

Chamaraja Wodeyar Innovator in Musical Trends in Princely Mysore

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Abstract

Chamaraja Wodeyar was provided with the musical environment by Mumtaz Ali Krishna Raja Wodeyar who was mainly responsible for the revival of cultural activities in the State. He himself was a great musician, musicologist and composer. By this environment Chamaraja Wodeyar equipped himself in Karnataka.

Hindustani and Western Music

Chamaraja Wodeyar (1881- 1894AD) was a great patron of art and literature. He patronized Mysore Musicians as well as musicians from other parts of the country. He appointed Veena Sheshanna and his classmate Veena Subbanna as court musicians. He also learnt music from Veena Sheshanna. We can also see the entry of western music and Hindustani music during this period. He encouraged many Javali composers and Hindustani Musicians. He also expertised western music. Chamaraja Played Violin during the Pallakki Utsava celebrations. He was the first Indian Prince to form an Amateur Drama Club in his courts. It is during his coronation ceremony in September 1868 A.D. The Mysore state Anthem came into being by the then court poet Basavappa Shastri with western notion. King Chamaraja lived only for 32 years. Many musicians adorned his court.

Sri Chamaraja Wodeyar IX was mainly responsible for the establishment of the State Band. The first Band Master was Mr. De. Fries a renowned Western Musician. Mr. Otto Schmidt, the great composer, was appointed as the Director of Music, King Chamaraja also established Music education in Sanskrit college, Mysore. He also played violin in Ganesh ceremony etc. Girls were encouraged to learn music.¹

Composers of this period

1. Veena Shamanna

Veena Shamanna who came from Tanjore and settled in Mysore court, as a court Musician served three rulers of Mysore, i.e. Mumtaz Ali Krishnaraja Wodeyar, Chamaraja Wodeyar and Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, Shamanna Popularly known as Tala Brahma, became well versed in Veena, Violin, Ghatam and Swarabath, Along with his children Veena Rammanna, Veena Subramanya Iyer, Subharayaru, Veena Padmanabiah, Sundara Shastri and Karoor Krishna Rao were his disciples. He wrote a book entitled Sangha Samayasara.²

2. Veena Padmanabiah

Veena Sheshanna, Veena Shamanna, Krishna Shastri and Tammayya Shastri. He composed Sapta Taleswari, Jatiswaras, Kritis, Javalis etc. with Anikta Padmanabiah.³

3. Veena Sheshanna

Veena Sheshanna had well versed in Veena and vocal and earned prestigious little Vainika Shikhamani, Vainika Chakravarty etc. He was the person who gave music concepts outside Mysore i.e. at Madras, Coimbatore, Baroda, Tanjore, Delhi (emperor George V function) and Belgaum.⁴

Jala Tarang and Piano also were familiar to Sheshanna (Moula Baksh introduced jalatarang to Mysore). He also conducted Ramotsava and Krishnotasava every year for 10 days in his house.⁵ He composed Sapta Ragamalika Gite, Jatiswaras, Varnas, Kritis, Tillanas etc His famous disciples were veena Venkatagiriapp. Srirangam Ramaswamy Iyengar and his brother Govinda Iyengar, Bhairavi Lakshminarayappa, Shermadevi Subramanya Shastry, Tirumale Rajamma, M.S. Bheema Rao, Famous artists K.Venkatappa, Narayana Iyer, Veena Shivaramaiah, his son Veena Ramanna grandsons, A.S Chandrashekaraiah and Swaramurthy V.N.Raod.⁶

4. Mysore Karigir Rao

Mysore Karigir Rao- earned titles such as Sangeetha Vidya Kanteerava. GanakalaDurandhana. Sangita Bhushana. He composed more than 200 Devaranamas with notation. He served as a Music teacher in a blind school at Mysore.⁷ Nanjuda Rao, Bidaram Krishnappa, Chikka Ramarao, Harikatha Ananta Shastry from Gadwai. Dodda Rama Rao, Piteelu Ramaswamy Krishnacharya, Mandya Shamacharya, Bejawada Subbaraya Shastry, Rallappali Anantakrishna Sharma, Lakshmana Rao and T. Venkata Rao were Prominent disciples.⁸

5. Veena Subbanna

Veena Subbanna – Veena Subbanna was appointed as court Musician and along with prince Chamaraja Wodeyar X he had his general education at Royal school. He composed Jatiswaras, Ragamalika etc. He earned titles such as Vaikika Praveena, Vainika varachudamani and Vainika Kesari.⁹

6. Mysore K Vasudevacharya

Mysore K Vasudevacharya was a court musician and composer under the Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, Chamaraja Wodeyar X Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar and Jayachamaraja Wodeyar. As a musician he composed varnas, Kritis with the Mudra Vasudeva his compositions and published in two volumes as Vausdeva Kriana Manjari. He also wrote Naa Kanda Kalvidaru and Nenapugalu. His titles were sangeetha Shastra Ratna, Sangeetha Shastra Visharada. Sangeetha Kalanidhi Sangeetha bhavagna Shikhamani, Sangeetha, Sahitya Vidwanmani and Padmabhushana by the central Sangeeta Natak Academy etc.¹⁰

7. Bidaram Krishnappa

Bidaram Krishnappa was Basically a dramatist at Dharmastala who came and settled at Mysore by Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar. His titles were Shuddha Swaracharya, Pallavi Krishnappa, Gana Vishrada, Gayaka Shikhamani, Gana Kesari etc. T. Chowdiah, Rallapalli Ananta Krishna Sharma, B Rachappa, B Devendrappa, Kolarada Nagarathnamma, Bangalore Nagarathnamma. T. Puttuswamaiah, Raja Iyengar, A.K. Subbarao A Lingapaji were his disciples. He constructed Rama Mandiram in 1928 which is still existed.¹¹

8. Tiruppunandal Pattabhiramaiah

Veena Subbana was another court Musician of Mysore wrote under the mudra Talavana also wrote with Ankitha Chamaraja.

9. Sosaie Ayya Shastry

Sosale Ayya Shastry served as a Kannada and Sanskrit teacher in Mysore Sadvidya Patashala and appointed a Rajaguru for Wodeyars between 1894-1901. his titles are Maha Vidwan, Kavi Tilaka by Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar.¹²

10. Jayarayacharya

Jayarayacharya – was Patronized by Chamaraja Wodeyar IX and Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar was a teacher in Maharani Bellavi Patashala, His title was Kalyana Gitavali.

11. Giribhattara Tammayya

Giribhattara Tammayya – under patronage of Aliya Lingaraja, uplifted the palace Drama Company, He composed Gaya Charitre, Droupadi Swayamvara, Neeti Chudamani, Virata Parva and sudhanvas Charite and also songs like Arati, Shobhane, Mangala Songs are printed in book Balika gita mukta Kalapa. Nanjangud Subba Shastry and Chandrashkeara shsattri were also important composers during this period.¹³

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