. Kaṭu kaiśi mī rāta- Deception from lover
 8. Sāsuraīci jāćāṇī sosēnā- Torture at in laws place
 9. Soḍire soḍire padara Sri Kriṣṇa- Epic mythology based
 10. Narakaćaturdaśī saṇa ājī -Religious
 11. *Visaru nako ga* - Viraha from Nayaka point of view
 12. *Śaśivadane pāhuni tuja mana mohilo*- Srīngāra
 13. *Koṇa savata japata hotī yālā*- Khanḍita Nāyika
- The Lāvaṇī songs are grammatically measured based on vrutta- Akshara vrutta, Matra vrutta and chhanda vrutta. Example of Matra vrutta found in one of the compositions as follows-

No. of matras in line- Ādi pāsuni aṇḍa raćānā aikā vistāra are 22.

No. of matras in line- brahma rupiṇī muḷamāyā jāli niradhāra are 22.

Which clearly shows the lines of dhruvapada of the Lāvaṇī are in matra vrutta where the total count of laghu, guru aksharas is same and it results in total no of equal matras.

CONCLUSION

Marathi Lāvaṇī in the period of Tanjore kings were not only the part of entertainment but were the major medium of social awareness through its presentation. Lāvaṇīs are not only categorized in Srīngāra and bhakti depiction but it has many faces which plays vital role in its presentation and practices. Lāvaṇī was not only a folk lore music but was constructed according to devanagari grammatical base like vrutta, chhanda etc. More research can be done on the rare compositions of Lāvaṇī written by Tanjore kings as the study only focuses on the Lāvaṇī by poets- Vandakar, Kasha Husaini, Kashinath from Marathi Lāvaṇī Vāṅgamaya.

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