

## CONFLUENCE OF SCIENCE, SPIRITUALITY AND MUSIC

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### Introduction

Sastreeya Sangeetham, or the science of music is a special means like meditation and many other upasanas that prepares us to the ultimate experience of bliss and oneness within us. According to Sanathana Dharma- this is the ultimate purpose of life. Music does this by training the performer as well as the listener to develop an attitude of 'Samatva Bhava' or harmony in a highly complex environment.

Music has these complex elements, laya, shruti, raga, bhava, and rasa. Each of these subsystems are internally harmonious as well as they should be in harmony with all the other systems. For example, if there are a series of notes, they all should be in unison. Otherwise we call there is an 'apasruti'. Furthermore, all the accompanying instruments should be unison as well. This is what is meant by Samatva Bhava. This is no simple task. The task of harmonizing requires nothing less than 100% involvement, a deep absorption into the activity. Without that there is absolutely no way of harmonizing all these elements. In that deep absorption, the performer as well as the listener momentarily loses the notions of I am the doer, I am singing, I am listening, etc. and the notions of I am enjoying it: it is melodious, it is tasteful, it is beautiful. Notice here that a music listener should also involve completely 100%. If not done that way, then there is no difference between listening to music or a conversation between two people. This complete involvement or deep absorption is referred to as being in zone by artists. In this moment of deep absorption, the performer as well as the listener experience something out worldly. They will come into contact with their real self which is pure bliss. They will experience the notion that I am pure knowledge, I am pure ananda. The state of pure bliss.

Any path that take us to the level of losing these two notions of I am the doer and I am the listener which can be achieved only by giving absolute 100% are all can be called upasanas.

Trivarga Phaladaah Sarve Daana Yagna Japaadayah,  
Ekam Sangita Vignanam, sarva karma phala pradam

This term 'sarva karma phala pradam' is highly technical expression. Meaning the results of all good karmas will be experienced by the practitioner of music. That result is nothing but pure bliss. When we do music, let it be performing, practicing, or listening, we should give our absolute 100% and become actively and deeply absorbed in it. That's when we would have achieved the real purpose of music as well as life.

The sole purpose of life is to experience and be established in this state. This is why music and any pure art is considered on par with yogic techniques such as meditation. Music is called nadopasana. The trinity of carnatic music (Tyagaraja, Muthuswami

Dikshitar and Shyama Shastri) and other saints sang out of devotion to God. It came from the depth of their hearts. They did not compose those songs for making money. Through those compositions they exhorted people to conquer the six inner enemies of uncontrolled lust, anger, greed, attachment to worldly objects, egoism and jealousy. As a matter of fact, they understood the real meaning of all sastras and took up music as their means of liberation.

Let us discuss on the aspects of how Science is related to spirituality and how spirituality is achieved through Music.

The physical world is ruled by laws of nature that are unfailing. Atmospheric air does not tolerate a vacuum. It fills it immediately. Water moves from an upper gradient towards a lower gradient. Fire is always hot and ice is always chill. We cannot find exceptions to such laws anywhere in nature like water moving upwards on its own or fire feeling cool or a vacuum remaining unfilled. If laws of nature are unfailing, naturally the laws of life will not fail.

When we change inside we see life circumstances changing outside. What exactly does this show is worth investigating. This shows that inside and outside are the same and therefore when the inside changes, there is corresponding change on the outside. One may ask how is it that both inside and outside are the same. Considering that the world outside is made up of so many different things and appear to be very different from the thoughts and feelings that make up our inside, we have to remind ourselves that behind the infinity diversity of creation is the essential unity of the Brahman which links all these different entities into component parts of the United whole.

We can say that though the various parts of our body look so different from each other, all these various organs like heart, lungs, liver, kidney and brain, etc. are all sub-parts of one united human body only. While the unity of human body is visible, unity of Brahman is not visible. Since we are not able to view the Brahman as a whole or feel the Brahmic consciousness. From musical aspects, there are various kritis explaining Advaita philosophy 'Tattvamasī'. It means that the very object and purpose of an Individual self is Supreme self. There is no difference between the individual soul and the Supreme Soul.

Nuclear Physicists say that some subatomic particles come in pairs and that there is such a bonding between them that when the position of one changes, the position of other changes automatically. They also say that this is true not only when the paired articles are packed within the close confines of the atoms. They say that this would be true even if these twin particles are separated and kept at the opposite ends of the universe. What is true of subatomic particles should be much true of conscious human beings. A devotee in India voices a goodwill prayer or sings on behalf for some friend or relative working in America and that person does not even know that some goodwill prayer is being voiced for him by somebody in India. But it works and benefit comes to the relative in America. Though distance separates the people, emotional unity brings about the result.

The progress of Science has also helped to establish the essential unity of existence. Experimental study has shown that members of human family belong to one group; They have the same physical and Chemical characters except minor details of form and colour arising from difference of Climate and terrain.

### **Law of Karma**

Cause and effect relationship is well established in Science and it may be direct and quick as with the firing of a gun and the killing or destruction that results. On the other hand in Chemistry, we are familiar with a reaction passing through a number of steps (Chain reaction) before the final product is obtained. In living systems biological reactions proceed in a still larger number of stages with the help of enzymes and maintain the delicate equilibrium in the animal or plant tissues. In social Sciences, dealing with human affairs, it is more difficult to trace the complex routes of action of a primary cause to the stage of final desirable or undesirable result. This experiment should enable us to appreciate the validity of the law of Karma so commonly accepted in Indian Philosophy and religion and used, but it is difficult to fully explain and understand its working.

### **The four Yogas**

The four Yogas are Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Raja yoga. karma-yoga: the path of selfless action; bhakti-yoga, the path of divine love; raja-yoga, the path of meditation and jnana-yoga, the path of knowledge. Bhakti yoga is the easiest path to reach God far easier than others for it does not depend on any other proof for it proves itself. It is easier to follow and suited to different temperaments. They lead to the purification and strengthening of the mind in different ways and enable it to perceive the ultimate truth.

The Bhakti cult reaches its peak with such devotees of Sri Krishna. Poet Saint Mirabhai and Andal who looked upon Sri Krishna as their Lord and husband gave a new dimension to the relationship between God and the soul. Mirabhai sang Bhajans and Andal sang Tiruppavai in praise of Lord Krishna and reached the ultimate Paramatma. Nama Japa: Japa(repetition) of "Om"with meaning will purify the mind, make it introspective, and ultimately lead to Samadhi or Self realisation. Nama Sankeertanam is the simplest & best way to reach higher levels in spirituality & to attain salvation.

### **Integration between Spirituality, Chakras of body and Music**

Kundalini is a hidden power that rests in the Muladhara which is at the base of the Vertebra. It is like a serpent having three and half coils. In the ignorant state of person this serpent is asleep with its head downward. As long as it sleeps the person is immersed with worldly activities and pleasures and has no taste for God's name and has no aspiration to realize God, and he even dislikes Satsang. If by any chance he comes into contact with a saint, the latter's power and grace works on him and he henceforth aspires for a spiritual life and eternal happiness. Now Kundalini awakens and seeks to rise up. Kundalini is awakened by various methods. Nama Sankeerthana is one such method by which Kundalini is awakened.

Before reaching Sahasrara one remains in Suddha Sattva (Vaikuntha world), but as soon as one reaches the culminating point, the devotee experiences Nirvikalpa Samadhi in which body is completely forgotten and it becomes as inert as a stone image. It is here that the devotee realises his identity with Paramatma and now a complete transformation takes place in his life. Then starts the gradual divinisation of the body ending in the vision of God everywhere.

### **Important people in the development of Indian Spiritual History**

Sri Ramakrishna stressed the essential Unity of all the religions and conveyed spiritual wisdom through simple stories. The artistic faculty was highly developed in our Lord Sri Ramakrishna and he used to say that without this faculty none can be truly spiritual.

His disciple Swami Vivekananda revitalized the Hindu religion and stressed the value of Vedanta and called for aspiring for spiritual greatness as the true way for accomplishment of goals of life. He gave the first true exposure to Western world of the true greatness of Hindu religion and spirituality and made them give it a respect which they did not give before.

Swami Dayananda, founder of Arya Samaj called for the elimination of all superstitious beliefs and practices such as idol worship, caste system and advocated the acceptance of Vedantic values purged of such superstitions as the true core of Indian spirituality.

Sri Ramana Maharishi advocated spiritual enquiry (Atma Vichara) as the way to find out the true self by a process of elimination of body, feelings, mind, ego, etc. as not self and finally arriving at the soul as the true self.

Sri Aurobindo broke fresh new ground with his advocacy of the impending descent of supermind which is a truth consciousness capable of delivering truth from falsehood, suffering and evil and his formulation of integral yoga as the way to reach supermind which called for total transmission of mind, feelings and body all at the same time.

Sri Sri Ganapathi Sachchidananda Swamiji , the head of Avadhoota Datta Peetham Mysore conducts tours of the world to spread spirituality and holds concerts believed to provide healing benefits. Swamiji works for popularisation of "Raagaragini Vidya", an ancient musical tradition that is claimed to augment spiritual Sadhana and cure ailments.

### **Conclusion**

Sastreeya Sangeetham or Science of music is a Nadopasana and an easiest method for achieving the eternal bliss. Nama Sankeerthana is one of the easiest method by which Kundalini is awakened. Automatically the person aspires for a spiritual life and eternal happiness.

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