

# Concept Of Mangala Verses; A Study Based On Musicological Texts In Sanskrit

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*Abstract - Mangala verses are the auspicious words that have been shown at the beginning of ancient Sanskrit texts. Generally, these verses consist of prayers of the author towards the god. Usage of Mangala verse is very common in every branch of knowledge traditions in Sanskrit. In the case of musicological texts in Sanskrit, Mangala verses have different functions. This paper aims to analyze different dimensions of Mangala verse.*

**Keywords:** Indian Musicology, Concept of Mangala Verses, Natyasastra, Tarkasangraha, Abhinava Gupta.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Sanskrit word Magala denotes various meanings in Sanskrit but the predominant meaning denotes “auspicious” in English. It is the prayer for the prosperity which is believed to be occurring in the future. Generally, all traditions of ancient Sanskrit textual tradition show the importance of Mangala verse. In the practical section of any knowledge systems like Ayurveda, Jyothisha, Vastushastra, and various art forms are consist of prayers to attain its ultimate aim. Nowadays especially in the presentations of any traditional Indian art forms, the program starts with a Mangala verse which represents a prayer to the god to prevent difficulties that are beyond human control. Like any other branch of knowledge tradition, Indian musicological textual tradition in Sanskrit also shows the prominence of Mangala verse. Indian Musicological tradition is simply the theoretical presentation of music, at the same time textual tradition of music carries many additional subjects along with the theory. These additional subjects often indicate the cultural background of a text like an author's period, beliefs, and politics. The concept of Mangala verse also has a relation with the cultural background of the text. So it has many dimensions according to the views and period of the author.

## II. IMPORTANCE OF MANGALA VERSE IN TEXTS

Musicological texts didn't show any discussion on the logic of Mangala while the Tarkasangraha of Annambhatta, a well-known text of Indian logic (Nyayadharsana), show a discussion about the logic of Mangala verse. The author introduces some contradictory facts about the Mangala. He says that in Kadambari, (a romantic novel was written by Banabhatta) it consist of a Mangala verse but the author did not survive to see its completion. At the same time, in the case of Kiranavali, (written by Udayanacharya) it has no Managala verse but the text becomes completed and reached its ultimate aim. Annambhatta finds some solution to this contradictory fact. He argues that, in the case of Kadmbari, its author did not do much Mangala as per his problems. At the same time, the author of Kiranavli may be done many Mangala-s (goodness) in his lifetime. So he concluded that the aim of Mangala verse is not only based on declining problems but also based on a Vedic concept (Shruti) which says “don't do a meaningless effort like one who claps on the surface of the water for making musical sound”[1].

### III. IMPORTANCE OF MANGALA VERSE IN PRACTICE

Natyasastra of Bharata, the oldest text of Indian dramaturgy which also consists of musicological elements shows some explanations of the importance of Mangala at the beginning of the drama. Bharata opined that in the time of Rangapooja (the worship which is done for the stage) prayers towards all deities must-do for Natya for attaining its goodness properly towards the audience [2]. Mangala gives much prosperity to its authority like a king and all kinds of people also [3]. Bharata also explains the aftereffect of avoiding Mangala. One who did not do Mangala, gets many problems and he must fall in hell and be born again as an animal [4]. So these textual pieces of evidence prove the importance of Mangala among the practices of the Indian drama.

### IV. VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF MANGALA VERSE BASED ON MUSICOLOGICAL WORKS

Unlike other cultures in the world, Indian music is believed to be very sacred and divine. Nadha, the musical sound is believed to be one of the paths for attaining salvation. Yajnavalkyasmruthi also supports this view and says that "one who can able to play vina and who knows the musicological facts like Shruthi, Jaathi, and Taala can easily attain salvation"[5]. So this spiritual behavior of Indian music is also reflected in the Mangala verses.

Based on Mangala verse in the musicological works can be divided into three types.

1. Texts without Mangala verse
2. Texts which consists of general Mangala verse (which praises the lord worshiped by the author)
3. Texts which shows philosophical contents in Mangala verse

#### *4.1 Texts Without Mangala Verse*

Texts which comes under the Agama or Tantra tradition generally shows the absence of Mangala. Unlike many other branches of knowledge traditions, the authorship of the text is attributed to Lord Siva. These kinds of texts start with a form like dialogues between Shiva and Parvathi. A predominant tantric text Rudrayamala directly starts with the advice of Shiva to Parvathi (Bhirava uvaaca)[6]. Availability of Tantric musicological texts is very rare, eventhough a text named Aoumapatha shows the behavior pattern of tantric tradition and it starts with the dialogue of Shiva to Parvathi ( Shrunu devee pravakshyaami)[7]. So the absence of Mangala represents the traditional behavior of the text.

#### *4.2 General Mangala Verse*

Normal Managala represents a prayer to the lord which is worshiped by the author itself. The deity who is praised in the Mangala indicates the sect of the religion of the author. The majority of the musicological works praise Lord Shiva which represents the Shivite tradition of knowledge. Some later texts like Sangeethapaarijaatha show the praising of lord Vishnu[8], which represents the influence of Vaishnavism in musicology and it is very exceptional also. Texts which praise Goddess Devi, which represents the ancient sect of Shakthi cult, are not available in the present condition. Natyasatra shows praising Lord Brahma along with Shiva[9], this feature also very exceptional because the worship of Brahma is very limited in India because of the lack of Mantra and Dhyana verse.

#### *4.3 Philosophical Mangala Verse*

The philosophical dimensions of Mangala sloka can be divided into two types. One is the pure form of philosophy which is not connected with the musicology and the other is the combination of philosophy with musicology. Abhinavabharati Commentary of Abhinavagupta on Natyasastra shows these two types of Mangala verses. In every chapter, he begins with a Mangalas which praises the Lord Siva. From the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter to the fifth chapter he depicted Lord Shiva as the Lord of Panchabhuta-s. The concept of Panchabhuta is very important in Kashmiri Shaivism and it included among 31 Shaiva Thatva-s in Kashmiri Shaivism [10]. So beyond a commentary Abhinavabharati includes the elements of Kashmiri Shaivism also. Abhinavagupta also used the Mangala verses to combine his philosophical belief with musicology. It represents the Mangala verse of the 31st chapter of Natyasastra in which he relates the three major concepts of Kashmiri Shaivism ( Kalaa, Kaala, and Kriya) along with the elements of rhythm.

## V. CONCLUSION

Mangala verse indicates the identity of a text and it represents the vision of the author towards the world. It plays a very important role to club the philosophical beliefs of the author into the Musicology. Most of the texts praising deities which are inside the sect of Shaivism. The Mangala verse which represents the Shkathi cult is absent in the available textual tradition. Influence of Vaishnava tradition, Lord Vishnu comes in Mangala verse in the later period only. Agama tradition of musicology doesn't show Managala verse and the authorship attributed to Lord Shiva. Praising of lord Brahma only seen in Natyasatra. This is very rare and needs further study.

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