

MANTRASHASTRA TANTRASHASTRA AND MUSIC

Dr. S. N. Bhavasar

While writing on Yoga and Music, Ayurveda and Music, Veda and Music some of the common issues have been already dealt with only the remaining ones, have been focused here.

Dharma-ārtha-kāma-mokṣa set forth the ends of human life. They are said to be the four pillars of life with all its various activities. Any discipline has to anticipate them while formulating a system. All sciences, learnings and lores, are basically categorised under these in a general scheme of cultural praxis in India. Mantrashastra covers all these aspects of life. Every activity is accompanied by some rite, some mantra, in this or that form. Life has six phases in all - i) existence (asti), ii) birth (jayate), iii) grows (vardhate), iv) transforms or precipitates (viparinamate) v) decays (apakshiyate), vi) dies (mriyate). In man the very first stage “existence” is indicated by inception (conception) called garbhadhāra, which is accompanied by a mantra. Even the last stage, “death”, - end, on the thirteenth day of the death, is characterised by an appropriate mantra. These are covered under sanaskara, sixteen in number. Life in India thus begins, endures and ends with mantra. Mantra thus covers all the four ends of human life with its four corresponding ashrama format, Brahmacharya, (celibate), Grhastha (household), Vanaprastha (following the forest) and the sanyasa (renunciation).

TYPES OF MANTRA

There are three major groups of Mantra, Vedic, Tantric and Laukika. Vedic are those that are formulated in accordance with Vedic spirit and conventions, also befitting the rites, rituals and sacrifices. Tantric are those that differ from the Vedic in form and contents, but ultimately in at individual self-perfection. While the laukika, are those belonging to mundane goals of life, even very lowest, if not negative practical needs like Jarana, Marana, Stam bhana, Vashikarana, Vidvesana, Uccatana (provoking, killing, fixing, captivating, creating enmity, uprooting), called satkar ma, etc. Actually, there is no compartmentalization in the body of mantric lore because it is the context that decides the employment of particular mantra. Laukika mantras are often formulated in regional, languages, popular dialects and phrases, coupled with certain sanskrit ones, as such are called shabara mantras. The Jain and Bauddha mantras, form a class in themselves, distinct from Vedic and Tantric both. Generally tantra refers to all such mantras and therefore, they are often called Non- Vedic.

However all the mantras have unity of form and phrases, contents and meanings.

VEDIC MANTRAS

Vedas form the cultural base of India. The first general consideration is that all the rules and regulations associated with Vedic tradition are also attached with mantric lore. The most salient feature of veda-mantras, e.g. any rk, or say gayatri mantra, is their macrocosmic character, as distinct from the individual or personal ones. Because all other mantras, have an individual or personal application, aspiration and goal. Vedic cosmogony, recognises three levels, earthy (bhuh), mid-regional (bhuvah, antariksa), and celestial (dyauh, sah), associated with corresponding divinities and other phenomena. The divinities also symbolize cosmic forces and powers. The aim of Vedic mantras, besides in the context of sacrifices is to achieve equipoise, balance, harmony, symbiosis, corporate life as expressed at the end of rigveda:

sarigacchadhvam sam vadaddhvam
sam va manansi janatam |
“Let us go together, let us talk together, let our minds perceive together” |
Its culmination is to be found reflected in the following shanti-mantra

prithivi shantih, antariksam shantih
dyauh shantih om shantis shantio shantih | |

Let the earth be peaceful, the midregion be peaceful, the heaven be peaceful,”...

This is especially the case with rigveda, samveda is a musical adaptation of it, yajurveda is a ritualistic, while the atharvaveda has some peculiar characters. Here we find all the phenomena, good and bad, auspicious and inauspicious of all the three cosmic types as well as that of an individual, family, society and nation. In fact it is the atharvaveda, which is the source for all sorts of mantric lore, Vedic Tantric, laukika and shabara.

As compared with a common idea of mantra, a small body of syllables, phrases often one, two, or a group of at the most 15/16 letters, the Vedic mantra is a stotra an enbogy, comprising of a rk, yajus, saman or chandas with one, two, three, four or five lines. This also reveals their cosmic character. Actually veda itself means Vedic mantras and brahmanas in technical Vedic context (mantra-brahmanayor veda samjna).

Another characteristic of Vedic lore is the role of accent, an important factor in deciding the meaning of the word. They are three, keeping pace with grammer and phonetics. It has been shown that Samavedic and musical svaras have been derived out of them. It has also shown that, the formulation of eightfold modes of Vedic recitation called astavikrtis might have paved the way for formulating the complex structure of Classical Indian Music. Vedic mantras are associated with rites and rituals, involving construction of pyres etc. The oblations were offered in the sacred fires, while observing certain self discipline, rules and regulations, upon which the later mantra texts have formulated the complex structure of the

Mantrashastra. The later development of Mantrashastra follows the course of sectarian schools of Indian tradition, like shaiva, shakta, vaishnava, ganapatya etc. The mantra was accordingly adopted to suit the context. Yet the general frame and structure of mantric discipline remained the same.

ASPECTS OF MANTRA

As a discipline mantra involved five major aspects i) asana (seat), pranayama (breathing control) ii) nyasa (internal placement of divine principles and forces), iii) mudras (finger locks), iv) digbandha (fixation of quarters), v) dhyana (meditation), Japa (repeation of mantra), homa (oblations in the sacred fire), purashcarana (long term following).

Asana refers to four main posture; pranayama to purification of nadis and also to the one used for transcending chakras, one above the other, from muladhara, at the base of spinalcord, and at the brahmarandhra, above the top of the head, seven in all Nyasa occupies an important position in Mantrashastra. It means establishing, putting up, placing properly. In mantric context it refers to a



rite where in the aspirant purifies his own body and then at each organ, a limb, establishes letters, mahabhutas, tanmatras (five each) called anganyasa, bhutanyasa, aksharanyasa. The main idea behind this is an identity of the aspirant (sadhaka) and of the mantra-devata the presiding divinity of the mantra, symbolising the divine power, the sadhya, along with the vehicle (vahana, transporting agent that connects the two), called

sadhana (lit. the instrument) by performing nyasa the aspirant establishes the mantra-devata and letters in himself, called mantra pratistha or prana-pratistha. Naradas aphorism (Bhakti-sutra) tanjijapas tadartha-bhavanam, i.e. “its repetition is the aspiration to arrive at or contemplate its meaning”, through in the context of bhakti, indicated the same sense. This is the philosophy which it tries to solve by the method of bhakti or mantrajapa.

Drawing yantra and writing mantra over it is the first stage of invoking mantra ritual (the sanskara), which has generally ten characters janana (birth), dipana (enkindling), bodhana (creating consciousness/establishing cognition), todana (training lit. beating), abhisheka (giving bath), vimali karana (purification), jivana (inducing vigour), tarpana (gratifying), gopana (protecting), appayana (nourishing) etc.

Mantrapuja i.e. worshipping, involves sixteen factors. This is done on the mantra written on the yantra the diagram which is a geometrical configuration, consisting of point (bindu), triangle, quadrangle, circle etc. mantra is written in the spaces between them or in the centres or at an appropriate place as per division. While doing so digbandha, fixing its quarters is made that protects it and also marks the the limits the field of activity of the mantra as the person. This is followed by the rite called mantra-caitanya-siddhi an act of accomplishing consciousness of mantra, it is awakening and inducing power in the mantra.

The last feature is that of purashcarana, lit. to move forward, procession etc. It refers to repetitive mantric cycle, with one hundred and eight as a unit called rosary garland (mala), could be raised up to even crores (koti) per sec, covering days, months or years. Twelve years unit is called a tapas (lit. penance) while satra (yearly), saptaha (weekly) etc. are the smaller units. It could be individual or even collective. The latter has public aim overall well being in general. This is followed by mantra-bhavana, or chintana as it already indicated. Here the preceptor (guru) and the intended divinity (ista-devata) are invoked. The other dictum ‘shivo bhutva shivam yajet’ shiva be worshipped by becoming “shiva” also is to be understood. This is called, inner meditation, (antaranga) repetition being external comparatively.

Besides, these central features, mantric lore anticipates some other factors that are covered below.

NUMBER:

Division of mantra is based upon the number of letters contained in the mantra. A pinda mantra is one which consists of only one letter, is also therefore called ekakshara-mantra (mono syllable). The one with two letters is called kartari (lit. scissor which has two blades), while those that have three to nine letters are called bija-mantras. Those having ten to twenty, are simply called mantras, that is what we generally understand by the term in practice. If the number exceeds twenty it forms mala-



No. of Letters		Types	Function
i)	Two	scissor (<i>kartari</i>)	chedana (cutting)
ii)	Three	suchi (niddle)	bhedana (piercing)
iii)	Four	<i>mudgara</i>	bhanjana (pricking)
iv)	Five	<i>musala</i> (pestle)	kshobhana (perturbing)
v)	Six	<i>shrinkhala</i> (chain)	bandhana (binding)
vi)	Seven	<i>kavaca</i> (armor)	rakshana (defence)
vii)	Eight-nine	<i>parashu</i> (axe)	vishleshana (spitting)
viii)	Ten	<i>shakti</i>	akarshana (captivating)
ix)	Eleven	<i>parasya</i>	various functions like those of
x)	Twelve	<i>chakra</i> (wheel)	concerned with attacking the
xi)	Thirteen	<i>kusila</i>	enemy, troupes etc.
xii)	Fourteen	<i>naraca</i>	chedana (cutting)
xiii)	Fifteen	<i>bbushundi</i>	bhedana (piercing)
ivx)	Sixteen	<i>padma</i> (lotus)	bhanjana (pricking)

GENDER/SEX

Mantras have been viewed as male, female and neutral. The female mantras are called 'vidyas'. Hum, phat are associated with male mantras, svaha, svadha for female, while namah, for the neutrals. The male mantras are employed for abhichara (black magic etc.) i.e. sixfold acts cited above. For wealth also they used. The female ones are used for growth, nourishment palliation, peace etc. The neutral ones are meant for any other aims than these two. Especially to achieve religious merit, spiritual attainment, knowledge, emancipation (mukti).

COSMIC ASPECT

Following genesis and macrocosmic considerations mantras are said to be fiery or solar (agni), and lunar (saumya). Agnisomatmikam jagat (the world is of the nature of fire and moon (hot and cold), the sun and the moon, is the base for this division.

THEISTIC FACTORS:

Association of mantras with the deities also divides them. Thus we have mantras of shiva, shakti, vishnu, ganesha etc.

SOCIAL FACTORS:

Friendship or animosity are the social aspects of life. Mantras also have been accordingly classified as friend and enemy type. This depends upon the consideration of acts, good or bad in a given context. Shantikarma, krurakarma are opposite types and the former is friendly, the latter otherwise. Thus good action, friendship, female mantras form one direction. While the bad action (cruel act) enmity and male type mantra form opposite direction. Extensions of such relationship are to be found in the classification of mantras like those of arishatru, siddha, saddhy, susiddha types while sevaka (servant),

poshaka (nourishing), ghataka (deceiving) also indicate such impact.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS: INTENSION

Mantras are recited generally with a view to achieve or accomplish something either of mundane nature or of higher type, covering human welfare. Such mantras are called sakama (associated with desires, aspiration) while others which are not accompanied by such mundane aspiration are called niskama mantras. Ajapa gayatri is an example of this type or even, when there are no power types of intentions behind japa, it becomes niskama. This depends also on the intension aspiration of the person as much on the mantras. The sakamatva is parallel to vrata and niskamatva is to mahavrata which terms the lower one into the higher one.

STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS:

We have four or five states of consciousness, awaking (jagrata), dreaming (svapna), susupti i.e. sleeping, deep sleeping and transcendental (turiya and turiyatita). These are the dimensions that are not known to many. Only a very few initiates following higher path of yoga, devotion, knowledge alone can offer to understand and follow. Thus male mantras be repeated when the solar cycle works in the body i.e. when the right nostril indicative of pingala, sun, hot phase, starts functioning opposite is for female type mantra. The neutral types of mantras be repeated when both the nostril function simultaneously, i.e. through sushumna, indicative of moderate hot-cold phase, midday or midnight, full moon or new moon phase etc. This involves deep aspects of astronomy, yoga, anatomy, physiology, and psychology etc. the great secret of Mantrashastra.

TIME FACTOR:

Time is another dimension that decides the nature of mantra. Time has two aspects, occasional, ephemeral, transitory and perpetual, eternal called naimittika and shasvata respectively. For instance, repetition of mantras for appearing particular deity or planetary deity (graha-devatas) are temporary, transitory, types of mantras, while the nityas, the perpetual ones like sandhyamantra i.e. daily performance are of this type and are intended for general well being and good health of an individual, family, society, nation or the whole world. The shanti mantras are of such types.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

From Indian point of view there are three features of mind, satvika, rajasika, tamasika, signifying knowledge, purity, action-vigour, ignorance, inertia, etc. respectively. Generally dakshinamarga in Tantra signifies satvika, vamamarga, indicates tamasika while both put together give rise to a third one.

DIRECTION

Dick-bandha forms one of the steps in mantra sadhana, even otherwise out of ten directions, upper and lower (urdhva, adho i.e. zenith and nadir) are not considered in mantra-shastra. The other eight have been assigned meaning and significance. Thus performing punya karma (auspicious act), elimination of ignorance or sin east is the direction, Indra is the divinity and these are appropriate mantras for the same. West is for nourishing effect varuna is the divine person, south is for provocation, disease, lord Yama in the deity and north is for peace, lord Soma (Shiva in puranas) is the divinity. The mid-quarters have

similar details with reference to mantra. Northeast (ishanya) is the most auspicious direction for all the higher aspiration. In yoga, it is said to be the direction for Brahma-prapti, moksha, supreme knowledge etc.

SPACE-REGION:

Mantra siddhi also is associated with space or region. Temple, river confluence, mountain peak, caves, forests, etc. have been specially recommended for particulars kind of mantrasadhana.

ASTRAL FACTORS:

This is one of the most important aspects behind mantrasadhana. The main consideration here is the relation of astral conjunctions, with that of human weI being in particular and living beings in general. The astral phenomena is classified generally with respect to solar and lunar cycle, caused by rotatory motions of sun, moon, earth and other planets. Thus the asteroids (nakshatras) or astral conjunctions are either good or bad, friendly or cruel, male or female etc.

On the other hand the planetary motions, with reference to sun, have been subjected to temporal considerations. We then have temporal cycle, with its small sub-cycles ranging from yuga-varsha (year) to pala, the smallest measurable unit, though there are further refinements. The temporal cycles are marked by transitory phases called parvas (lit. segments). They further are specified in forms of lunar day (tithi), day (weekly day), nakshatra (asterism), yoga (conjunction), karana and lagna (with ref. to sunrise point in the sky). All the astral aspects have been subject to binary classification like shubha-ashubha (good bad), opposite to each other, relatively, in themselves and to man, i.e. the context. With this background all the astral phenomena have been assigned values and meanings. For cruel act, one has to select cruel asterism, day, lunar aspect, karana and yoga, so also other details. All these have to be adjusted, before the mantra is employed. Abhinava Gupta says that out of all these the tithi (lunar day) is the most important. In case of emergency and necessity tithi itself would suffice.

COLOUR:

In totality, the colour also has a place in mantric lore. The type of mantra (solar-lunar), friendly or otherwise, astral aspects, ethical factors, and type of action also have affinity with colour. Thus for blackmagic black; for cruel once red; for growth, nourishment, the yellow; for the auspicious one white, are the colours. The colours also have been associated with casts (varna-jati), shudra, kshatriya, vaishya and brahmina respectively. They inturn, also symbolize creative elements, like earth, etc. and their shapes and so, on. Concept of symmetry and similar other considerations are called forth to understand and appreciate the hidden significance behind these complexities. This includes, geometrical consideration. In mantra-shastra drawing yantra (diagram), has a unique place. Geometry deals with points, lines, cones, triangles, circles, spheres, along with measurements, sequences, ratios, proportions. These create geometrical configurations adopting metaphysical concepts of mantra as a whole.

Concept of yantra could better be understood, in the context of mantra and tantra, forming the triune concept.



MANTRA-YANTRA-TANTRA:

Mantrashastra, recognises three types of yantras i.e. drawings, from structural point of view. First is the one called bhuprsta it one drawn on the ground, i.e. a plain drawing, similar to layout or blueprint in modern sense. Day to day example is the linear drawing drawn on the floor in front of the house in Indian tradition often called rangoli or rangavali. The second is skiled kurmaprsta, which means the one similar to the back of tortoise, as is seen put before Indian temples, slightly elevated from the floor. The first type is one dimensional while this is two dimensional. The third is meruprsta, which means the one that has structure like that of mountain peak meru, i.e. the whole mountain symbolizing the three dimensional complete body, the whole temple so to say. Any temple, as we see anywhere in India is but the elevation, expression of the linear blue print type. Actually the temple is erected, covered on the yantra itself.

Yantra grammatically is derived from the root yam to control, meaning the one that is under control or that controls (active and passive sense), indicative of systematization, methodology, processing, ordering. Machine is the secondary meaning of yantras.

Tantra is derived from the root tan to extend, stretch, weave, fabricate and means a piece of cloth, a literary composition (a book), a living body. Both these terms are used very appropriately by Charaka in sutrastrana “vayus tantrayantradhrah” i.e. “Vayu is the upholder of the bodily machine”. Mantra on the otherhand is derived from man - to think, to know, to be conscious, Mantra thus indicates living spirit, mantra-caitanya, the soul of the mantra as a person, yantra, the process, method, technique of construction, materialization and tantra is actual manifestation, physical form of the mantra. The expression “Yantram mantramayam proktam, devata-mantra-rupini” means that the yantra is the form of mantra and the deity is also of the nature of mantra itself. Thus mantra a whole means to body, mind and spirit together.

TANTRA:

It is in this sense that we have to understand the term tantra and the very tradition of tantra, which has emerged out of Vedic tradition itself parallel to ritualistic, sacrificial tradition on one hand and to the spiritual, mystic, tradition (karmakanda and jhanakanda). Though on higher level they have no segregation, practically they are poles apart. Actually tantra incorporates yoga, devotion, knowledge etc. Infact in its positive sense tantra, with all its five limbs, kalpa, tantra, patala, paddhati, bijkosha, symbolizes overall perfection of Mantrashastra.

To be qualified in tantra initiation is the preconditions otherwise first-hand knowledge is impossible because it is a living tradition, a complex discipline. Mantra-diksha mantric intitiation is the first step in tantra tradition.

MANTRA IN TANTRIC TRADITION:

There are three constituents and components of mantras the male, the female and the unified third sharing both of these. Shiva and Shakti (god, goddess, father, mother, male, female) together give rise to the third entity the mantra. They are also termed bindu nada, bija. Shiva is the soul, Shakti is the body, Prana is the link, the mind. Symbolic terms for these are sun, moon and fire, or in general, agni-soma.

Every mantra is thus an organic entity, evolves out of union of male female factors. The terms agnisoma also indicate heat-cold phenomena the physiological aspect of mantra which the aspirant experiences while constantly repeating.

Philosophically mantra is regarded as an emerging agent out of the pure, absolute reality the divine flame the jyoti, Shaivites, speak of it as jyotirlinga. Creation of mantra is the process, called sphota, signifying bursting spontaneously. Sphota is a term also in grammar. The sphota is the phenomenon that gives rise to bindu and varna (bindu sphota and varnasphota). Nada is the name for this process, which has two forms, dhvani (sound) and varna (letters), mantra is concerned more with varnas. Tantra, incorporate monism and dualism i.e. vedanta and sankhya, yoga and ayurveda, astronomy, astrology as well. While accepting monism it accepts Shakti or Shiva as the supreme reality and in either case it speaks also of supreme reality as supreme consciousness or cosmic consciousness (parasamvit or mahasamvit) of absolute reality also it speaks as light (praksha). An integration of both Shiva and Shakti, also is sought for which is designated a state called samarashya lit a state wherein both of them have equivalence as against samkhyas duality, i.e. prakrti and purushg as opposite to each other. In mantric context sphota is the result of creative impulse in the mind of supreme reality (ekoham bahusyam as found in upanishadas). The sphota has both the formal and semantic aspects varnasphota and arthasphota. The varnasphota has varna-pada-vakya, which is the linguistic aspect of Mantrashastra. While the arthasphota indicates the divine qualities of the presiding deity of the mantra, both are found by the relation (samavaya), concomitance. Through the form one has to reach the meaning the deity. The form in lakshana (indicator), the meaning is lakshya, the indicated, of this grammar speaks in terms of abhidha (direct) lakshana (indicatory), vyanjana (implicated), as the semantic levels of word.

Tantrashastra has developed both formal and semantic aspects of mantra. The formal aspects are the letters that constitute the body of the mantra, associated with each part or organ of the mantraperson. To accomplish this the aspirant has to identify himself with the deity by instituting the letters accordingly (nyasa), endowed with other factors like gender, colour, varna (cast), which technically is called dhyanameditation; because it involves also the yogic way. Conversely dhyana also indicates that, the deity, the divine qualities also are the result of contemplation as seen by the seer in the state of deep meditation.

This leads to other higher aspect of mantrasadhana related to the states of consciousness, vaikhari, madhyama, pashyanti and para (which also has linguistic significance), they stand for loud gross, middle (very low), mental and the last as the ever awakened state of mantra recitational process, as implied by the expression “tadjapas tadarthabhavanam” cited above. They are also generally associated with waking, dreaming, sleeping and everconscious state that pervades all the three states respectively. These are the successive states, of mantrasadhana. At last mantrajapa becomes steady, continuous, easy, effortless, an occupation, day and night: Ajapagayatri is such a state, wherein soham or hamsah (the former is Vedic, the latter, the Tantric way of repetition), constituting so and aham (He and I), coupled with inhalation and exhalation that constitute the respiration cycle. Such an accomplishment (siddhi) has been referred to by patanjali in “janmausadhi mantra · tapah samadhijah”. Here the sadhaka (the aspirant) sadhya (aim, i.e. the deity and the divine qualities) and the sadhana (the instrument i.e. mantra japa) all become one, the diversity merges into unity, all the states of consciousness (waking, dreaming, sleeping) get unified in the transcended state (turiya) and get the name purna-jagrta-avastha, an everawakened state. This is a

highest reward of the sadhana, the spiritual practice.

MANTRA-TANTRA-MUSIC: AN OVERVIEW

A glimpse of the previous pages would take no time to find affinities between mantra- antra and music. A detailed comparative features have already been brought out in other articles. They have to be recalled here. Only those that need to be introduced have been summarily presented here. An identity of tantra and mantra has been conveniently anticipated.

Music is basically a sound so also the mantra. Both have the same source. Sound according to grammarians has sphota as the initial cause. Music also accepts sphota as the cause of sound, the word, which in tum, is caused by the movement of bodily air, characterised by touch (sparsha), vibration (spanda) and power (shakti). Sphota gives rise to dhvani and varna (sound and letters). Music combines both of them, is the function of both, while mantra is the function of varna sphota only. Sound being powerful, exerts influence not only on the resider or the producer, but also on the listener. Bhartrihari, rightly states that the efficacy and the power of sound could be seen when the mantra being repeated and employed for multifying the toxic or poisonous effects in the body.

In the place of dhvani, the Music, Yoga and Tantra speak of nada. Infact nada is practically the sound only. It is the subler form of the later. Nada is an essence of music and varna (letters) is that of mantra. The Tantric name of letters, besides verna is kala (phase, digit). Thus bindu, nada-kala is the nature of mantra in trantric sense and varna-pada-vakya is the nature of speech in grammer, both are the products of sphota.

Mantra has three kinds Vedic, Tantric and Laukika. Following Vedic tradition, all mantras have svara, varna, devata, rsi, chandas, jati, prayoga etc. Vedic mantras come very close to music as has been shown, elsewhere. We have seen that mantra structurally, constitute a single letter or the whole hymn (rk) or stotra in general. A mantra upto twenty is the mantra proper and is to be repeated mentally, while those beyond twenty, called stostra or stutis are to be recited loudly. It is stostra that offers a very important link between music and mantra-tantra.

Almost all the pieces of music or musical compositions that form the lingual text are stotras or stutis, of god, goddess, guru respect worthy, the king etc. The stotra brings out the features of the god, goddess that indicate gesticular (nrta, natya) aspect of music also stotra has also a poetic value, in itself musicality is an additional dimension.

As a piece of poetry stotra is full of sentiment (rasa) and semantic connotation (bhava) and beauty or aesthetic elements, along with rhym and rhythm the metrical dimensions sentiment and psychic content (bhava-the semantic aspect) are the soul of poetry (rasatmakam vakyam kavyam), while rhym and rhythm are that of metre, the embellishments of poetry. Music elevates rasa to nada; rhym and rhythm to svara and raga, that bestows atheistic colour and perfection to it. All these are possible through nada itself. It translates repetitiveness into continuity of mantra, or into a continuum of stotra. Thus nada combines, poetry, music, grammer and yoga or tantra.



Upanisadas, often talk of rasa as a Brahman the supreme soul (rasa vai sah), which comes down on poetic level as sentiment (kavya rasa). It is stated in the upanisadas that having obtained rasa the aspirant becomes delegated (anandi bhavati). Rasa form the organic aspect the heart of poetry nada in the form of svara and raga, add musicality, colour beauty, aesthetic perfection to rhym and rhythm. The sentiment (rasa), the resonance (nada) and semantic aspect (bhava) when put together, mark the culmination of poetry, music, mantra, a unique products of divine chemistry (brahma-rasayana).

It is interestingly to note that poetry identifies, rasa, the poetry essence as bhahman itself. Music identifies nada as brahman while grammer speaks of speech, word as the brahman. Music in this light, brings out all these aspects of brahman a confluence of these three together.

In classical music, the prabandha type of composition comes very close to stotra or stuti. Even in an ordinary piece of music, a raga composition (a chiz in modem sense) along with its prastara (extensions) run parallel to stotra type.

Mantra is composed of letters that symbolize psychosomatic power in concentrated form, therefore need alose attention. The letter (varna) is produced in the living body, and as such is a substance a product (dravya) has properties and function. Thus letter carries with it earthly, waterly, fiery, arial or ethereal properties on one hand or solar, lunar or neutral (hot, cold, neutral) properties on the other, which induces, similar power in the mantra as a whole. In stostra it is totality that creates the atmosphere that slightly differs from mantra. Daily, seasonal, yearly continuous repeation of fixed number of mantra is essential for strengthening inducing the power of mantra. More the repeation, more intense is the power the efficacy. This effect is achieved in music by riyaz (abhyasa). It adds power to musicians stamina, adds melody to the voice, creates continuous cyclic patterns of energy. There is tradition in music to employ om as either as a base for riyaz or a form of riyaz itself, which thus combines grammers, yoga, mantra, tantra, and music together. The culmination is achieved when there is an identification of the musician with contents of the mantra, deity the meaning that is semantic part that is presiding as a whole decides the strength and success of mantra. So also is the case with music, raga, a piece of dance or drama needs a alapa, zala, bola, tana gamaka etc. for its full manifestation or realisation. This is parallel to that of prana pratistha which mean establishing of prana in the body bhuta nyasa, aksharanyasa dhyana, japa and purascarana (long term repeation).

This could be exemplified, by just going through the classical composition of music, like prabandha type, wherein almost all the mantric features would be displayed. In recent times, the three great saints and the devotional musician of the south, Tyagaraja, Muttha Swani Dixitar and Shamshastri not to speak of Purandaradasa are those who combine, music, mantra and devotion. The other example would be of Agragharana as . represented by Dagara brothers who sing a highly rich musical composition of dhrupada, dhamara type, which are of devistuti in Sanskrit possessing matric power. In a sense all the music is a mantra lore an upasana, a mantric discipline. The author had a chance to listen to the famous Tantric, vidya-mantras called kadi-hadi (asakalahrimsakalahrim) in a classical musical way from late Shri Bhagavan Das Modi, who combined veda, yoga, tantra, music and ayurveda and navakhanda yogico-Tantric practices.

The gesticular aspect of Music, especially nrtya and natya, along with mental (satvika), physical (kayika)

and verbal (vacika), character . associated with mudras, involving poses (asanas), with particular meditative type (dhyana), along with appropriate sentiments and bhavas (psychological contents) are parallel to mantric lore as stated earlier.

Laukika or the popular type of mantra is similar to most of desi type (the light one in modern sense) like, thumari, tappa, tarana etc, which reflect regional and dialectic factors.

In music a few points deserve mention, the concept of komala (soft) and tivra (hard) vadivivadi, anuvadi-samvadi are parallel to solar and lunar (krura and saumya), friend and enemy (mitra, sastru), male-female aspects which are based on individual, familial, social, political relationships adopted in Mantrashastra from arthshastra (dandaniti - rajaniti).

If properly understood the yantra (diagram) in mantra is semantically, similar to writing notation music.

Mantra is purely a subjective personal, discipline excepting Vedic mantra (rks) that have cosmic significance which have both subjective and objective character. However, the devotional tradition has evolved also the mantric aspect as some universal mantras of Rama and Krisna. Music on the other hand has a very powerful subjective character. It is a recitation, while mantra is a repetition. Mantra has also a great power; it could be released and could be reversed or taken a back. If it be repeated in reverse manner it can be used to yield opposite effects. Being powerful one has to be very careful in repeating the mantra much so with the Vedic mantra. Patanjali, adds that, otherwise it would bestow contrary results on the part of the character. The other feature of the mantra, is its secrecy and also the privacy, while music has not, in open. Music is an art a skill as compared to mantra. Mantra yields the power music confers aesthetic values to the power.

Tantric tradition, represented and expounded in Shaivagama of Kashmira, especially by Abhinava Gupta and others, trace the music right from the sun. The rigveda, states that the sun is the soul of all the mobile and the immobile ones (suryoatma jagatah tasthusasca). He further says that all the seven svaras (notes) sa, re, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni, sa have been derived from the surya gayarti mantra “tat savitur varenyam”, etc. This is very strange, yet is quite significant. However we do not get any other source, that would corroborate this nor do we get any further detailings of this issue by him.

Suffice is to say that music could well be benefited by mantra-tantra shastra. In the sense that a musician could combine in himself a Mantric, a Tantric, within and a musician without mantra could be adopted as an inner discipline (antaranga-sadhana) and music as an external discipline (bahiranga-sadhana). We have such examples in Indian Tradition; like those of Narada, Nandi of the past or like those of Swami Ramadasa, Ekanatha, Haripada, Purandardasa, Tyagaraya and very recently like, Vishnu Digambar Pauskar, Swami D. R. Parvatikara, Abdul Kasim Khana etc. In these personalities, the Music is transformed into the Mantra nada yoga a perfection and accomplishment of music. It is the highest height of music.