

TAAL-TATVA IN TAALADHYAY OF SHARANGDEV'S SANGEET RATNAKAR

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Abstract: Two important texts we have in the history of Indian Music which provides valuable insights into the musical practices, theories, and music cultures of the bygone eras are Natyashastra around 200 BC by Bharat Muni and Sangeet Ratnakar around 13th century by Sharangdev. Taal and its nature in the then music is discussed in detail by both the authors. A separate chapter named "Taaladhyay" in Sangeetratnakar is the fifth chapter where he discusses various Taals its nature and its significance in the ancient and medieval music. There are nine Taal characteristics discussed in this chapter which is considered as the crucial aspects of the Taal. These nine aspects of Taal are the principles of the Taal and nowhere it is mentioned that these are Praan of the Taal. The term Dash-Praan is widely used nowadays and surprisingly the authentic texts refer these aspects of Taal as Tatva and not Praan (Soul).

Keywords: Taal-Tatva, Taaladh, Sangeet Ratnakar, Sharangdev

INTRODUCTION

The tradition of treatises in Indian Music begins from the "Saamveda" and the great musicologists have contributed in this tradition. One of these great musicologists is Sharangadeva. He contributed to Indian tradition by conferring his treatise named as "Sangeet Ratnakar" around 13th century which is known as the reference book of all the genres in Indian Music.

The "Sangeet Ratnakar" is a classical Sanskrit text on musicology and Indian classical music. It was written by Sharngadeva in the 13th century and is considered one of the most important texts in the field of Indian classical music. The book covers various aspects of music, including raga theory, musical instruments, and compositions. It's a valuable resource for anyone interested in the study of Indian classical music. Is there anything specific you'd like to know about it?

The "Taaladhyaya" is one of the chapters in the "Sangeet Ratnakar" by Sharngadeva. In this chapter, Sharngadeva discusses various aspects of rhythm and time measurement in Indian classical music. He provides detailed explanations of different taalas (rhythmic cycles), their divisions, and how they are used in musical compositions and performances. The "Taaladhyaya" is a crucial part of the "Sangeet Ratnakar" as it lays the foundation for understanding rhythm and timing, which are essential elements in Indian classical music. It includes descriptions of various taalas, their components, and mathematical calculations related to rhythm. The "Taaladhyaya" in the "Sangeet Ratnakar" is highly regarded as a comprehensive and invaluable source of knowledge on rhythm and time measurement in Indian classical music.

ROLE OF ANCIENT TEXTS

Ancient texts play a significant role in music for several reasons, ancient texts often contain the foundational knowledge of a culture's music. They provide insights into historical musical styles, instruments, and techniques, preserving a cultural heritage that can be passed down through generations. Musicians frequently draw inspiration from ancient texts, using them as a source of ideas for lyrics, melodies, and themes. Ancient poetry, myths, and stories have inspired countless compositions throughout history. When performing music from a specific time period or culture,

ancient texts can provide authenticity. Musicians can use these texts to understand the language, pronunciation, and context of the lyrics, ensuring an accurate and respectful interpretation of the music. Historical Perspective: Ancient texts offer valuable historical insights into the role of music in various societies. They can reveal the social, political, and religious significance of music in different eras, enriching our understanding of the past. Education and Research: Musicologists and scholars rely on ancient texts to study the evolution of music theory, notation, and performance practices. These texts serve as primary sources for academic research and help uncover musical traditions that may have otherwise been lost. Ancient texts can facilitate cross-cultural exchange by enabling musicians to explore and adapt music from different traditions. This can lead to the creation of fusion genres and innovative musical expressions. Ancient texts are a valuable resource for musicians and scholars, offering a window into the musical traditions and cultural contexts of the past while serving as a source of inspiration and authenticity in contemporary music.

SIGNIFICANCE OF TAALADHYAY

The "Taaladhyaya" offers an extensive and systematic exploration of various aspects of rhythm. It covers different taalas (rhythmic cycles), their subdivisions, and their application in musical compositions. This thorough coverage makes it a foundational text for understanding rhythm in Indian classical music. Sharngadeva provides detailed mathematical calculations related to rhythm, which adds an element of precision to the understanding of taalas. These calculations help musicians and scholars alike in mastering the intricacies of rhythm. The chapter not only delves into theoretical concepts but also explains how to apply these concepts in practice. It offers insights into how musicians can use taalas effectively in their compositions and performances. Sangeet Ratnakar as a whole, including the "Taaladhyaya," is historically significant because it provides insights into the musical practices and theories of the time (13th century). It helps us trace the evolution of Indian classical music.

Even today, the "Taaladhyaya" serves as a vital educational resource for students and practitioners of Indian classical music. It continues to be studied and referenced by musicians and scholars to deepen their understanding of rhythm. The "Taaladhyaya" in the "Sangeet Ratnakar" is a revered text that contributes significantly to the knowledge of rhythm in Indian classical music. Its systematic approach, mathematical precision, and practical insights make it a timeless resource for anyone interested in this musical tradition. In the context of Indian classical music, "Margi" and "Deshi" taals are classifications of taalas (rhythmic cycles) that are discussed in the "Sangeet Ratnakar," an ancient Sanskrit text on musicology.

MARGI TAAL

Margi taals are considered to be the classical or "pure" taals in Indian music. These taals follow strict and traditional rhythmic patterns and are associated with the more classical and structured forms of music, such as classical vocal music and classical instrumental music. Margi taals are characterized by their complex mathematical structures and precision.

DESI TAAL

Desi taals, on the other hand, are considered regional or folk taals. They are often associated with folk music and regional music traditions in India. Desi taals are generally simpler and less structured than Margi taals. They have a more flexible and adaptable rhythm and are used in various folk and semi-classical forms of music.

These classifications help categorize taals based on their complexity, usage, and traditional associations. While Margi taals are associated with classical and highly structured music, Desi taals are linked to more regional and folk music expressions. Understanding these classifications is important for musicians and scholars in Indian classical music as it helps them choose the appropriate taal for different musical compositions and contexts.

SOME IMPORTANT SHLOKAS IN TAALADHYAYA AND ITS EXPLANATION

nanamarargelayo yatina syatkalanidhao

tam dakshinam shivam naumi chitram vrittimayam dhruvam

Explanation: - this is the first shloka of the Taaladhyaya, where Sharangdeva cleverly mentions about his bhakti and margi Taal.

Meaning - dhruva, chitra, vartik and dakshin marga are responsible for Taal's various Yatis and ultimately they get merged in the shivarupa.

taalstal pratishtayamiti chattrorghatri smritha

gitam vadyam tatha nruttam yatastaale pratishtitam

Meaning- when 'a' pratyay is given to tal dhatu 'Taal' is created, off course the Geet, Vadya and nrutta are stably established in this Taal.

kalo laghvadimitiya

Meaning: The time which is counted by units like Laghu, guru and pluta.

According to Sharangadeva "Anga" is not a separate principle and as per the present taal system anga is the basic unit of Taal.

nishabda tu kalochyate

Meaning: Nishabda Kriyas are known as 'Kala'.

Nishabda Kriya of Taal:- The kriyas applied in the "Marg" are Dhruvaka, Sarpini, Krushna, Padmini, Visarjita, Vikshipta, Pataka and Patita.

syadavapotha nishkramo vikshepaschya praveshakaha

nishabdotti chturdhokta sashabdapi chaturvidha

dhruva shamyā talastāal sannipāat itirata

pata kala tu sa dnyeya tasam laskhmabhidadhmahe

Meaning: Avaap, nishkram, vikshep and praveshak are the four Nishabda kriyas, also Dhruva, Shamyā, Taal and Sannipaat are Shashabda Kriya.

Sharangadeva discussed various issues in *Taala charcha* in Sangeet Ratnakar and its sequence is as follows:-

- Margi Taal Lakshan
- Taal Vyakhya
- Kaal
- Kriya
- Nishabda & Sashabda Kriya
- Marg
- Jati
- Kala
- Laya
- Yati
- Graha
- Geet & provision of Taal in Geetak
- Deshi Taal Lakshanam
- 120 Desi Taal
- Prastar

THE TERM DASHA-PRAAN (SOUL)

After studying the whole Taaladhyay we come to the conclusion that Sharangadeva nowhere used a term which is known as “Dasha Pran”. He discussed only Nine Taalatva which are as follows:-

- Kaal
- Kriya
- Marga
- Jati
- Kala
- Laya

- Yati
- Graha
- Prastar

CONCLUSION

Nishanka Sharangadev discusses the fundamental principles of Taal which are Kaal, Kriya, Marga, Jati (Bhed), Kala, Laya, Yati, Graha & Prastara. But as new conception has evolved that there are ten Pranas of Taal. In the Taaladhyay of Sangeetratnakar nowhere discusses the term 'Anga'. Hence there is no point in considering Anga as a separate entity in fundamental principles of Taal.

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