

**The Role of
Sanskrit Literature
in
Indian Renaissance**

**Dharmaraj Adat
Reeja B. Kavanal**

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Reflections on Karṇātic Music Related to Sanskrit and Indian Renaissance

Manju Gopal

Sanskrit and Karnatic Music

In India, all disciplines-art or science developed through Sanskrit, which was a medium for nationalism. Indian culture got flourished and nourished through Sanskrit which has been a medium of Sangita from ancient times and it formed the text part of Samagāna-the vedic music. Almost all the laksanagrantas in Karnātic music beginning from "NāṭyaŚāstra" of Bharatamuni down to "Sangita Ratnākara" of sarāṅga Dēva and "Sangitasudha" of Raghunātha Naick were written in Sanskrit. It is noteworthy that the musical forms figuring in them were also in Sanskrit.

Sanskrit is a phonetically perfect language in which there is a distinct alphabet for each sound/viceversa. Dhvani is the first common factor between Sanskrit and Sangita. In language, just as there are varnas/alphabets combined to form a word (name) which denotes meaning and creates feelings (rasa), in music there are svara-s (notes) which are combined to form rāga-s, each of which have a distinct svarūpa capable of evoking feelings (rasa). The 'champu' in Sanskrit sahitya is said to be the forerunner of "kriti", the most highly evolved musical form in Karnātic music. (Sreevatsa, 2003)

Jayadēva's Gita Gōvinda (12th cent AD), Nārāyana Tirta's (1590-1675 AD) Krishna Lila Tarangini are milestones, since in them, there is a firm bond between the two, Sanskrit and Sangita. Annamāchārya (1424-1503 AD) and Purandara Dāsa (16th cent AD) also contributed compositions in Sanskrit. In the 17th century MārgaDarsī Śeṣa Iyengar laid down the prototype of a kriti in Sanskrit.

Karnatic music reached the zenith of its glory during the 18th century, with the emergence of three saint-composers, Śāma Śāstri, Tyāgarāja and Mutusvāmī Dīkṣitar, who were collectively called The Musical Trinity. Sanskrit had been utilized by all the three, with Mutusvāmī Dīkṣitar