

Spiritual aspects of music and dance

Abstract

Sacred Sanskrit literature states that any pathway to God-realisation (the pinnacle in spiritual evolution) is underpinned by increasing the spiritual positivity (*Sattva*) in oneself and in one's environment, and eradicating negativity (*Raja-Tama*). That is why it recommends that this ethos be the driving force behind one's attitude, thoughts, behaviour and deeds. Music and dance too need to abide by these fundamentals for the holistic benefit of the individual and society, and more importantly, their advancement in Spirituality. Unknown to most of the world nowadays, ancient Indian culture understood these concepts and practised the art of music and dance as a path to God.

When some seekers (undertaking spiritual practice under the guidance of the Maharshi University of Spirituality) were attending the daily *Āratī* (ritual of waving a lit lamp in front of a Deity and Saints, accompanied by singing of hymns), they started behaving strangely, which was completely alien to their personality. By researching this strange response to devotional music, it became clear that the cause of such behaviour was spiritual in nature and was attributable to the influence of negative energies. Ancient Sanskrit literature has also recognised and elaborated upon attacks by negative energies. Taking seekers who behaved like this, and exposing them to various other genres of music prompted a variety of behaviours and dance movements depending on what they were listening to. Studying these findings broadened the research team's view of the impact of music and dance. In comparison, the current scope of mainstream research in such art-forms is limited to physical and psychological areas such as increasing productivity, entertainment and reducing anxiety or stress. Using bio-feedback instruments and advanced sixth sense, the spiritual research team demonstrated that one's spiritual state influences his/her choices in music and dance and vice versa. It showed that there is an impact of any given genre of music and dance on the performer, the environment and the audience.

Encouraged by such seminal findings, the team studied the spiritual aspects of sound. In physics, it is commonly believed that sound produces a relatively low level of energy when compared with other forms of energy such as kinetic and thermal energy. From a spiritual perspective, however sound has spiritual energy associated with it and is a manifestation of the powerful Cosmic Ether Principle. When conducting

experiments with spiritually related sounds such as *mantras*, it was observed that the possibilities of using sound as a medium for transfer of energy dramatically increased. Some sounds resulted in extraordinary healing at the physical and psychological levels, such as curing eczema and addictions and improving overall well-being. Furthermore, it was found that sound energy can be used as a way to fuel spiritual growth and acts as an enabler for faster spiritual progress towards the ultimate goal of God-realisation.

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