

Indian Classical Music Philosophy

Komal Rani

Assitant professor in edu of teaching of music (National college of education)

ABSTRACT:-

Philosophy in Indian Music is very strongly rooted in Classical Indian philosophy and thought. Since the earliest times, music was treated as a manifestation of the divine. It was considered as a medium of understanding the all-pervading divinity. It is rather difficult to trace the particularities of Indian Music through its growth at every stage of its culture through its 3000 to 5000 years of evolution. However, this does prove to be an extremely rewarding search in that it helps us to understand the various facets of contemporary music as well. Classical music basically has its own classicism with deep roots in the classical period of Indian history, and bears a strong relation to the classical ideals propagated in classical texts.

INTRODUCTION

The term “Indian Classical music” ought to embrace both the classical music of the South, called Karnatak music, and the classical music of the North called Hindusthani classical music. Karnatak music which is a great system of music is confined to a limited area in Southern India and its influence has not penetrated into other parts of India. An example of this is Shivashtakam and Rudrashtakam. On the other hand, Hindusthani classical music, originally the music of the North, is now universally recognized all over India. Therefore, for the sake of convenience, the terms Indian classical music and Hindusthani classical music, are identically same in meaning. The philosophy of divinity becomes rather difficult to comprehend for the modern student of music. When confronted with the table or relations of the various notes with nakshatras, sages, individuals and rasas, their mythological significance hold no meaning for him. The entire culture of the past is rather strongly associated with Indian Classical music, and this forms one of the most important philosophical elements of the same. This understanding is absolutely necessary to comprehend the full ethos of Indian music, thus permitting a greater training to one's aesthetic sensibilities.

Once this rationale of interrelatedness and cosmological nature of every manifestation is understood in terms of Indian ancient thought, it becomes easier to understand how the nada, svara and its numerous variations form a natural link with other manifestations of life. One can take a look at some of the enveloping, but at the same time interpenetrating, aspects of music. For instance, the origin of different notes has been ascribed to different animals and birds. There is no direct link between the musical note (a particular frequency equals a pitch) and the "noise" quality of the sounds of animals and birds. This only points out the significant fact that sound and sound producing apparatus is not confined to men only; that sound, as energy (as Agni) is found in God's other creations also and provides a perspective on men, animals, birds, etc.-all creatures living a

homogeneous life on this planet. It goes to show that all the notes of a scale are a gift of nature around us or that musical notes were realized from the natural cries of birds and animals, or, that svaras were not invented by the human being; they were there in their elemental energy and within the propensity of the sounds of animals. An all-inclusive understanding of various factors of life is an essential aspect of the philosophy of music. To understand the inner psychology and the stream of consciousness behind our life and arts, an integrated approach is not only useful but absolutely necessary on account of demands made by these arts as living forms. However, it requires to be noted that it is much easier to correlate the written word, of the Veda, philosophy, literature, etc. with the referential arts, or at least to the referential aspects of all the literary and plastic arts. The Indian dance till the present-day uses mythology, Puranic stories and epics; painting and sculpture also use individualized objects. The same approach is possible for music using full import of words. However, the purer aspects of music or the non-referential aspects of music were realized, even before Bharata wrote his treatise, in the conception of jati-gana and later in the conception of raaga.

Philosophical ideas in samveda

Instead of conducting a technical discussion of classical music and its grammar, and analyzing how a Shiva Stuti differs from a Shiva Stotram, it is far better to understand the true spirit of its art. How to answer the layman who repeatedly asks “What is classical music”? Classical music is both classical and music and is Indian in spirit .. It is as ancient as the Vedas. It is just possible, the music of Sama veda was the music of the Vedic period and post-Vedic period in India. But no historian can trace the origins and beginnings of an ancient art with any mathematical precision. The history of Indian classical music, therefore, must have the inevitable gaps.

We derive from Shastras or ancient treatises all our knowledge of classical music. Among the most outstanding ones are:- Natya Shastra, Narad Shiksha, Sangita Ratnakar, Raga Tarangini, Sangita Darpan, Sangita Parijata, Nagmate Asaphi, Sangita Ragakalpadruma, Sangita Paddhati and others. The theory of classical music, divorced from practical art, has no meaning. It is a product of ages. While it has established laws which cannot be easily violated, it has been tremendously influenced by musicians. That is why, tradition in classical music is a very important thing. Since times immemorial, Indian music has depended upon a scientific system which has been both rigid and elastic. Even the chants for Shiva and other gods fall into this category.

Gharana system:-

There is no such thing as Hindu classical music or Muslim classical music. For centuries, Hindus and Muslims have united their efforts in enriching one and the same system of music. While there have been no divergent schools of thought among musicians in Indian music, there have been musicians and groups or families of musicians following different styles but inspired and guided by ideals of fundamental unity. The “Gharanas” or the families have invariably been the nucleus of practical art. But Indian music being highly individualistic, individual musicians have played a very great part in stimulating the progress of music. Even Muslim singers do not hesitate to chant Om Namah Shivaya.

In fact, in India all great musicians embody and interpret the music of their age and time. They build up

epochs in art. No system of classical music belongs to the masses, though it appeals to them. This holds true in the case of Indian classical music too. This music has a genius and a character of its own which distinguish it from all other systems of music. In our country, music like literature, has interpreted life in a vital manner. Therefore, any study of Indian culture which omits music, is incomplete. If one wants to form a correct estimate of classical music, he must see it in its spiritual and sensuous forms because they are inseparable. The Kalabhairava Ashtakam and the Bilvashtakam interweave passion and philosophy in their texture. Like every other art it has evolved a grammar of technique, an art of interpretation. The two are not opposed to each other, but, in fact, complete each other. No one should run the risk of misjudging classical music by trying to evaluate them separately. Therefore, though grammarians and musicians have existed separately, what is called classical music has been built up by the united efforts of both.

Man and nature are inseparably united in this music. Both are beings whose varying moods have a great resemblance. Classical music was never written and recorded. It was heard, acquired and transmitted. Therefore, modern classical music, unlike ancient classical music, has to be reviewed afresh, in a new historical perspective. These are some of those vital truths and assumptions which form the basis of Indian classical music.

Indian music philosophy:-

Philosophy in Indian Music is very strongly rooted in Classical Indian philosophy and thought. Since the earliest times, music was treated as a manifestation of the divine. It was considered as a medium of understanding the all-pervading divinity. It is rather difficult to trace the particularities of Indian Music through its growth at every stage of its culture through its 3000 to 5000 years of evolution. However, this does prove to be an extremely rewarding search in that it helps us to understand the various facets of contemporary music as well. Classical music basically has its own classicism with deep roots in the classical period of Indian history, and bears a strong relation to the classical ideals propagated in classical texts.

From this premise, it becomes easier to understand the relationship of music with various other manifestations of the divine. This philosophy of divinity becomes rather difficult to comprehend for the modern student of music. When confronted with the table or relations of the various notes with nakshatras, sages, individuals and rasas, their mythological significance hold no meaning for him. The entire culture of the past is rather strongly associated with Indian Classical music, and this forms one of the most important philosophical elements of the same. This understanding is absolutely necessary to comprehend the full ethos of Indian music, thus permitting a greater training to one's aesthetic sensibilities. Once this rationale of interrelatedness and cosmological nature of every manifestation is understood in terms of Indian ancient thought, it becomes easier to understand how the nada, svara and its numerous variations form a natural link with other manifestations of life. One can take a look at some of the enveloping, but at the same time interpenetrating, aspects of music. For instance, the origin of different notes has been ascribed to different animals and birds. There is no direct link between the musical note (a particular frequency equals a pitch) and the "noise" quality of the sounds of animals and birds. This only points out the significant fact that sound and sound producing apparatus is not confined to men only; that sound, as energy (as Agni) is found in God's other creations also and provides a perspective on men, animals, birds, etc.-all creatures living a homogeneous life on this planet. It goes to show that all the notes of a scale are a gift of nature around us or that musical notes were realized from the natural cries of birds and animals, or, that svaras were not invented by the human being; they were there in their elemental energy and within the propensity of the sounds of

animals.

Conclusion:-

An all-inclusive understanding of various factors of life is an essential aspect of the philosophy of music. To understand the inner psychology and the stream of consciousness behind our life and arts, an integrated approach is not only useful but absolutely necessary on account of demands made by these arts as living forms. However, it requires to be noted that it is much easier to correlate the written word, of the Veda, philosophy, literature, etc. with the referential arts, or at least to the referential aspects of all the literary and plastic arts. The Indian dance till the present-day uses mythology, Puranic stories and epics; painting and sculpture also use individualized objects. The same approach is possible for music using full import of words. However, the purer aspects of music or the non-referential aspects of music were realized, even before Bharata wrote his treatise, in the conception of jati-gana and later in the conception of raaga. Thus, in a nutshell, it may be said that the philosophy of music is contained in the living style and philosophy of the enlightened community which experiences life in consonance with nature, other beings and other men who find through music their communication in the membership of the larger .

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