



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Spiritual Background Of Indian Music

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ABSTRACT

Music has been closely connected with spirituality since ancient times. In many cultures, music is not only a form of artistic expression but also a powerful medium for connecting with the divine and achieving inner peace. In the Indian tradition, music is often viewed as a path to spiritual realization. The philosophical idea of Nada Brahma suggests that the entire universe is made of sound and vibration, and through music one can experience this universal energy. Indian music has deep roots in sacred texts such as the Samaveda, where hymns were chanted in melodic patterns for spiritual and ritual purposes. Over time, music developed into various classical and devotional forms that aim to elevate the mind and soul. Concepts like Raga are designed not only to create melodies but also to evoke specific emotions and spiritual moods. The influence of the Bhakti Movement further strengthened the relationship between music and devotion, as saints and poets used songs to express love and surrender to God. Through practices such as bhajans, kirtans, and devotional compositions, music became a form of spiritual practice and meditation. Thus, spirituality in music reflects the belief that sound and melody can transcend ordinary experience, helping individuals achieve emotional purification, inner harmony, and a deeper connection with the divine.

KEY WORDS: Bhajan , Kirtan, Samaved, Devotional, Music, Bhakti, Spiritual ,Divine.

While the art of music may have originated within the natural emotions and indomitable impulses of humanity, its development and nurture within the heart of religion is beyond dispute. Religious expression has been the foundation of Indian fine arts. While originating in secular traditions, they have been grounded in religious traditions. According to the Indian perspective, art is that which is conducive to liberation. Art that merely serves as a means of material pleasure and luxury is not art in the eyes of Indian philosophers. The ultimate goal of art is to transcend the material world and attain a state of bliss in which material conflicts have no place. Relaxation in sexual intercourse is considered to be art, not art. That which merges in the supreme bliss is the supreme art.

The goal of human life is 'self-realization': 'There is nothing beyond self-realization' The interest of human life is supposed to lie in this self-realization. According to the Upanishadic writers, the creation of the soul is described as consisting of five cells: Atramaya Kosha, Pranamaya Kosha, Manomaya Kosha, Vijnanamaya Kosha and Anandamaya Kosha. The first two are equally available in living beings, the remaining three are the inherent splendor of mankind. The importance of the blissful treasury is

considered to be of the utmost importance. The realization of the Supreme Being is the work of this dictionary. The joy obtained from this is omnipresent and superior to the joy of human beings, human Gandharvas, Deva Gandharvas and Prajapati. By attaining this essential element, the being becomes juicy. According to the Taitriya Upanishad, this is the mysticism of supreme bliss: rasau vaisah. He is happy to have this taste. Who else but who would breathe if this sky were not joy? This is the Hyedhananda. Music is the medium of this self-bliss. When the sweet chirping of music falls into the ears, the consciousness of the innermost part of the heart is awakened and the innermost experiences such supernatural joy and divine feeling that is a hundred times greater than that of the ordinary senses.

Spirituality has been the foundation of the entire Indian philosophy of life. The pursuit of the ultimate truth has inspired all our endeavors since time immemorial. By imbuing the world with the colors of spirituality, our wise artists have experienced the omnipresent divine in every form. This human spirit has permeated all objects to such an extent that even objects considered highly sensual have a spiritual background. In the eyes of Indian artists, the Maheshwar idols in the Elephanta Caves have the same glory as the Konark Maithun paintings, which present colorful scenes of life. In this regard, the following statement by renowned art scholar Percy Brown is worthy of mention. Under the editorship of Radhu Mishra, it had 27 issues till January 2008, under the leadership of K. Sadananda Tripathi, Jnan Hota, Sriyut Satyanash, Kailash Tan.

"Greek architecture was characterized by its brilliance and perfection. Roman architecture is renowned for its scientific design. French Gothic art displays a passionate intellect and creativity. Similarly, the primary characteristic of Indian architecture lies in its spirituality."

The religious sentiment of Indians was never limited to daily and external rituals, but was inspired by spiritual experience; this fact is respectable. The inner consciousness of Indian sages attempted to discover spirituality in all the processes of the world. This mysterious element lies behind the ancient tradition of Yajna. The purpose of Sama singing in Yajnas was not merely to entertain the people, but to worship the unmanifest power that governs the universe. The use of ancient folk music melodies for spiritual practice can be considered a speciality of Vedic music. The singing of the hymns of the Rigveda was considered not only necessary but also essential for the pleasure of the gods. The musical tradition of Sama singing has been meaningful through the exploration of the ultimate truth - "Gaayanti ya Sama Gaanah." If this purpose was lost, Sama singing became a subject of slander. Evidence for this is available in the Sutra Granthas and Smriti Granthas. The singing of the Sama Veda was not limited to mere singing skills, but also stirred sublime emotions. The idea of how the name of Omkara could be rasatmak at the beginning of music was crucial for contemporary musicians. In the Vedic period, secular music existed alongside Sama music, which was considered inferior because it was solely for public entertainment. Gandharva music, which aroused the sensual tendencies of gods and kings, can be considered to have originated from this source. The songs and dances of Gandharvas and Apsaras were not rooted in a spiritual foundation, but rather supported material pleasures. Compared to Sama music, contemporary Gandharva music can be considered indigenous music. Ancient acharyas accepted rasa as a teaching, and its essence lies in its indigenous nature. Ancient yogis attempted to turn this Gandharva music towards spirituality. In their view, the origin of all creation lies in sound, and the form of the supreme Supreme Being is sound. The secret of the various methods of sound lies in merging into supreme bliss. The process of progressing from ahata nada to anahata nada is a specific practice of nadanusandhan and layayoga in the path of yoga. According to yoga scriptures, worship of sound is considered the best means for devotion to God. Whether in the form of Sankirtan or Devadasis, dance and music are often depicted in ancient architecture and painting, which can be considered indicative of music's metaphysical significance. In fact, the secret to the longevity of these works of art lies in the inspiration of spirituality. Where art is limited to the luxury

and pleasure of a few individuals, the sources of eternity dry up. Like the stupas of Sanchi and Bharhut, the wall paintings of Ajanta, and the monolithic temples of Ellora, the art of music also thrives for public entertainment, public education, and spiritual practice. In the view of Indian philosophers, mere worship of the gross can never truly bring joy. The realization of the subtle through the gross is a hallmark of Indian philosophy, and because of this uniqueness, the art of music has been consistently revered by sages, philosophers, and devotees. Despite other differences among Indian traditions, such as Vaishnava, Shaiva, and Shakta, music has been recognized as undeniably important. Song and dance have been integral parts of ancient deities. At such festivals, devotees would join the procession, carrying lutes and clapping their hands, and dance freely while singing praises of the Lord. The Ramlila of Uttar Pradesh, the Yatras of Bengal, and the Dindi of Maharashtra carry on this tradition of saints and sages.

The point is that ancient philosophers' perspective on music has been spiritual. Indians' goal was not simply to stimulate desires and inspire evil tendencies. Eliminating restless mental tendencies and achieving human well-being through concentration—this is the Indian perspective on music. This perspective can undoubtedly transform music into a construct for the welfare of the world by creating a colossal harmony within minor differences and disparities.

The union of spirituality and music is deeply rooted in Indian tradition. According to the Indian perspective, music is not merely a means of entertainment for a tired mind, but rather a source of ultimate well-being through the exploration of God. From Narada and Tumburu to medieval devotional poets, music has been a medium of worship. The practice of song and dance as part of temple worship has been prevalent from ancient times to modern times, whether for the benefit of devotees or for the benefit of others.

The pioneer of devotional music played a significant role in spreading spiritual teachings through songs and melodies. Devotional music has been an important part of religious traditions, expressing deep faith, love, and dedication to God. One of the most celebrated pioneers of devotional music is Purandara Dasa, who is often regarded as the Father of Carnatic Music. Through his thousands of compositions dedicated to Lord Vishnu, he helped popularize devotional singing and established systematic methods for teaching music. His contributions greatly influenced the growth of devotional music in India and continue to inspire musicians and devotees today.  The pioneer of devotional music played a significant role in spreading spiritual teachings through songs and melodies. Devotional music has been an important part of religious traditions, expressing deep faith, love, and dedication to God. One of the most celebrated pioneers of devotional music is Purandara Dasa, who is often regarded as the Father of Carnatic Music. Through his thousands of compositions dedicated to Lord Vishnu, he helped popularize devotional singing and established systematic methods for teaching music. His contributions greatly influenced the growth of devotional music in India and continue to inspire musicians and devotees today.

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