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## Gāndharva-Saṃgīt: Source of Indian classical music

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### Abstract

Experts in music (*Gān*) had been designated as *Gāndharvas*. Music occupied a very important place in the life of ancient people of India where only single word *Gāndharva* denoting all its aspects (vocal as well as instrumental). *Gāndharva*<sup>1</sup> designated as music in general. *Gāndharva* type of music is *Mārga Saṃgīt*<sup>2</sup>. *Gandharva*<sup>3</sup> perceived the “*Science and Art of music*”. As this word derived from *Gandharva* who were artists and possessed free-imaginative and intuitive-mind<sup>4</sup>. Here we are considering the *pravṛtti*<sup>5</sup> [प्रवृत्ति] (application). *Gandharvas* have capacity of some special faculty making to establish them as superior than ordinary human beings to comprehend *gandha*<sup>6</sup> (smell of new attitude) i.e., a special layer of consciousness to transform intangible to tangible<sup>7</sup>. *Gandharvas* acquired divine power to use tones and overtones properly to manifest in music.

**Keywords:** Gāndharva, svāra, tāla, pada

### Introduction

In Ṛg-Veda: X/177/2 – *Gandharvas* uttered speech in the womb (पतङ्ग, *Patamga*) where sun has borne in his mind. This heavenly speech was given out thereafter by the poets<sup>8</sup>.

In Ṛk X/11/2 (first line) – There is hints that *Gandharvas* were delighted to music or sound of river (नद, *nada*) which idea developed in epic poetry to make them established as celestial musicians or heavenly singers in the court of Indra<sup>9</sup>.

In Atharva-Veda XII/1/23 (First two lines): Etymological expression as the essences (all the cream attitude) of earth rise to *Gāndharvas*<sup>10</sup>.

In the epic poetry, Mahābhārata - II/161/26, we find *Gandharvas* were described as celestial musicians or heavenly singers<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> It was used as music-performers and music also.

<sup>2</sup> It is something which is chaste or classical where in nature it is sombre i.e., not quite flexible.

<sup>3</sup> They were semi-divine race of Gandhāra or Khaṇḍahār (गान्धार / खण्डहार), a tract of Afghanistan. The race assumes the ability to grasp the fragrance: गन्धम् अर्वति इतिगन्धर्वः। Gandham arvati iti gandharvaḥ |

<sup>4</sup> These should be the essential qualities among the musicians.

<sup>5</sup> The word stands for rūḍhi / रूढि (traditional usage).

<sup>6</sup> It is harmonic tone (Upasvara, उपस्वर) of svāra.

<sup>7</sup> अमूर्तस्य मूर्तवद् दर्शनम्। *Amūrtasya mūrtavād darśanam* | - To express subtle to substantial.

<sup>8</sup> पतङ्गो वाचं मनसा विभर्ति तां गन्धर्वोऽवदद्गर्भं अन्तः। तां द्योतमानां स्वयं मनीष्य-मृतस्य पदे कवयो नि पान्ति ॥ *Patamgo vācaṃ manasā vibharti tāṃ gandharvo'avadadgarbhe antaḥ | Tāṃ dyotamānāṃ svaryaṃ manīṣya-mṛtasya pade kavayo ni pānti ॥*

<sup>9</sup> रपद्गन्धर्वोरप्या च योषणा नदस्य नादे परिपातु मे मनः। (*Rapadgandharvorapyā ca yoṣaṇā nadasya nāde paripātu me manaḥ*).

<sup>10</sup> यस्ते गन्धः पृथिवी संबभूव यं विभ्रत्योषधयो यमापः। यं गन्धर्वा अप्सरसश्च भेजिरे -- ॥ *Yaste gandhaḥ pṛthivī saṃbabhūva yaṃ vibhratyōṣadhayo yamāpaḥ | Yaṃ gandharvā apsarasaśca bhejire ... ॥*

<sup>11</sup> स तमास्थाय राजराजो महारथम्। प्रययौ देवगन्धर्वैः स्तूयमानो महाद्युतिः ॥ *Sa tamāsthāya bhagavān rājarājo mahāratham | Prayayau devagandharvaih stūyamāno mahādyutiḥ ॥*

*Yādapatya*<sup>12</sup> in prose wrote: *Gandharvas* and *Apsarās* perform singing and dancing before Gods<sup>13</sup>.

In *Bhāgavata* VII/8/50: Gandharva said to Viṣṇu “*Oh lord we are your singers, actors and dancers*”<sup>14</sup>.

In *Śabdakalpādruma* we see most appropriate derivative as: *Gandharvas* are heavenly musicians who delighted by singing and playing musical instruments .

Civilised art loving *Gandharvas* were historical beings and they still exist in Indian hilly areas. We find the name *Viśvāvasu*<sup>15</sup> as king of *Gandharvas*<sup>16</sup> in Rg-Veda. *Divya Gandharva*<sup>17</sup> or *Devagandharva* praised as lord of living beings. *Viśvāvasu* was efficient in art and knowledge of music. The *Gandharvas*, *Nārada*, *Tumburu* were described as designers of new and scientific art of music – recognised as *Gāndharva*.

*Devagandharvas* were extolled in the hymns from Vedas and hold higher position as well as status in pantheon of Vedic theologians than human *Gandharvas*. Distinction between *Devagandharva* and *Manuṣyagandharva* has been given in *Śabdārthacintāmaṇī* as: *Manuṣyagandharvas*’ status is much lower than *Devagandharvas* according to gradation of Vedic pantheon, epic and classical poems<sup>18</sup>. When *Gandharvas* were referred to as bards or in praising songs to Gods then our *Śāstra* established *Gandharvas* in two division (a) *Manuṣya-gandharva* (मनुष्य-गन्धर्व) and (b) *Deva-gandharva* (देव-गन्धर्व)<sup>19</sup>. It has been expressed in *Taittirīyo-Upaniṣad* (तैत्तिरीय-उपनिषद्)<sup>20</sup>. In *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Araṇya Parva* 69 – 73: We find *Viśvāvasu*, as *Kabandha* कबन्ध, was a *Gandharva* chief and celestial musician, who was blessed by *Brahmā* with immortality. He was “drunk with the wine of youth and beauty” and used to roam the universe’s enchanting beautiful

maidens. *Lava* and *Kuśa* in *Bāla-Parva*-4/10: (described as twin brothers) endowed with sweet voice like the *Gandharvas* who were evidently human *Gandharvas*<sup>21</sup>. The *Mahābhārata* tells that *Kabandha* was a *Gandharva* named *Viśvāvasu* in his previous life and was cursed by *Brahma* to be born from a *Rākṣasa womb* – These epics were written by *Aryans* and they were very inferior to *Gandharvas*. So, they expressed *Gandharvas* as *Rākṣasa* (Demon). *Manuṣya-Gandharvas* have been considered so in *Taittirīyo-Upaniṣad* (तैत्तिरीय-उपनिषद्)<sup>22</sup>.

In *Matsya Purāṇa* 259/25-26 we find Viṣṇu is surrounded by *Gāndharvas* were designated as *Vidyādhara* are playing divine-drum (देव दंडुभि) with their wives form a band of musicians along with *Kinnaras* as their music-instrumental hands in *Indra’s heaven* – they were *Devagandharva*<sup>23</sup>.

*Aryans* described *Gandharvas* as semi-divine beings and were looked like half-man and half-animal. But it was false and mythical. They were described so as they were civilised and rival of *Aryans* and they were superior than *Aryans* as they were expert in city-architects & town-planner and were original inhabitants of *Indus cities*.

Existence of a lotus-lake of five rivers where white-lotus and sweet water flowing in it was known. On the water dance and music used to organised by *Apsarās* with recitation.

*Svara* comes out of *Āghāta*<sup>24</sup> becoming tangible or audible as gross sound. Harmonic tone (गन्ध - *Gandha*, sense of creating rhythmic sound) arises from resonance<sup>25</sup> (अनुरणन - *Anuraṇana*) which percept as subtle sound. *Dhaivata* is audible as harmonic of *Madhyama*<sup>26</sup> (fourth tone, मध्यम - मा) is subtle *Gandha*<sup>27</sup> of *svara* which is considered that *Tumburu*<sup>28</sup> perceived this overtone first; thus, he became

<sup>12</sup> यादुपत्य in *Śabdakalpādruma* (शब्दकल्पद्रुम).

<sup>13</sup> नृत्य गान कर्तार इति गन्धर्वाप्सरसाम्। *Nṛtya gāna kartāra iti gandharvāpsarasām* |

<sup>14</sup> गन्धर्वा ऊचु — वयं विभो ते नटनाट्यागायका .....। *Gandharvā ūcu — vayan vibho te naṭanāṭyagāyaka* ..... |

<sup>15</sup> (a) It is 7th Muhurta (मुहूर्त), 1/30 – part of a day) of the day, from 10.48 – 11.36 a.m. (also known as *Viśvedevā*, विश्वेदेवा) treated as Heavenly lights in the Universe. (b) In *Brhat-Samhitā* of *Barāhamihira*: VII-41 (second line): क्रोधी तृतीयः परतः क्रमेण विश्वावसुशचेति पराभवश्च। *Krodhī tṛtīyaḥ parataḥ krameṇa Viśvāvasuśceti parābhavaśca* | - In last but one year of diurnal motion of *Jupiter* (39th year) named as *Viśvāvasu*.

<sup>16</sup> *Gandharvarājā*: *Mahābhārata* – I-8-5: एतस्मिन्न एव काले तु मेनकायां परजज्ञिवान्। गन्धर्वराजो विप्रर्षे विश्वावसुर इति शरुतः॥ *Etasminn eva kāle tu menakāyāṃ prajājñivān | Gandharvarājo viparṣe viśvāvasur iti śrutah* ||

<sup>17</sup> (a) Rg-Veda: X-139-5 (first line): विश्वावसुरभितन्नो गृणातु दिव्यो गन्धर्वो रजसो विमनः। *Viśvāvasurbhitanno grṇātu divyo Gandharvo rajaso vimānaḥ* | - *Viśvāvasu* is *Divya-Gandharva* resides in heaven. (b) *Atharva-Veda*: II-2-1 (first line): दिव्यो गन्धर्वो भुवनस्य यस्पतिरेक एव नमस्ये विक्ष्विज्यः। *Divyo Gandharvo bhuvanasya eva namasye vikṣviḍyaḥ* | *Divyo-Gandharvas* are praised and worshipped by all ultimately treated as lord of living beings. (c) He was epithet of *Viṣṇu* (in *Mahābhārata* – VI-61-42: विश्वावसुर्विश्वमूर्तिर्विश्वेशो विष्वक्सेनो विश्वकर्मा वशी च। विश्वेश्वरो वासुदेवोऽसि तस्माद्योगात्मानं दैवतं त्वामुपैमि॥ *Viśvāvasurviśvamūrtirviśveśo viśvakṣeno viśvakarmā vaśī ca | Viśveśvaro vāsudevo’si tasmādyogātmanān daivataṅ tvāmupaimi* ||).

(d) He was king of *Gandharvas* (*Gandharvarājā*: *Mahābhārata* – I-8-5: एतस्मिन्न एव काले तु मेनकायां परजज्ञिवान्। गन्धर्वराजो विप्रर्षे विश्वावसुर इति शरुतः॥ *Etasminn eva kāle tu menakāyāṃ prajājñivān | Gandharvarājo viparṣe viśvāvasur iti śrutah* ||)

<sup>18</sup> अस्मिन्कल्पे मनुष्यः सन् पुण्यपाकविशेषतः। गन्धर्वत्वं समापन्नो मर्त्य गन्धर्व उच्यते। पुर्वकल्प कृतात्पुण्यात् कल्पादावेव चेद्भवेत्। गन्धर्वत्वं नादृशोऽत्र देव गन्धर्व उच्यते॥ *Asminkalpe manuṣyaḥ san puṇyapāka viśeṣataḥ | Gandharvatvaṅ samāpanno martya gandharva ucyate | Purvakalpa kṛtātpuṇyāt kalpādāveva cedbhavet | Gandhartvaṅ tādrśo’ tra deva gandharva ucyate* ||

<sup>19</sup> They reside in sky or in water accompanied with *Apsarās* being divine they were graceful and extremely handsome as musicians in the court of *Indra*.

<sup>20</sup> ते ये शतं मानुषा आनन्दाः स एको मनुष्यगन्धर्वाणामानन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य च। ते ये शतं मनुष्यगन्धर्वाणामानन्दाः, स एको देवगन्धर्वाणामानन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य। - २/८ *Te ye śataṅ mānuṣā ānandaḥ sa eko manuṣyagandharvāṇāmānandaḥ | Śrotriyaṣya cākāmahatasya ca | Te ye śataṅ manuṣyagandharvāṇāmānandaḥ, sa eko devagandharvāṇāmānandaḥ | Śrotriyaṣya cākāmahatasya | II/8.*

<sup>21</sup> भ्रतरौ स्वरसंपन्नौ गन्धर्वाविव रूपिणौ॥ *Bhratarou svarasaṅpannou gandharvāviva rūpiṇau* ||

<sup>22</sup> अहं वृक्षस्य रेरिवा। कीर्तिः पृष्ठं गिरेरिव। ऊर्ध्वपवित्रो वाजिनीव स्वमृतमस्मि। द्रविणं सवर्चसम्। सुमेधं अमृतोक्षितः। इति त्रिशङ्कोर्वेदानुवचनम्॥ I - X - १॥ *Ahaṅ vṛkṣasya reriva | Kīrtiḥ pṛṣṭhaṅ gireriva | Ūrdhwapavitro vājīnīva svamṛtamasmī | Draviṇaṅ savarcasam | Sumedha amṛtokṣitaḥ | Ii trīśaṅkorvedānuvacanam* || I-X-1 ||

<sup>23</sup> गन्धर्वं विद्याधर किन्नराणामथाप्स रोगुह्यकनायकानाम्। गणैरनेकैः शतशो महद्भैरुमि प्रवीरैरपि नम्यमानम्॥ धृताक्षसूत्रैः शतशः प्रवाल पुष्पोपहारप्रचयं ददद्भिः। संस्तूयमानं भगवन्तमीढ्यं नेत्रत्रयेणामरमर्त्य पूज्यम्॥ *Gandharva Vidyādhara kinnarāṇāmāthāpsa roguhyaḥkānām | Gaṇairanekaiḥ śataśe mhendhairmuni pravīrairapi namyamānam || Dhṛtākṣasūtraiḥ śataśaḥ pravāla puṣṭopahārapracayaṅ dadadbhiḥ | Saṅstūyamānaṅ bhagavantamīḍhyaṅ netratreyaṅāmaramartya pūjyam* ||

<sup>24</sup> Strike to create frequency (आघात).

<sup>25</sup> *Pārsvadeva*: स्थानघात प्रभवो ध्वनिर्नादः अनुरणनात्मा यः स्यादसावुच्यते स्वरः। *Sthānaghāta prabhavo dhvanirṇadāḥ anuraṇanātmā yaḥ syādasāvucyate svarah* | - Resonant sound produced by hitting the specific *sthāna* (from navel to throat / head) is called *svara*.

<sup>26</sup> As per modern nomenclature the *Svayanbhū Gāndhārva* (musical notes) start to be audible from *Ṣaḍja* – *Sā* (षडज).

<sup>27</sup> The semi-divine musicians who have risen above the earthly level.

<sup>28</sup> According to *Hindu mythology*, *Tumburu* (तुम्बुरु) / *Tumbaru* (तुम्बर) / *Tumbara* (तुम्बर) is known as best among *Gandharvas* (celestial musician) described as the best of singers. He performed in the courts of gods *Kubera* (कुबेर) and *Indra* (इन्द्र) as well as sing to praise the god *Viṣṇu* (विष्णु). He leads the *Gandharvas* in their singing. He was also recognised as *draṣṭā* (prophet, द्रष्टा) of *Dhaivata* (sixth tone, धैवत, धा) and *Niṣāda* (seventh tone, निषाद, नि) *svaras*.

Gandharva<sup>29</sup>.

In *Gāndharvic music Madhyama* was an indispensable feature borrowed from *Sāma-Gāna*. In *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharatamuni (XXVIII/65): *Madhyama* is chief of all notes (सर्वस्वराणामिति, *Sarvasvarāṇāmīti*) and is indispensable. It has been decreed in the musical laws of *Gandharvas* (i.e., *Gāndharva*) and *Sāma-Gāna*. This has been recognised as prime note of *Swarasvati Devi*<sup>30</sup> and in *Nāradiya Śikṣā – V/1* (first line) we see In *Sāma-Gāna* it is the starting note (*Madyama*)<sup>31</sup>.

*Gāndharvas* were very fond starting *svara* from *Madhyama* as when wind arising from navel hit to throat or head, it gives pleasure to *Gāndharvas* (designated as semi-divine singers) and this *svara* is recognised as *gāndhāra*<sup>32</sup>.

The wind arising from naval hitting the heart is known as it is produced by the *madhya-sthāna* (middle place) and named as *madhyama*<sup>33</sup>.

To analyse *Gāndharva*<sup>34</sup> and their music (*Gāna*, गान) following fundamental four-fold difference (*Vailakṣaṇya*, वैलक्षण्य) can be excluded from normal *Mārga-Saṅgīt*<sup>35</sup>:

1. This type of music differs in nature than formal one in its structure (*svarupaphalāt*, स्वरूपफलात्) i.e., in distinct set of *Svara*<sup>36</sup> (स्वर), *pada*<sup>37</sup> (पद) and *tāla*<sup>38</sup> (ताल).
2. This music terminates to a resulting reward (*phalat*, फलत्) where *Gāndharva* has unseen (*adrṣṭa*, अदृष्ट invisible) attitude and its musical expression has pleasing aesthetic effect (*drṣṭa*, दृष्ट visible).
3. *Gāndharvas* possessed attitude of application of music (*kālād*, कालाद्) by using in playing (*pūrvaramga*, पूर्वरङ्ग) with music (*gāna*, गान).
4. *Gāndharva-gāna* differs distinctly as per its change of frequencies (*dharmāt*, धर्मात्) and (*calan*, चलन्).

*Gandharvas* were contemplative being having refined senses. **Experimental section:** Recapitulation / reviewing of different materials from ancient musical text of India.

## Discussion

According to concept in *Purāṇas*, *Gāndharvas* are sons of *Brahmā* as at the invent of songs, *Gāndharvas* come out. From the race of ancient literature promptly acceptance of *Gñā* (गं), means speech of *Brahmā* the word *Gandha* (गन्ध) was created along with word *Arva* (अर्व) suffixing we get *Gandharva*<sup>39</sup>. Here *gandha* represents essence of delight in vocal & instrumental music where performers are *Gāndharvas*<sup>40</sup>. In early age *Gāndharvas*' songs were to praise *Śiva*<sup>41</sup>. It was said that *Śiva* himself taught *Mārga-Saṅgīt* with his *Vīṇā*. In his *Dakṣiṇāmūrti* we find sages and *devatās* are sitting around him to learn music [Fig.1].



Fig 1: Dakṣiṇāmūrti of Śiva

According to *Saṅgītaratnākara* (Chapter - IV<sup>42</sup>): The ancient tradition<sup>43</sup> practiced by *Gāndharvas* in accordance with definite rules<sup>44</sup> to achieve supreme good<sup>45</sup> declared by the wise as *Gāndharva*<sup>46</sup>.

In *Chandogya Upaniṣad* (चन्दोग्य उपनिषद्) we find: *Gāndharva-vidyā* (गान्धर्व-विद्या) as *Devajana vidyā* (देवजन-विद्या) and *Gāna parātaram na hi* (गान परातरम् न हि) – knowledge of *Gāndharvas* (in music & dance) is art of *Devatās* and nothing higher than the *Gāndharva Music*.

<sup>29</sup> The person who could smell or perceive tonal entities.

<sup>30</sup> न मध्यमस्य नाशस्तु कर्तव्यो हि कदाचन। सर्वस्वराणां प्रवरो ह्यनाशी मध्यमः स्मृतः। गान्धर्वकल्पेविहितः सामस्वपिचमध्यमः॥ प्रथमं मध्यमादेव वाग्देवी सर्वदेहिनाम्। Na madhyamasya nāstu kartavyo hi kadācana | Sarvasvarāṇāṇaṁ pravaro hyanāśi madhyamaḥ smṛtaḥ | Gāndharvakalpe vihitaḥ sāmasya ca madhyama || Pratahmaṁ madhyamādeva vāgdevī sarvadehinām |

<sup>31</sup> यः सामगानां प्रथमः सवेणोर्मध्यमः स्वरः। Yaḥ sāmaganāṇāṁ prathamāḥ sa veṇormadhyamaḥ svara |

<sup>32</sup> नाभेः समुत्थितो वायुः कण्ठशीर्षसमाहतः। गान्धर्वसुखहेतुः स्याद् गान्धारस्तेन हेतुना॥४३॥ Nābheḥ samutthīto vāyuh kaṇṭhaśīrṣasmāhataḥ | Gandharvasukhaheṭuḥ syād gāndhārastena hetunā ||43||

<sup>33</sup> वायुः समुत्थितो नाभेर्हृदये च समाहतः। मध्यमस्थानोद्भवत्वात् मध्यमत्वेन कीर्तितः॥४४॥ Vāyuh samutthīto nābherhṛdaye ca smāhataḥ | Madhyamasthānodbhāvāt madyamatvena kīrtitaḥ ||44||

<sup>34</sup> As per characteristics by Bharatamuni in *Natyāśāstra*: गान्धर्वमिति तज्ज्ञेयं स्वरतालपदाश्रयम्। Gāndharvamīti tajñeyaṁ svaratālapadāśrayam | (second part of XXVIII/8) – *Gāndharvas* are consist of notes (*svara*), time-measure (*tāla*) and verbal themes (*pada*) as they seem to be combination of vocal-music, instrumental-music (such as *Vīṇā* - lute, *Vaṅśa* - Flutes). गान्धर्व त्रिविधं विद्यात् स्वरतालपदात्मकम्। Gāndharvaṁ trividhaṁ vidyāt svaratālapadātmakam | (first part of XXVIII/11) – *Gāndharvas* possessed three types of knowledges in music which are notes, time-measure and verbal theme. अस्य योनिर्भवद् गानं वीणावंशस्तथैव च। Asya yonirbhaved gānaṁ vaṅśastathaiva ca | (first part of XXVIII/10) – Vocal music is from human

throat (literally body) and instrumental from instruments (*Vīṇā* - lute, *Vaṅśa* - Flutes). Initially, *Gāndharva* music was formal, composed, ceremonial.

<sup>35</sup> Indian Classical Music

<sup>36</sup> Notes of music.

<sup>37</sup> Language (*Sāhitya*).

<sup>38</sup> Rhythm.

<sup>39</sup> गन्ध अर्चति इति गन्धर्व। Gandha arvati iti gandharva |

<sup>40</sup>

गायतो गांततस्तस्य गन्धर्वजज्ञिरे सुताः॥ धयेति धा तु क विभिः पानार्थे परिपठ्यते। पिबतो जज्ञिरे वाचं गन्धर्वस्तेन ते स्मृताः॥ Gāyato gāṇ tāstasya gandharvā jajñire sutāḥ || Dhayeti dhātu kavibhiḥ pānārthe paripaṭhyate | Pibate jajñire vācāṁ gandharvāstena te smṛtāḥ ||

<sup>41</sup> Śiva-stuti (शिव-स्तुति).

<sup>42</sup> गान्धर्वलक्षणम्: अनादि संप्रदायं यद्गन्धर्वैः संप्रजुज्यते। नियतं श्रेयसो हेतुस्तद्गान्धर्वं जगुर्बुधाः॥२॥ Gāndharvalakṣaṇam: Anādi saṅpradāyaṁ yadgandharvaḥ saṅprajujyate | Niyataṁ śreyaso hetustadgāndharvaṁ jagurbudhāḥ ||2||

<sup>43</sup> Anādi (अनादि) in the text literally means ‘beginningless’ figurative usage to indicate the immemorable antiquity of tradition under *Sampradāya* (सम्प्रदाय) is teacher-disciple transmission of knowledge.

<sup>44</sup> *Niyatam* (नित्यम्) – well defined terms like *grāma* (ग्राम), *mūchhanā* (मूर्छना), *jāti* (जाति) and so on.

<sup>45</sup> *Śreyas* (श्रेयः): “Prosperity and merit for the other as well as emancipation from the bondage of suffering”. Enjoyment at every level of existence i.e., the supreme God.

<sup>46</sup> In music, from *jāti* (जाति) to *bhāṣā* (भाषा) constitute *Gāndharva*.



In *Nāradya Śikṣā* (Verse: IV-12)<sup>47</sup> we find interpretation *Gāndharva* i.e., gave etymology of the term *Gāndharva* splitting into three parts as *Gā* for *Gāyana*<sup>48</sup> / singing i.e., understanding of song by wise, *Dhā* for *Dhātu*<sup>49</sup> / words or lyrics or artistic playing of lute or skillful playing of *Vīṇā* using fingers and *Vā* to designate *Vādyā*<sup>50</sup> / instrumental accompaniment or other instruments and gesture. This indicates *Gāndharvas*<sup>51</sup>.

The enjoyment produced by *Manuṣya-Gandharvas* is hundred times richer than that of ordinary humans whereas enjoyment created by *Deva-Gandharvas* is hundred times richer than that of *Manuṣya-Gandharvas*. This is free from affectation i.e., genuine.

So, divinity associated with *Gandharvas* is as per subtle faculty of extraordinary perception or observation and its manifestation. This faculty is considered to be associated specially to *Brāhmaṇas*.

The Mover of the Tree I am; my fame like the mountain's peak. The High One making (me) pure, I am the very Immortal One as He is in the sun; I am the Lustrous Wealth of High wisdom (I am), immortal, un-decaying. Thus, runs *Triśaṅku*'s<sup>52</sup> (ऋषि त्रिशङ्कु) teaching of wisdom. Or, *Brahmaṇa*<sup>53</sup> (ब्राह्मण) is the Supreme Purifier, because by shining forth through *buddhi* (बुद्धि) in consciousness.

Hence, *Gandharvas* were called *Bhudevas*<sup>54</sup> (भुदेव) –

<sup>47</sup> गेति गेयं विदुः प्राज्ञा घेति कारुप्रवादन्सु। वेति वाद्यस्य संज्ञेन गान्धर्वस्य विरचनमिति ॥  
Geti geyāṅ viduḥ prājñā gheti kārupravādānas | Vetī vādyasva sañjñena gāndharvasva virocānamiti ॥

<sup>48</sup> गिति गेयं विदुः। Giti geyāṅ viduḥ |

<sup>49</sup> कारुष्य वादनम्। Kārupya vādanam |

<sup>50</sup> वेति वाद्यस्य संज्ञेन। Vetī vādyasva sañjñena |

<sup>51</sup> ये गान्धर्वस्य निरोचनम्। Ye gāndharvasva nirocānam iti |

<sup>52</sup> Ṛṣi Triśaṅku and realised *Brāhmaṇa* and realised *Brahmaṇa*, said after attaining to a knowledge of *Ātman*'s oneness, with a view to proclaim, like the sage *Vāmadeva*, the fact that he had achieved all aspirations.

<sup>53</sup> Seeker of truth.

<sup>54</sup> *Devatas* of the earth. From *Śabdastoma-mahānidhikośaḥ* (शब्दस्तोम-महानिधिकोशः) we find: दीव्यति क्रीडति यस्माद् रोचते द्योतते दिवि। तस्माद्देव इति प्रोक्तः। (*Dīvyati kṛīḍati yasmād rocate dyotate divi | Tasmāddeva iti proktaḥ |*). *Devas* should possess a special faculty of *Rocana*<sup>54</sup> or *Dyotana*<sup>54</sup> (enlightenment).

<sup>55</sup> Dattilam, Śloka-1(second line): गान्धर्वशास्त्रक्षेपः सारतोऽयं मयोच्यते ॥१॥  
*Gāndharvaśāstrasankṣepaḥ sārato'yam mayocyate* ॥1॥

<sup>56</sup> Dattilam, Śloka-2: गान्धर्वे नारदादिभ्यः प्रथमादौ स्वयम्भुवा। विधिवन्नारदेनाथ पृथिव्यामवतारितम् ॥२॥  
*Gāndharvaṅ nārādādiḥyaḥ prathamādaū svayambhuvā | Vidhivannāradenātha pṛthivyāmatāritam* ॥2॥

<sup>57</sup> Etymology of *svara*: राज्जीवित्वातिधातोः स्वशब्दपूर्वकस्य च। स्वयं यो राजते यस्मात् तस्मादेव स्वरः स्मृतः ॥३७॥  
*Rājīdvīṭvātiḥātoḥ svaśabdapūrvakasya ca | Svayaṅ yo rājate yasmāt tasmādeva svaraḥ smṛta* ॥1/37॥ - by *Pārśvadeva*: The syllable *sva* followed by the verbal root *rajru* (light) forms the word *svara* (note).

The sound that generates melody or creates emotions is *svara*. [रागजनको ध्वनिः स्वरः। *Rāgajanako dhvaniḥ svarāḥ* | first part of 1/38]। Physiological concept of creating *svara*: [आत्मेच्छया नाभितलात् वायुरूद्यन्निधायते। नाडिभित्तोत्तादाकाशे ध्वनिरक्तः स्वरः स्मृतः ॥३८॥  
*Ātmecchayā nābhitālātvāyurūdyannidhāyate | Nāḍibhittotadākāśe dhvaniraktaḥ smṛtaḥ* ॥second part of 1/38॥] – When *vāyu* (air) rising freely from the base of *nābhi* (naval) and is borne by *nāḍis* (nerves) and *ākāśa* (void), it generates a delightful sound designated as *svara*.

<sup>58</sup> As per *Nāṭyaśāstra* of *Bharatamuni* – XXXII/28 (first line) - यत् स्यादक्षरसम्बद्धं तत्सर्वं पदसंज्ञितम्।  
*Yat syādakṣarasambaddhaṅ tatsarvaṅ padasajñitam* | Whatever formulated with syllables, all that is called *pada*.  
*Nāṭyaśāstra* of *Bharatamuni* – XXVIII/16-17 – व्यञ्जनानि स्वरा वर्णाः सन्ध्योऽथ विभक्तयः। नामाख्यातोपसर्गाश्च निपातास्तद्धितास्तथा ॥१६॥ छन्दो वृत्तानि जातश्च नित्यं पदगतात्मकाः। अनिबद्धं निबद्धं च द्विविधं तत् पदं स्मृतम् ॥१७॥  
*Vyañjanāni svārā varṇāḥ sandhaya 'tha vibhaktayaḥ | Nāmākhyatopasargāś ca nipātās taddhitāḥ kṛtaḥ* ॥16॥ Chando vidhir alamkāṛā jñeyāḥ padagato vidhiḥ |

*Gandharvas* are in possession of enlightening through their music and dance.

In this context *Gāndharva-Śāstra* (गान्धर्व-शास्त्र) was an essential thing to enunciate in brief<sup>55</sup>. Initially, the music (*Gāndharva*) was self-existing to *Nārada* (नारद) and *Gāndharvas* was taken down to earth by *Nārada*<sup>56</sup>. *Here music (Gāndharva) has been explained as: collection of notes (svara*<sup>57</sup>, स्वर) based on words (*pada*<sup>58</sup>, पद) where well measured by time-measurement (*tāla*, ताल) to be executed with attentiveness (*avadhāna*, अवधान)<sup>59</sup>. In it, words (*pada*) should have usage with language as per rules (*śāstra*) by the application of intellect and awareness (*buddhi*, बुद्धि)<sup>60</sup> along with other faculties. Here notes were explained on the basis of measurableness<sup>61</sup> (*mevatva*<sup>62</sup>, मेयत्व). The factors are micro-interval (*śruti*<sup>63</sup>, श्रुति), notes (*svara*), two tone-systems (*grāma*<sup>64</sup>, ग्राम), scales (*mūrchanā*<sup>65</sup>, मूर्च्छना) consisting of series of notes (*tāna*<sup>66</sup>, तान), registers (*sthāna*<sup>67</sup>, स्थान), styles (*vṛtti*, वृत्ति), pure instrumental music (*śuṣka*, शुष्क) and two ways of overlapping (*sādhāraṇa*<sup>68</sup>, साधारण), modes (*jāti*, जाति) and ways of ornamentation (*varṇā*<sup>69</sup>, वर्ण) connected with various graces (*alamkāra*<sup>70</sup>, अलङ्कार). This is mere description of the things relating to notes<sup>71</sup> where these are the topics in a schematic order which relate to *svara*<sup>72</sup> and these need their authoritative exposition (*nirṇayaḥ*).

*Nibaddhaṅ cānibaddhaṅ ca dvididhaṅ tat padaṅ smṛtam* ॥17॥ Constants, vowels, euphonic combinations, case-ending, nouns, verbs, prefixes, particles, secondary and primary suffixes, syllabic and stagnant metres always relate to the verbal themes of music.

<sup>59</sup> Dattilam, Śloka-3: पदस्थः स्वरसंघातस्तालेन सुमितस्तथा। प्रयुक्तश्चावधानेन गान्धर्वमभिधीयते ॥३॥  
*Padasthaḥ svarasaṅghātastālena sumitastathā | Prayuktaś cāvadhāneṇa gāndharvam abhidhīyate* ॥3॥ where attentiveness indicates bringing in right-form under rigorous practice (*prasiddham avadhānaṅ tu samyagbuddhyādiyojanam*).

<sup>60</sup> Dattilam, Śloka-4: लोकाद्विद्यात्पदानीह शब्दशास्त्राद्यनुग्रहात्। प्रसिद्धमवधानं तु सम्यग्बुद्ध्यादियोजनम् ॥४॥  
*Lokādvīdyātpadānīha śabdaśāstrādyanugrahāt | Prasiddhamavadhānaṅ tu samyagbuddhayādiyojanam* ॥4॥

<sup>61</sup> Dattilam, Śloka-5 (second line): स्वरगतं पूर्वं मेयत्वादुपदिश्यते ॥५॥  
*Svaragataṅ pūrvaṅ meyatvādūpadiśyate* ॥5॥

<sup>62</sup> Determination of length of the syllables (*akṣara*) on which poetic and musical metre are based.

<sup>63</sup> It signifies a perceptible constituent unit-factor of tone.

<sup>64</sup> *Grāma* is a specific group of *svaras* (tones) and three *grāmas* are acceptable viz., *śaḍja-grāma*, *madhyama-grāma* and *gāndhāra-grāma* in ancient music. The objective of *grāma* is systemisation of *svara*, *śruti*, *mūrchanā*, *tāna*, *jāti* and *rāga* in significant way. Specific arrangement of *svara*, *śruti* where intervals established in *grāma* are strictly followed in *mūrchanā* and omission of *svaras* in *tāna* are guided by *grāma*.

<sup>65</sup> Both ascending and descending and unimpaired original order of *svaras* as well as seven *svaras* without omission are *mūrchanā*. The word derived from the root *mūrchā* – stands for vertigo, dizziness or augmented.

<sup>66</sup> Omission of *svaras* is *tāna* or incomplete scale.

<sup>67</sup> The birth place of *svaras* [स्वरादिनाम् उत्पत्ति हेतुत्वात् स्थानम् ॥९॥  
*Svarādinām utpatti hetutvāt sthānam* ॥9॥ I/9 (second line) of *Samgītasamayāsāra* of *Śrī Pārśvadeva* | *Nāṭyaśāstra* of *Bharatamuni* – XVII/106 – शारीर्यामिथ वीणाया त्रिभ्यः स्थानेभ्य एव तु। उरसः शिरसः कण्ठात् स्वरः काकुः प्रवर्तते ॥  
*Śārīryāmītha vīṇāyā tribhyaḥ sthānebhya eva tu | Urasaḥ śirasāḥ kaṅṭhāt svaraḥ kaku pravartate* ॥ - In the *śārīri* (body) *vīṇā* the *svara* or *kaku* (tonal inflexion) proceeds from three *sthānas* alone viz., chest, cerebrum and throat.

<sup>68</sup> Modified notes (*svara*).

<sup>69</sup> Melodic line. It is type of tonal movement, the act of singing, such as *sthāyi*, *ārohi*, *avarohi* and *sañcāri* and these are note-pattern.

<sup>70</sup> It is specific combination *svaras* (tones).

<sup>71</sup> Dattilam, Śloka-6-7: श्रुतयोऽथ स्वरा ग्रामौ मूर्च्छनास्तानसंयुताः। स्थानानि वृत्तयश्चैव शुष्कं साधारणं तथा ॥६॥ जातयश्चैव वर्णाश्च नानालङ्कारसंयुताः। एष स्वरगतोद्देशः संक्षेपेणाथ निर्णयः ॥७॥  
*Śrutayo'tha svaraḥ grāmau mūrchanāstānasanyūtaḥ | Sthānāni vṛttayaścaiva śuṣkaṅ sādhāraṇa tathā* ॥6॥ *Jātayaścaiva varṇāśca nānālamkārasanyūtaḥ | Eṣa svaragatatodeśaḥ sañkṣepēnātha nirṇayaḥ* ॥7॥

<sup>72</sup> एष स्वरगतोद्देशः। Eṣa svaragatatodeśaḥ |

In ancient times music was indicated by *Gāndharva* later on it was termed as *Gīta* (गीत) or *Samgīta* (सङ्गीत) but in Vedic music was (a) *Vādita* (वादिता): instrumental music; (b) *Gīta*: vocal music and (c) *Gāthā* (गाथा): originally for religious then became secular musical recitation (Sprechgesang, songs in recitative style) which was *Sāmāna-melodies* (सामन-गान).

Combination of *jātis* and *bhāṣās* (melody types) reserve capacity to create endless varieties of *svaras*. These tuned *svaras* (notes) with *tālas* (rhythmic patterns) used to perform various *rasas* (aesthetical sentiments)<sup>73</sup>.

We find the word in our Epics<sup>74</sup>: There are two types of expressions in *Gāndharva Samgīt* where only difference is in its use<sup>75</sup>.

Where *Vālmikī* praised music of *Lava* and *Kuśa* as *Gāndharva tatvajñau* (गान्धर्व तत्वज्ञौ) i.e., they are acquainted with rules on this type of music. In *Bāla-kāṇḍa* of *Rāmāyaṇa* (IV/8 – 10): Quality of sing has been expressed as – reciting poetry in singing-way was sweet and furnished with three notes / syllables<sup>76</sup> based on seven *jātis* accompanied with string instrument maintaining time-rhythm<sup>77</sup> - I-4-8<sup>78</sup>. Endowed with comic, erotic, pathetic, furious, heroic, terrible, odious and other sentiments<sup>79</sup> - I-4-9. Two brothers knew essence of music, skilled in registers, scales using notes where these knowledges were migrated to them from *Gandharvas*<sup>80</sup> - I-4-10. Both of them are conversant with art of *gāndharva* music with capability of using high and low tones / pitches or rhythmic variation; both brothers can represent the music in wealthy voice with different tones like celestial singers.

In *Mahābhārata*, the word *Gāndharva* often used to indicate music. As it contains mostly politics and war where the word *Gāndharva* used for warriors as well as musicians. युद्धगान्धर्व सेवी च | *Yuddhagāndharva sevī ca* | – *Gandhrvas* are fond of wars also. गान्धर्व नारद वेदः | *Gāndharva Nārada Vedaḥ* | – *Nārada* was acquainted with *Gāndharva-Veda*. गान्धर्वशास्त्रं च कला परिज्ञेय नराधिप। *Gāndharvaśāstraṅ ca kalā parijñeyā narādhipa* | Kings should know *Gāndharvaśāstra*<sup>81</sup>. *Gāndharvas* were described as celestial musicians or heavenly singers (*Mahābhārata* – II/161/26)<sup>82</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> As per Kohalaḥ (कोहलः) in *Pārśvadeva*: जातिभाषादिसंयोगादनन्तः कीर्तितः स्वरः। नार्दयुक्तस्तालमितः कृतौ योज्यो रसेष्वपि॥३९॥ *Jātibhāpādisaṅyogādānantaḥ kīrtitaḥ svarah | Nārdaiyuktastālamitaḥ kṛtau yojyo raseṣvapi* ||39||

<sup>74</sup> *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*.

<sup>75</sup> According to *Rāmāyaṇa* (रामायण) of *Vālmikī Muni* (वाल्मीकी मुनि): इहायं गान्धर्वशब्दो लोके शास्त्रे च द्विविधो नाटकशब्दवत्। सामान्यविशेषणस्य प्रयोगदर्नात् || *Ihāyaṅ gāndharvaśabdō loke śāstre ca dvividho nātakasabdavat | Sāmānyaviśeṣaṇāsya prayogadarnāt* ||

<sup>76</sup> Duration of notes and syllables are *Laghu* (लघु) - a pattern with a variable number of beats, three, four, five, seven or nine, depending on the *jāti*. It is notated 'l' and consists of a downward clap with the palm facing down followed by counting from little finger to thumb and back, depending on the *jāti*, *Guru* (गुरु) - a pattern represented by eight beats. It is notated '8' and consists of a downward clap with the palm facing down followed by circling movement of the right hand with closed fingers in the clockwise direction and *Plutam* (प्लुतम्) - a pattern of twelve beats notated '3', it consists of a downward clap with the palm facing down followed by counting from little finger to the middle finger, a *krśya* (waving the hand towards the left-hand side four times) and a *sarpini* (waving the hand towards the right four times).

<sup>77</sup> लय – *Druta* (द्रुत) or quick; *Madhya* (मध्य) or moderate; *Vilambita* (विलम्बित) or slowly-extended.

<sup>78</sup> पाठे गेये च मधुरम् प्रमानैः त्रिभिर् अन्वितम्। जातिभिः सप्तभिः युक्तम् तन्वी लय समन्वितम्॥ *Pāthe geyē ca madhuram pramāṇaiḥ tribhir anvitam | Jātibhiḥ saptabhiḥ yuktam tantrī laya samanvitam* || I-4-8

Ultimately, गान्धर्वो दिव्यगाने<sup>83</sup> | (३/१४२) *Gāndharvo divyagāyane* | (Chapter-3, Śloka-142) *Gāndharvas* are celestial singers later interpretation as *singers in general*.

We find features of *Gāndharva* in *Jaina literature*: *Jinālamkāra* (जिनालङ्कार) gave following verse in *Prākṛit* as Gods are in ten thousand who make merriment, dance, sing and play on musical instruments<sup>84</sup>; actually these demi-gods or *Gāndharvas* as it has been corrected by his note of *Jinālamkāra*<sup>85</sup> (जिनालङ्कार-टिका) meaning *devaputra Pañcaśikha* (पञ्चशिख) plays on a bamboo flute and being surrounded by many *Gandharvas* and *Gods* is found singing (गन्धर्व). (*Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India, 1930-34, Page.134*).

*Gāndharva* figures were depicted in *Buddhist tradition*: In *Chandrehe Inscription of Pradodhaśiva* dated 724 (CE 073) at *Kalachuri* – states God Śiva and his fame was incessantly sung with delight in a light tone by *Gāndharvas* and *Vidyādharas* in the assembly of *Indra* at celestial garden<sup>86</sup>.



Fig 2: In painting at Ajanta-cave – two *Gāndharvas* are playing

<sup>79</sup> रसैः भृङ्गार करणा हास्य रौद्र भयानकैः। विरदिभि रसैर युक्तम् काव्यम् एतत् अगायतम्॥ *Rasaiḥ śṛṅgāra karuṇa hāsya raudra bhayānakaiḥ | Virādibhiḥ rasair yuktam kāvyam etat agāyatām* ||I-4-9||

<sup>80</sup> तौ तु गान्धर्व तत्वज्ञौ स्थान मुर्च्छन कोविदौ। भ्रातरौ स्वर समपन्नौ इव रूपिनौ॥ *Tau tu gāndharva tattvajñau sthāna mūrccana kovidau | Bhrātarau svāra sampannau gāndharvāḥ iva rūpiṇau* ||I-4-10||

<sup>81</sup> *Gāndharvaśāstra* (गान्धर्वशास्त्र) “theory of music”—*Monier-Williams* explains this term, by equating it with *gāndharvakalā*, i.e., “art of the *Gandharvas* in, song, music”. We also find this aptitude in *Gitagovindam* as यद्-गान्धर्व कलासु कौशलम्-अनुधानं च यद्वैष्णवं *Yad-gāndharva kalāsu kauśalam-anudhyānaṅ ca yadvaiṣṇavaṅ* ||2/2| - we should follow the rules and performances of *Gāndharvas* in music to apply it in *Vaiṣṇava-Samgīt*.

<sup>82</sup> स तमास्थाय भगवान् राजराजो महारथम्। प्रययौ देवगन्धर्वैः स्तूयमानो महाद्युतिः॥ *Sa tamāsthāya bhagavān rājarajo mahāratham | Prayayou devagandharvai stūyamāno mahādyutiḥ* ||

<sup>83</sup> Mentioned in: *अमरकोशः* *Amarakośaḥ*, the popular name is *Nāmalīṅgānuśāsanam*, *Nāmalīṅgānuśāsanam*, a thesaurus in Sanskrit written by the ancient Indian scholar *Amarasīṅha* (अमरसिंह).

<sup>84</sup> तथा नचन्ति गायन्ति सेलेन्ति वादयन्ति च। देवाद स सहस्रं हि तुःत्यापो सोदितम्॥ *Tathā naccanti gāyanti selenti ca | Devāda sa sahasraṅ hi tuḥtyāpo soditam* ||

<sup>85</sup> पञ्चशिखो देवपुत्रो तिगावुतं वेलुर पण्डुविणामादाय। बहु गन्धर्व देवे परिवारे गन्धर्व कुस्मानो धितो॥ *Pañcaśikho devaputro tigāvutaṅ velura paṇḍuviniṅmādāya | Bahu gandhavba deve parivāre gandhavbaṅ kusmāno dhito* ||

<sup>86</sup> देवेद्यान गतेन्द्र संसदि मुदा गन्धर्व विद्याधैरानन्दाय च धूर्जटे ..... प्रतितपः शश्वद्यशो गीयत॥८॥ *Devedyāna gateṅdra saṅsadi mudā gandharva vidyādharairānandāya ca dhūṛjate ..... pratitapaḥ śaśvadyaśo gīyate* ||8||



Viṇā both-sides of Buddha (just back)



Fig 3: Sculpture at Mathura-buddha surrounded by gandharvas

In *Mahābhārata*, *Gāndharvas* were called *Deva-Gāndharvas* and described as celestial musicians<sup>87</sup>. They sing to perform *Gāthā-song*<sup>88</sup>s and *Sāman-songs*<sup>89</sup> playing musical instruments<sup>90</sup>. They were skilled in singing and playing musical instruments (*Gītavādītrakuśala*)<sup>91</sup> and dancing along with singing (*Gītakuśala nr̥teṣu ca viśārādāḥ*)<sup>92</sup>. Their music was illustrious became bewildering<sup>93</sup> (*Cittabuddhihara*)<sup>94</sup> on listening. *Gandharvas* mostly perform group music (chorus<sup>95</sup>) and performers were *Viśvāvasu*, *Citrasena* (son of *Viśvāvasu*), *Nārada*, *Tumburu*. According to Abhinava Bharati: अत्यर्थमिष्टं देवानामित्यनेन गां वाचं धारयतीति गान्धर्व, गन्धर्वाणामिदमिति च। *Atyarthamiṣṭaṅ devānamityanena gaṅ vācaṅ dhārayatīti gāndharva gāndharvāṇāmidamiti ca* | - Vocal songs were

<sup>87</sup> गन्धर्वाणं तु या माता सा गर्भं गृह्ण गच्छति। तत विलीनगर्भा सा मानुषी भुवि दृश्यते॥ Gandharvāṇāṅ tu yā mātā sā garbhāṅ gr̥hya gacchati | Tato vilīnagarbhā sā mānuṣī bhuvī dṛśyate ||III-219-37 ||; जेहीयन्तेस्म गन्धर्वा ननुतुश चाप्सरोगणाः। देवदुन्दुभयश चैव परावाद्यन्त महास्वनाः॥ Jehīyantesma gandharvā nar̥tuśa cāpsarogaṇāḥ | Devadundubhayaś caiva prāvādyanta mahāsvanāḥ ||XII-311-14||; गीतगन्धर्वघोषैश्च भेरीपणवनिस्वनेः। सदा प्रमुदितस्ताभिर देवकन्याभिरीड्यते॥ Gītāgandharvaghōṣaiśca bherīpaṇavanisvanaiḥ | Sadā pramuditastābhir devakanyābhīrīdyate ||XIII-110-59||; उत्तमं लभते स्थानमप्सरोगणसेवितम् | गन्धर्वरूपगीतं च विमानं सूर्यवर्चसम्॥ Uttamaṅ labhate sthānamapsarogaṇasevitam | Gandharvairupagītāṅ ca vimānaṅ sūryavarcaśam ||XIII-110-82||

<sup>88</sup> song on verse, especially referring to any poetic metre which is used in legends and Epic The word is originally derived from the Sanskrit/Prakrit root gai, which means 'to speak, sing, recite or extol.

<sup>89</sup> Expressing Rks of Vedas in music-form. अत्र सामानि गाथाभिः श्रुत्वा गीतानि रैवतः। गतदारो गतामाल्यो गतराज्यो वनं गतः॥ Atra sāmāni gāthābhiḥ śrutvā gītāni raivataḥ | Gatadāro gatāmālyo gatarājyo vanaṅ gataḥ ||V-107-10 ||

<sup>90</sup> अवाद्यन्त गन्धर्वा जगुश चाप्सरसां गणाः। सिद्धाश च मुमुचुर वाचः साधु साध्व इति भारत॥ Avādayanta gandharvā jaguś cāpsarasāṅ gaṇāḥ | Siddhāś ca mumucur vācaḥ sādhu sādhu iti bhārata ||IX-60-52||

<sup>91</sup> चित्रसेनाः सहामाल्यो गनधर्वाप्सरसस्तथा। गीतवादित्रकुशलाः शम्यातालविशारदाः॥ Citrasenaḥ sahāmālyo ganadhavāpsarasastathā | Gītavādītrakuśalāḥ śamyātālaviśāradaḥ ||II-4-31 ||

<sup>92</sup> गन्धर्व गीतकुशला नृतेषु च विशारदाः। रमयन्ति स्म तान विप्रान यज्ञकर्मन्तरेषु अथ॥ Gandharvā gītakuśalā nr̥teṣu ca viśāradaḥ | Ramayantīsmā tān viprān yajñakarmāntareṣu atha ||XIV-90-39||

<sup>93</sup> अत्र मन्दरकुञ्जेषु विप्रर्षिसदानेषु च। गन्धर्वा गान्ति गाथा वै चितबुद्धिहर॥ Atra mandarakuñjēṣu viparṣisādaneṣu ca | Gandharvā gāntī gāthā vai cittabuddhiharaḥ dvija || V-107-9 ||

<sup>94</sup> Astonished.

<sup>95</sup> In *Taittirīya Aranyaka* – 1.9.30: एति एकादश गन्धर्व गानः। Eti ekādaśa gandharva gānaḥ | - A group of eleven *Gāndharvas*.

under the jurisdiction of *Gandharvas* and its pleasure and sweetness expressed as *Gāndharva*. “पुरा स्वर्गे प्रनष्टं (वाचं) देवेभ्यः” – *Purā svarge pranaṣṭā (vācaṅ) devebhyḥ* | - In pre-historic period language was offering of Gods<sup>96</sup>. Songs were under the custody of learned where beating created sound and sound-creating device was used in different aspects<sup>97</sup>.

*Nirgūta*<sup>98</sup> and *Gīta* combined to represent *Gāndharva* as *Nārada* pacified that *Nirgūta* would help to preserve *Gīta* i.e., *Pada* (*Vāk*, language) could be retrieved on the basis of *Nirgūta* (*Svara-Tāla*) as needed.

The svaras in early *Sāman* were in descending order<sup>99</sup> as concept of *Grāma-Vibhāga* (Classification according to *Grāma*<sup>100</sup>) were not then.

In *Saṅgītaratnākara* (Chapter - IV) - classification of *gīta*: there is two-fold classification in *Gāndharva* and *Gāna*<sup>101</sup>.

Bharatamuni in his *Nāṭyaśāstra* (XXVIII/9<sup>102</sup>) explained *Gāndharva* as music was dear to Gods<sup>103</sup>, giving pleasure, therefore it is called *Gāndharva*.

### Conclusion

*Gandharvas* used three types modes as per in need at the time of performance. Consequently, expertised use it in different ways designated as *Gāndharva*<sup>104</sup>.

Combined use of *svara*, *pada*, *tāla* was recognised as *Gāndharvas*<sup>105</sup>.

There is no structural similarity between *Sāman*<sup>106</sup> and *Gāndharva*<sup>107</sup> but result of rendering two was indeed same – bestowing bliss leading toward *Mokṣa*<sup>108</sup>. Such music was worthy offering to Gods and Gods were delighted with sublime music. The recital of poetry, performance of dance / drama along with songs accompanied with instrumental music bear equal merit with recitation of Vedic hymns<sup>109</sup>.

*Gāndharva* or *Mārga Saṅgīt* are counterpart of *Sāman Music* though they are different types of music.

<sup>96</sup> The verbal aspect of *Gīta*.

<sup>97</sup> गेति गेयं विदुः घेति घातुः प्रवादजमिति, वाक्यस्य संज्ञेति रेफस्तु वाद्यस्योपलक्षणं काकुप्रवादनमिति वा। Geti geyāṅ viduḥ gheti ghātuḥ pravādajamiti, vākyaśya sañjñēti repastu vādyasyopalakṣaṇaṅ kākupravādanamiti vā |

<sup>98</sup> *Nirgūta* (निर्गूत) refers to instrumental music played to satisfy the vanity of the *Daityas*. It is also known by the name *Bahirgūta*, when it is played in honour of the gods. Accordingly, it is called the *nirgūta* because in it there is sung a combination of sounds carrying no sense.

<sup>99</sup> अवरोह, *Avaroha*.

<sup>100</sup> Musical scale / system.

<sup>101</sup> गीतस्य भेदद्वयम्: गान्धर्व गानमित्यस्य भेदद्वयमुदीरितम्।१। *Gītasya vedadvayam: Gāndharva gānamityasya bhedadvayamudīritam* |1|

<sup>102</sup> अत्यर्थम इष्टं देवानां तथा प्रीतिकरं पुनः। गन्धर्वाणां च यस्माद थि तस्माद गान्धर्वम उच्यते॥ *Atyartham iṣṭaṅ devānāṅ tathā prīti-karaṅ punaḥ | Gandharvāṇāṅ ca yasmād dhi tasmād gāndharvam ucyate* ||

<sup>103</sup> अत्यर्थम इष्टं देवानां। *Atyartham iṣṭaṅ devānāṅ* |

<sup>104</sup> गान्धर्व त्रिविधं विद्यादिति। *Gāndharva trividhaṅ vidyāditi* | - व्याख्या: - त्रिभ्यः स्वरादिभ्यो विधा विधानं यस्य। पृथकपृथगगान्धर्वव्यवहारो भवेत्। *Vyākhyā: - Tribhyaḥ svarādibhyo vidhā vidhānaṅ yasya | Prthakprthaggāndharvavyavahāro bhavet* |

<sup>105</sup> स्वरपदतालसमवाये तु गान्धर्वम्। *Svarapadatālasamavāye tu Gāndharvam* |

<sup>106</sup> Singers of *Sāma*-music used in the context of *Yajña* (यज्ञ).

<sup>107</sup> *Gāndharvas* were trained singers in the occasion of worship (पूजा).

<sup>108</sup> जाति नीति कुल गोत्र दूरगं, नाम रूप गुण दोष वर्जितम्। देश काल विषया तिवर्ति यद्, ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भाव यात्मनि॥ *Jāti nīti kula gotra dūraṅga nāma rūpa guṇa doṣa varjitam* || That which is beyond caste and creed, family and lineage; devoid of name and form, merit and demerit; transcending space, time and sense-objects; — that *Brahma* art to you, meditate on this in your mind.

<sup>109</sup> *Nāṭyaśāstra*: *Abhinava Gupta* – पाठ्यं नाट्यं तथा गेयं चित्रवादित्रमेव च। वेदमन्तार्थवचनैः समं ह्येतद् भविष्यति॥ *Pāṭhyaṅ nāṭyaṅ tathā geyāṅ citravādītrameva ca | Vedamantrārthavacanaiḥ sanaḥ hyetad bhaviṣyati* ||XXXVI/25||

*Gāndharvas* are exiting in the prime position on Indian Classical Music. It creates bridge between *Sāman-Music* and developed music of later generations as present stage of our *Mārga-Saṃgīt* has come down to us through series of transformations. *Gāndharva-Saṃgīt* originally descended from *Sāma-Veda* scales which have been recast into new ascending and descending of *seven-svara* (notes) structures. In our culture, *Gāndharva-music* is also significant too from another aspect as (a) in *Yajña* as chanting of *Sāma-Gāna*; (b) in prayer and *Pūjā* i.e., worship, adoration.

On the efficiency, particularly in music, of *Gāndharvas* has been expressed in *Gāndharva-Veda* which has been detailed by *Yāmalāṣṭakatantra* (यमलाष्टकतन्त्र<sup>110</sup>) from *Upa-Vedas*<sup>111</sup> as: *Gāndharvaveda* deals with a lot of books. In this there were dealing with seven notes has been evaluated along with rules of playing *Vīnā*, art (music & dance), its combination, use of rhythms, micro-tone, musical instruments etc. had been properly expressed<sup>112</sup>.

That these celestial musicians held monopoly of divine music is set forth in the classical and technical literates and inscriptions also from the earliest period down to 17th Century CE when religious and spiritual traditions of the followers of *Vaidika* rites were alive on Indian soil.

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<sup>110</sup> *Tāntra* (तंत्र): Rule to organise ceremonies, rites, rituals.

<sup>111</sup> The term *upaveda* (applied knowledge) is used in traditional literature (subordinate to *Vedas*) to designate the subjects of certain technical works and these are (a) *Āyurveda* (आयुर्वेद, Medicine), associated with the *Rgveda* (ऋग्वेद), (b) *Dhanurveda* (धनुर्वेद, Archery or military science), associated with the *Yajurveda* (यजुर्वेद), (c) *Gāndharvaveda* (गान्धर्ववेद, Music and sacred dance), associated with the *Sāmaveda* (सामवेद), and (d) *Arthaśāstra / Sthāpathya-Śāstra-Veda* (अर्थशास्त्र / स्थापथ्य-शास्त्र-वेद Economics / Engineering & architecture), associated with the *Atharvaveda* (अथर्ववेद).

<sup>112</sup> *गान्धर्ववेदः षट्त्रिंशत्सहस्रग्रन्थसंमितः। यत्र सप्तस्वरोत्पत्तिकथनं परिकीर्त्यते। वीणातन्त्रं कलातन्त्रं रागतन्त्रमनुत्तमम्। मिश्रतन्त्रं तालतन्त्रं गीतिकातन्त्रमेव च॥ लासिकोल्लासिकातन्त्रं मेलतन्त्रं महत्तरम्। जातिग्रहलयस्थानं मार्गाङ्गप्रक्रिया क्रिया॥*

कालज्ञानं वाद्यवल्लीत्रिभिन्नाध्याय एव च। तुरङ्गरतिसारङ्गसिंहलीलाविजृम्भणम्॥ अङ्गहारप्रविक्षेपाध्यायः संक्षोभणक्रिया। एवमादीनि गान्धर्ववेदे सन्ति सहस्रशः॥  
Gāndharvavedaḥ ṣaṭtriṅśatsahasraṅgranthasānmitaḥ | Yatra saptasvaropattikathanaṅ parikīrtyate | Vīṇātantraṅ kalātantraṅ rāgatantramānuttamaṅ | Miśratantraṅ tālatantraṅ gītīkātantrameva ca || Lāsikollāsīkātantraṅ melatantraṅ mahattaram | Jātigralaysthānaṅ mārgāṅgprakriyā kriyā || Kālaññānaṅ vādyavallītribhinnādyāya eva ca | Turamgaratisāraṅgasīnhalāvījṛmbhaṅam || Aṅgahārapravikṣepādhyāyāḥ saṅksobhaṅākriyā | Evamādīni gāndharvavede santi sahasraśaḥ ||