



## **SYAMA (Society of the Youth for Artistic Music Appreciation)**

42B Race Course Road Singapore 218 557 Tel: +65 97696747

Email: [info@syama.org](mailto:info@syama.org) On the Web: <http://www.syama.org>

### **PRATHAMA**

#### **THEORY**

##### **SRUTHI and THALAM:**

|| Shurthi matha Laya Pita ||

The base note for a song is known as the **Sruthi**. It is also called as the pitch. Sruthi is considered as the mother of music.

Musical speed, tempo or pace of a musical composition is called **Thalam**.

##### **IMPORTANT ANGAS OF A THALAM:**

**LAGHU:** Having one beat and 3/4/5/7/9 finger counts, commencing from the small finger with duration of 3/4/5/7/9 akshara kalas. Its symbol is "l".

**DRUTAM:** Having one beat and waving of the hand with duration of two akshara kalas and its symbol is "O".

**ANUDRUTAM:** Having one beat with duration of one Akshara kala, and its symbol is "U".

##### **BASIC NOTATION:**

Symbol	Meaning
,	Indicates one akshara kala
„ or ;	Indicates two akshara kala
; ,	Indicates three akshara kala
	Indicates the splitting of the laghu and dhrutham
	Indicates the ending of thalam avartham
-	If this symbol comes near the swaras, it will indicate splitting the group of swaras, if the same symbol appears along with the sahithyas it indicate the continuation

##### **SAPTA SWARAS:**

Syllable	Name	English Notes	Animals
S	Sadjam	C	Peacock
R	Rishabam	D	Bull / Cow
G	Gandharam	E	Goat
M	Madhyamam	F	Kiraunch Nightingale
P	Panchamam	G	Cuckoo
D	Daivatham	A	Horse
N	Nishadham	B	Elephant

- S & P are fixed notes (no variations) They are called Prakruthi Swaras
- R G M D N are called Vikruthi Swaras.



Thyagaraja



Mutthuswami Dikshitar



Shyama Sastri



Purandara Dasa



## MADHYAMA

### THEORY

#### Names of 12 Swarasthanas :

Sl. No.	Swaras Name	Identification
1	Shadjam	S
2	Suddha Rishabham	R1
3	Chathusruthi Rishabham	R2
4	Sadharana Gandharam	G2
5	Anthara Gandharam	G3
6	Suddha Madhyamam	M1
7	Prathi Madhyamam	M2
8	Panchamam	P
9	Suddha Dhaivatham	D1
10	Chathusruthi Dhaivatham	D2
11	Kaisiki Nishadam	N2
12	Kakali Nishadam	N3

#### SWARAM and SAHITHYAM:

A musical note is called Swaram. There are sapta swaras (7 swaras). They are S,R,G,M,P,D,N. The swaras form the skeleton of a song. Eg. MPDSSR RSDPMP ... is the swaram for Purandaradasa's Sri Gananatha Geetham. Swaram is denoted as 'Dhaatu'

The lyrics of a kruthi or keerthana or geetham is called Sahithyam. Eg : In the Sri Gananatha Geetham, the Shaithyam is 'Sri Gananatha Sindhura varna....'. The Sahithyam is denoted as 'Maathu'

#### **STHAYIS :**

The way of presenting the musical notes in higher or lower octaves are called Sthayis. Normally we use the 'Manthra sthayi' or Lower octave, 'Madhya Sthayi' – Middle octave and 'Thaara Sthayi' – Upper Octave.

Manthra Sthayi is denoted by a 'dot' below the swara. Thaara sthayi is denoted by a 'dot' above the swara.

#### **POORVANGAM :**

The lower tetrachord S,R,G,M are Poorvanga swaras.

#### **UTTARAGAM :**

The higher tetrachord P,D,N,S are Uttaranga swaras.

#### **AROHANA :**

A series of swaras of a raga in the ascending order is called Arohana.

Ex: S R G M P D N S

#### **AVAROHANA :**

A series of swaras of a raga in the descending order is called Avarohana.

Ex: S N D P M G R S



## Short Biography of Trinities & Sri Purandara Dasa :

### **Sri Tyagaraja Swami :**

Thyagaraja was born in 1767 to Ramabrahmam and Seethamma. He started music under the tutelage of Vidwan Sonti Venkataramanayya. He composed more than 20,000 of kritis mostly in telugu. His mudra (signature) was "Thyagaraja". Some important kritis are Pancharatna Kritis, Lalgudi Pancharatna etc., Thyagaraja died on Pushya Bahula Panchami in 1847.



### **Sri Muttuswami Dikshitar :**

Muttuswami Dikshitar was born in 1775 to Ramaswami Dikshitar and Subbamma, in Tiruvarur. He learnt music initially from his father. Muttuswami Dikshitar also learnt to play the veena. He composed number of kritis with mudra "Guruguha". Some important kritis are Navagraha kritis and Navavarna Krithis. His compositions were complicated compared to Thyagaraja's.



### **Sri Shyama shastri :**

He was born in Tiruvarur in 1762. Shyama Shastri attained scholarship in Telugu and Sanskrit at a young age. He has composed kriti-s in, varnam-s and swarajati-s with the mudra 'Shyama Krishna'. He is said to be the architect of the swarajati musical form and composed the Navaratnamalika. Most of his compositions are on Goddess Kamakshi. He died in 1827.



### **Sri Purandara Dasa :**

Sri Purandara Dasa (1494-1564) is known as the father (Pitamaha) of Carnatic music. Purandara Dasa is believed to be an avatar of Sage Narada,. His mudra was 'Purandara Vittala'. He composed around 475,000 songs in kannada, although only a thousand or so of them are known today. The Sarali, Jendai varisais, alankarams and geethams are his compositions.



Oothukkadu  
Venkatasubbiyer



Swati Tirunal



Papanasam Sivan



Annamacharya



## THRAYEE

### THEORY

#### Scheme of 72 Melakartas:

The 72 melakarta ragas are grouped under twelve charkas. In the first half which includes charkas 1 to 6 and the melas 1-36, the suddha madhyama(M1) occurs as a constant note and in the second half, which includes charkas 7 to 12 and melas 37-72, the prati madhyama(M2) occurs as a constant note.

The 12 chakras are **Indu, Netra, Agni, Veda, Bana, Rutu, Rishi, Vasu, Brahma, Disi, Rudra, Aditya**

#### 16 Swarasthanas :

Sl. No.	Swaras Name	Identification
1	Shadjam	S
2	Suddha Rishabham	R1
3	Chathusruthi Rishabham	R2
4	Shatsruthi Rishabham (Vivaadhi)	R3
5	Suddha Ghandara (Vivaadhi)	G1
6	Sadarana Ghandara	G2
7	Antara Ghandara	G3
8	Suddha Madhyamam	M1
9	Prathi Madhyamam	M2
10	Panchamam	P
11	Suddha Dhaivatham	D1
12	Chathusruthi Dhaivatham	D2
13	Shatsruthi Dhaivatham (Vivaadhi)	D3
14	Suddha Nishadam (Vivaadhi)	N1
15	Kishaki Nishadam	N2
16	Kakali Nishadam	N3

#### MELAKARTHA RAGAS :

Ragas that have all seven notes (*sapta swaras*) in order in both the ascent (arohana) and the descent (avarohana). These ragas are also called Janaka ragas. Eg: Mayamalawagowla, Kalyani, Shankarabharana.

#### JANYA RAGAS :

In the arohana and/or avarohana we cannot find one or more of the sapta swaras. It's a raga which is said to be born or derived from a Melakarta Raga. Eg: Mohana, Hamsadwani

#### VIVADI RAGA:

A melakarta raga which uses any one or more of the vivadi swaras (Shatsruthi Rishabham, Suddha Gandharam, Shatsruthi dhaivatham or Suddha Nishadham) Ex : Kanakangi, Ratnangi, Ganamurthi

#### GAMAKAS :

In Indian music every note is embellished and sung. This is known as Gamakas. According to the Bharata shastra Music without gamaka is like a moonless night, a river without water, a flower without smell. There are 10 basic types of gamakas (Dasa Vidha gamakas).

#### DESADHI and MADHYADI TALAS:

The Tala is started with a wave followed by 3 beats. The Kruti/song starts by leaving 3 akshara kala (3/4) from the beginning of tala, that is at 3/4<sup>th</sup> of the wave. Ex: Sithapate – Kamas raga; Banturithi – Hansanadam.

The Tala is started with a wave followed by 3 beats. The Kruti/song starts by leaving 2 akshara kala (1/2) from the beginning of tala, that is at half the wave. Ex: Yochana – Darbar raga; Apa doodu kolonathive – Javali.

#### Short Biography :

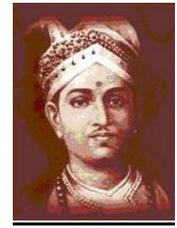
#### Sri Ootthukadu Venkatasubbayyar : (17th century)

He lived for just 32 years. He composed both in Sanskrit and Tamil. The first to compose group kritis on a certain deity e.g., Kamakshi Navavaranam. Composed numerous compositions on Lord Krishna in the Kaliya nartana pose. The terse jatis and madhyama kala sahityas in his compositions reflect his deep knowledge of natya sastra.



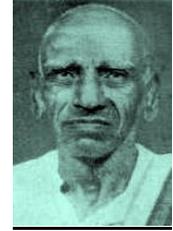
### Sri Swati Tirunal : (1813 – 1847)

Swati Tirunal was the king of Travancore, Kerala. He is believed to have composed around 500 songs. Besides Varnams, Kritis, Swarajatis, Padams and Javalis. Besides these, he also composed Dhrupads, Khyal, Tappas, Thumris and Bhajans in the Hindustani style and Navarathri krithis. Most of his compositions are in Sanskrit on Lord Padmanabha.. He used the mudra Padmanabha and its variations, Jalajanabha, Pankajanabha and Sarasijanabha.



### Sri Papanasam Sivan : (1890-1973)

Papanasam Sivan was born as Ramaiah in Thanjavur district. He was committed to Thamizh, Thamizh music and the freedom movement. He composed around 2,500 songs. He was a teacher at the famed Kalakshetra during 1934-39. He composed classical music for several movies and also acted in four movies. He composed mainly in Tamil but also penned a few compositions in Sanskrit and Telugu. He used the signature/mudra 'Ramadasan'. He was awarded 'Sangeetha Kalanidhi' by the Music Academy in Chennai in 1971.



### Sri Annamacharya : (1424-1503)

At the age of 16, it is said that Annamayya has a vision of Lord Venkateswara and he spent the rest of his life composing kirtanas and padams on Him. Disciple of Shatakopayati of Ahobalam, he is the first to compose padams in Telugu and said to have composed 32,000 padams, out of which 14,358 are available.



 Semmangudi Sreenivasa Iyer	 Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar	 Musiri Subramaniam Iyer	 Madurai Mani Iyer	
 G N Balasubramaniam	 T Brinda	 ML Vasanthakumari	 M S Subbulakshmi	
 D K Pattammal	 S Balachander	 Balamuralikrishna	 Palghat Mani Iyer	
 Jayadeva	 Narayana Theertha	 Mysore Vasudevachar	 Koteeswara Iyer	 Muthiah Bagavathar



## CHATUSRA THEORY

### Vivaadi Melas:

While combinations of the purvanga (R, G and M) form the 12 chakras (6 x 2 – R1G1M1, R1G2M1, R1G3M1, R2G2M1, R2G3M1, R3G3M1, R1G1M2, R1G2M2, R1G3M2, R2G2M2, R2G3M2, R3G3M2), the combinations of Uttaranga (D and N) form the six ragas of each chakra (3 x 2 – D1N1, D1N2, D1N3, D2N2, D2N3, D3N3)

The Mela combinations that have one or more of the Vivaadhi swaras (R3, G1, D3, N1) are called Vivaadi melas.

Since the 1<sup>st</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> chakras contain R3 or G1 in all their melas, there are 4 x 6 = 24 vivaadhi ragas. Out of the remaining 8 chakras, the 6 combinations of uttarangam have 2 melas that contain either D3 or N0. Hence there is 8 x 2 = 16 more vivaadhi melas. In total, there are 24 + 16 = 40 Vivaadhi melas.

### Katapayadhi Sankhya:

It is a mnemonic device to decipher the melakarta number from the name of the raga.

.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>Kadi Nava</b>		Ka	Kha	Ga	Gha	Nga	Cha	Chha	Ja	Jha
<b>Tadi Nava</b>		Ta	Tta	Da	Ddha	Na	Tha	Thha	Dha	Ddha
<b>Padi Nava</b>		Pa	Pha	Ba	Bha	Ma	.	.	.	.
<b>Yadyashta</b>		Ya	Ra	La	Va	Sa	Sha	Sa	Ha	
<b>Nakara sunyam</b>	Nga,Gnya,Na,Nna	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

To use the *sankhya*, take the first two syllables of the name of the *raga*, and locate the corresponding columns on the table. Then take the two numbers and reverse them to get the *mela* number.

For example, the raga "Dheera Shankarabaranam" has Dhe and Ra as its first characters, the map to 9 and 2. By juxtaposing the 2<sup>nd</sup> character's number with the 1<sup>st</sup> one we get 29, which is the mela kartha number of the raga. Ragas like Chakravagham are represented with Cha and Ka (6 and 1, thereby 16).

### Dasavidha gamakas:

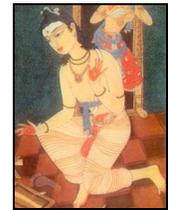
Gamaka is defined as the ornamentation or variation of a swara.

The 10 types of Gamakas are: avaroha, dhalu, sphuritha, kampitha, ahata, pratyahatha, tripuchcha, andola, murchchana

### Pre-trinity Composers:

#### Jayadeva:

- Lived during 11th-12th centuries
- Composed the famous opera, "Gita govinda", also called ashtapati (since the songs have eight stanzas each), based on the Radha-Krishna episode in the Brahmaivaivartapurana.
- His padams are very popular, and they contain shringara rasa – the emotions of hero - heroine.



#### Narayana theertha:

- Lived in the early 17th century and became sanyasi early in his life.
- He is the illustrious author of the "Sri Krishna Lila Tarangini"
- Sri Krishna Lila Tarangini is the finest and longest Nritya Nataka of Sanskrit language and consists of 12 tarangas.
- The subject matter of the work relates to dasamaskandham of Srimad Bhagavatam.
- Sonti Venkatasubbaiya, Tyagaraja's guru, belongs to the sishya parampara of Narayana Tirtha.



## Contemporary Composers:

### Mysore Vasudevachar

- Mysore Vasudevachar was born in Mysore in 1965. His initial training in music was at the Maharaja Sanskrit Pathasala by the ashtana vidhwan Veena Padmanabhiah. Later Maharaja's gracious patronage helped him to undergo training under Patnam Subramanya Iyer, an illustrious vocalist-composer of the Thyagaraja school.
- Vasudevachar became a ashtana vidhwan at the Mysore court after his return from Tiruvayyaru. For over five decades he continued his concert career with great success. Upon Rukmini Devi's request he also taught at the Kalakshetra in Madras, eventually becoming its principal. But, he will be remembered more for his great compositions, over 200 in all.
- Vasudevachar's compositions were mostly in Telugu and Sanskrit. The style was essentially the one used by Thyagaraja. He composed in many forms including Swarajathi, Varna, Kriti, Javali, Tillana and Ragamalika. He has composed in popular as well as rare Raaga-s and Taala-s. Some of his most popular krithi-s include *Brochevarevarura* in Khamas, *Devadideva* in Sunadavinodini, *Mamavatu Sri Saraswati* in Hindola, *Pranamamyaham* in Gowla, *Mama Hrudaye Vihara* in RitiGowla and *Paratpara* in Todi. He published a large number of his compositions in the book *Vasudeva Kirtana Manjari* and *Naa Kanda Kalavidaru*.
- After a long and fruitful life he breathed his last in 17th May, 1961 at the age of 96



### Koteeswara Iyer

- Koteeswara Iyer is known for his many krithi-s in Vivadhi Raaga-s.
- Koteeswara Iyer was born into a music family. His grand father was the famous poet and composer Kavikunjara Bharati, a contemporary of the trinity. Koteeswara Iyer was initially trained by his grand father. Later he was trained by Ramnad Sreenivasa Iyengar and then by Patnam Subramania Iyer..
- Koteeswara Iyer's mudra, Kavi Kunjaradasan, shows his respect for his grand father, Kavikunjara Bharati.
- Koteeswara Iyer penned over two hundred compositions. He also composed a krithi in each of the 72 mela-s and published them in his book *Kandha Gaanamritham*. But he is well known for his Vivaadi raaga krithi-s like Mohanakara (Neethimathi), Ma madhura sarasa (Ganamurthi) and Singara Kumari (Varunapriya).
- Famous vocalist S. Rajam is one of the artists who has sung a lot of Koteeswara Iyer krithi-s and popularized them



### Muthiah Bagavathar

- Dr. Harikesanallur Muthaiah Bhagavathar is one of the most important post-trinity composers and an important vocalist as well.
- Muthaiah Bhagavathar was born in 1877. After the early death of his father, he was brought up by his maternal uncle Lakshamana Suri of Harikesanallur, who taught him Sanskrit, Vedas and music. He got further musical training from Sambasiva Iyer and his son T. S. Sabesa Iyer, who belonged to the Thyagaraja shishya parampara.
- In 1887 Maharaja Mulam Thirunal of Travancore honoured him as a court musician. Later he started giving Harikatha performances, for which he earned the name Bhagavathar.
- He was a court musician in Mysore, from 1927. Most of his compositions were from this period. Initially he composed mostly in Madhyakala, like Shri Thyagaraj. After 1931, he was influenced by Muthuswamy Dikshitar compositions and started composing in vilambita kala. In 1936, he was again invited by Maharani Sethu Parvathi of Travancore and he spent several years there. During that time, one of his major contributions was popularising Swati Tirunal compositions. He was also the first principal of "Swathi Thirunal Academy of Music" there.
- Apart from being a vocalist and composer, Muthaiah Bhagavathar was also a learned musicologist. He was actively involved in the Annual Conference of Experts conducted by The Music Academy of Madras. In 1930 he was awarded the Sangeetha Kalanidhi by the academy. He also wrote a book on the science of music, *Sangeetha Kalpa Dhrama*, for which he was awarded Degree of Doctorate in 1943 by the Travancore state.



### Arunagirinathar

- Lived in 16th century
- An ardent devotee of Sri Subrahmanya and propagator of Kaumara cult.
- He composed 16,000 hymns in praise of Lord Subrahmanya, collectively called Tiruppugazh, of which only 1307 are available now.
- Besides Tiruppugazh, he has written smaller works like *Kandaranubhuti*, *Kandarantadi*, *Kandalankaram* and *Tiruvaguppu*.
- The distinctive feature of Tiruppugazh songs is the varied and intricate rhythmic patterns (sandam) and time measure (tala) and are a veritable treat to music lovers.

