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GRT INVENTIONS OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS DURING 18-19TH CENTURIES IN INDIA

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Abstract:-In Indian music, 18th and 19th centuries are considered as golden era. Innovations of newer versions in music forms and musical instruments were taken place in this era. Unfortunately at the same time of this musical transformation, the country became subject of significant changes in political status that effected on all sectors of contemporary Indian civilization. Due to the offended circumstances while British rule taking control over the India between 17-18th century, many authentic descriptions of Indian music fallen into obscure.

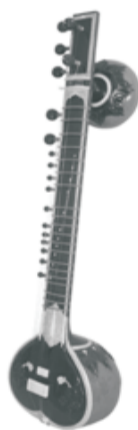
Keywords:musical instruments , political status , musical transformation.

INTRODUCTION:

Regarding the invention of the musical instruments introduced between these critical times, any authentic records clarifying the way of introduction are uncertain. Thus it has become a subject of research. Till today a number of researches have been made on the inventions of music forms and musical instruments during 18-19th centuries. Here is an overview of the points described by various researchers.

The sitār

The sitār is very prominent instruments in present day Indian music. Somehow it is argued to be an ancient instrument but contemporary researches have set its date back to 18th century. Till present day, the innovation of sitār is popularly credited to Hazarat Amir Khusro who lived in the court of Delhi in late 13th century. It is popularly believed that Amir Khusro (1253-1325) created an instrument on the model of existing Indian instrument and gave it a Persian name seh-tār which means three strings. But considering no evidence, the modern researches discredited Amir Khusro's role in inventing sitār. According to Brihaspati (1976; II.241), 'Khusro Khan an eighteenth century figure who was brother of Namath Khan (Sadarang), a famous singer and composer of khayāl, introduced sitār in Delhi'



Supporting this theory E.S.Perera (1994,198;N) states that, 'possibly the reference of Amir Khusro in connection with the invention of sitār is a misplaced emphasis from Khusrau Khan to Amir Khusro of 13th century. The identical title 'Khusro' is responsible for this misplaced emphasis'.

Researcher Allyn Miner (1994;I.28) points that the earliest notification of sitār is found in Urdu text 'Muraqqā-e-Delhi' of 1738 and the earliest visual description of sitār is made by Irish artist F.B.Solvyns in his collection of colored sketches titled 'Costumes of Hindoostan' in 1799. Considering all these points it can be stated that sitār is invented during 18-19th centuries. The instrument which said to be existed prior to this period was the Tambur which was very similar to the primitive sitār.

The Kachuā sitār

Kachuā sitār, which is a larger type of sitār, was invented in early 18th century. This was a rarely heard instrument but notified in Indian music throughout 18-19th centuries. Some scholars hold that the present kachuā Sitār has taken source from ancient kachapi veena. Tagore (1976;18-19) calls this sitār as kachapi veena.



Nevertheless, Deva (1977.VI:135) and others have been described that ancient kachapi veena was a fretless stick zither and represented in temple sculptures of medieval India. Yet there is a relation of its name with ancient instrument. The inventor of kachuā sitār is unknown. Actually, it is introduced in Indian music during late eighteenth century. Bhagwan Chandra Das of 19th century was well known figure of kachuā sitār.

The Surbahār

According to the musicologists, the invention of Surbahār set back to around 1825 and attributed variously to Sahebdad khan of Bengal and Gulam Mohammad of Banda state near Varanasi. In the text Yantrakosha Tagore (1976;34) states that it was invented by Gulam Mohammad of Lucknow and says that it is no different than a large kachuā sitār. It is used to play dhrupad based music instead of Khayal style.



Surbahār is a Hindi word means 'spring of notes'. There is an influence between names of early invented sursingār with surbahār, the later one. It is an enlarged version of kachuā sitār. The deep long lasting sound of surbahār and capability of extensive pulling of strings are distinguished characteristics of Surbahār. Miner (1994;54) observes that captain Smith made an early evidence of likely this instrument in 1833. Till present day the surbahār is performed in Indian music.

The Sursingār

The sursingār was invented by modifying the rabāb in the 19th century. The term means 'decoration of notes'. Tagore (1879;1976:33) attributes its invention to Pyar khan. The instrument was able to produce a deeper long sustain through acquiring a metal plate on finger board. It was capable to imitate the sound of rudraveena. The sursingār reached its peak in the second half of nineteenth century. But shortly the sarod emerged as a musical prodigy and the sursingar went back from performance within one century.



The Sarod

Sarod is one of the later additions into Indian music. Miner observes that musicologist Deva (1997,VI;128-30) and others give a brief account of existing name shahrud or sarode since 10th century AD but possibly indicates some other definition of music like a musical mode.'



It is proved that the sarod is a modified version of rabāb and sursingār. Mishra (1973:117) suggests that the invention of sarod was influenced by the sursingār. The modern sarod is derived from the Afghani rabāb by replacing fingerboard with a metal plate. Later metal strings were added. In Persian language sarūd means 'singing'. It is said to be first mentioned in India around 1830. Musicologists credit an Afghani originator rabābiā Ghulam Ali Khan, who was a soldier, for creating the instrument modifying from the rabāb.

Dilrubā, Esrāj, Tāus and Tār-Shehnāi

Few instruments belonging to combine categories of fretted and bowed instruments were invented during this period. The inventors of these instruments are unknown. Somehow they are related with Sikh religion. Prominent instruments among them are dilrubā and tāus. Both dilruba and esraj are similar instruments except the sound box bowl. Sikh people believes that Taus was invented by Guru Nanak. But S.M.Tagore mentions the esrāj as a recent instrument in 1875. The esrāj appeared in Indian music around 1850-1875. Esraj is a related with Dilruba. A similar instrument of dilruba called khemancha was existed in Afghan and Persian music which we can find in Moghal paintings. In Arabic, the name tāus means 'peacock', that is applied to the Indian bowing instrument having peacock shaped sound guard. A similar name mayuri veena said to be existed since ancient age in India. However the description of ancient mayuri veena is unclear.



CONCLUSION

Most important inventions including new forms of performance and musical instruments were invented during this period. Present article is an attempt of notifying the inventions of stringed musical instruments, which is an overview of previous studies.

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