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# THE JOURNAL OF THE MUSIC ACADEMY

DEVOTED TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE SCIENCE AND ART OF MUSIC

Vol. LXV 1994

नाहं वसामि वैकुण्ठे न योगिहृदये रवौ ।
मद्भक्ता यत्र गायन्ति तत्र तिष्ठामि नारद ।।

*"I dwell not in Vaikuntha, nor in the hearts of Yogins nor in the Sun; (but) where my bhaktas sing, there be I, Narada!"*

Edited by
T.S. PARTHASARATHY

**The Music Academy, Madras**
306, T.T.K. Road, Madras - 600 014.
Annual Subscription - Inland Rs. 40/- Foreign $ 3-00

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## OURSELVES

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The Editor of the Journal is not responsible for the views expressed by contributors in their articles.

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**(Sd.) T.S. PARTHASARATHY**

Dated: 1994

(Signature of the Publisher)

# THE 67TH MADRAS MUSIC CONFERENCE
# OFFICIAL REPORT

## THE OPENING DAY
## 17.12.93

The 67th Annual Conference of the Music Academy, Madras was held at the T.T.Krishnamachari Auditorium in the premises of the Academy from the 17th December 1993 to 1st January 1994. The Conference was inaugurated by Shri Niranjan Desai, Director General, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, New Delhi.

The inaugural function began with invocation by Smt. J. Rajeswari and Smt. Revathi Subramanian, Lecturers in the Teachers' College of Music, Music Academy.

The Messages received from the President of India and Shri Arjun Singh (Union Minister of Human Resource & Development), and Dr. Selvi J. Jayalalitha, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, were read by Sri T.T. Vasu.

The President of the Academy, Sri T.T. Vasu, welcomed the members of the Academy, members of the Advisory Committee and distinguished guests.

Sri Vasu, in his address said:

"Shri Niranjan Desai, Director General of I.C.C.R., Smt. Mani Krishnaswami, President-designate of this Conference, distinguished invitees, members of the Music Academy, vidwans, vidushis, ladies and gentlemen;

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to this inauguration of our 67th Annual Conference and concerts.

I extend to Shri Niranjan Desai a most hearty wlecome on behalf of all of us, the Executive Committee and on my own behalf. We are grateful

to him for consenting to be with us this evening and inaugurate this Conference. This is a unique occasion when the Director General of the prestigious Indian Council for Cultural Relations inaugurates our Conference. The ICCR, founded in 1950, has a variety of objectives but the most important are the strengthening of cultural relations between India and other countries, playing host to eminent musicians, dancers, writers and scholars from abroad and reciprocally sending distinguished Indians to other countries to participate in seminars and conferences. The ICCR has set up cultural centres in Fiji, Guyana, Surinam, Mauritius and Indonesia and plans to open more centres.

After a brilliant scholastic career, Shri Niranjan Natvarlal Desai entered the Indian Foreign Service in 1965 and has acquired a rich experience by serving in various parts of the world in different capacities. He has served in Kenya, Somalia and Uganda in Africa, Kuwait in the Middle East, U.K., U.S.A. and in Germany. He was the coordinator of the Festival of India in U.S.A. in 1985-86. He has held high positions in the Ministry of External Affiars, New Delhi, and presently heads the ICCR. This Academy has always had excellent rapport with the Council and as one closely connected with that institution, I once again extend to him a warm wlecome.

I heartly welcome vidushi Mani Krishnaswami who will be shortly elected as President of the 67th Conference. Mani is no stranger to this Academy as she has been giving recitals regularly in our festivals from 1961. She is a highly respected figure in the sphere of Karnatic music for her uncompromising fidelity to tradition and her concern for the more enduring values in music. She has had the good fortune of being groomed by several doyens of the latter half of this century and this has stood her in good stead. Her choice this year assumes a special significance because a woman artiste is presiding over this Conference after an interregnum of 16 years.

Mani's services to music have already been recognised on two other occasions during this year. In September, the Sri Tyagaraja Trust and the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams of Tirupati conferred on her the coveted title Saptagiri Sangita Vidwanmani. In October, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust of New Delhi invited her to be the guest artiste at the

Indira Gandhi death anniversary. She rendered devotional songs in seven languages and the programme was telecast live by Doordarshan. It is our privilege to have such an artiste to preside over this Conference and I thank her for so readily accepting our invitation.

1993 has been an eventful year for our institution as we embarked on a diversification of our activities in several ways. With financial aid from the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi, we conducted a workshop for five days on "Some group kritis of Dikshitar" . Eminent musicians and musicologists participated in it and presented papers and demonstrations on the various aspects of the subject. Practical classes were also held in which the kritis of Dikshitar were taught by a senior musician. Students from different colleges, including our own, attended the workshop which was a great success. The Academy also conducted a six-week summer course on Pallavi Singing and this was a popular among music students.

Well wishers of the Academy will remember that in my address last year I announced that we proposed to construct a Diamond Jubilee Hall for the Teachers College of Music and to shift the library and the reading room to the ground floor of the Mini Hall. The project had a flying start with a donation from our Chief Minister which was supplemented by contributions from Indian Bank, Madras Fertilisers and from Dr. L. Subramaniam in memory of his father, the late Vidwan Lakshminarayana Iyer.

This year we shall be taking up the archives of the late Mr. G. Narasimhan's tapes. The Sruti Foundation, which runs Sruti the news and features magazine dovoted exclusively to Indian music and dance, has also been undertaking special projects (like the study of the music of GNB), research and documentation and publication of books and audio visual materials, through special divisions established for these purposes. They have offered to take up our archives project as it involves time, dedication and devotion to this project. I may add in this connection that when Sruti was launched in October 1983, I too, like many others, was sceptical about its viability. But Sruti surprised us all. It has not only survived but created for itself a special niche as a highly regarded research-oriented magazine with an independent stance.

Renewal of seats in the balcony was taken up last year with a generous donation from Dr. Nalli Kuppuswami Chetty. With Ashok Leyland Finance further supporting us, we have completed 9 rows.

The Hindu family has been helping this Academy in many ways from the time of Sri Kasturi Srinivasan and recently we received a generous donation from them for the renewal of seats and other improvements in the Kasturi Srinivasan Hall.

During the current year, the work on the Spirit of Freedom Gallery, which is contiguous with the Kasturi Srinivasan Hall on the ground floor, was completed with the installation of lighting and air-conditioning. I take this opportunity to convey our gratitude to Sri S.S. Rajasekhar of Rotary Club of Madras East for his substantial contribution for this project. The Gallery was used on two occasions this year for the exhibition of rare photographs of the Paramacharya of Kanchi and later for a similar exhibition of portraits of Sri Satya Sai Baba of Puttaparthi. Both the exhibitions attracted large crowds on all the days,.

With generous sponsorship from Parrys, Meltrack and T.I. Cycles, we conducted the usual Spirit of Youth Music and Dance Festival for ten days in October. About 40 young and promising artistes, including musicians and dancers, gave recitals for which no admission fee was collected from the public. Vani Krishnaswami of Bangalore, disciple of Guru Padmini Rao, was declared as the best dancer while Shanti Venkatakrishnan (vocal), R. Hemamalini (violin) and Ganapathiraman (mridangam) became eligible for awards. The Ambujam Krishna awards for young talent will be presented to them by the President of the Sadas on January 1, 1994.

This is the Birth Centenary Year of Justice T.L. Venkatarama Iyer, a former President of this Academy. To commemorate ths event, January 1, 1994, is being observed as T.L. Venkatarama Iyer day and Sangita Kalanidhi Smt. D.K. Pattammal will be giving a concert from 8.30 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. on that day.

The Academy is poised to acheive several other ambitious projects we have chalked out and I earnestly seek the support of music lovers, patrons and institutions to enable us to maintain our steady growth without swerving from the ideals envisaged by our founding fathers.

The conference commences tomorrow morning and a very interesting programme of lectures, demonstrations and other events has been drawn up. The concerts that follow will also provide a sumptuous fare to connoisseurs of music and dance.

The Sadas on January 1, 1994, will be presided over by Shri A. Chengal Reddy, Chairman of the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Trust Board. In addition to Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami, who will be receiving the birudu of Sangita Kalanidhi, Vidwan Titte Krishna Iyengar, the nonagenarian asthana Vidwan of Mysore and vidwan Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao will be receiving the title of Sangita Kala Acharya, a gold medal and a cash award.

I now request Shri Niranjan Desai to inaugurate the Conference."

## INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Shri Niranjan Desai delivered his inaugural address in which he said:

"Shri T.T. Vasu, President of the Music Academy, Smt. Mani Krishnaswami, President-designate of the 67th Conference, office bearers and members of the Music Academy, distinguished invitees, ladies and gentlemen.

I consider it a previlege to be invited to inaugurate the 67th Conference of the prestigious and world-renowned Music Academy and I am deeply grateful for this gesture.

The cultivation, enjoyment and appreciation of music at all levels and in different spheres of life has aways had a vitally important place in Indian culture. Music in India like most traditional arts has its foundations in the religious and spiritual impulses of our people. It was acclaimed as one of the means of attaining the four-fold aim of human existence :

religio-ethical values, socio-economic values, emotional-aesthetic values and devotional-spiritual vlaues. The art and science of music was extolled as both Lokaranjana - leading to sensuous enjoyment and aesthetic delight and Bhavabhanjana - leading to spiritual bliss and liberation.

The essential preoccupation of classical Indian music has been predominantly spiritual - to transcend the human condition and to experience the infinite. The traditional goal of all spiritual striving in India has been to identify with, and merge into the vastness of the eternal being. This attitude is central also to the practice of music in India.

Indian music had played a vital unifying and integrating role in India. It may have many schools and styles but beneath all this diversity there is a distinctive unity transcending all apparent barriers. It is part of a large distinct Indian sensibility. All ancient treatises written on music from Kashmir to Kanyakumari are all written in Sanskrit and musicologists from all parts of India can easily read and understand the theories of music propagated by schools in various parts of India.

The 20th century, from point of view of Indian classical music, stands out as the most historic and proliferative period. Indeed, the past eight decades or so have been a period of great resurgence, of progress, and an age of overall musical explosion. All this came about as a result of the great national awakening during Indias fight for liberation from colonial yoke. I find it of very great interest that the Madras Music Academy itself had its nucleus in an All-India Music Conference arranged by the cultural wing of the Madras session of the Indian National Congress held in 1927. I would like to pay tribute to the founding fathers of your academy for being in the forefront of a cultural renaissance which restored to us our self-respect and pride in our great heritage.

I would like to express here my personal happiness at being present here in these august premies. The Music Academy of Madras has a rich history of which any Institution can be proud. It was started in a spirit of a mission amidst many difficulties and constraints by a brave band of motivated public figures. Since its founding it has grown in strength and stature as one of the premier art Institutions not only in Madras but in the state of Tamil Nadu. Your annual conference and Music Festival have

become a major event in the artistic and cultural calender of not only Madras but nationality and musicologists from all over India and even abroad take part in them. I understand that the Academys journal is only one of its kind published without a break for 66 years and find a place in many libraries abroad. Your college of music, publications, exhibitions, seminars and other activities are all parts of the excellent work the Academy is doing to sustain and foster Indian classical music traditions and other art forms.

Every year this time in December is the Madras Season for music and dance which is eagerly looked forward to by all art lovers and cognoscenti. But the Music Academys annual conference seems to have a special significance because of the unbroken tradition which has been kept live for over six decades and its monumental contribution to the promotion of arts.

I have great pleasure in inaugurating this 67th Annual Conference of the Music Academy and once again I thank all of you for the honour done to me."

## ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

Sangita Kalanidhi Thanjavur K.P. Sivanandam proposed Smt. Mani Krishnaswami to be the President of the 67th Conference. The proposal was seconded by Sangita Kalanidhi B. Rajam Iyer.

Smt. Mani Krishnaswami then delivered the following Presidential address

"Respected Shri Niranjan Desai, Director General of I.C.C.R., Shri T.T. Vasu, President of the Music Academy, Vice-Presidents, Secretaries, Office-bearers and Members of the Academy, distinguished invitees, vidwans and vidushis, ladies and gentlemen: I offer to all of you my humble and respectful pranams.

At the outset I wish to express my deep gratitude to the President, Office-bearers and Members of the Academy for conferring on me the rare honour of presiding over the 67th Conference of this prestigious Academy. I must admit that I am overwhelmed by this opportunity and the occasion.

At this solemn moment, my thoughts go back to my parents, Lakshminarasimhachari and Marakatavalli. I recall the affection with which they encouraged me to learn music and I offer this honour at their feet. I also remember on this occasion my Gurus, Ellayya and Murugan, Jalatarangam Ramanayya Chetti, Tiruparkadal Srinivasa Iyengar, Tiger Varadacharya, Budalur Krishnamurti Sastri, T.K. Jayarama Iyer, Mysore Vasudevacharya, Musiri Subrahmanya Iyer and my present Guru, Chengalpattu Ranganathan, but for whose fostering care in shaping me, I would not have merited this honour which I respectfully place at their feet. Since this honour is being bestowed on a woman artiste after a gap of 16 years, I consider it as an honour done to all women artistes in general by the Academy. Women artistes of today and tomorrow owe a debt of gratitude to the illustrious stalwarts, Smt. M.S. Subbulakshmi, Smt. D.K. Pattammal, Smt. M.L. Vasantakumari, Smt. Brinda and Smt. Balasraswati, for it was they, who laid the path for this recognition by the Academy.

The services that are being rendered by this Academy to performing arts for the past 66 years and the prestige enjoyed by it are facts which are known universally. It is no exaggeration to say that vidwans and vidushis consider it as a great prestige to be invited to perform at this Academy and to be honoured by it.

Indian music has had a long evolution - from Nada to Srutis, from Srutis to Svaras and from Svaras to hundreds of Ragas which are the special features of our musical system. Sampradaya or tradition and a knowledge of Sastra or theory enable one to master this music. Sampradaya means the expertise acquied by Gurukulavasa with a qualified teacher and imbibing musical wisdom from him. Sampradaya is so important in our music that Tyagaraja, in one of his songs, describes God Himslef as a Sangita Sampradayakudi.

Sampradaya is thus the soul of our music and I consider it my unique good furtune that I learnt it from vidwans who were custodians of

tradition. During my early years at Vellore, Jalatarangam Ramanayya Chetti and Tiruparkadal Srinivasa Iyengar (father of Tiruparkadal Veeraraghavan) laid the foundation for my musical career. I can never forget the laya vidwan Gopalachariar, father of Vellore Ramabhadran, who gave me all encouragement during my formative years.

After passing Matriculation, I joined Kalakshetra at Madras for the Sangita Siromani Course. During my stay there I was the recipient of unbounded love and affection from Smt. Rukmani Devi. I had the privilege of functioning as her secretary for some time. My close association with Smt. Rukmani Devi is something which I shall always cherish till the end of my life. What a grand and sublime atmosphere Kalakshtra had in the campus in those days! What a galaxy of great veterans she was able to gather under one roof; hallowed names like Karaikudi Sambasiva Iyer, Tiger Varadachariar, Budalur Sastrigal, Mysore Vasudevacharya, Chandu Panicker, Papanasam Sivan, Gowri Ammal --- all these giants were there. It was my good fortune that I had the privilege to study and learn the lessons of music at the feet of great masters.

I cannot find adequate words to describe the mighty personality of Tiger Varadachariar who was the Principal there at that time. He was veritably an ocean of music. I benefitted from every moment I spent in his presence and by the torrent of music that he used to treat his students with.

The highly respected Budalur Krishnamurthi Sastrigal was a supreme example of purity of kriti rendering and sampradaya. Although he was a great exponent of the Gottu Vadyam, he was an excellent vocalist as well and taught me a large number of compositions in their impeccable pathantras.

After receiving the Sangita Siromani Degree, I had the good fortune of studying ragam, tanam and pallavi at the feet of the doyen Mudicondan Venkatarama Iyer. Mysore Vasudevacharya, the Bhishmacharya of Karnatic Music, was kind enough to teach me many of his compositions.

My marriage with Shri M. Krishnaswami, who was an Officer in the Parliament Secretariat, in the year 1954, was the turning point in my life. During our stay in Delhi for nearly a decade, I had my musical lessons

from the great violonist, Shri T.K. Jayarama Iyer,. My first professional public concert was in Delhi in 1954. After we settled down in Madras on the advice of T.T. Krishnamachariar, my husband decided that I should undergo advanced training in music under his personal friend, the great Musiri Subrahmanya Iyer. The years I spent with the uncrowned king of bhava sangita may be called the golden period of my musical sadhana. If I can claim to be a musician of some merit today, the credit goes entirely to Musiri. He was never tired of emphasizing that bhava was the soul of music. Tyagaraja also stressed this fact when he said bhaktileni kavi jala varenyulu bhavamu eruga leru --- even great poets cannot understand bhava unless they have devotion. In music also, bhakti and bhava go hand in hand. I also learnt the art of neraval from him as it was one of his specialities. I can never, therefore, forget this Guru who opened my eyes to the secrets of soulful music.

Music is a vast ocean and no one can claim that he or she has completely mastered it. Learning is a continuous process. I, therefore, continue to be a humble student of the art, still taking guidance from Vidwan Chelgalpattu Ranganathan on the subtler aspects of laya.

Eminent musicians and musicologists who presided over this Conference in the past have given precious advice to the future generation and I am not qualified to add anything new to their suggestions. Yet, I wish to place before you a few impressions gathered during my tutelage under some of the titans of music of this century.

In my opinion, it is wrong to think that there is no room for manodharma or musica imagination in sampradaya or tradition. In fact, the touchstone of a musicians calibre is his capacity to display manodharma within the boundaries of tradition. There is unlimited scope for manodharma in alapana, neraval, kalpana svaras, etc. But it will do incalculable harm to our music if, in the name of manodharma, the original tunes of kritis are tampered with. If this practice continues, the original versions of the compositions of master composers like Tyagaraja will soon become unrecognisable. This advice was being constantly dinned into my ears by my Gurus and I am proud of the fact that I have never deviated from the versions taught by them.

Youth Festivals are being conducted to give tham the much needed exposure and the newspapers have taken very kindly to them. If I may offer a piece of advice to the younger generation, it is to urge them to maintain the purity of our tradition and not permit cheap applause and quick success to influence their outlook. Many undesirable features and disturbing trends have started creeping into our music, which we should guard ourselves against, and this is the reason why I am offering this advice.

Hard work, dedication and perseverance are needed for achieving some measure of success in the music field and there is no short cut. I was given only junior chances in this Academy for 11 years before I was promoted to the sub-senior level. It took me eight years more to reach the senior grade. Each performance is a challenge and a test for a musician and even a little remissness or complacency will let him/her down.

I take this opportunity of thanking the Music Academy, the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams, the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, the State and Central Governments, Tamil Nadu Iyal Isai Nataka Manram, Sri Krishna Gana Sabha and other Sabhas in the city and other places, music critics and above all rasikas who have been encouraging me in all possible ways. My husband, Shri Krishnaswami, has been a pillar of strength to me all these years and I have excellent support from the members of his family and my brothers and sisters.

I have no prior experience of presiding over a Conference of this nature and conducting its deliberations. I therefore, humbly appeal to all members of the Advisory Committee, vidwans and vidushis, to give me the necessary guidance and advice to enable me to conduct the proceedings successfully.

I once again thank the Music Academy for bestowing on me this unique honour.

I wish you all a Happy New Year.

Thank you."

## CONFERENCE SOUVENIR

The Souvenir which was brought out on the opening day, contained an account of the Music Academy from its inception and its activities and the following articles:

| | |
|---|---|
| Remembering T.V. Subba Rao | by T.S. Rangarajan |
| T.L. Venkatarama Iyer | by Brinda Varadarajan |
| Our National Academies | by T.T. Vasu |
| Legendary Violinist | by T.S. Parthasarathy |
| Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan | by N.V. Ramaswamy |
| Vadya Vrinda of Akashvani | --- |

* * *

# ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS 1992-93

*AT THE T.T. KRISHNAMACHARI AUDITORIUM*

FROM 18.12.1993 to 1.1.1994

Daily from 8.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.

**President :** Vidhushi MANI KRISHNASWAMI

## AGENDA

### SATURDAY - 18.12.93

| | |
|---|---|
| Shanthi Colony Chinmaya Bala Vihar | Vedic Chanting & Songs |
| B. Chandrasekar | Music for beginners with computer lessons. |
| A.I.R. Madras (Conductor : Poornachander) | Vadya Vrinda |

### SUNDAY - 19-12-93

| | |
|---|---|
| Nada Brahmananda Brindam Group | Devotional Songs |
| Thanjavur Sankara Iyer | Tevaram (Nachimuthu Gounder Rukmani Ammal Charitable Trust in memory of Sri. P. Nachimuthu Gounder) |

### MUSIC CONCERT

| | |
|---|---|
| T.K. Govinda Rao | Vocal |
| Sikkil Bhaskaran | Violin |
| Yella Venkateswara Rao | Mridangam |

### MONDAY - 20-12-93

| | |
|---|---|
| Gayakapriya Group | Slokas from "Sri Mooka Pancha Sati" |
| Tirupambaram S. Shanmugasundaram | Sirkazhi Moovar (Nachimuthu Gounder Rukmani Ammal Charitable Trust in memory of Smt. Chellammal Palani Gounder) |

| | |
|---|---|
| M.O. Srinivasan | The contribution to Bhakti Music by Guru Nanak |

**TUESDAY - 21-12-93**

| | |
|---|---|
| Surmangal Group | Bhajan (in different languages) |
| Dr. Alladi Ramakrishnan | The spiritual diction of Tyagaraja |
| T.R. Kamalamoorthy | Harikatha (in Tamil) on "PARAMACHARYA" composed by V. Swaminatha Atreya (Alamelu Ramanarayana Sarma Award) |

**WEDNESDAY - 22-12-93**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sridaya Group | Vedanta Desikar Stotram |
| B.M. Sundaram | Contribution of Tamil Composers (18th Century) to Carnatic Music (Chellammal Natarajan Endowment Lecture) |
| Dr. Rajalakshmi Santhanam | Post-Trinity composers : Vaitheeswarankoil Subbarama Iyer (Sri Ramanarayana Sarma Memorial Endowment) |

**THURSDAY - 23-12-93**

| | |
|---|---|
| Ganarchana group | Achyuta Dasar Songs |
| T.V. Govindarajan | Tamil Composers of the 20th Century: Mayuram Viswanatha Sastri. (Tribute in Centenary Year) (Nachimuthu Gounder Rukmani Ammal Charitable Trust in memory of Smt. Rukmani Nachimuthu Gounder) |
| Dr. Pappu Venugopala Rao (assisted by D. Pasupathi) | Sanskrit compositions of Annamacharya (Dr. V. Raghavan Shashtyabdapurthi Endowment Lecture) |

**FRIDAY - 24-12-93**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sri Ranganatha Baktha Samajam | Songs on Lord Ranganatha |
| Rajashree Gautham | Parallel thoughts in Divya Prabhandam and Krishna Karnamritam (Nachimuthu Gounder Rukmani Ammal Charitable Trust in memory of K. Palani Gounder) |
| Brahmasri T.S. Balakrishna Sastrigal | Harikatha - "Sri Venkatesa Mahimai" |

**SATURDAY - 25-12-93**

| | |
|---|---|
| Kala Subramaniyam & Party | Songs on Lord Krishna |
| Sangita Kalanidhi Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer | Release of book titled "Kritis composed by Kallidaikurichi Dr. E.S. Sankara narayana Iyer" followed by rendering of his "Ekadasa Rudra Kritis" by the disciples of Vidvan A. Sundharesan. First copy will be received by T.T. Vasu. |

**MUSIC CONCERT**

| | |
|---|---|
| Thanjavur S. Kalyanaraman | Vocal |
| M.R. Gopinath | Violin |
| T. Shyam Sunder | Mridangam |

**SUNDAY - 26-12-93**

| | |
|---|---|
| Andavan Pichai Bhajan Mandali | Songs by Andavan Pichai |

*Presentation of portrait of Sadguru Tyagaraja by the great grandsons of Krishna Bhagavatar and Sundara Bhagavatar of Umayalpuram. Sri. R.V. Raman will render a song in the Umayalpuram tradition.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman | Laya Lavanya - "Rhythm Spectrum" |

**MUSIC CONCERT**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sangita Kalanidhi B. Rajam Iyer | Vocal |
| T.S. Veeraraghavan | Violin |
| J.Vaidyanathan | Mridangam |

**MONDAY - 27-12-93**

| | |
|---|---|
| Vanamalika | Songs on Lord Lakshmi Narasimha<br>Release of book : "The structure of Music in Raga and Western system" authored by Dr. Raja Ramanna |
| Japan Foundation<br>(The Indo-Japanese Association) | Japanese Music :<br>Satuma Biwa "Yoshino Ochi" (15 min.) by Ms. Ranshu Kiyokawa<br>Shakuhachi "Shika-no-Tohne" (12 min.) by Mr. Jumei Tokumaru & Master Goro Yamaguchi<br>"Shin Kyo Rei" (10 min.) by Master Goro Yamaguchi |

**TUESDAY - 28-12-93**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sriram Nagar Ganamalika | Ashtapadi |
| Dr. S.R. Jayasitalakshmi | "Melodic patterns in Kritis" (Brinda Varadarajan Memorial Endowment) |

**MUSIC CONCERT**

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|---|---|
| Sangita Kalanidhi<br>Thanjai K.P. Sivanandam &<br>Smt. Sarada Sivanandam | Veena |
| Srimushnam V. Raja Rao | Mridangam |
| Palghat Sundaram | Ghatam |

**WEDNESDAY -29-12-93**

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| Bala Brindam group | Devotional songs in Malayalam |

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|---|---|
| Mani Krishnaswami | Tyagaraja on Lord Krishna |

**MUSIC CONCERT**

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|---|---|
| R.K. Srikantan | Vocal |
| Rudrapatnam S. Ramakanth | Vocal support |
| S.D. Sridharan | Violin |
| Ramanathapuram M.N. Kandaswamy | Mridangam |

**THURSDAY - 30-12-93**

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|---|---|
| Godha Mandali group | Nalayira Divya Prabandham |
| Pandit Kashinath Shankar Bodas (Kanpur) | Bhajans in the Hindustani Style |
| Prabala Subba Rao | Harmonium |
| K. Dattatreya | Tabla |
| Dr. Prithiwindra Mukherjee (France) | Indian Ragas in cognitive Research |

**FRIDAY - 31-12-93**

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|---|---|
| Sowbhagya group | Kritis on Sri Rama Nama Mahimai |
| Vidya Bhavani Murthy | Tiruppugazh (Bharatanatyam Demonstration) (Mr. Ganesa Iyer Birth Centenary Memorial Lecture) |

**MUSIC CONCERT**

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|---|---|
| Dr. S.R. Janakiraman | Vocal |
| M.S. Anantharaman | Violin |
| E.M. Panchapakesan | Mridangam |

**SATURDAY - 1-1-94**

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| Students of the Teachers' College of Music | Songs on Devi |

Sangita Kalanidhi T.L.Venkatarma Iyer BIRTH CENTENARY

**MUSIC CONCERT**

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|---|---|
| Sangita Kalanidhi D.K.Pattammal | Vocal |
| T. Rukmini | Violin |
| T.A.S. Mani | Mridangam |
| Calcutta K.S. Krishnamurthy | Kritis of Patnam Subramania Iyer (T.S. Sabesa Iyer Award for a Bodhaka) |

**Summing up of Conference Proceedings**

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|---|---|
| D. Umamaheswari | Harikatha (Sanskrit) on 'Life of Adi Sankara' |
| Distribution of prizes awarded in Competitions | Vidhushi Mani Krishnaswami |
| Release of the Book "Ragas of Sangita Saramrta" - (Part I by Sangita Kalanidhi T.V. Subba Rao and Part II by Dr. S.R. Janakiraman) | T.T. Vasu. |

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# MEETINGS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## 18TH DECEMBER, 1993

The proceedings of the first day of the 67th Conference started with the rendering of Taitriyam and Bhajans by children from the Shanthi Colony Chinmaya Bala Vihar.

Sri B. Chandrasekhar offered a video presentation of traditional classical music for beginners through computer software. The course is offered in six languages - English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam with a sruti range from 5 to 7 and in four basic ragas - Mayamalavagoula, Sankarabharanam, Kalyani and Kharaharapriya. The entire gamut from Swaravali to Varnam is covered in thirteen lessons. The manual however has now been prepared only in the English language. The exercises are also offered in the upper and lower octaves in order to enable the student to perfect his or her voice modulation. Lessons covering all these aspects were covered - Saralivarisai, Jantavarisai, Geetam, Varnam etc.

Smt. Mani Krishnaswami and Vidwan T.K. Govinda Rao commended this attempt to cater to a wider range of students who can undertake these lessons at their own leisure.

Sri Chandrasekhar mentioned that in the next stage of research they would try to include the gamaka - which is a special feature of Karnatic Music. He acknowledged the inspiration and guidance received from Vidwan P.S. Narayanaswamy, other vidwans and his mother.

This was followed by a special programme of Akashvani Vadya Vrinda, Madras under the baton of Sri L. Poornachandar. The orchestra consisting of about thirty five artistes rendered eight compositions by S. Gopalakrishnan, Emani Sankara Sastry, M.Y. Kama Sastry, Sangita Kalanidhi T.K. Jayarama Iyer and Poornachandar in the ragas

Hamsadhvani, Gowrimanohari, Hamsanadam, Vagadeeswari, Phalamanjari, Kosalam, Suddhabangala and Kamboji. Thematic compositions were ecstasy in Koslam and pursuance of peace in Suddhabangala. Kamboji highlighted both the classical and folk elements. The programme was compered by Ms. Vijayalakshmi Subramanian.

## 19TH DECEMBER, 1993

The Second days morning session programme commenced with the rendering of devotional songs by a group of ladies from the Nada Brahmananda Brundam Group from Hyderabad. Their offering included sons of Annamacharya, Narayana Teertha, Bhadrachala Ramadasa and Tulsidas.

Thanjavur Sankara Iyer gave a lecture demonstration under the endowment of the Nachimuthu Gounder Rukmani Ammal Charitable Trust in memory of Sri P. Nachimuthu Gounder. He was assisted by Sri V.L. Sudarshan on the violin and Sri M. Ganesan on the Mridangam.

After singing invocation in the ghana ragas, he said the word Tevaram could be interpreted as worship or love for God or taking references from the Silappadikaram. Varam could also be considered as a musical form. The Silappadikaram also refers to 103 Panns some or which have also been used in Tevarams. Some familiar Panns are Kausikam, Takkesi, Sadari, Vyazhakurinji, Kolli, Suddhasaveri, Sevvazhi etc. The Chatusruti Rishaba was not in use in anciet times and the Nata raga was that as heard on the occasion of the beginning of the procession (Swamipurappadu) or as Todayamangalam.

One thousand three hundred years ago, ragas were described as having Chandam and tala. After sketching briefly, the lines of Gnanasambandar, Appar and Sundarar and incidents in their lives, he rendered Todudaiya Sevian in Natai, Madaiyil Vazhai in Kamboji, Petariyam Paravai in Hari Kamboji, Kootrayina in Navaroj, Meela adimai in Madhyamavati, Neeru Servado in Nilambari and Ezhisai in Sankarabharanam.

He referred to the services of Thiruneelakanta Yazhpaanar, Matangachudamani and Tilakavatiyar in setting the tunes for the songs and popularising them. There can be no music without bhakti. Iyal and Isai are equally important. There is no need for unnecessary frills or additions.

This was followed by a concert by T. K. Govinda Rao - Vocal; Sikkil R. Bhaskaran - Violin; Yella Venkateswara Rao - Mridangam.

## 20th DECEMBER 1993

The third day's programme commenced with the rendering of verses form the Mooka Panchasati, a special programme by Gayakapriya.

One sloka and the last sloka from each of the satakas had been set to music by Vidwan P.S. Narayanaswami in six ragas with chittaswaras. It is believed that if one recites or listens to the Mooka Panchasati with faith, Kamakshi Devi will appear and shower her blessings.

Sri Tiruppambaram S. Shanmugasundaram, Principal, Tamil Nadu Govt. Music College, Madras delivered the Smt. Chellammal Palani Gounder Endowment lecture under the Nachimuthu Gounder Rukmani Ammal Charitable Trust.

Arunachala Kavirayar, Marimutha Pillai and Muthuthandavar are generally described as the Sirkazhi Moovar. All of them belong to the eighteenth cnetury. Arunachala Kavirayars Rama Natakam is well known and reflects the deep love and insight he had for the Kamba Ramayanam. Songs like Yaro Ivar Yaro (Bhairavi) Saranam Saranam (Asaveri) are well known and dance dramas have also been created on the basis of these songs.

Marimutha Pillai specialised in Ninda Stuti. Songs like Enneramum, Oru Kalai Thooki Kondu, Kalaithooki Ninradum Deivame, Edukkithanai Modi are popular.

Of these three, Muthuthandavar was the first to introduce the Kirtana form and to bring the songs of his Manasikaguru Manickavasagar into this format. His songs reflect the (nine) components of music as elaborated in

the Silappadikaram and the various aspects like Sol, Porul, Ani, Isai, Talanayam are reflected in his songs in praise of Lord Siva. After an invocation to Vinayaka, he sang a few songs and commented on the alliteration and prosody and the possibility of niraval elaboration. The songs are replete with details regarding the history of the place be it Sirkazhi or Chidambaram temples the puranic lore and Saiva siddhanta.

Shri M.O. Srinivasan in his paper on the contribution to Bhakti music by Guru Nanak referred to his emphasis on the chanting of Gods name, his devotion and simple guidance to a layman to approach god through the path of devotion. The meaning and content of six songs were explained first and them sung in appropriate Hindustani ragas. The last bhajan by Saint Khalas was rendered to the tune of Vaishnava Janato.

He was assisted by Sri Shankar and Jyothi Kamath(Vocal support), Sri Krishnamurthy on the harmonium and Sri Ramamurthy on the tabla.

## 21st DECEMBER, 1993

The programme on 21st Dec. 1993 commenced with the rendering of Bhajan (in different language) by Surmangal Group, under the guidance of Sri P.S. Srinivasa Rao and Sri Gopal Ratnam, Master Kartik Rajagopal on the keyboard, Y.G. Sundar on the tabla and Sri Tatachari on the cymbals accompanied the artistes.

Prof. Alladi Ramakrishnan in his lecture on the spiritual diction of Tyagaraja said that one should look beyond the technicalities of his songs and search for the spirit, meaning and message of Tyagaraja. The songs are the quintessence of the Vedas, Upanishads, epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata through the medium of Telugu and Sanskrit. In some kritis, both languages fuse into one another. Alliteration, prosody, rhythm, rhapsody, assonance and resonance are found in profusion as in the Nata and Sriraga Pancharatna Kritis. His theme covered all of Gods creation. Space and matter meant the entire universe for Tyagaraja who did not refer to any particular area, locality or contemporary matter. He was an astrophysicist. Time to him was eternity from minus to plus infinity and yugas merge.

He explored the purpose of human life without giving way to despair. Man through devotion obtains the love of God and loses fear of death. Enjoyment of life is reflected in the Nauka Charitram. He quoted some lines from Tyagaraja Kritis extolling loyality to bhaktas and their associates chiefly Narada, Anjaneya and Prahlada, Unity of all religions and the omnipresence of god. His kritis set aloft the glories of music.

Finally, he said that the message of Tyagaraja is that man should not waste time but go after the real values of life and pursuit of God.

Sri T.K. Govinda Rao complimented Prof. Ramakrishnan on the extensive study made of saint Tyagaraja and the meaning his kritis.

Smt. Kamala Moorthy presented a Harikatha (Alarmelu Ramnarayan Endowment) on the life of the sage of Kanchi as prepared by Sri Atreya.

## 22nd DECEMBER, 1993

The proceedings commenced with the rendering of pasurams of Madurakavi Azhwar and stotras from Vedanta Desikar.

Sri B.M. Sundaram delivered a lecture on the contribution of Tamil composers to the growth of Karnatic Music (Chellammal Natarjan Endowment).

In his very extensive treatment of the subject, he covered the period from pre-Trinity to modern times. In the twentieth century Tanjore Ponniah Pillai sang the compostions of Muthuthandavar in ragas traditionally handled down while Tirupamburam Swaminatha Pillai changed some of the tunes. He referred to some earlier composers in Shajis court at Tanjore such as Panchanada Rama Bharati, Muthukkavirayan and Vasudeva Kavi. Vasudeva Kavi is credited with a padam in Nagagandhari raga. Muthukkavirayar who was an expert in music composed the Tyagesa Kuravanji. Arunachalakavirayar is famous for his Ramanatakam. Uttukkadu Venkatasubbiers songs are very popular even today. Songs abounding in puns (sledai) were first introduced by Marimutha Pillai also known as Tillaividangan. He referred to the Tamil padams of Ghanam Krishna Iyer some of which like Parengum Parthalaum, Nithirayil, Ella

perumaigalum being sung in concerts. Papavinasa Mudaliar is credited with the Kumbhesar Kuravanji. Tiruvarur Ramaswami Pillai should be considered as a junior contemporary of Tyagaraja. Four of his varnams have been found. Of Anaiyas compositions Paruvam Paarka nyayama, Kaanakkannayiram in Nilambari, Ennatukkudavi in Suddhasaveri are well known. Gopalakrishna Bharati in addition to Nandanar Charitram has also got a collection of other songs to his name. Of Kavi Kunjara Bharatis song Sivanai Ninaindavar Elloraiyum Polave are popular. In addition to his well known arupta, RamalingaSwamigal is credited with 106 songs. Mayuram Munsif Vedanayakam Pillai is famous for his Sarva Samaya Samarasa Kirthanas. Mazhavai Chidambara Bharati and Vaitheeswaran Koil Subbaramaiyer belonged to this period. Ramaswami Sivan was a specialist in Monai and is known for his Periya Puranam and Tiruvilaiyadal puranam songs Muthukkumaraiyane, Ananda Natesa and Kadaikkannoki are popular. He referred to the Uttara Ramayana Padalgal of Ananta Bharati. Nilakanta Sivans songs like Navasiddhi, Orunal oru pozhudagilum, Ananda Natamaaduvar are very popular. Annamalai Reddiars Kavadicchindu and Thandavarayars Kili Kannigal were new forms. Sankaradas Swamigal was not merely a great actor but also was well versed in music. Sri Sundaram sang snatches from some of the compositions. The 72 melaraga kritis collectively known as Kanda Ganamudam were composed by Kotiswara Iyer and were the first in the Tamil language.

Tanjore Ponniah Pillai composed in Tamil and other languages. Abraham Panditars Karnamruta Sagaram is a magnum opus on music and musicology of the early years of the present century.

With Papanasam Sivan, Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar, Mayuram Viswanatha Sastri, Thanjavur Chitrakavi Sivarama Rao who was the guru of Srimati C. Banni Bai and M.M. Dandapani Desigar, he completed the enumeration of Tamil composers.

In the recent past musicians like Ponniah Pillai, Palani Krishna Iyer and Dhanakoti sisters and later Musiri Subrahmania Iyer, Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer were responsible for popularising Tamil songs in prefusion.

Dr. Rajalakshmi Santanam in her paper on Vaitheeswaran Koil Subbarama Iyers padams (Ramanarayan Sarma Memorial endowment) stated that particulars relating to his life are scanty. He studied alankara sastra and was also an expert in Tamil music. His padas imply pacchi Sringara. There is a strong melody line in them. There are references to him in U.Ve. Swaminatha Iyers biography of Ghanam Krishna Iyer and Abraham Panditars Karnamrita Sagaram. He has composed in many rakti ragas and rare ragas like Gaulipantu. She cited some of his Padas serving as parallels to Telugu padas. A remarkable feature of his padas is the confluence of Sahitya Bhava and ragabhav.

She then sang four padas which could be strung into a story pattern. These were Padari (Kamboji) Aduvum solluval (Saurashtra), Idu enna pecchu (Sahana) and Ettanai Sonnalum (Saveri).

## 23rd DECEMBER 1993

The proceedings started with rendering of a few songs of Achyuta Dasa, set to music by the late Sathur Krishna Iyengar and taught to the Ganarachana group by his disciple Calcutta K.S. Krishnamurthy.

As a tribute to Mayuram Viswanatha Sastri whose birth centenary is being celebrated this year, a lecture demonstration was given by Shri T.V. Govindarajan who had had the opportunity of knowing the composers family.

Mayuram T.R. Viswanatha Sastri was born in 1893 at Terizhandur village. His early education included the study of Sanskrit, Veda Adhyayana and he later learnt English. His mother, noticing his interest in music, encouraged him. Beginning with Harikatha he was later trained under illustrious preceptors like Sri Dasavadyam Venkatrama Iyengar of Devakottai, Namakkal Narasimha Iyengar and Simizhi Sundaram Iyer. From 1921 he started giving concerts. He later moved to Madras. He was noted for his bhava oriented singing, raga alapana and swaraprastaram.

His genius however lay in his ability to compose in Sanskrit and Tamil. His ishta deivam was Lord Muruga. But he also sang in praise of other deities. His compositions included Varnams, Swarajatis, Oradi

Padam and Tillanas. His first book of songs was published in 1926 and was titled Valli Parinaya Manipravala Satakam . His mudra was Viswa or Vedapuri . The second book of sixty songs published in 1940 was titled Muruga Madhura Kirtanai. He mostly used rakti ragas though there are a few in rare ragas. He was a master in Swarakshara. Some of his compositions with varied *nadais* are also suited for dance. He is nted for his patriotic songs, which were popular and sung in every nook and corner of Tamil Nadu.

He won the prize for the best composition on Bharata Mata given by the Music Academy in the year 1931- viz. in the early years of the Academys existence. He was also asked to compose and submit four songs for consideration for selection for our national anthem. His genius was also revealed in his composing 289 Kirtana based on the Tirukural and published as Tirukkural Madhura Kirtanai. Some songs however remain in manuscript form after his death in 1958.

He sang a varnam in Ritigaula, Mata Sada avatu mam in Abhogi replete with Swaraksharas, Sivanukkilaya (Hemavati) Kaividalagathaiyya (Sankarabharanam); Mayilvahana (Amritavarshini) Jayati Jayati (Khamas); Kuzhalinidu (Mohanam).

The Sanskrit compositions of Annamacharya formed the theme of Dr. Pappu Venugopal Raos lecture under the Dr. V. Raghavan Shastiabdapurti Endowment. Prof. D. Pasupathi rendered some the compositions.

Tallapaka Annamacharya, who lived between 1424-1503, was the first Vaggeyakara who divided his compositions into Pallavi and charanam with mudra in the last charanam. The anupallavi finds place in some. If only he was known to the world a hundred years ago, the history of South Indian Music would have been re-written. It is unfortunate that he himself locked up his compositions engraved on copper plates in a room called the Sankeertana Bhandaaram saying that one Sankeertana was enough to protect him.

Annamayya is said to have composed 32,000 padams but only less than half is available. He was equally at home in Aadhyatmika Samkeertana and Sringaara Sankeertana. For him there was no difference between any God and Venkateswara.

Annamayya is said to have authored a hymnody, a treatise on lyrical compositions entitled Samkeertana Lakshanam in Sanskrit. Unfortunately this is not available, but its Telugu version, translated by his own grandson, Chinna Tirumalayya is available with the title Sankeetanala Lakshanamu. The sthala purana of Tirupati entitled Venkatachala Mahatmyam in Sankstrit is also attributed to Annamacharya.

Of the 14,525 padams, only 100 compositions in Sanskrit are available today. A proportional approach will indicate that one can calculate a figure of 300 for the remaining 18,000. Of the 100 available, 5 of 8 are on Sringara. A few are philosophical in nature.

Historical evidence has it that Annamayya and Purandaradasa, a junior contemporary, met at least once. There should not be any comparison of his Sanskrit compositions with that of others as each of them had their own unquestionable devotion.

Prof. D. Pasupathi interspersed the lecture with the following compositions: Aadipurusha (Gambheeranatha), Narayanate Namo Namo (Arabhi), Deva devam (Dhanyasi), Karunanidhim (Kannadagaula), Vandeham (Bauli) Sakalam (Sindhu Bhairavi); Rajeeva netraya (Kamboji) Madrusaanam (Mukhari) and Twameva Saranam (Madhyamavati).

## 24th DECEMBER, 1993

In view of the importance of the day, Vaikunta Ekadasi, the Sri Ranganatha Bhakta Samajam group sang some songs of Nerur Srinivasachariar in praise of Lord Ranganatha. They were accompanied on the violin by L. Neela and on the Mridangam by Sivasankar.

Rajshree Gautam, in the delineation of parallel thoughts in divya Prabandham and Krishna Karnamritam (Nachimuthu Gounder Rukmani Ammal Charitable Trust in memory of Shri K. Palani Gounder) referred to the pasurams of Kulasekhara Azhvar and Periyazhwar and the Krishnakarnamruta slokas of Leelasuka.

The Divya Prabandham abounds with references to avataras of Vishnu and are replete with Vatsalya and Sringara bhava. The Krishna Karnamrutam dealt with Krishnas childhood. The Pillai Tamizh of Periyazhwar is very similar to that of Leela Suka, who was born in Kerala. Some of the slokas also remind us of Andals Tiruppavai. Tirumangai Azhvar had prayed to Lord Ranganatha that the Tamil Prabandhas be given a status equal to that of the Sanskrit Vedas.

She performed abhinaya for three slokas (Gosha ragosha, Godhuli and Ayi Murali) from the Krishna Karnamritam and Kulasekhar azhwars Muzhudum Vennai, Tirindezhutazhai and Tuppudaiyaarai of Periazhwar.

The orchestra consisted of S. Rajeswari (Vocal), T.K. Padmanabhan (Violin) and Kannan (Mridangam).

This was followed by a Harikatha on Sri Venkatesa Mahimai by Brahmasri Balakrishna Sastrigal.

## 25th DECMBER, 1993

The proceedings began with the rendering of devotional songs in different languages on Lord Krishna by Mrs. Kala Balasubramaniam and party.

Dr. E.S. Sankaranarayana Iyer was a founder member of the Experts Committee of the Music Academy. He had a long and fruitful association with the Academy. In addition to his medical practice, he was a musician who also was a Vaggeyakara. He used his own name as the mudra and used Sanskrit and Tamil in his songs.

Part two of his songs was released by Semmangudi Dr. Srinivasa Iyer who has also written the introduction for the volume. He remarked that the songs were set to lilting music and were easy to learn and sing. This volume included his Navagraha and Ekadasa Rudra Kritis.

The Ekadasa Rudra Kritis were then rendered by students of Vidwan A. Sundharesan.

This was followed by a concert by Thanjavur S. Kalyanaraman accompanied by Sri M.R. Gopinath on the violin and Sri R.Shyam on the mridangam.

## 26th DECEMBER, 1993

The proceedings started with the rendering of devotional songs by Andavan Pichai Bhajan Mandali. Andavan Pichai was Marakathavalli in her purvashram before receiving deeksha from Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh. Most of her songs in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu were in praise of Muruga and were set to music by her daughter, Kamakshi Kuppuswami. The Mandali was accompanied on the harmonium by Srimathi Janaki Rajagopal, Sri Y.G. Sundar on the Tabla and Sri Thathachariar giving rhythm support.

The descendants of Umayalpuram Krishna Bhagavatar and Sundara Bhagavatar, represented by Shri R.V. Raman, Sri T. Karthikeyan and others presented to the Academy a copy of the portrait of Sadguru Tyagaraja which had been in their family for over 175 years. Sri R.V. Raman rendered the song Ninne in Gambhira Nata as sung in the Umayalpuram tradition. They had also arranged for passport size photographs to be given to all the members of the Expert Committee and participating musicians.

The effects of Rhythm on the psyche was demonstrated by Umayalpuram Sivaramans theme, Rhythm spectrum.

The raga and tala systems had been highly developed in Karnatic Music. The 35 tala prastara, the 108 tala system and the Chanda talas are outstanding examples.

Rhythm spectrum owes its origin and development to the core of Panchavadyam and Tayambika solo in Kerala. This percussion ensemble had inspired Sri Sivaraman to develop this programme presented as Rhythm spectrum. This ensemble consists of three mridangams tuned to Aadhara Shadja, antara gandhara and Panchamam. A basic drone-like effect was given by two mridangams and cymbals. The adi tala which was chosen for the demonstration was kept by another member. Senior mridangam artistes Mannargudi Easwaran and K.V. Prasad had their mridangams tuned to antara gandhara and panchama respectively. Umayalpuram Mali and Nagarajan provided the drone effect on the mridangam, S. Venkatachari kept the tala while Vasudevan played the cymbals and R. Krishnan strummed the tambura. Sangita Kalanidhi Thanjavur K.P. Sivanandam complimented the ensemble on its performance.

The morning session concluded with a concert by Sangita Kalanidhi B. Rajam Iyer accompanied by Sri T.S. Veeraraghavan on the violin and Sri J. Vaidyanathan on the Mridangam.

## 27th DECEMBER, 1993

The proceedings commenced with he rendering of songs in praise of Lord Lakshmi Nrisimha by Sri Vanamalika. The songs were drawn from the works of Adi Sankara, Purandaradasa, Alwars, Annamacharya and Vedanta Desika.

Books on a comparative study or even explaining the features of Indian and Western Music are few and far between. Therefore it was a welcome addition to have the book of Dr. Raja Ramanna on The structure of Music in Raga and Western systems released by Sri C. Subramaniam President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Mr. Handel Manuel, Dr. V. Doreswamy Iyengar and Mr. T.T. Vasu highlighted various special features of the book like the notation for the 72 melakartas, the Varnam and Ragamalika in staff notation, the glossary of terms in both systems and the enormous amount of research and preparation that had gone into the writing of this book.

Sri T.T. Vasu said: The Music Academy considers itself privileged that the release of this epoch-making book by Dr. Raja Ramanna is being held in this auditorium during 67th conference. The distinguished speakers who spoke before are eminently qualified men and they have already mentioned that although several musicologists have, in the past, worked in the field of interpreting Indian music through the medium of European notation, Dr. Ramannas book covers a much wider area. It is a comprehensive study of the raga and tala systems of Karnatic music in terms of Western music parlancè. As Mr. Parthasarathy observed, it deals with Mela Ragas generated by modal shift of the tonic note, the derivation of Janya ragas and harmonic elements in raga systems. I congratulate Dr. Ramanna on this magnificent effort and his generosity in sharing the fruits of his labours and research with musicians and musicologists all over the world. I hope the book will be widely welcomed by the music world and will open a new chapter in the future development of raga systems.

Introducing the book, T.S. Parthasarathy, Secretary of the Music Academy, said:

"Right from the beginning of the 19th century, even from a little earlier, Europeans had shown considerable interest in the music of India. These include scholars from Germany, Belgium and Britain. In fact, the earliest work can be traced to the 18th century Francis Fowkes study On the Veena of the Hindus is dated 1788 and Sir William Jones On the Musical Modes of the Hindus dated 1792. They were published in Calcutta. Two works published in London were dated 1797.

The earliest work dealing mostly with Karnatic music was The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and the Deccan by Captain C.R. Day of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry published in 1891. This author uses only staff notaion in his book. This was two years before A.M. Chinnaswami Mudaliars book Oriental Music in European Notation published in 1893.

Mudaliyar, who was a Roman Catholic and a Master of Arts of the Madras University, spent all his savings for publishing his work. As

Dr. Ramanna says in the present book, one is amazed at the erudition of the author . It was Mudaliyar's book that later made many Western savants alive to the beauties of Indian music. Although he was aware of the drawbacks of the staff notation for writing Indian music, he made a fervent plea in his book that 'the Royal Academy of Music in England and its French counterpart and others should evolve a notation which can be uniformly adopted by all the nations in the world.'

Sir E. Clements I.C.S. was another European who, in 1920, published the book Ragas of Tanjore which contains a long introduction and 52 Karnatic compositions in staff notation.

Many of these have their own shortcomings because the authors do not appear to be aware of Venkatamakhis scheme of 72 Melakartas and they have adopted the Kanakangi-Ratnangi nomenclature. Dr. Raja Ramannas book The Structure of Music in Raga and Western Systems comes as the crowning piece of this long line of attempts to interpret Karnatic music with the help of staff notation, particularly the Raga System. Dr Ramanna is musician among scientists and a scientist among musicians. The present book is the result of his studies of Karnatic music in collaboration with distinguished Indian musicians. He is aworld-renowned scientist with a passion for Western classical music and had studied at the Royal School of Music and the Trinity College, London.

Dr. Ramanna's book explains in great detail the basic generic systems of raga evolution and mela ragas generated by the modal shift of the Tonic Note known as graha bheda in Karnatic music. The 72 Melakarta ragas are shown in staff notation and as regards derived ragas from certain mela, Dr. Ramanna has selected 153 janya ragas derived from seven representative parent ragas.

Chapter 5 deals with harmonic elements in raga system. Counterpoint, in which two or more melodic lines sound simultaneously, does not exist in Indian music although Chinnaswami Mudaliar gives two possible contrapuntal accompaniment in his book. This inherent harmony in Karnatic is re-examined in the book and the possibility of harmonisation of raga melodies discussed with examples. The examples include the Pillari gita, the Vishnu Gita, and Vara Vina in Mohana.

Forms in Karnatic music are then discussed and the illustrations in this chapter include a Varnam, five representative kritis and raga malika rendered into staff notation.

There is another illuminating chapter on the Aesthetics of raga Systems and another on Musical Notations and Definitions. There are glossaries of musical terms in European music and Karnatic music, musical events of historical importance and gamaka symbols.

Dr. Ramanna's book is a landmark publication and a bonanza for musicologists, both Indian and foreign. It is thought provoking and provides for new developments in the raga music of the future. I again thank the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and the Music Academy for giving me an opportunity to introduce this unique publication".

In his response, Dr. Ramanna referred to the need to study the two classical systems and to experiment with the introduction of counterpoint in the Carnatic ragas. He made reference to the fact that not all melakartas can be treated as ragas in the definite sense. Sri C. Subramanian, in releasing the book stressed the need for such comparative studies and to the scientific, artistic and spiritual qualities that have made a nuclear scientist a scholarly writer.

Concluding the programme was a brief concert of Japanese Music by the members of The Music Mission sponsored by the Japan Foundation. Prof. Tanabe gave a brief introduction to Japanese Music and said that the programme consisted of religious music and the history of the two instruments used today, namely the Satuma Biwa (stringer) and Shakuhachi (flute). This was followed by Ms. Ranshu Kiyokawa on the Satuma Biwa rendering Yoshino Ochi Master Goro Yamaguchi - the Shakuhachi (Japanese Flute with Shika no Tone and Mr. Goro Yamauguchi with Shin Kyo Rei.

The first item was Yoshino Ochi which was a song narrating the battle on Mount Yoshino that took place between 1391-92. Ms. Kiyokawa sang the works and played the Satuma Biwa. A wooden plectrum was used with the instrument held vertically. The notes were like that of Carnatic Suddha Saveri (15th Mela Mayamalavagoula). The Biwa was similar to the veena, seen in Ajanta paintings.

Shin Kyo Rei by Mr. Yamaguchi - Kyo means shunya, the highest spiritual idea in Buddhism. The Shakuhachi is a bamboo flute with four holes in front and one at the back. The gliding of notes was a feature - minor.

Shika-no-Toone was a duet performed by Master Yamaguchi and Mr. Kumel Tokumaru. The word Shika means deer and Tohne sound and refers to the call between male and female deers.

The Indo-Japanese Association with the help of the Japan Foundation presented this team of experts. Prof. Tanabe and Prof. Yamaguchi are known as National Human Treasure of Japan, like our own Padma Bhushan. Mrs. Takako Inoue acted as the interpreter.

## 28th DECEMBER, 1993

Sriramnagar Ganamalika rendered some Ashtapadis of Jayadeva. They were accompanied by Srimati Janaki Rajagopalan on the Harmonium and by Shri Devanesan on the Tabla.

Delivering he Brinda Varadarajan Endowment Lecture, Dr. S.R. Jayasitalakshmi, Senior Lecturer, Department of Music, Queen Marys College, Madras, spoke on melodic patterns in kritis.

The form of any type of musical composition consisted of four main aspects - melodic, structural, sahitya and rhythm. Melody was an arrangement of musically pleasing notes. The nature of a raga was determined by the melodic movement of svara passages and different patterns and moods can be developed by the theme and tempo of the svara passages.

Kriti is the dominant compositional form in Carnatic Music with an accent on musical excellence. this form affords scope for different patterns and since there are no strict rules as to the progression of the melody, each composer stamps this form with the mark of his own style, personality and creativity.

A Kriti starts with a pallavi followed by the anupallavi and charanam. From the middle octave there is an upward movement to the tara sthayi and a return to the anupallavi theme and then the conclusion. In most of the kritis of Tyagaraja, Patnam Subramania Iyer, Diskhitar, Shyama Sastri, Swati Tirunal and Papanasam Sivan this can be noticed. This is the normal standard pattern. There are some kritis which start on the tara sthayi shadja, some times with svarakshara and the initial movement is then downward. So too there are few instances of the charana starting in the tara sthayi. In some charanas, there are unexpected turns in the mode of development.

Where certain kritis start on a higher note and centre round tara sthayi shadja, there is a powerful and effective appeal. Composers have taken care to set the tune to suit the emotional content of the sahitya. Even in the same raga different moods are expressed through suitable changes.

In some kritis, a condensed or elaborate pattern can be traced. The entire range is abridged or there is a gradual step by step development. In some kritis only certain aspects of the raga are emphasised.

The speaker profusely illustrated the above points with samples from many kritis of the composers mentioned. She was supported on the violin by Shri V.L. Sudharshan.

The programme concluded with a Veena recital by Sangita Kalanidhi Thanjavur K.P. Sivanandam Pillai and Smt. Sarada Sivanandam with Srimushnam Rajarao on the miridangam and Palghat Sundaram on the Ghatam.

## 29th DECEMBER, 1993

Bala Brindam group consisting of children between the age of nine and fourteen commenced the proceedings with devotional songs in Malayalam. The composers were Sri Swati tirunal, T.Krishnan Bhattathiri, K.S. Kesavan Pillai, C.S. Krishna Iyer and Poondanam Bhattathiri. The group had been trained by Srimati Seetha Rajan and were accompanied by Sudev on the harmonium and Subash on the Tabla.

Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami, President of the Conference, chose for her lecture the songs of Tyagaraja on Lord Krishna. Initiated by his father, Sri Ramabrahmam into the effectiveness of the Taraka mantra and later by Ramakrishnananda, a sanyasi, into the Ramashadkshari, it is well known that Tyagaraja completed a 96 crore nama japa. While he is known for his Rama bhakti and sang that even seeing those who worshipped Rama would bring His blessings, he was not unfamiliar with Krishna Bhakti. In fact there are songs not only on Krishna but also on Nrsimha, Siva, Ambal, Sita, Ganapati, Subrahmanya, Lakshmana, Anjaneya and Tulasi.

It is also notable that he wrote two opearas Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam and Nowka Charitram . Some songs on Krishna outside the scope of the Nowka Charitram were taken up for illustration. These were Brindavana lola in Todi, Samajavaragamana in Hindolam.

Prananatha originally set in Sulini (35th mela) but now sung in Sankarabharanam and Venuganaloluni in Kedaragaula. She also stated that in the Pancharatna Kriti Arabhi, Sadhinchene some Charanams alternated, between Rama and Krishna. Vocal support was given by her disciple Akhila.

The morning session concluded with a concert by Vidwan R.K. Srikantan with Rudrapatam Ramakant (vocal support), S.D. Sridhar (violin) Ramanathapuram Kandaswamy Mridangam and Selvaganesh (Kanjira).

## 30th DECEMBER, 1993

Godha Mandali rendered pasurams from Nalayira Divya Prabandham. Trained by Sri M. N. Venkatavaradan, the selections were from Periazhwar, Thirupanazhwar, Perumal Tirumozhi, Periya Tirumozhi, Nacciyar Tirumozhi, Naanmugan Tiruvandadi and Nammalwar's Tiruvaimozhi.

Sri Kashinath Shankar Bodas of Gwalior Gharana, who had his initial training from his father, a disciple of Paluskar, had special training with Kumar Gandharva and has taken it upon himself to promote classical music at Kanpur. In addition to singing khyals in the Gwalior tradition, he also has set to music about 90 bhajans of Kabirdas, Surdas and Meerabai. He started with Sanskrit sloka as a prayer and then sang some bhajans including Payojimaine popularised by Paluskar. He ended the recital with Hari Om Tat Sat. He was accompanied by Prabala Subba Rao on the Harmonium and K. Dattatreya on the Tabla.

During the course of his talk on the comparative investigation of Ragas practised in the music of the north and south of India, Dr. Mukherjee stated that the word Raga stood for modal scale in which the degrees are a chosen succession of intervals within the framework of an ascending and descending octave.

He pointed out that the 72 melakartas are parent structures or prototypes distributed in twelve cycles, each composed of six prototypes.

After explaining the purpose of cognitive phenomena and their psychological basis, Dr. Mukherjee explained the scientific process of identifying shades of sound in relation to pitch and extolled the Melakarta sceme of Venkatamakhin. Cautioning that his research was based on the notes of uniform frequency without their shades, he explained that he could demonstrate the genesis of the mela scheme in European countries.

## 31st DECEMBER, 1993

The Sowbhagya group led by Srimati Parimala Balasubramaniam rendered kritis on Sri Rama Nama Mahimai. They included compositions of Bhadrachala Ramdas, Purandara Dasa, Brahmananda and Swami Dayananda. They were supported by Srimati Meenakshi on the harmonium, Kumari Jayashree on the Violin and Sri Balasubramaniam on the mirdangam.

The M. Ganesa Iyer Birth Centenary lecture on Tiruppugazh was delivered by Kumari Vidya Bhavani Murthy.

The Tiruppugazh is a work of Saint Arunagiri Natha and dates back to the 15th century. Only 1330 are available today. These hold the pride of place in Tamil Bhakti literature and are unique for content and tala patterns, metre or chandams. The chandams handled by the saint composer encompass countless cross combinations of odd and even numbers which complicate their rendering. When interpreted through the medium of dance, it lends a sparkle to the recital because of the complex kalappu chandams (cross or mixed metric patterns).

The Tiruppugazh covers almost all Hindu mythology and epics - which means that many gods and goddesses as mentioned. The Ramayana, Mahabharatha, Sivaleela, Krishnaleela and other themes find a place with the verse ending describing Muruga as the nephew of Lord Vishnu in whichever avatar is described therein.

She took up three verses - Seetala varija paada namo nama in Khamas raga, Anga, tala of 17 beats, Shailanganai in Latangi in anga tala of 30 beats and for her concluding items the themes of the Ramayana in the verse Enathu mozhi as a Ragamalika in Khanda Chapu.

Sri B.M. Sundaram congratulated the artiste on the choreography and her adherence to the original tala without making changes.

The mornings programme concluded with a concert by Dr. S.R. Janakiraman (vocal) with Sri M.S. Anantaraman (violin) and Sri E.M. Panchapagesan (mridangam).

## 1st JANUARY, 1994

The proceedings of the 67th Conference commenced with the rendering of songs on Devi by the students of the Teachers College of Music run by the Academy. The songs rendered were Himachalatanaya (Ananda Bhairavi), Yaarabhimaanam (Ragamalika) and Paradevi (Surati).

Sri T.S. Parthasarathy paid a tribute to the late Sangita Kalanidhi T.L. Venkatarama Iyer whose birth centenary fell this year. Venkatarama Iyer was responsible for collecting the songs of Muthuswamy Dikshitar who had no sishya parampara to carry on the tradition. Prominent among those who studied under him were Sangita Kalanidhi Smt. D.K. Pattammal, Sangita Kalanidhi B. Rajam Iyer and Sri Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao.

The tribute was followed by a concert mainly of Dikshitar kritis by Sangita Kalanidhi Smt. D.K. Pattammal with Lalitha Sivakumar (vocal support), T. Rukmani (violin) and Bangalore T. A. S. Mani (Mridangam).

Under the T. S. Sabesa Iyer Award for a Bodhaka, Calcutta K. S. Krishnamurthi had taught some students a few rare compositions of Patnam Subramania Iyer. The group rendered an Ata Tala Varnam in Begada, Panchanadisa (Purnachandrika), Bhajare Manasa (Sugunabhushani), Srikara (Saraswati), Sri Panchanadisam (Sahana), Palaya Panchanadiswaram (Sankarabharanam) and Naravara (Manirangu). Accompanying them were Sriramkumar on the Violin and Arun Prakash on the Mridangam.

President Sri T. T. Vasu released the Academy's publication of the Ragas of the Sangita Saramrta of King Tulaja. The first part was edited by the late T. V. Subba Rao and Part II by Dr. S.R. Janakiraman. The book was dedicated to the memory of Sri T. V. Subba Rao.

Sri V. Subramaniam gave his impressions of the proceedings of the 67th Conference in his summing up.

D. Umamaheswari rendered a harikatha in Sanskrit on Adisankara.

The 67th Conference concluded with the distribution of prizes to the winners in the thirty competitions conducted by the Music Academy.

## THE SADAS

The Sadas (Convocation) of the 67th Annual Conference was held at the T.T. Krishnamachari Auditorium at 4-00. p.m. on 1st January 1994, with Sri A. Chengal Reddy, Chairman, Tirumala - Tirupati Devasthanams Trust Board, in the Chair.

There was a distinguished gathering of the members of the Academy, music lovers, musicians, scholars and experts.

The function began with invocation by Ms S. Kasthuri and Ms K.Ganga students of the Teacher's College of Music, Music Academy.

The Sadas was convoked by Sri T.S Rangarajan, Secretary of the Academy. Welcoming Sri A. Chengal Reddy and others present, Sri T. T. Vasu, President of the Academy said:

"Sri Chengal Reddy, Chairman, Tirumala-Tirupathi Devasthanams Trust Board, Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami, Vidwan Tittle Krishna Iyengar, Vidwan Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao, distinguished invitees, ladies and gentlemen:

I extend to all of you a hearty welcome to this Sadas, which is our annual Convocation, and offer you my warm greetings for the New Year.

Our 67th Conference was inaugurated on the 17th December 1993 by Sri Niranjan Desai, Director General of I.C.C.R., and it conclued this morning. We had a colourful programme of lecture demonstrations in the mornings and enjoyable recitals of music and dance from mid-day onwards. We presented concerts by both veterans in the field and young and upcoming artistes, some of whom attracted a full house. If such audiences are any criterion, we may hopefully look forward to a bright future fr our performing arts. Despite numerous programmes during the season in various Sabhas in the city, the performances of senior vidwans and vidushis in our Academy were well attended. I thank them all for the excellent form in which they performed.

It would be invidious to mention only some of the events during the mornings, but the highlights included two harikathas which were linked with the centenary celebrations of the Paramacharya of Kanchi. The first was a harikatha in Tamil on the Paramacharya himself by Vidushi Kamala Murthy of Tanjore composed by Pandit Swaminatha Atreya and the second, a Sanskrit harikatha on Adi Sankara by Kum. Umamahesvari of Kapileswarapuram. There were two dance demonstrations, one by Rajashree Gautham on Parallel thoughts in Divya Prabandham and Krishna Karnamritam and the other by Vidya Bhavani Murthy on Tiruppugazh. Two features presented by visitors from abroad were a concert of Japanese music by the Japan Foundation and a lecture on Indian Ragas in Cognitive Research by Dr.Prithwindra Mukherjee from France.

Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami, President of the Conference, attended the morning sessions regularly and made illuminating comments on the items presented and felicitated the participants. She herself presented and interesting lecture-demonstration, the subject being Tyagaraja on Krishna.

The Sadas today is presided over by Sri A. Chengal Reddy, Chairman of the Tirumala-Tirupathi Devasthanams Trust Board, which manages one of the most ancient and sacred temples in India and perhaps in the whole world. His achievements in many fields of constructive activity have endowed his image with a unique distinction. After a brilliant scholastic career, including a study of law, Sri Reddy commenced legal pratice in his native place Rajampeta, but the call of public service was too compulsive to be resisted by him. He distinguished himself as an able legislator for two terms as a Member of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council. Later positions came to him unsolicited and he earned a reputation for his commitment to developmental activites and unimpeachable integrity. His appointment as the Chairman of the T.T.D marks a turning point in the history of that prestigious institution.

Sri Chengal Reddy is a person with a cultural background and even as a student he took an active part in literary activities and edited a Telugu magazine called Andhra Vaani. His stewardship of the T.T.D.is bound to have an impact on its purposeful activites in the fields of music

and dance. The T.T.D. has excellent rapport with the Tyagaraja Trust at Tirupati and the two bodies jointly confer the tittle Saptagiri Sangita Vidwan Mani every year on eminent musicians. By a happy coincidence, the title was conferred on Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami at Tirupati in September 1993.

At a time when public life in conspicuosly and unfortunately dominated by self-seekers and sycophants ,it is refreshing indeed to find a person like Sri Chengal Reddy, who carries the high office so lightly on himself and who leads a simple,unassuming and self-effacing life, shunning publicity. Known for his sincerity and devotion, Sri Chengal Reddy has brought out remarkable qualitative improvement in T.T. Devasthanams. It is my pleasure to know him intimately, thanks to the introduction of my good friend, Sri Obul Reddy.

In addition to Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami, who will be shortly receiving the birudu of Sangita Kalanidhi, Vidwan Tittle Krishna Iyengar and Vidwan Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao will be receiving the tittle of Sangita Kala Acharya, a citation and a purse from the hands of the president of the Sadas.

The Dr. M.G.R. Award for a young danseuse of the year goes to Vani Krishnaswamy of Bangalore and the Obul Reddy Award for the Guru goes to Mrs. Padmini Rao. Young Anita Menon also receives a special award for her participation in our Spirit of Youth Festival this year.

The Ambujam Krishna Awards for music go to Deepa Ranganath (Hindustani Music), Shanti Venkatakrishnan (Karnatic Music), R. Hemamalini (Violin) and Ganapathy Raman (Mriangam).

The 67th Conference and the Music and Dance Festival lasted for a fortnight and I thank our Secretaries, members of the Executive Committee, office staff, volunteers and others for cheerfully shouldering the heavy responsibility.

I take this opportunity to thank Ms. Sharon Appa Rao for designing the beautiful backdrop in our stage.

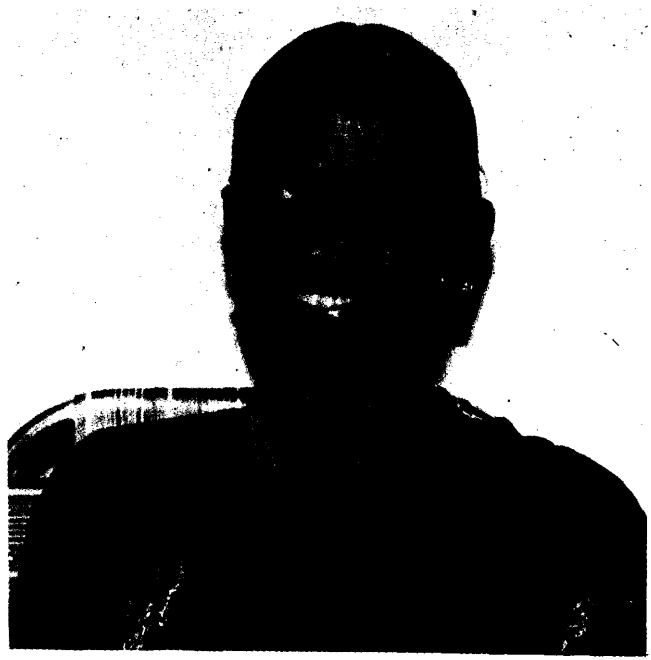
The year 1994 will be witnessing many changes and improvements in the functioning of this Academy. The new building to house the Teachers College of Music will be completed and the Library shifted to the Kasturi Srinivasan Building. We have many other plans on the cards and I earnestly appeal to our well-wishers, members of the Academy, sponsors and others to give us all support to achieve our dreams and maintain the standards and values built up over a period of more than six decades.

I once again welcome all of you and request Sri Chengal Reddy to preside over the Sadas and conduct the proceedings".

* * *

Sri T. S. Parthasarathy, Secretary of the Academy, presented Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami, President of the Conference.

## CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



**Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami**

Born in 1930, daughter of Lakshminarasimhachari and Marakatavalli, had initial training in vocal music from Jalatarangam Ramanayya Chetti and Tiruparkadal Srinivasa Iyengar: after matriculation joined Kalakshetra at Madras and passed the Sangita Siromani course: had the benefit of learning from eminent Gurus like Tiger Varadacharya and Budalur Krishnamurti Sastri: underwent a special course in pallavi singing under Mudicondan Venkatarama Iyer: learnt the kritis of Mysore Vasudevacharya from the composer himself: while at Delhi had advanced training under T.K. Jayarama Iyer; received her final polish from Musiri Subrahmanya Iyer at Madras: presently working with Vidwan Chengalpattu Ranganathan on the finer aspects of laya: noted for her uncompromising adherance to sampradaya and inpeccable rendering of ragas, kritis, neraval and svara: recipient of many titles and honours including Sangeet Natak Akademis award and the birudu Saptagiri Sangita Vidwan Mani at Tirupathi: widely travelled in U.S.A., U.S.S.R., U.K., and Germany: has specialized in rendering Sanskrit devotionals by different saints.

The President of the Sadas, Sri A. Chengal Reddy conferred the tittle Sangita Kalanidhi on Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami and presented her with the Birudu Patra and the Gold insignia of the tittle.

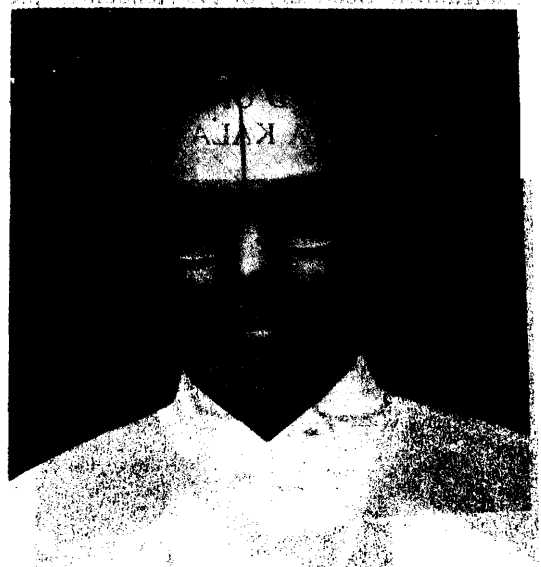
Sri T.T. Vasu, President of the Academy, presented to Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami, a cheque for Rs. 5,000/- being the interest from an endowment made by Sri C. V. Narasimhan in the name of his Guru Sangita Kalanidhi Musiri Subrahmanya Iyer, to be awarded to the President of each years Conference of the Music Academy.

The Academy had selected two senior Vidwans, who had rendered distinguished services in the field of music, for the conferment of the tittle Sangita Kala Acharya

The conferment of the tittle Sangita Kala Acharya is a new scheme introduced from this year onwards - 67th Conference (1993-94).

Sri S. Natarajan, Secretary of the Academy, presented Vidwan Titte Krishna Iyengar

## AWARD OF THE TITLE "SANGITA KALA ACHARYA"



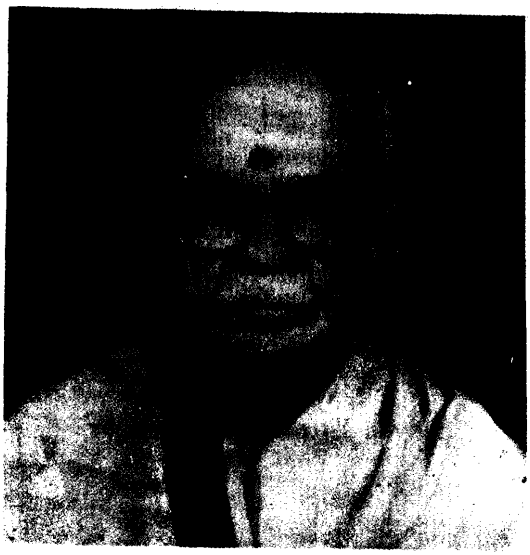
**Vidvan Titte Krishna Iyengar**

Born in 1902; son of Mysore Asthana Vidwan Titte Narayana Iyengar initially learnt music from his father and later from Veena Seshanna and Bidaram Krishanappa; belongs to the sishya parampara of Sri Tyagaraja: has been in the performing field for many decades and has given hundreds of concerts: was Asthana Vidwan at the Mysore palace for 28 years:noted for his vast repertoire of different compositions:has conducted research in various aspects of music and published the book Sangita Lakshya Lakshana Paddhati: edited for the Music Academy the Rare Compositions of Veena Subbanna: recipient of many awards and honours including the prestigious Kanaka Purandara Prasasti: a highly respected doyen in the field of Karnatic music.

Sri A. Chengal Reddy conferred the title of Sangita Kala Acharya on Vidwan Titte Krishna Iyengar and presented him with the Birudu Patra and the insignia of the title and a Cash Award of Rs.5,000/-

Sri T. S. Rangarajan. Secretary of the Academy, presented Vidwan Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao.

## AWARD OF THE TITLE "SANGITA KALA ACHARYA"



**Vidvan Sandhyavandanam Sreenivasa Rao**

Born at Penukonda in Andhra Pradesh in 1918; son of Narayana Rao and Ganga Bai; first learnt music from Pallavi Vidwan Pakka Hanumanthacharya; later had advanced training from Tirupati Rangacharyulu and Chilamathoor Ramaiah; commenced giving concerts

from the age of twelve; studied law at Madras: recipient of gold medals from the Music Academy in 1939 and 1940: spcialized in singing Dikshitar's kritis by direct tutelage under T.L. Venkatarama Iyer: built up a vast repertoire by learning from other emient Vidwans; worked as staff artiste in All India Radio and later as Principal of the Central College of Carnatic Music and the Teachers' College of Music of the Music Academy; noted for his purity of style, raga bhava and flawless pronunciation of sahitya in several laungua̲ges; recipient of many titles and honours.

Sri A. Chengal Reddy conferred the title of Sangita Kala Achayra on Vidwan Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao and presented him with the Birudu Patra and the gold insignia of the tittle and a cash award of Rs.5,000/-.

Sri A. Chengal Reddy, who presided over the Sadas, then delivered his address:

Sri T.T. Vasu, President of the Music Academy, Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami, President of the 67th conference, Vidwans Titte Krishna Iyengar and Sandhyavandanam Sreenivasa Rao, members of the Music Academy, ladies and gentleman:

"It gives me great pleasure to be here in your midst this evening to preside over the Sadas which is your convocation. The annual conferences and music and dance festivals of the Music Academy have become events of great significance in the artistic and cultural life of not only Madras but of the whole of India. The origin and growth of the Music Academy are themselves sources of great instruction and inspiration to lovers of the performing arts. It came into being when our arts were in a state of neglect and a brave pioneering effort was needed to revive them and give them their due place in the life of a nation. Some men eminent in public life, who realised the grave injustice done to our artistic hertitage, set in motion forces which gave us back our pride and self-respect in the cultural field.

Your Academy, I understand, was started in 1927 as an expression of the general awakening in the country not only in the political but also in social and cultural fields. During this period of over six decades, your Academy has set up a record of which any institution could be proud. It has grown in strength won the goodwill of more and more people and till today it is among the handful of institutions in India which command the respect of even the West for its services in the cause of music. You have created greater appreciation of music, established a college of music, publish a journal, printed many books on musical theory, maintain a good library and hold competitions and exhibitions. In your conferences every year you bring together not only musicians from the South and the North but also musicians and musicologists from abroad. It is a matter for gratification to know that under the dynamic stewardship of Sri. T.T. Vasu, the Academy has made significant progress in areas mentioned. I congratulate him and his team of dedicated colleagues. You will be happy to know that TTD has made T.T. Vasu a member of the very important sub-committee of TTD dealing with Dharma Prachar and he is an asset to the Board.

I come from the place where lived Tallapakka Annammacharya, the earliest composer of Telugu kritis. The history of Carnatic Music would have been written in a different way if he Sankirtanas of Annamacharya had been discovered two centuries age. The great Purandara Dasa was a junior contemporary of Annamacharya and there is an account that they had a meeting at Tirupati. Annamayya was known as "Sankirtanacharya", "Harikirtanacharya" and the "Mula Purusha of the Bhajana Paddhati". I am plasantly surprised to know that a number of Sangita Kalanidhis are closely associated with the propagation of Annamacharya sankirtanas, the latest being Smt. Mani Krishnaswami. After Vidwan Veturi Prabhakara Sastri unearthed the copper plates, it was Vidwan Rallapalli Anantakrishna Sarma who studied the Sankirtanas and set them to music in the original ragas as far as possible. But the credit of popularising the musical version of the Sankirtanas goes entirely to our Queen of Song Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi who is in our midst today. M.S. has rendered yeoman service by not only recording the songs in soulful music but also recording the Venkatesa Suprabhatam.

Dr. Sripada Pinakapani and Vidwan Nedunuri Krishnamurthy have also set a number of songs to music. A Tamil version of Dr.Pinakapanis Telugu book with notation, edited by one of your Secretaries Sri T.S. Parthasarathy, was published in 1982 by the Devasthanams and I understand that all the copies of this publication have been sold out. All these show that the T.T.Devasthanams and the Music Academy have been associated with each other for a long time for a common cause.

As already mentioned by Sri Vasu in his welcome adress, the Devasthanams and the Tyagaraja Trust of Tirupati recently in September conferred the coveted title Saptagiri Sangita Vidwan Mani on Smt. Mani Krishnaswami. I am extremely happy that I should preside over the sadas this evening and confer the prestigous title Sangita Kalanidhi on her. Mani Krishnaswami sings with knowledge, understanding and devotion. Well versed in several languages, she is able to bring subtle nuances delicately to the audience. Everyone will accept that Mani Krishnaswami stands in the forefront of Carnatic music. She is the daughter of Tamil Nadu and daughter-in-law of Andhra Pradesh and it gives me special pride and pleasure that she is getting honoured by this great Academy. I wish her many more laurels in future.

As the present Chairman of the T.T.Devasthanams I look forward to greater collaboration between TTD and the Music Academy in the furtherance of music and devotion, which represent the great heritage of India.

I thank you for honouring me by giving me the privilege of presiding over this Sadas."

Sangita Kalanidhi Sri Nedunuri Krishnamurthy offered felicitations to the Conference President Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami, followed by Sangita Kalanidhi Mysore Doreswamy Iyengar on Vidwan Titte Krishna Iyengar and Sangita Kalanidhi B. Rajam Iyer on Vidwan Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao.

Sangita Kalanidhi Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi offered felicitations to Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami and a shawl.

The recipients of the titles acknowledged the honour bestowed on them and thanked the Academy. Conference President Vidushi Mani Krishnaswami, while thanking the Academy for the honour bestwoed on her, made an annoucement creating an endowment of Rs.10,000/- with the Music Academy, to be given to the best senior vocalist during the Conference period for Neraval singing , as Sangita Kalanidhi Musiri Subrahmania Iyer prize . She then requested Smt. M.S. Subbulakshmi to hand over the cheque to the Academy's President. She said:

"Respected Sri A. Chengal Reddy garu, Chairman, Tirumala-Tirupathi Devasthanams Trust Board, Sri T.T. Vasu, President, Music Academy, Vice Presidents, Secretaries, Executive Commmittee Members, Experts Committee Members at the Music Academy, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I find it difficult to express my feelings of joy and gratitude on this memorable day in my life. I receive this great honour in all humility and in a prayerful mood.

I have, in my presidential address on 17th December, stated how greateful I am to the illustrious gurus at whose feet I had the privilege to study music. Besides the blessings of the gurus, I have been extremely privileged to enjoy for a number of years the benediction of the great Acharyas of Sri Ahobila Mutt, Srimad Andavan Asram, Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam and Sringeri Sannidhanam. On this auspicious occasion, I invoke their continued grace on me in the years to come.

To you all, ladies and gentlemen present here, and to all the rasikas I offer my grateful thanks for your affectionate and consistent support, encouragement and patronage. It will be my endeavour, as a Sangita K..anidhi, to follow the glorious traditions laid down by my distinguished predecessors. I take this opportunity to salute particularly Smt. M.S. Subbulalskmi, Smt D.K. Pattammal and Smt. Brinda, who are happly with us today.

To Sri T.T.Vasu President, Executive Committe Members and Office-bearers of the Music Academy I offer my sincere thanks and I assure them that I will prove, on and off the platform, worthy of their choice. I will be failing in my duty if I do not thank the Expert Committee Members, and especially to Sri T.S. Parthasarathy and Ms. Maithreyi Ramadurai, for guiding me in conducting the morning sessions of the Conference.

To Sri Titte Krishna Iyengar and Sri Sandhyavandanam Srinivasarao garu, I offer my respectful pranams and I seek their blessings and as a token of my regard and respect for them, I offer these shawls to them.

Ladies and gentlemen, the presence of Sri Chengal Reddy garu on this eventful day of my life has a very great sentimental significance for me. I was elected President of this Conference on the 17th December, which was the birth star day of Lord Venkateswara (Sravanam). And today, I receive the title at the hands of the First Servant of Lord Venkateswara, the Chairman of Tirumala-Tirupathi Devasthanams Trust Board, Sri Chengal Reddy garu. It is evident that Lord Venkateswaras grace is on me in this regard.

I have great pleasure in making an announcement. Sangita Kalanidhi Musiri Subrahmania Iyer, as you all know, was one of the tallest musicians of yester years and as a great performing artiste he was equalled by few and excelled by none. It was he to whom I owe my present position. I am therefore happy to create an endowment of Rs. 10,000/- to the Music Academy and I request the Academy to give a prize to the best senior vocalist during the season for Neraval Singing , as Sangita Kalanidhi Musiri Subrahmania Iyer Prize. I request the first lady Sangita Kalanidhi Smt. M.S. Subbulakshmi to hand over this cheque to the President of the Music Academy.

Lastly, I offer to you all , brothers and sisters my respectful good wishes for a happy and prosperous New year. I seek your blessings and good wishes"

* * * *

# PRIZE WINNERS IN COMPETITIONS AND CONCERTS 1993-94

## A. COMPETITIONS

| | Name of the Award / Prize | Endowed by / Donor | Prize Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | TEVARAM, DIVYA PRABANDHAM and LINGAPPA NAIDU GARU KRITIS<br>Sri Vijayaraghavalu Naidu Memorial Prize | Vijayaraghavalu Memorial & Charitable Trust, Sirkali | Srividya Ganesan |
| 2. | BHARATHIYAR SONGS | Bharat Film Distributors<br>Sri M. Saravanan | S. Sowmya<br>Srividya Ganesan<br>S.R. Shriram<br>K.A. Deepa Rekha |
| 3. | PALLAVI SINGING<br>Dr. Sankaranarayana Iyer Memorial Prize | Dr. E.S. Sankaranarayana Iyer's Children and Grand Children | Pantula Ramah<br>C.N. Krithika |
| 4. | ANNAMACHARYA KRITIS<br>Bulusu Parameswari Prize | Sri. B.V.S.S. Mani | C.N. Krithika<br>A. Vijayalakshmi |
| 5. | TYAGARAJA KRITIS<br>a. Sri. S. Swaminathan (formerly of The Hindu) prize<br>b. Vedagiri prize | Sri. S. Balachandar<br><br>Smt. Lakshmi Vedagiri | V. Srividya<br>Ponnamma Sharma<br>Special Prize :<br>Sangeeta Mahadevan<br>Master Saketha Raman |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 6. | Narayanatheertha TARANGAMS | Narayanatheertha Educational and Charitable Trust | S.R. Shirram<br>Madhumita Dandapani<br>Mathangi Ravi<br>V. Subhashini |
| 7. | a. TULSIDAS SONGS<br>Smt. Rajalakshmi Jagannarayanan prize | Sri. S. Jagannarayanan | Madhumita Dandapani<br>S. Sripriya |
| | b. MEERABAI SONGS<br>Sri Ramachandra Rao Memorial Committee prize | Sri. U. Ramesh Rao | K. Ashwini |
| 8. | SANSKRIT COMPOSITIONS<br>Dr. Raghavan Memorial Prize | Smt. Priyamvada Sankar | C.N. Krithika |
| 9. | TAMIL SONGS<br>Amarar Kalki Prize (Tambura) | Sri. T. Sadasivam | S. Kasthuri |
| 10. | MODERN COMPOSITIONS<br>L. Muthiah Bhagavatar Memorial Prize | The Music Academy | Srividya Ganesan<br>Sreeram Chandrasekar |
| 11. | VOCAL (Gents)<br>Sangita Kalanidhi G.N.B. Memorial Prize | Smt. Rajeswari Ranganathan | S. Prakash |
| 12. | SYAMA SASTRI KRITIS<br>Sri Uttaram Thamba Satchidhananda Prize | Sri. V.S.S.K. Brahmananda (Jaffna) | K.P. Radhika |
| 13. | KSHETRAJNA PADAMS | The Music Academy | Not held. |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 14. | PURANDARADASA PADAS | Sri V.S.S.K. Brahmananda (Jaffna) | R. Rasika<br>V.Vikram<br>V. Srividya<br>S.R. Shrirram |
| 15. | PAPANASAM SIVAN SONGS<br>a. Smt. Alamelu Viswanathan Prize | Sri. K.V. Balasubrmaniam<br>Kumari Lakshmi Viswanathan | Sangeetha Mahadevan<br>Srividya Ganesan<br>C.N. Krithika |
| | b. Gowri Mahadevan Memorial Prize (Girls) | Sri I. Mahadevan | Padma Sugavanam |
| 16. | TIRUPPUGAZH<br>a. M. Ganesa Iyer prize<br>b. Parthasarathy Mudaliar Memorial Trust Prize | Dr. M.G. Varadarajan<br>K.H. Shanmugasundaram of Parthasarathy Mudaliar Memorial Trust | S. Kasturi<br>Madhumita Dandapani<br>C.N. Krithika |
| 17. | MRIDANGAM<br>S.A. Venkatarama Iyer Prize | Dr. (Smt.) S.A.K. Durga | B. Shree Sundar Kumar<br>V. Prasanna Karthikeyan |
| 18. | VOCAL (Ladies)<br>T.R. Venkatarama Sastri Memorial Prize | Sri. T.V. Rajagopalan | V. Shobha<br>Mathangi Ravi |
| 19. | MUTHUSWAMY DIKSHITAR KRITIS<br>Bhikshandarkoil Rajagopal Pillai Memorial Prize | a. Smt. Sarada Natarjan<br>b. Smt. Indira Ramadurai | N.Ponnamma Sharma<br>S.Kasturi<br>B. Uma Shankar |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 20. | VARNAMS<br>T. Chowdiah Memorial Prize | Sri. V. Sethuramiah &<br>Sri R.K. Venkatarama Sastri | N.Ponnamma Sharma<br>U. Srividya<br>Madhumita Dandapani |
| 21. | MAHARAJA SVATI TIRUNAL COMPOSITIONS<br>Murthi Memorial prize | R.K. Murthy Memorial Committee | M.S. Subhashini<br>R. Rasika |
| 22. | VIOLIN<br>Kasturi Ranga Iyengar prize | THE HINDU<br>(through Mr. N. Murali) | M. Vijay Ganesh<br>S. Narayanan |
| 23. | Thambirajan Shashtyabdapurti prize and rolling shield for school children for the best rendering of songs of well-known composers | Smt. Meenakshi Shankar &<br>Smt. Kanaka Cadambi | **Rolling Shield :**<br>1. Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Sr. Sec. School<br>Madras 600 017<br>**Individual**<br>R. Gokulakrishnan<br>V. Vikram<br>Padma Sugavanam<br>**Special Prize :**<br>R. Ramprasad<br>V. Vikram |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 24. | TEVARAM<br>a. Mangalammal Prize<br>b. K.N. Shanmugasundaram Educational Trust Prize | Dr. M.G. Varadarajan<br>Shri K.S. Hemanthkumar of K.N. Shanmugasundaram Educational Trust | H. Subramaniam<br>B. Uma Shankar |
| 25. | NATIONAL INTEGRATION SONGS prizes in memory of Mrithinjaya Iyer, A.K. Suryanarayanan, Smt. Sitalakshmi Suryanarayanan & M. Subramanian | Dr. M.G. Varadarajan | **Rolling Shield :**<br>1. National English Sr. Sec. School, Madras 600 086<br>Consolation Prize<br>2. D.A.V. Hr. Sec. School Madras - 600 086.<br>Consolation Prize<br>3. P.S.S. Sr. Sec. School Madras - 600 004<br>**Individual**<br>G. Karpagam, S. Amrutha |
| 26. | RAMALINGA SWAMIGAL SONGS-Prize | Dr. M.G. Varadarajan | S.R. Shriram<br>Mathangi Ravi |
| 27. | Sangita Kalanidhi G.N.B. Songs Prize | Dr. Sinnathambi (New Zealand) | T. Easwaran Bhattathiri<br>Aparna<br>C.N. Krithika |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 28. | Mayuram T.R. Viswanatha Sastri Memorial Endowment (for general proficiency in songs) | TEE AR VEE Trust | C.N. Krithika |
| 29. | T. LAKSHMANA PILLAI MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS<br>Award for rendering of his compositions | R. Mahadevan Nair<br>Brig.R.B.Nair<br>Smt. Rajeswari Menon<br>R. Indusekar | S. Kasturi<br>Padma Sugavanam |
| 29. | Veena Dhanammal Memorial Prize | Late M. Sudharsanam Iyengar | K. Salai Parvathi |
| 30. | Tamil Devotional songs | Sri V. Natarajan | S.R. Shriram |
| 31. | D. Rangasamy Iyer Endowment / Prize for Elocution in Musicology | Dr. S.R. Janakiraman | |
| 32. | Dr. Sankaranarayana Iyer songs-Maragatham Sankaranarayanan Trust | Smt. Sarada Natarajan | ----- |
| 33. | Natya Sangeetham and Natyam - Jayammal and Balasaraswathi Prize | Sri. V.S.S.K. Brahmananda (Jaffna) | ----- |

**B. CONFERENCE**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Sangita Kalanidhi Musiri Subrahmania Iyer Memorial Award | Sri. C.V. Narasimhan I.C.S. (Retd.) | Vidhushi Mani Krishnaswami |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 2. | "Sangita Kala Acharya" Award | The Music Academy | 1. Vidvan Titte Krishna Iyengar<br>2. Vidvan Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao |
| 3. | T.T.K. Trust Award for Meritorius musicians | T.T.K. Trust | ----- |

## C. CONCERTS - VOCAL

| | Name of the Award / Prize | Endowed by / Donor | Prize Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Smt. Yogam Nagaswamy Award to a Senior Vocalist (gent or lady) | Smt. Yogam Nagaswamy | U. Srinivas |
| 2. | P.R. Chari Memorial Prize for the best Pallavi Singing (gent or lady) | Smt. Janakam Chari | P.S. Narayanaswamy |
| 3. | Pappu Kamakshiamma Award to a sub-senior vocalist (lady) | Sri. V. Pappu | S. Sowmya |
| 4, | a. Nyayapathi Rangamannar Award to a sub- senior Vocalist (gent) | N.V.V.J. Swamy | |
| | b. K.S. Ramaswamy Shashtyabdapurti Award to a Sub senior Vocalist (gent) | Smt. Akhilandeswari<br>Smt. Chitra | N. Vijay Siva |
| | c. Smt. Pankajam Rajam Award to a Sub-senior Vocalist(gent) | Smt. Pankajam Rajam | |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 5. | Chidambaram Sri. V.V. Swarna Venkatesa Dikshitar's prize to a Junior Vocalist (gent) | Sri. V.V. Swarna Venkatesa Dikshitar | Papanasam Ashok Ramani |
| 6. | a. Smt. D.K. Pattammal Award to a Junior Vocalist (lady)<br>b. Sri. T.V. Subbha Rao Memorial Award to a Junior Vocalist (lady) | D.K.P. ladies' Felicitation Committe<br>Smt. T.V. Manjula | Geetha Rajasekar |
| 7. | Palghat Rama Bhagavatar Award for a deserving carnatic musician for the best exposition of any raga - (gent or lady) | Sons & family members of Palghat Rama Bhagavatar (represented by Sri. M.R. Venkataraman) | Neyyatinkara<br>N. Vasudevan |
| 8. | T.S. Rajagopala Iyer prize to a musician for Raga Alapana | Smt. Kamakshi Ramachandran & Smt. Rajalakshmi Swaminathan | Krishna Vageesh |
| 9. | Padmashree Rajam Ramaswamy Award for the best rendering of Sanskrit compositions in concerts | Padmashree Rajam Ramaswamy | R. Vedavalli |
| 10. | Padmashree Rajam Ramaswamy Award for the best rendering of Tamil compositions in concert | Padmashree Rajam Ramaswamy | Sanjay Subrahmanyam |
| 11. | Sarada Krishna Iyer Memorial Award to an artiste in mid-year series or annual concerts | Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer | R. K. Srikantan |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 12. | Dr.S. Ramanathan Memorial Award for the best raga rendering in concerts | a. Smt. Savithri Satyamurthy<br>b. Disciples of Dr. S. Ramanathan | R.K. Srikantan |
| 13. | Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Memorial Prize for the best rendering of Tyagaraja Kritis in concerts | Smt. Padmini Diwakar | Hyderabad Brothers (D. Sesha Chary & D. Raghava Chary) |
| 14. | The Carnatic Music Assn. of North America Endowment Prize to a carnatic vocalist under the age of 25 - (gent or lady) | The Carnatic Music Assn. of North America INC. | P. Unnikrishnan |
| 15. | Sri. N. Sivaswamy Endowment prize to vocal artiste for the best rendering of Rama Nataka Kritis of Arunachala Kavirayar | Sri. S. Vaidyanathan | Allepey Venkatesan |
| 16. | Sri Vinjamuri Varadaraja Iyengar Memorial Award to a Senior Artiste for the best Pallavi singing (Gold medal) | Sri. V. Govindarajan | Charumathi Ramachandran |
| 17. | G. Ramakrishna Iyer Award for a Sub-senior vocalist (gent or lady) | Smt. Indira Sivasailam | Neyveli R. Santhanagopalan |
| 18. | Dr. Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar Memorial Award for one or more talented musicians | Smt. C.T. Unnamalai Achi | S. Kamala<br>Anayampatti S. Ganesan<br>T.V. Vasan |

## VIOLIN

| | Name of the Award / Prize | Endowed by / Donor | Prize Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | a. Abhiramasundari prize to a sub senior violinist in concerts | Late violinist Abhirmasundari | Vittal Ramamurthy |
| | b. Semmangudi Narayanaswami Iyer memorial award to a junior violinist | Sri V. Panchapakesan | |
| 2. | a. Lalgudi V.R. Gopala Iyer Award to a sub-senior violinist in concerts | Lalgudi Jayaraman | Savithri Satyamurthy |
| | b. Smt. Sivakamuammal Prize to a sub-senior violinist in concerts | Smt. Sivakamuammal | |
| 3. | C.S. Iyer Endowment prize to a Junior violinist (Gent or Lady) | Dr. S. Chandrasekaran and other family members of late C.S. Iyer | Embar S. Kannan |
| 4. | N.V. Raghavan Memorial Award to a Junior violinist (Gent or Lady) | Smt. Indira Ramaswamy | Poorna Siva |
| 5. | Tirukkodikaval Sri. R. Krishna Iyer prize to a promising Junior violinist | Sri R. Subramaniam | S. Varadarajan |
| 6. | Naum Lichenberg Prize to one or more violinists in concerts | Dr. Johanna Spector | V.L.Kumar |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | Dr.T.S. Tirumurthi and Smt. T.N. Sundari Ammal Prize to a young aspiring violinist | Sri T.T. Srinivasamurthi | L. Neela |
| 8. | Lalgudi Sri Jayaraman Prize to a sub-senior violinist | Sri T.N.S. Mani & Sri T.N. Swaminathan | M. Narmada |
| 9. | Sangita Kalanidhi T.V. Subba Rao prize to a Junior Violinist | Smt. Sudha Vyas | B. Ranjani |
| 10. | V. Lakshminarayanan Memorial award to a Junior Violinist | Sri. L. Subramanian | Kalpana Kishore |

**MRIDANGAM**

| | Name of the Award / Prize | Endowed by / Donor | Prize Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | a. Palani Subramania Pillai Memorial Prize to a sub-senior Mridangist | Sri Mahalingam Kollappan of South Africa, disciple of Sri A.V. Raghuprasad | Neyveli R. Narayanan |
| | b. Dr. Henry Cowell Award for the best junior Mridangist | Dr. Henry Cowell | |
| 2. | Coimbatore Ramaswamy Pillai Award to a Junior Mridangist | Mridanga Vidwan Coimbatore Sri Ramaswamy Pillai | Melakaveri Balaji |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3. | Thanjavur Sri Vaidyantha Iyer Memorial Award to one mridangam Vidwan in senior concert duri ıg the Music Festival | Umayalpuram Sri K. Sivaraman | T.K. Murthy |

**VEENA**

| | Name of the Award / Prize | Endowed by / Donor | Prize Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | a. Veenai Shanmugavadivu Memorial Prize to a Senior Veena Artiste<br>b. Chellapally Rangarao Award to a Senior Veena Artiste | M.S.S. Ladies' Felicitation Committee<br>Sri Chitti Babu | Not Awarded |
| 2. | Vissa Satyavathamma Award to a Sub-senior Veena Artiste | Sri Vissa Krishnamurthy and brothers | P. Vasanth Kumar |
| 3. | Lakshmi Sundaram Award to a Junior Veena Artiste | Smt. Janaki Loganathan | Kalyani Ganesan |
| 4. | D. Padmavathi Ammal Endowment to a Senior Veena Artiste | Sri D. Varadarajan on behalf of G.V.D. Sons, Coimbatore | Not awarded |

**GOTTUVADYAM**

| Name of the Award / Prize | Endowed by / Donor | Prize Winner |
|---|---|---|
| Budalur Krishnamurthy Sastrigal Prize to a Gottuvadyam Artiste | Mrs. Gayatri Kassebaum | N. Ravi Kiran |

## FLUTE

| | Name of the Award / Prize | Endowed by / Donor | Prize Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | M.D. Ramanathan Award to a Senior Flute Artiste | Dr. Fredrick Liberman | Sikkil Sisters (V. Kunjumani & N. Neela) |
| 2. | V.R. Sambasiva Iyer Memorial Award to a Sub-senior flutist | Sri. S. Natarajan | Not awarded |
| | Sri. S. Ramaswamy Shashtyabdapurti Award to a Sub-senior flutist | Sri. S. Ramaswamy Shashtyabdapurti Trust | Not awarded |
| 3. | Nyayapathi Sriranganayakamma Award to a Junior Flutist | Prof. N.V.V.J. Swamy (U.S.A.) | Not awarded |
| 4. | Flute Mali Award to a flutist (Silver Flute) | Dr. S. Jagadeesan | Dr. N. Ramani |

## D. SPIRIT OF YOUTH FESTIVAL

| | Name of the Award / Prize | Endowed by / Donor | Prize Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| | VOCAL | | |
| | Ambujam Krishna Award to Junior Artistes | Sri. Suresh Krishna and Smt. Suresh Krishna | Deepa Ranganath/ Hindusthani Concert<br>Shanthi Venkatakrishnan - Vocal<br>R. Hemamalini - Violin<br>Ganapathi Raman -Mridangam<br>Anita Menon - Dance |
| | DANCE | | |
| | The Music Academy Endowment for Dr. M.G.R. Award to young and talented danseuse | Sarvaraya Sugars Ltd. | Vani Krishnaswami |
| 2. | Sri.P. Obul Reddy Endowment Award to the Guru of the best dancer in the Spirit of Youth Programme | Sri. P. Obul Reddy | Padmini Rao |

## E. LECTURE - DEMONSTRATION

| | Name of the Award / Prize | Endowed by / Donor | Prize Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | a. Award for the best paper, talk etc., at the Morning Session | Sri. A.C. Rangarajan | Vidya Bhavani Murthy (Tiruppugazh) |
| | b. S. Ramaswamy Shashtyabdapurti Felicitation Committee prize | Sri. S. Ramaswamy-Shashtyabdapurti Felicitation Committee | |
| 2. | Suryakanthamma Memorial Award for the best demonstration | Sangita Kalanidhi Dr. Balamurali Krishna | Tanjore Sankara Iyer |

## F. DONATION

| | Name of the Award / Prize | Endowed by / Donor | Prize Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Mr. Ananthaswamy (Cash Award for 1993 only) | Rs. 5,000/- two Junior and sub senior Musicians in the Music Festival | 1. Smt. Prema Hariharan<br>2. Smt Sugnadha Kalamaegam<br>3. Rudrapatnam Ramakanth<br>4. S.P. Ramah |

# MUSIC OF THE SOPANAM

(A study of Kerala's traditional music)

Brig. R.B.NAYAR

In this study, we shall see what Sopanam music is and how it came about; also how, since the early centuries AD, it developed some unique features and how these have remained part of Kerala culture in spite of the prevailing influence of Tamil Music in later centuries. In this connection, the Sopanam style in Kathakali music will be examined in its Raga, Bhava and Tala aspects. The contribution of Swati Tirunal and other Kerala composers of Carnatic Music to the Sopanam style will also be looked into. The remarkable institution of Thullal Katha-s (dance-stories) of which Kunchan Nambiar was the pioneer and the raga and laya content of his works should also elicit our attention.

## INTRODUCTION

There is hardly an exception to the rule that folk music is the foundation upon which classical music developed. While the origin of folk music is almost as obscure as the origin of language, it is quite evident that in India, folk music was made up of a large variety of songs, sung on different occasions and for different purposes. Some of these are occupational songs, seasonal, philosophic and festival songs; religious songs for worship of various deities, both Aryan and pre-Aryan, historical songs to be sung on social occasions and so on.

Folk music, indeed, formed the basis on which the earliest 'lakshana kaaras' even pre-samaveda, worked to produce a different strain or breed of music. Whenever a conflict arose between lakshana (sastra) and lakshya (practice) the former was altered or interpreted so as to conform to the latter (lakshya pradhanam khalu gana sastram). Such music, besides providing entertainment, was appealing both emotionally and intellectually. When there are two parallel streams, the one influencing the other is quite usual. We have, therefore, at least in South India, ragas of classical music being influenced by tunes or panns of what is loosely called Dravidian music, as also folk melodies being enriched by ragas of the classical music system.

# SOPANA MUSIC, ITS ORIGIN AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Sopana music of Kerala originally had a function purely devotional. Inside the temple precincts, the lone singer stood at the foot of the steps leading to the Garbhagriha where the idol is installed, singing devotional songs usually preceding a pooja, to the accompaniment of the Edakka, a percussion instrument. This music was originally referred to as 'Sopaṅathil pattu' meaning 'Song at the Sopanam'.

Sopana music does not differ fundamentally from Carnatic Music in its essential features such as Sruti, Swara and Taala. Yet it is somewhat distinctive in the method of musical exposition. The Sopanam style rules out virtuoso efforts at elaboration of raga-s, it usually avoids the use of sangati-s or melodic variations within a tala frame, and there is no swara singing in the music. The reason is not far to seek. The sopana song was originally offered as a prayer or means of worship in the exceedingly quiet atmosphere inside a typical Kerala temple prior to the culmination of a Puja with the door of the garbha griha closed. The atmosphere was one of peaceful devotion and was not the occasion to indulge in anything other than a musical prayer with the gentle rhythm of the Edakka for accompaniment. For, the same reason, the tempo of the music was vilamba-kaala. All these features give Sopana music its typical characteristics. These are further discussed in this essay in connection with the 'Music of the Kathakali'.

In his essay "Travancorean Music and Musicians" (1918) the late T.Lakshmana Pillay, scholar and Tamil Composer says :

"The Sopanam music so called because it is sung near the steps in front of the Srikovil-is simple, sweet, perhaps languid, yet more pathetic and tender than Carnatic Music, and more sung in country parts than in towns. It is chiefly resorted to in Kathakali and in religious and devotional compositions. It is the most ancient among the systems of music in vogue in Travancore".

At this stage, we may to go back to the early centuries of the Christian era to see what we can find in the music that led to the beginnings of Sopana music. Mahakavi Ulloor Parameswara Iyer, in his important work Kerala Sahitya Charitram, lists an impressive variety of typical Pattu-s or songs used to be sung in Kerala from ancient times, of a hundred odd kinds. Each pattu or song has some musical content, which must have exerted influence, however subtle, on the formation of the Sopanam style which was mainly the vehicle for uttering chants or prayers. The more 'refined' of these suggested the presence of raga-s, Anandabhairavi, Punnagavarali, Kurinji, Nilambari etc.

## THE TAMIL CONNECTION

It is generally accepted by historians that many centuries B.C., a language 'Dravida Bhasha', already developed and mature, was prevalent all over the southern peninsula of India, in the area corresponding to the modern states of Andhra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Of these four, all except Tamil had absorbed words liberally from Sanskrit from the early centuries A.D., resulting in the modern languages of Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam. However, the Tamil Nadu and Kerala areas were together as Tamizhagam or the land of the Tamils, as there was close affinity between these two languages. Tamizhagam had three political units, namely, Chola, Pandya and Chera (corresponding to Kerala). In the natural course of cultural development, all these three regions of Tamizhagam must have shared the same music, which indeed, was ancient Tamil music with its highly organised system of 23 panns or ragas and around 12000 'isais' or Janyaraagas.* We have references to this in Silappadikaram, the celebrated Tamil epic by Ilango Adigal, brother of Senguttuvan, the Chera king of 2nd century A.D. We have also references in Silappadikaram to the Koothu of Kerala which, even its present from, is a one man story-telling performance with the raconteur adopting a recitation-type presentation accompanied by the drumming of the Mizhaavu, a special percussion instrument and the sounding of cymbals. The author of Silappadikaram refers to King Senguttuvan being entertained by a Chakyaar (Chakkayyan) at Paravur, Central Kerala**.

'Paraiyoor Koothachakkayan aadalil makazhnthavan

Kudiyattam, the ancient Sanskrit drama of Kerala as the name suggests, is not a solo performance. It is a kind of dance drama with more than one character where the actor himself profices the word and music. There is an old verse which stipulate; not only the various raga-s (tunes) to be sung on different occasions but also for different dramatic roles. some of these ragas are known as :

, Mudda, Veladhooli, Srikanta, Idalam, Muralindalam, Korakkurinchi, Poraniram etc***. However, it is difficult to say when these ragas were introduced in the dance and how exactly they were sung.

In tracing the origin of Sopana music, the cultural and linguistic affinity between the Kerala region and its eastern neighbour will be of interest. Across the Western Ghats from Kerala, in the Tamil country in the 7th to 9th Centuries, we comeacross the musical outpourings of the three scholar-saints in their Tevaram songs. Most of these panns have their equivalents in the Carnatic system as seen below :

| Pann | Corresponding raga |
|---|---|
| Sevvazhi | Yadukulakamboji |
| Sikamaram | Nadanamakriya |
| Puranirmai | Bhoopalam |
| Kausikam | Bhairavi |
| Gandharapanchamam | Kedaragaula |
| Megharagakurinji | Nilambari |
| Pazhampanjuram | Sankarabharanam |
| and so on. | |

P-535 *Silappadikaram-Arangettukathai quoted by M.Abraham Pandither in his Karunamrithasagaram.

P-159 **Kerala Sahitya Charitram by Mahakavi Ulloor S.Parameswara Iyer.

P-163 ***Kerala Sahitya Charitram - Mahakavi Ulloor

While the Carnatic 'derivatives' of panns must have been familiar for Kerala for a long time, Kerala's Sopana music seems to be the only repository of the pann ragas in current use. It may, therefore, be assumed that Kerala was exposed to actual pann music at about the same time as they were in use at their source. A few centuries later, from the 14th century, these were to be adopted for the singing of Ashtapadi-s at certain Krishna temples of Kerala, notably the Guruvayoor temple.

Chandana Charchita Nilakalebara --.

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As already stated, the Sopana style of music in Kerala had its origins in folk songs. Some of these were connected with ancient Kali-worship. When Jayadeva's Gita Govindam songs were adopted, around the 14th or 15th Century for singing at Kerala temples, Sopana music had taken its essential shape. In the calm atmosphere of a typical Kerala temple, the 'bhava' had to be one of bhakti and therefore, Sopana music did not develop so as to include raga elaboration, use of sangati-s and briga-s which one associates with Carnatic music rendered at music concerts. Ashtapadi singing became very popular in Kerala temples, and is often heard today in some temples.

When in the 17th Century, Manavedan Raja of Kozhikode introduced a new dance drama Krishnattam he had based it mainly on Gita Givindam, embodying elements such as sloka-recitation and singing of pada-s. This dance was confined to temples and palaces.

The Sopana-scene now shifts to Kottarakkara in South Kerala where the Raja of that place (1555-1605) composed a new type of dance-drama known as Ramanattam on themes from Ramayana. This is considered a pioneering work of Kathakali because all later playwrights have followed the Sanskrit sloka-Pada combinations in the Sahitya. Both the sloka and pada are usually sung in the same raga. On an average, each Kathakali play uses 20 to 25 different ragas of the Carnatic system and upto 10 ragas of Tamil pann system.

## SOPANAM MUSIC IN KATHAKALI

It is the Sopanam style of music that has been adopted for Kathakali during the last three or four Centuries; otherwise, it would have been merely confined to temple precincts. Thus, it is the 'institution' of Kathakali that has kept the Sopanam-style alive and active. We can, for this reason, go in some detail into the music of the Kathakali. Though the earlier accent on bhakti has, in the case of Kathakali changed into one of entertainment, there has been no change in the basic Sopanam music. Kathakali has however absorbed and adopted a good number of raga-s for its use, a development necessary to provide the variety in Sopanam's entertainment role.

In this role, bhakti was not the main motivating force, but producing a drama rich in story, poetry and abhinaya. The play was more important than the music, hence music had to adopt the requirements of the play. Generally, Kathakali pada-s are sung to a slow tempo in order to give the actor plenty of scope to the content of story and poetry in the author's lines to the audience. This requirement has given Kathakali music its characteristic tempo and style. There has, however, been a tendency in last few decades to 'Carnaticise' it, but like all innovations there are rasikas for and against. Those against, lament that Kathakali music has lost its character and become hybrid. Kirtanacharya C.R.Srinivasa Iyengar's remarks on the subject are quiet relevant; 'The music of Kathakali preserves and ought to preserve the largest portion of what the Margi system stood for in the ancient days'.

The task of the Kathakali singers as opposed to the concert singer is particularly difficult. He stands all through the performance singing every sloka and pada with a keen ear for the laya which he marks with a gong, usually sings at a high pitch and volume for the benefit of an open air audience, trying to adhere to his sruti in the midst of so many distracting sounds, the gong , the chenda and maddalam which can hardly ever be tuned in unison. The principal singer is also a conductor/stage manager.

A study was made of the raga-s employed in the Kathakali plays of a few representative playwrights composers whose lives ranged between 16th and 19th Centuries. The study includes the earliest known author namely Kottarakkara Tampuran, the author of light plays, all on themes from the Ramayana.

| Author | Period | No of Plays Consi-dered | Total No. Songs | No of different ragas used | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Carnatic | Ancient Tamil / Malayam |
| Kottarakkara Thampuran | 1555-1605 | 8 | 205 | 23 | 10 |
| Kottayathu Thampuran | 1645-1716 | 4 | 96 | 26 | 9 |
| Unnayi Warrier | 1675-1716 | 4 | 110 | 20 | 6 |
| Karthika Tirunal Maharaja | 1724-1798 | 7 | 143 | 20 | 10 |
| Irayimman Tampi | 1783-1856 | 3 | 103 | 20 | 7 |

From the above sampling of the work of five important authors of Kathakali plays of the 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries, we know that Kathakali music has used both raga-s of the Carnatic system and those of ancient Tamil/Kerala music.

## MUSICAL ANALYSIS OF CERTAIN RAGAS IN KATHAKALI MUSIC - SUNG SOPANA STYLE

Ten non-carnatic ragas used in Kathakali were briefly analysed by Dr.K.Omanakutty, Head of the Department of Music, College for Women, Thiruvananthapuram for the purpose of this article and is reproduced below with her kind permission :

## Indalam

It can reasonably be assumed that Raga Indalam of ancient Tamil Music, the Indalam of Kathakali and the Suddha Dhanyasi of the Melakarta scheme are one and the same. It is a janyaraga of Kharaharapriya.

Scale : Sa ga ma pa ni sa
Sa ni pa ma ga sa

## Puranira

Hardly used outside Kathakali music. A vakra Sampoorna raga, janya of Harikamboji.

Scale : Sa ri ma ga ma pa ma ni dha ni sa
Sa ni dha pa ma ga ri ga ri sa

## Indisa

Would seems to be essentially a Kerala raga. A janya raga of Kharaharapriya, involves a characteristic use of gandhara (which has come to be known as 'Kairali gandhara') and typical employment of gamaka-s.

Scale : Sa ni dha pa ma pa dha sa
Sa ni dha pa ma ga ri sa.

## Ghantaram

A janyaraga of Natabhairavi - to be distinguished from the Ghanta of Carnatic music which is a janya of Todi. A raga where duhkha-rasa (sadness) predominates.

Scale : Sa ri ma pa ma pa sa
Sa ni dha pa ma pa ri sa

## Paadi

The Paadi used in Kathakali is a janya of Harikamboji whereas the Paadi of Carnatic music is derived from Mayamalavagaula. The raga is used in Kathakali to express sringanra rasa.

## Kanakurinji

Janya of Harikamboji which is somewhat similar to Nilambari (which itself corresponds to the pann Megharagakurinji of ancient Tamil music).

It is an ubhaya-vakra-raga which in Kathakali is often used to depict valour and wonder.

Scale : Sa ri ga ri ga ma pa dha ni sa
Sa dha pa ma ga ri ga ma pa ma ga ri ga sa

## Maradhanyasi

Rarely used raga, derived from Kharaharapriya.

Scale : Sa ma ga pa dha ni dha sa
Sa ni dha pa ma dha pa ma ga ri sa

## Samantamalahari

A janya of Sankarabharanam heard and used only in Kerala.

Scale : Sa ma ga ma pa dha ni sa
Sa ni sa dha pa ma ga ri sa.

**Gopikavasantam**

The raga of this name used in Kathakali is a janya of Harikamboji.

Scale : Sa ri ga ri ma pa dha ni sa
Sa ni dha pa ma ga ri sa.

In Carnatic music, this raga is considered a Janya of Nathabhairavi and has the Scale :

Sa ri ga ma pa dha pa sa,
Sa ni dha ma dha pa ma ga ri ma ga sa.

**Navarasam**

This is quite the same as raga Navaroj of the Carnatic system, both being derived from Sankarabharanam, and usually sung in Madhayama Sruti.

Scale : Pa dha ni sa ri ga ma pa
Pa ma ga ri sa ni dha pa.

## BHAVA AND LAYA CONTENTS OF KATHAKALI MUSIC

The 'Raga' content of Kathakali music has been mentioned. As for 'bhava' in this music, its importance is realised when you know that Kathakali with its highly involved (and selective mudra-language) intends to portray all the bhava-s effectively. Music has to move in step with the mood and with this in view, the ragas chosen by the composer are appropriate to the situation. Again Kathakali music can be said to be functional, without trimmings and this, perhaps, explains the limited number of ragas, each with an assigned role in conformily with the mood it is said to portray.

Great importance had always been attached to laya even in ancient Kerala. Scrupulous adherence to laya was necessary even in the various Kalari exercises to train young men in warfare. Besides the application of laya to different kinds of folk songs and dances, if there was a special

inclination to laya in Kerala, it could be due to the coordinated rowing rhythm of canoes and boats plying the wide-spread water-ways and lakes of Kerala; this was the main transportation available at one time even for the movement of troops to battle!.

Even as early as the Koothu and Koodiyattam days percussion instruments such as the 'Mizhavu' provided the all-important rhythm. The installation of the Mizhavu in the Koothambalam (dance hall) was itself considered a sacred act. A variety of Tala-s which are in common use today, were practised to perfection for Koodiyattam performances. The use of orchestrated rhythm reaches its climax in Kerala in the great percussion ensemble played on special occasions at certain temples. This involves a few numbers each of Chenda, Timila, Edakka, Madhalam, Shankhu and Kombu which are played together in a combination of tala-s often continuously for more than one hour, with split second accuracy; all without a 'non-playing' conductor!.

It will be noted, therefore, that a well-developed laya-content is essentially part of the Sopana style of music.

## SOPANAM AND SWATI TIRUNAL

While Swati Tirunal has composed a large variety of musical forms such as Varna-s, Kriti-s, Tillana etc. (total number around 380) a good number of these are Pada-s in Malayalam.

Being an essential part of Kathakali music, Pada-s were already popular in Kerala, and in composing these, may be for Mohiniattam, Swati Tirunal was on home ground. Some of his colleagues, the well-known Irayimman Tampi one of them, were acknowledged playwrights in Kathakali. Swati Tirunal and Irayimman Tampi indeed, made significant contribution to Sopana music. It is necessary to understand this aspect of Swati Tirunal's music as he is often considered by the pure-sopanam 'lobby' that being totally attracted by the Carnatic style of music, he neglected the sopanam style. All his padams presumably composed for Mohiniattam were intended to be sung in the Sopanam style. So were the pada-s of Irayimman Thampi.

T.Lakshmana Pillay comments on the Maharaja's Sopana style :

"In some devotional pieces His Highness finds his most congenial sphere; the charm of the melody being allied to the Sopana method and attaining the highest perfection in the line. A native and pristine simplicity - characterises these compositions. We instance the piece 'Dhanayoya' in the charming tune of Gopikavasantam. In them one can realise the garb which music assumes in the rural parts of Travancore 'beneath waving palms and land-locked lagoons"

Many of us would know about the celebrated Sopanam singer Govinda Marar, a contemporary of Swati Tirunal who visited Tyagaraja and sang his ashtapadi on which the composer is stated to have been so impressed that he asked his disciples to sing 'Endaro Mahanubhavalu'. Marar is known to have received musical training in Tamil Nadu, but we do not know what music he sang for Tyagaraja.

## KUNCHAN NAMBIAR AND THULLAL MUSIC

Kunchan Nambiar was the one man who created the institution of Thullal. This is a one-man story-telling effort perhaps after the fashion of Koothu. This was a popular entertainment even in the 18th Century. Nambiars were the traditional laya experts who played the mizhavu for a Koothu performance. The story goes that Kunchan Nambiar, a naturally gifted literary man, fell out with the Chakyar (the story teller) and set out to start something more of popular interest than Koothu. And sure enough, did he succeed! The new dance was a kind of folk dance enriched by chosen mudras and angika movements borrowed from Kathakali. The Thullal-artiste sang Nambiar's verses composed by him in quite a collection of raga-s, often with a supporting singer. Percussion was provided by the madhalam, or in later years a Mrdangam. Nambiar's stories were all from

classical literature but what a twist he gave to the rendering through sarcasm and criticism of current social conditions!

While accepting the important role of Kathakali music in the evolution and support of the Sopanam musical form, Kunchan Nambiar's versatile contribution to this music needs mention, especially as his name is hardly familiar to rasika-s outside Kerala. Here was an author with scholastic achievements in Sanskrit and Malayalam, who almost overnight, introduced a new dance form which came to be known as Thullal, literally meaning 'dance'. Thullal is of three different kinds depending on the main 'metre' adopted for the verse and the costume worn by the dancer. Each Thullal Katha is recited in musical verse, but has also some conventional musical interludes with Pallavi, Anupallavi and many Charana-s. Ragas prescribed for these are either those common to the Carnatic and Sopana systems, such as Anandabhairavi, Todi, Kalyani etc. or are peculiar to Sopana Music such as Indisa and Kanakkurichi. In an impressive output of 41 Thullal Katha-s, there are 61 such musical compositions. As for Tala-s, all those commonly used in Carnatic music are used.

Nambiar does not rest content there. He often chooses metres for his recitative story-telling which act as lakshanas for the tala-s used including some rare and complicated ones. In the Kiratam Thullal Katha, for instance, the composer introduces a string of seven tala-s which requires the dancer to dance to these one after the other. Besides the common Ata, Jhampa and Roopaka tala-s, Nambiar's list consists of the Laksmi and Kumbha Tala-s which contain long and complicated jatis in an avarta. These two and the Marma Tala figure in the Tamil manuscript Tala Samuddiram, a fact which would establish a common source of Tala for both Tamil and Malayalam speaking peoples. Kuntanaachi Tala the seventh in the list, is of Kerala folk music origin and does not seem to have been known outside Kerala.

Kunchan Nambiar, a versatile man, who was at once a traditional percussionist, a satirist who lampooned even puraanic characters for their greed and hypocrisy, a song-and-dance composer deeply learned in the epics and religious lore, seems to have been also something of a music enthusiast. The names of 46 different musical instruments, in current use in his time lie spread out in his various Thullal kathas, more than half this number being percussion instruments. This could indicate not only Nambiar's enthusiasm for laya but also its importance in Sopana music. Right from ancient days, it must be noted that Kerala's penchant for rhythm has been evidenced in the relative importance attached to a variety of 'Kottu-Katcheri-s'* as against 'Pattu Katcheri-s'! Perhaps it will be right to say that the Sopana music of Kerala is an integrated system of song, dance and laya.

## CONCLUSION

The 'Sopanam' music of Kerala fits clearly into the Carnatic music system, both these sharing the fundamentals of south Indian Music. However, the Kerala region of ancient Tamizhakam had its own folk music and style of devotional music. The combination of these two, together with association with the music of Tamil Nadu must have, in the 15th or 16th Century, resulted in a style which was adopted for kathakali when this art form became an important entertainment medium. The Sopanam style is well preserved in kathakali music, but of late, this style has shed some of the limitations which the play itself had imposed on it. We have, in this study, also seen the importance of laya in the evolution of the Sopanam style.

In a study of this nature, we admire the wisdom of the following statement in the Sangitaratnakara on the subject of 'regional' differences in music.

"The appeal of music varies with the varying tastes of people-hence the mode of singing and dancing will also vary from place to place."

*By Kottu-Katcheri is meant a group performance of laya instruments ranging from a few numbers to many.

# HISTORICAL GLIMPSES OF PURANDARADASA

P.B. DESAI

It is unfortunate that very few biographical details of Sri Purandara that could stand test of the historical touchstone have been handed down by posterity. What little is known about him sounds like legend and cannot be accepted as historically true. This is the plight of most of our eminent historical personages, and Sri Purandara is not an exception.

This state of affairs can be explained if we understand the peculiar development of the Indian mind, which, with its philosophical and spiritual outlook, is eventually pitched to the higher realities of enduring life and treats with relative indifference the passing phases of men and events, however big or important they might appear to particular contemporaries.

It is proposed in this short article to examine critically some of the traditional details of Sri Purandara's life and to furnish a few biographical details that can be claimed as authentic with the help of recent epigraphical discoveries.

Except for one outstanding episode which seems to be real, as handed down by tradition, the early life of Sri Purandara is enveloped in darkness. The reason might be like this: Sri Purandara's original personality was transformed by a miraculous turn in his life into so sublime a stature that its early traits were submerged in its subsequent splendour.

None dared to peep into his past. Here was a most pious saint and benefactor of humanity, a singer of divine glory. Why bother about his who-is-who! Perhaps, Sri Purandara himself never cared to mention it. So much so, that even his actual name became a matter of surmise. Some called him Sinappa (Srinivasa) and some Krishnappa (Krishna). But all were content to adore him as Sri Purandara Dasa.

Uncertainty prevails regarding the place of this saint's birth and domicile. It is traditionally believed that he hailed from Purandaragad near Poona. But this belief can be challenged.

For one thing, there is no trace of Kannada anywhere near Purandaragad, which is an out and out a Marathi region of Maharashtra. And Sri Purandara and family were perfect scions of Karnataka. No grounds exist to indicate that this Kannada family went from Karnataka and settled in Maharashtra, and particularly in a fortified settlement of military importance, devoid of civil life, which is Purandaragad.

This tradition, according to available evidence, dates from the time of Sri Vijayadasa, a later disciple of Sri Purandara. Sri Vijayadasa, in one of his compositions, while giving an account of his guru, tells that Sri Purandara hailed from Purandaragad. It is not unlikely that this tradition was current even earlier and Sri Vijayadasa simply affirmed it.

Anyway, this appears to be an afterthought and a later invention. As nobody knew where Sri Purandara was born, some ingenious brain might have hit upon the idea of connecting him with Purandaragad on the basis of the verbal resemblance. There is no dearth of such inventions in our country.

Though Purandaragad is away, it is not far from the northern Karnataka region. In the 17th century, the areas of north Karnataka and portions of Maharashtra including Poona formed part of the Adilshahi dominion. Further, Purandaragad must have been well known to the people of north Karnataka on account of its strategic importance, particularly during the tumultuous period of Sivaji's struggle against the Adilshahi and Mughal rule. Thus, there was no improbability about the idea and no reason to doubt the ingenious invention.

Local investigation has revealed that nothing exists at Purandaragad to suggest Sri Purandara's association with the place. No recollection of the saint, even in a faint echo, either through a relic or a lingering tale, has been preserved there. A temple dedicated to the deity Purandesvara, of

about the 18th century, exists at Purandaragad. (See Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Vol.XXX p.235). But it bears absolutely no connection with Sri Purandara. It is obviously named after the fort and not the saint.

Thus examined from whatever point of view, the tradition seeking to link up the fort with the saint stands totally unsupported. Nay, it is even misleading, and has misled one and all so far.

Another significant factor to be taken note of in this context is the serious break in the continuity of the Haridasa cult soon after Sri Purandara. This saint passed away in 1565 A.D., and nothing is known about the Haridasa movement for nearly a century and a half, until the advent of Sri Vijayadasa who resumed its activities in the first quarter of the 18th century. Sri Vijayadasa was not a direct disciple of Sri Purandara, who only initiated him through a vision. It is no wonder that Sri Purandara had become a legend and a dream by Sri Vijayadasa's time.

Under these circumstances, we have to search for Sri Purandara's domicile somewhere else. Since no other direct clue is available to determine the issue, we have to fall back upon circumstantial evidence, such as the Kannada language, vocabulary and the mode of expression used in his compositions, and suggest a probability. A critical study of the above leads one to hold the view that he belonged to the north Karnataka area.

We need not disbelieve the story which, though exaggerated and distorted in the hands of the narrators, portrays Sri Purandara in his early life as a money-lender engrossed in worldly pursuits. His wife, a pious lady of extraordinary devotion, must have played a dominant role in bringing home to him the blessings of the spiritual life. for in one of his songs, Sri Purandara lavishly pays glowing compliments to her for bringing about his transformation.

It has been stated above that posterity remained ignorant about Sri Purandara's early life. Here is yet another instance to substantiate the remark. While giving an account of a respectable member of the Brahmana community, it was customary to mention his gotra and sakha (school of Vedic studies). Yet, it is rather strange that Sri Vijayadasa is silent about these. The reason is simple; he was not aware of them.

One more account of Sri Purandara's life is contained in a clumsy narrative poem ascribed to Guru Purandara Vithala. The details given here are not only highly legendary and fantastic, but even contrary to the known facts. For instance, it is stated that the early name of the saint, even before his initiation, was Purandara. His family is said to have lived at Purandara Pattana. He is depicted as a reckless youth squandering money in charity, but intensely devotional. This Guru Purandara Vithala is traditionally believed to have been a son of Sri Purandara; but this belief can rightly be questioned. As we shall see presently, uncertainty prevails in regard to the number and names of Sri Purandara's sons. The author of the above composition, whose language, expression and style apparently do not belong to the age of Sri Purandara, must have been a later member of the Haridasa school, probably of the 19th century, bearing no relation with Sri Purandara.

In such a Sahara of historical ignorance, if one comes across even a few scraps of trustworthy information, they should be as welcome as an oasis. Here are a few reliable details about Sri Purandara, incidentally revealed in an authentic contemporary source.

A copper-plate charter, originally found at Kamalapur near Hampi, the traces of which have since been lost, is published in the Epigraphia Indica, Vol.XXXI, pages 139 ff. The present writer had a hand in shaping the article to its present form. The published text of the charter has been checked by him with reference to the estampages of the record preserved in the office of the Government Epigraphist at Ootacamund.

The copper-plate document refers to the reign of the illustrious Vijayanagara king Krishnadevaraya. It is dated Salivahana Saka 1447, Parthiva, Phalguna su. 12, corresponding to 24th February, 1526 A.D. It comprises a royal order issued in the presence of the god Vithalesvara on

the bank of the river Tungabhadra, evidently from Vijayanagara, by the king, proclaiming the grant of the village Bettakonda alias Vyasasamudra, also called Krishnarayapuram. The donee who received the grant was Vyasatirtha, the disciple of Brahmanyatirtha, who had a mind exclusively devoted to the contemplation of Brahman and had written commentaries on all the Sastras. The gift village was situated in Mukkutla-sthala and Koyyakuriki-sima in Ghanagiri-rajya. With it were clubbed the villages of Gitapali, Kammacheyu, Rama, Kandukuru, and Guramvayalu.

Vyasatirtha, after receiving the gift village along with its hamlets, divided it into a number of vrittis, or shares, and bestowed them upon 308 Brahmanas of various gotras and sakhas, assigning the individual share of each donee. The details of all the Brahmanas who were recipients of such shares are given at length in the charter. Among them the following three are of particular interest to us.

1. Lakshmanadasa, son of Sri Purandaradasa, who belonged to the Vasishtha gotra and Yajus sakha, received two vrittis.

2. Hebanadasa, son of Sri Purandaradasa, who belonged to the Vasistha gotra and Yajus sakha, received two vrittis.

3. Madhvapadasa, son of Sri Purandaradasa, who belonged to the Vasishtha gotra and Yajus sakha, received two vrittis.

It is quite obvious that Sri Purandara and his three sons are mentioned here. Though Sri Purandara does not figure among the donees, we know from other sources that he was alive at this time. Hence, the record is contemporary and furnishes the most reliable and unquestionable testimony about the saint's life. The following information, not known hitherto from any other source, is made available by the record.

1. The gotra of Sri Purandara was Vaishtha and his sakha Yajus.

2. In the year of the charter, i.e., 1526 A.D., at least three of his sons were still living. They were Lakshmanadasa, Hebanadasa and Madhvapadasa.

Whether he had any more sons or daughters, we have no information.

The above details may be compared and contrasted with those given in the traditional account. It is said that Sri Purandara had a daughter and four sons by name Varada, Gururaya, Abhinava Purandara and Madhvapati. Madhvapati is identical with Madhvapa of the above copper-plate charter. Lakshmanadasa and Hebanadasa figuring in the record, are known for the first time. It is strange that they have hitherto remained unknown, though they belonged to the order of the Haridasas as their names show.

The above facts prove the defective character of traditional accounts, which often depend upon hearsay. Hence, we have to exercise caution and scrutiny before we accept them as trustworthy.

According to the details given by Sri Purandara's son Madhvapati, Sri Purandara passed away in the cyclic year Raktakshi, corresponding to Saka 1486 and 1564-65 A.D. The above record mentions his three sons, the oldest of whom would have been about 25 years of age in 1526 A.D. Assuming that he was born to Sri Purandara approximately in his 21st or 22nd year, Sri Purandara's age in 1526 A.D. would be about 46. Thus he would have been born about 1480 A.D. His life span would thus be about 84 years.

We may note here one discrepancy detected in the last date of Sri Purandara. The tithi and the week-day as given by the followers of the order are Pausha amavasya, Saturday or Sunday. Neither of the week-days is correct, according to Swamikannu Pillai's Indian Ephemeris, Vol.V. It was Tuesday. The scientifically correct equivalent, according to this authority, would be 2nd January 1565. According to the Hindu reckoning, four hundred years since his demise have expired on Pausha amavasya of Saka 1885 and Sobhana Samavatsara, corresponding to January 14, 1964.

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# WAS PURANDARADASA THE PRECURSOR OF KARNATAKA MUSIC?

B.V.K. SASTRY

ON the eve of the quatercentenary celebrations of Purandaradasa, the Tainadu of Bangalore published an article entitled "Purandaradasa from the viewpoint of research scholars". This article by Dr.S.Srikantha Sastri came as a shock to the faithful who were content with the time honoured beliefs and mythis about the master. Naturally the article invited protests and also recriminations from them in which there was of course more heat than light.

But some of the points raised by Dr.Sastri have not drawn satisfactory explanations till now. Like many of our ancients the material available about the life and works of Purandaradasa is a mixture of myth and legend that does not stand the test of a scientific inquiry. And in the very area he is said to have spent a great part of his life the information forthcoming is not of much value either to get an idea of his person or to have a clear perspective of his activities.

Dr.Srikantha Sastri's queries covered almost all the aspects of Purandaradasa preserved more through popular belief than material evidence. However earnest efforts have also been made by some scholars to examine these beliefs and set the record straight, on the strength of facts gathered by them, in the voluminous literature produced during the quatercentenary celebrations. Some of these scholars have objectively excamined such long standing beliefs concerning the birth place, the popular incidents in his life, the claim that Purandaradasa composed 4,75,000 songs during his life time and others. They have attempted to throw some light on these subjects.

In this context special mention must be made of the following : 1. Article by Dr.P.B.Desai on Purandaradasa with reference to the Kamalapur plates in the Journal of the Karnatak University; 2. Karnataka Haridasa-parampare by Sri Kaptral Krishna Rao in Prabuddha Karnataka (No.179); 3. Suladis and Ugabhogas by Prof.R.Satyanarayana in Purandaradasara Sahitya, Vol.4 published by All Karnataka Sri Purandaradasa quatercentanary celebrations committee, Dharwar.

Since other aspects of the life and person of Purandaradasa have been dealt with by some of the above scholars I confine myself to his association with music.

Purandaradasa has been revered as the 'Karnataka Sangita Pitamaha' or the precursor of the Karnataka music of today. According to popular belief he devised preliminary exercises in music like Sarali, Alankara etc., set them in Mayamalavagoula-raga to be easily grasped by the beginners, enriched Karnatak music by composing 4,75,000 songs (Geeta, Pada, Suladi, Ugabhogas etc.,) and was responsible for the developement of the present form of the Karnatak music and Tyagaraja was heavily influenced by him. There are also other claims untenable for an objective evaluation.

As a seasoned and conscientious scholar Dr. Sastri rightly questioned the basis for these beliefs. He even went to the extent of questioning whether Purandaradasa was as learned in music as it was being claimed; if so, who was his preceptor; whether he wrote any treatise, and why his name, except for the reference in the Annamacharya Charithamu of Chinna Tirumala, does not occur anywhere in the literature, inscriptions and other records of his times.

It is true this aspect of Purandaradasa has not received as much attention as his spiritual thoughts, the literary merits of his songs, their sentiments and messages etc. about which we have voluminious literature May be his spiritual heirs were more concerned with the hereafters, the path for salvation than with bothering themselves about such mundane matters as the musicianship of Purandaradasa or the musical merits of his

songs. for those who are aware of the historical process of development of Indian music, these claims seem to be untenable. The solfeggio passages called as Alankaras ae described even from the days of Matanga at least 1000 years before Purandaradasa. And the raga bearing the full nomenclature of Mayamalayagoula is heard only from the 18th century, long after the passing away of Purandaradasa. The ancient name for this raga was Malavagoula. Regarding the Gita and other compositions, a reference to ancient texts on music is enough to convince that such compositions in Sanskrit and the regional languages were in use from a long time. And Sripadaraja and Vyasaraja (guru of Purandaradasa) composed Suladis and Ugabhogas even earlier. The dubious nature of the song and the claim that he composed 4,75,000 songs has been discussed in fair detail in the preface of Vol. VI of Sri Purandara Sahitya, published by the Purandaradasa quatercentenary celebrations committee, Dharwar.

Notwithstanding these facts, a strong belief that Purandaradasa was instrumental in the moulding of the Karnatak music of today persists not only in Karnataka but in all the areas where this system of music prevails. Even though many other members of the Haridasa-kuta composed innumerable pada, suladi, etc., some of them with even better literary merits, it is only Purandaradasa who is revered as the 'Pitamaha' in the sphere of Karnataka music.

It is against this background, we have to examine the contribution of Purandaradasa to Karnataka music. This work is difficult because as a nation we lack a historical sense equating myths and legends with history. This is clearly evident from the innumerable sthalapuranas of almost all the towns and villages in the land which attribute their origin to some ancient rishi or puranic heroes. The tenable material, if any, should forthcome by accident like an inscription or references in the literature produced at that place. This habit of investing great men with divinity still persists with the result we are rewarded more often with rumours than facts about many persons who lived till recently. Even the biographical material about Tyagaraja who lived barely 150 years ago is adulterated with myths and miracles. And it is no wonder if the facts about Purandaradasa who lived at least 300 years before have lost all verity, embroidered by the spiritual successors and buried under mounds of myth and superstition.

Consequently any objective assessment of his contribution to or influence on Karnataka music is difficult to make. We have to examine all the available material, pick up a piece here and there and construct a mosaic of the musical personality of Purandaradasa. The material available is little and more often unreliable. Apart from the ageold belief alluding to him as the pitamaha of Karnataka music some tangible material is found inhis songs and also in references to him in old musical literature.

There is sufficient reference in the songs of Purandaradasa to testify to his good knowledge of music. These references to musical forms, ragas, talas, instruments etc. are spread over nearly 30 songs. They refer to svara, numerous ragas by name, murchanas, jathis, prabandha, gita and a large number of instruments and above all the qualifications of an ideal musician. And it is notable that such profuse references to different elements of music are not found in the songs of other Haridasas. We may not know who was the Sangitaguru of Purandaradasa. But it is certain he was well versed in the art which he used as medium for leading people on the path of righteous living and god.

Adverting to Purandaradasa in literature, the earliest reference occurs in the Annamacharya charithamu by Chinna Tirumala, which indicates that he was a youger contemporary of Annamacharya. In the invocatory verses of his Opera, Prahlada Bhakti Vijaya, Tyagaraja salutes Purandaradasa. But here he is not revered as the Sangita Pitamaha, but as one among the great Bhaktas like Prahlada, Narada, Jayadeva. Another reference to Purandaradasa is found in the Guru Charitra of Walajapet Venkataramana Bhagavatar about his guru Tyagaraja. It is stated there that Tyagaraja invariably sang the songs of Sri Purandaradasa swamigal. Annamacharya and Vekata Vithalar in his daily Bhajana. By this it is evident that apart from revering him as one of the ancient saints of Bhakti-sampradaya, Tyagaraja also knew and sang the compositions of Purandaradasa. The fact that he was also influenced by that music finds some support from the two manuscripts of the songs of Purandaradasa found in the library of Tyagaraja and now preserved at the Sourashtra Sabha at Madura.

But the most important reference to Purandaradasa is found in the Sangita Saramrita of Tulaja who lived nearly two centiries later. Tulajaji refers to the Suladis of Purandaradasa in his descriptions of Ragas and also

in the Prabandha chapter. And these references are more than 20 in number. Apart from the Suladi, Hasugala kareva dhvani referred to in the Prabandha chapter, Tulajaji quotes sections from many suladis to describe the lakshanas of Ragas like Sudhanati, Ardradesi, Takka, Nadaramakriya, Goulipanthu, Goula, Malahari (a section of the Gita 'Kundagoura' is also quoted here), Varali, Ramakri, Sankarabharana, Arabhi, Purvagoula, Narayanagoula, Desakshi, Bhairavi, Ritigoula, Hindola, Mukhari, Kannadagoula, Kedara.

The significance of these references in the Saramrita has not been as much appreciated as it deserves. We must remember that in almost all the literature on music and dance produced during the past thousands of years, it is only mythical figures like Tumburu, Narada, Hanuman, Nandi, etc. and eminent theoreticians like Bharata, Matanga, Dattila, Nanya, Someswara and Sarangadeva that are referred to as authorities on the subject. And it is interesting to note that nowhere in all these works any great practical exponents or Vaggeyakaras (composers) who gave shape to the theories expounded by these scholars and whose compositions were deemed as reference material to this, have been mentioned. Compared to these theoreticians such composers may have been legion. Every Royal court had patronised eminent musicians and we may presume that some of the atleast were endowed with creative minds and gave new life and forms to the lofty theories expounded by these lakshanajnas. In the alternative there is also the possibility of these theoreticians themselves desribing many a lakshana on the basis of this new produce with replace the older ones. But surprisingly enough we do not come across any references to them in these treaties while enunciating the lakshanas of many features-not even the name of Jayadeva. Obviously the ancients attached greater importance to theoreticians than exponents who practised and propagated the living form of those ideas.

The solitary exception seems to be the famous Gopala Nayaka who is referred to by Kallinatha and also Venkatamakhi. Possibly he was such a great figure whose achievements in particular branches of music remained unsurpassed that these lakshanajnas were obliged to refer to him in support of some of their statements.

The significance of the references to Purandaradasa in the Sangita Saramrita could be appreciated when viewed against this background. It is also notable that with the exception of one Vyasapacharya, no reference is made in Saramrita to such eminent composers like Kshetrajna and Bhadrachala Ramadasa, who came later, and also Tulaja's own contemporaries like his brother Shahaji who is reputed to be a good composer or Veerabhadrayya. Thus it is reasonable to infer that Tulajaji chose these songs to exemplify his statements about many ragas because of the fact that during his days Purandaradasa was considered as a master of music (apart from being respected as a minstrel of god) and whose songs were deemed to be the touchstone of the Karnatak music tradition.

Now we shall view this subject from a different angle. The contribution to or influence of Purandaradasa on Karnatak music, if any, is to be studied in its broader perspective. A reference to literature on music produced during the span of time covering the periods of Purandaradasa to Tulajaji will be of help in this respect. This study will provide atleast a rough idea of the gradual development of Karnatak music to its present form. Purandaradasa lived during the golden age of Vijayanagar when creative activity in the various spheres of literature and arts developed in all its intensity and glory. The Royal court sheltered under its roof some of the best talents and creative minds drawn from different parts of the land and belonging to different schools and systems. To the north and east of Vijayanagar were the Bhamani Sultanates where Islamic and the Northern Indian system of music were being patronised. We can presume that there was a good deal of cultural traffic between Vijayanagar which also patronised the Northern Indian system of music as the Sultans were doing in respect of the music of the south in their courts. This exchange of music and musicians inevitably generated new ideas and reorientation of the older ones. Thus an entirely new face was given to Karnatak music by the numerous practical exponents or the Rayabayakaras and Veggeyakaras under the patronage of the Royal court. This music with its new face, new ideas and new strength and lustre gradually spread through the south and consists of the heart of the Karnatak music tradition even today.

Some of the works on music like the Svaramelakalanidhi of Ramamatya, Sadragachandrodaya of Pundarika Vithala, Ragavibodha of Somanatha, Sangitasudha of Govinda Dikshita, Chaturdandi Prakasika of Venkatamakhi, Ragatalachintamani of Poluri Govindamatya and operas like the Gita Gopala of Chickadevaraja or the Yakshaganams produced in Tanjore and Mysore and also compositions of well known composers of the period will help to learn about the changing face of Karnatak music during the interval between Purandaradasa and Tulaja. Due to the cultural flow between north and south new ideas germinated and took shape in the branches of ragas and compositions. We may refer in this context to the verses in the Ragamanjari of Pundarika Vithala where he mentions some Indian ragas with their Iranian couterparts. In addition to this the compositions and talas were also undergoing changes, from the cerebral to the lyrical. The older tongue-twisting compositions set in labyrinthian talas gradually yielded place to simpler forms. This subject has been described in detail by Prof.R.Satyanarayana in his article Suladis and Ugabhogas. In brief, music evolved into forms that could appeal as much to the head as to the heart and to scholar and laymen alike.

Needless to add that Purandaradasa lived in the midst of this music and adopted it for his compositions. The songs set in these new refined forms of ragas evolved at Vijayanagar immediately arrested attention and become popular. Added to this his peregrinations throughout the south helped to spread the beauty of these refined musical ideas while his songs established their popularity. These songs no doubt became an important part of the repertoire of not only the musicians but also the devotional music or Bhagavata Bhajana-paddhati where Purandaradasa was esteemed as a great minstrel of god.

The subject of the development of the ragas during this interval between Purandaradasa and Tulaja will be an interesting study. Referring to the works on music like Svaramelakalanidhi mentioned earliner, we could see that the number of the ragas is gradually on the increase nearly doubling itself by the time of Tulaja. Ramamatya, the author of Svaramelakalanidhi was a contermporary of Purandaradasa. An interesting point here is that some of the ragas described by Tulajaji in the Saramrita

are not found in Svaramelakalanidhi. But they are referred to by Purandaradasa in some of his songs. They are Kalyani, Todi, Purvi, Maruva, Saranga. Some of these ragas no doubt occur in some works subsequent to the Svaramelakalanidhi but anyway later than Purandaradasa. A few of them also occur in the Gita Gopala of Chickadevaraja composed nearly a century later.

As an itinerant minstrel Purandaradasa sang his way throughout the south. Set in the refined melodies evolved at Vijayanagar his compositions as much attracted people as his ascetic life and spiritual fervour compelled their respect so as to elevate him to the ranks of the ancient Bhaktas. Whether it was the newer but simpler structure of the Suladi much different from the time honoured Prabandhas, the free flowing Ugabhogas and above all the canticles carrying different stamps from the folksy ballad to the classical composition, gradually relegated the older intricate compositions to the backstage and ultimate oblivion, we cannot say.

Many ragas that were new to people and also the order ones invested with more refined blends came into circulation through his songs. From the available facts we could state with confidence that Purandaradasa enriched Karnatak music through the following ragas.-Atana, Asaveri, Arabhi, Ghantarava, Erakala Kambhoji, Kalyani, Kapi, Todi, Desi, Pantuvarali, Padi, Purvi, Maruva, Mohana, Megharanji, Gouri, Saranga, Suruti, Huseni. These became popular throughout the south enhancing the beauty of Karnatak tradition. But it is also interesting to find that purists may have frowned upon the entry of these new ideas and ragas. In his Chaturdandi Prakasika for instance Venkatamakhi has condemned both Pantuvarali and Kalyani as unfit for scholarly compositions, adding also that the Kalyani appealed to the Muslims. And many ragas designated desiya were introduced through his songs and all these ragas now considered as the mainstay of Karnatak music acquiring respectability in the intervening period. It may not be wrong to presume that it is this work that perpetuated the reputation of Purandaradasa as the Sangita Pitamaha throughout the sphere of Karnatak music.

The trinity of Karnatak music, especially Tyagaraja repeated this work of Purandaradasa two hundred years later. Each may be considered as the precursor of new ideas and trends in Karnatak music. After the fall of

Vijayanagar these ideas and forms were improved further at Tanjore. Classification of ragas under the system of Melas was developed into a more logical arrangement by Venkatamakhi. His theory and its new possibilities were translated into viable forms in the Sangraha Chudamani of Govinda. On the other side the trinity of Karnatak music-Tyagaraja, Dikshitar, Syamasastry-and others gave them a clear definition through their compositions. These new ideas and new ragas flowered through the compositons of Tyagaraja and Dikshitar who gave a distinct personality to them and thus enriched Karnatak music.

It is learnt that the pattern of a music concert in the pre-Tyagaraja days was much different from today. The concert, it is learnt, commenced with an invocatory verse. Next came Tanam in the ghana ragas to be followed by the songs of Jayadeva, Purandaradasa, Ramadasa and songs of some famous local composer. Next a spacious elaboration of a time honoured raga through alapana, Tanam and Pallavi. It is notable that these concerts invariably featured songs of Purandaradasa along with other composers. This pattern changed after the advent of the trinity whose compositions occupied the centre of the stage by their more attractive ideas and melodies thus relegating the older ones to the backstage.

We must remember in this context that notwithstanding their novelty even superior melodies and ideas, the compositions of the Trinity would have suffered the same fate as those of Purandaradasa. But fortunately they lived at the time of the advent of the machine age. Against the time honoured method of preserving the compositions by memory and palm leaf, printing by machine and production in large number became available thus helping the preservation of at least a good part of their works in notation.

Tyagaraja was also fortunate in having a large number of devoted disciples, who learnt his compositions and popularised and perpetuated them through the line of their disciples. As a consequence we are fortunate that a good part of this musical heritage is surviving, though many of the compositions of Tyagaraja suffered the same fate as those of Purandaradasa - twisted, tampered and losing the original melody.

While there may be similarities between the spiritual thoughts and lives of Purandaradasa and Tyagaraja, their service to Karnatak music seems to be identical. Notwithstanding the claims and counterclaims in respect of the contribution of Purandaradasa in the sphere of Karnatak music, we can aver that he was a pioneer in propagating and thus popularising the new ideas and forms developed in Vijayanagar which represents the soul of Karnatak music today. Nearly two centuries later this work was repeated by Tyagaraja when he gave a shape to the same forms and ideas acquiring a fresh vitality and beauty at Tanjore and thus enriched Karnatak music tradition further.

*COURTESY* : SRIKANTIKA Felicitation Volume.

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# THE KRITI FORM IN KARNATIC MUSIC

T.S.P

During its long and chequered history, Indian music evolved a large number of musical forms with distinctive characteristics of their own. Many musical forms mentioned in ancient works on music become obsolete with the passage of time and some underwent changes and are now known by other names. Thanks to the persevering experiments made by a galaxy of enterprising composers, new musical forms continued to be evolved to replace those getting gradually out of vogue.

Dhruvas and Gitis were the two main types of composition that were in vogue in Bharata's time. Matanga, in his 'Brhaddesi', mentions 49 Desi Prabandhas and Sarngadeva, in his 'Sangita Ratnakara', speaks of 75 different Prabandhas. Some of the lakshanas of Prabandhas were subsequently absorbed in later day music and several parallel examples in modern music can be cited to illustrate the types of prabandhas thus absorbed.

So far as South Indian music is concerned, the earliest musical form, which is still extant, is the Tevaram although it is not perhaps being sung in the original music. All the 23 panns of the Tevaram have been identified and equated to ragas of the present day Karnatic music. The Divyaprabandham, composed by the Alvars during the same period as the Tevaram, had a similar musical set up in the Tamil Panns and talas but this music is no longer extant in Vaishnavite temples in South India. But both the Tevaram and Divyaprabandham contain only verses set to music which are not musical forms in the strict sense of the world.

There is a long interregnum in the history of Indian music from the 8th century to 14th century A.D. punctuated by two events viz the composition in the 12th century of the 'Gita Govinda' by Jayadeva which contains the earliest regular compositions in Indian music and the writing of the 'Sangita Ratnakara' by Sarngadeva in the 13th century. The Dhruva and charanas

of the Ashtapadis formed the basis for the pallavi and charanas of kirtanas when they appeared in the 14th century. Some of the lakshyas and lakshanas described by Samgadeva went out of vogue within three centuries as mentioned by both Ramamatya and Venkatamakhi in their works.

The earliest kirtana-like compositions were written from the 14th century onwards by the Haridasas of Karnataka. Narahari Tirtha (14th century) was followed by Sripada Raya, Vyasaraya and Purandara Dasa (15th century). Purandara Dasa has no equal in the number of compositional types he created. His compositions range from the simplest gitas to the elaborate and complex Suladis. It is, however, the kirtana that forms the bulk of the compositions of this giant, although they are described as padas and devarnamas. Even in his vrittanama, a composition in which padya and kirtana alternate, the kirtana conforms to the common type.

It is interesting to note here that although the Tallapakkam composers mention the word 'kriti', the songs of Annamacharya, a senior contemporary of Purandara Dasa, later came to be known as 'Sringara Sankirtanam' and 'Adhyatma Sankirtanam'. In a recent edition of Annamayya's compositions, the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams have circumvented this difficulty by calling the songs as 'Annamayya Patalu'.

Subbarama Dikshitar mentions in his 'Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini' that Ramamatya, the author of 'Svaramela Kalanidhi', (who was a contemporary of Purandara Dasa and lived at the same place viz., Vijayanagar or Hampi) composed various kinds of Prabandhas like Ela, Raga Kadambakam, Gadya Prabandham, Pancha Talesvaram, Svarangam and Sriranga Vilasam but no kirtana!.

According to Venkatakrishna Dasa, Purandara Dasa composed Gita. Thayam. Prabandha, Suladi. Ugabhoga, Padya and Pada, the last-named being perhaps the kirtana. Venkatamakhi. who came a century later, composed Gitas and Prabandhas with all the six angas described in musical treatises.

# THE KRITI FORM

The term 'kriti' in Sanskrit has many connotations. 'Yat kritam tat kritih'. 'Whatever is done is a kriti'. Its meanings include - manufacturing, making, performing, action, deed, creation, work and composition. Strangely enough, it also means magic, enchantment, injury and killing!

An early reference to the kriti as a composition is found in the 15th sarga of Kalidasa's 'Raghuvamsa' in which the poet says that the sage Valmiki taught Kusa and Lava how to 'sing' his 'Kriti', the Ramayana. 'Svakritim Gapayamasa kavi prathama paddhatim". The work kriti is used in several places in the same sarga later.

Purandara Dasa, in his song, 'Vasudeva Namavaliya', uses to term 'kriti' to mean his own compositions and gives their total as 4,75,000. "Intu nalku laksha eppattaidu savira kritiyu". But not a single song of Dasa is called kriti. They are called by names already mentioned by me earlier.

It was left to Tyagaraja to spell out the grammar of 'kriti' in his song 'Sogasuga mrdanga talamu' in Sriranjani. He is the only composer who has clearly defined the lakshanas of a kriti. According to him, a kriti should contain "Yati (caesura), Visrama (rest), Sadbhakti (true devotion), Virati (pause), Draksha rasa (the flavour of grapes) and Nava rasa (the nine rasas or sentiments). It is needles to say that his own kritis are shining examples of this description, particularly in the depiction of rasas which is lacking in the kritis of other composers. But Tyagaraja uses the word 'kriti' only in this one song and in songs like 'Aparadhamula' in Rasali and 'Ragaratna Malikache' it Ritigaula he calls his own songs as 'kirtanas'.

Later writers on music have laid separate emphasis on the terms 'kriti' and 'kirtana' and have almost made it appear that they are two different types of musical form.

But in common parlance we use the terms 'kirtana' and 'kirti' in a somewhat loose manner. Tyagaraja's Pancharatna group in the ghana ragas is called by both the names but his Utsava Sampradaya and Divyanama songs are called kirtanas. Dikshitar's Navavarana and Navagraha groups are called kirtanas but his Panchalinga sthala songs are called kirtis.

It is noteworthy that Subbarama Dikshitar, the doyen among musicologists of the recent past, does not mention the term 'kriti' at all in his monumental work. In the section entitled 'Lakshana Sangrahamu', he expatiates on Nada, Sruti, Sthayi, Gitam and so on. In item 22 under this section he deals with Kirtana, Padam, Daru, Chaukavarna and Tana Varna but there is no mention of the kriti. It would appear that in his time there was no hard and fast distinction between a kirtana and a kriti so far as their nomenclature concerned.

Subbarama Dikshitar's definition of a kirtana makes interesting reading. According to him, a kirtana should have the following ingredients :- (1) The Matu or libretto (sahitya) should be in praise of a deity (2) There should be a pallavi, anupallavi and charana (3) The last part of the first charana should have the same dhatu or musical arangement as the anupallavi (4) The dhatu of the second and the third charanas should be the same as the first charana. This is followed by a long description which is not relevant here. He mentions how madhyama kala passages should be fitted in. But the definition of a kirtana as given by him is the same as that of a kriti found in later publications.

It is only in the works of the late Prof. P. Sambamoorthy, like his "South Indian Music" series and his "Dictionary of South Indian Music and Musicians", that we find a detailed description of the kirtana and the kriti as two different musical forms. After furnishing a comparative picture of the two forms, the author, however, admits that there are many border line compositions in respect of which it will be difficult to say whether they are to be classified kirtanas or kritis.

The following points emerge from the comparative study made by the late Professor :-

## KIRTANA

1. Kirtanas are older than kritis. The kriti is a development from the kirtana.

2. The kirtana had its birth about the latter half of the fourteenth century.

3. The kirtana is a strictly sacred form. Its sahitya may be of a devotional character or may relate to a puranic theme. Many kirtanas are mere doxologies viz. hymns of praise to God.

4. The music as well as the rhythm of a kirtana should be simple.

5. The music is subordinated to the sahitya.

6. Words are many and charanas are sung to the same dhatu. Sometimes the charanas have the same music as the pallavi.

7. The anupallavi is a dispensable anga in a kirtana.

8. Kirtanas are in common ragas while kritis can be in scholarly ragas.

9. Ornamental angas like chitta svaras, svara sahitya, solkattu svaras, svaraksharas and sangatis are not usually found in kirtanas.

These lakshanas are not based on any textual authority but on observation and a comparative study of the two types of musical form commonly known as kirtana and kriti.

The kriti emerges as the most highly evolved amongst the art musical forms in Karnatic music. Like the khyal in Hindustani music. it has thrown the other types to the background and has occupied the main place in present day concerts in which more than half the time is taken for the

rendering of kritis. Its popularity may be judged from the fact that almost all the composers of the post-Tyagaraja period vied with each other in composing only this musical form. The Lakshanas of a kriti may be summed up as follows :-

1. The Kriti is an outcome of the kirtana.

2. It need not necessarily be a strictly sacred form but may be didactic or introspective incharacter.

3. The accent is on its musical excellence and the words, which are few, have a secondary importance.

4. The charanas may have different dhatu.

5. Sangatis are a special feature of kritis.

6. The kriti lends itself to neraval or musical interpretation of the raga concerned.

7. A pallavi, anupallavi and charana are usually the angas of a kriti although there are exceptions.

8. With the exception of the kritis of Muthuswami Dikshitar, the dhatu of the anupallavi is usually repeated in the latter half of the charana.

9. A kriti can be enriched by ornamental angas like chitta svaras etc.

Although several composers of the 17th and the 18th centuries have written musical forms which fall under the category of kritis, the form reached its acme of perfection at the hands of Syama Sastri, Tyagaraja and Muthuswami Dikshitar generally referred to as the Music Trinity. Many compositions of Pachimiriam Adiappiah, Pallavi Gopala Iyer and Ramaswami Dikshitar are excellent specimens of the kriti form but it was left to the Trinity, particularly to Tyagaraja, to raise it to unprecedented heights of musical excellence.

Syama Sastri, the oldest among them, had, in addition to three svarajatis of unsurpassed beauty, composed only about 40 krtis, the musical quality of which secured for him equal stature as a composer with Tyagaraja and Muthuswami Dikshitar. He was undoubtedly one of the masters of kriti composition and had an uncanny knack of combining the essence of ragas with a stately pace of rhythm which endowed his kritis with a charm of their own.

But the supreme architect of the kriti form was Tyagaraja. Writers on Western music say that the Sonata form was awaiting the coming of Beethoven. We may echo the same sentiment in respect of the kriti and Tyagaraja. At his hands, it was to grow to grand, titanic proportions and to be filled with an intenser life than at any time before. It was the only form handled by him and he lavished on it all his gifts as a composer. It was in the midst of formidable giants that he was called upon to assume a challenging role. To those who might have regarded his talent as mainly lyrical and devotional, the vistas of musical possibilities opened up by his kritis must have come as a blinding revelation.

Tyagaraja made endless experiments with the kriti and always struck out a long new lines in kriti-making. He was the first composer in Karnatic music to have made provision in kritis for introducing 'sangatis' or variations to unfold, in their logical sequence, the possibilities of the raga employed.

The kriti form found in the ghana raga panchakam, not attempted by any composer before or after Tyagaraja, sums up his musical genius. They are not stray pieces composed at random but constitute a deliberate scheme of melody rhythm and words into which he has painstakingly fitted in every aspect of the classical form of Karnatic music. The 'ettugada' svaras come in waves with an originality and daring that are breath-taking. The sarvalaghu dances merrily both in the brisk and the sedate pieces.

Most of Tyagaraja's kritis are cast in a typical mould with a pallavi, anupallavi and one or more charanas, with the music of the anupallavi repeated in the latter part of the charana. But there are many exceptions to this rule. Some kritis have many charanas with the same dhatu. In kritis like 'Sri Raghuvara Aprameya' in Kambhoji and 'Brochevarevare' in

Sriranjani there are several charanas with different dhatu. The length of kritis vary from 'Nikevari bodhana' in Suddha Saveri, which has only four lines, to 'Endaro mahanubhavulu' in Sriraga which has fifty. There are no two kritis of Tyagaraja with the same dhatu or eduppu and his seven hundred kritis represent as many different melody forms. For us, Tyagaraja's kritis represent, in energy of form and musical refinement, the highest peak to which our music has attained.

Muthuswami Dikshitar was another formidable creator of the kriti form but he followed a different pattern altogether. His scheme had some unmistakable features like the weaving of the raga name into the kriti, non-repetition of the music of the pallavi in the latter part of the kriti, a combination, in some kritis, of the anupallavi and the charana into what is now called the samashti charana and the introduction of madhyama kala passages. Most of his kritis are in a majestic slow tempo, composed in ornate Sanskrit.

The post-Tyagaraja period produced a galaxy of talented composers like Patnam Subrahmanya Iyer and Ramnad Srinivasa Iyengar who, more or less, followed the Tyagaraja pattern. New ragas were discovered and pressed into service but the kriti pattern remained the same.

The kriti has thus become not only the backbone of Karnatic music but has influenced our music to such an extent that it has become kriti-oriented. The traditional method of raga alapana has given way to alapana based on the sangatis of kritis and many of our present ragas live through kritis alone.

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# DATE OF BHARATA & THE YUGA PUZZLE

DR. PADMA SUBRAHMANYAM

Sage Bharata's Natya Sastra is an encyclopaedic work on the Theatre Art. It is easily the oldest extant treatise on the subject in the world. It consists of thirty six chapters written in the Samskrita language. From the style of presentation, as well as the syntax, it resembles Vedic literature, and it is rightly called the Fifth Veda.The work is referred to as both Natya Veda and Natya Sastra.

This magnum opus has governed the laws of aesthetics in India from very remote times. It has influenced the allied arts of painting, sculpture and poetics. It has been the common basis for classical tradition in music, dance, drama, poetics and iconography for the entire Indian sub-continent. It has also influenced all the countries where "sanatana Dharma" (later known as Hinduism) spread its roots. Natya Sastra is the very sub-stratum of the artistic living tradition of our Bharatavarsha. It is a vibrant phenomenon in our planet which is constantly experiencing changes. Though the vitality of this Sastra has been permanent in its oral and practical traditions, a systematic study of its precepts has unfortunately been out of vogue in the last five centuries in India itself. A work which had influenced Aristotle and hence the Greek Drama, that which has inspired the Chinese Theatre, the Japanese performing arts, or even the theatre of Far East, came to be forgotten by Indians of the North from the twelfth century and those of the South after the fourteenth century. There were inevitable political, religious, sociological and economic causes for this tragedy. Studying and following the path shown by Sage Bharata was called "Marga", or Margi meaning classical. This common Margi style in music, dance and drama co-existed with the respective regional styles called "Desi". Desa means region and Desi is regional. This can be compared with the Samskrita language, having co-existed as lingua franca in India along with the respective Prakrita languages and dialects of regions (Desi Vibhashas), until a hundred years ago. The post-independence India has fortunately revived and revitalised many of the Desi forms of dance and theatrial traditions. These include Bharatanatyam (which used to be called "Sadir" till about fifty years ago), Kathak, Kathakali, Manipuri,

Odissi, Kuchipudi, Sattriya and many others like the Bhagavata Mela, Kudiattam, Chau, Terukkuttu, Yakshagana and even folk forms like Ramlila, Nautanki and Bhavai. The Margi or the common classical tradition which was like the very root of this great banyan tree of Indian Performing Arts can be revived only through an in-depth study of Natya Sastra.

## BHARATA - THE AUTHOR

Sage Bharata is called the "Adiguru" on the subject. His biography and date are shrouded in mystery, as in the case of other such personalities. He was a seer, and hence a link between the past, present and future, as well as a chain between super-human, human, sub-human and inanimate levels. He is said to have received the knowledge of Natya directly from Brahma, the Creator Himself. This mythological account is only a re-assertion of the Indian approach to the very concept of "Vidya" or learning. Brahma is said to have created the Fifth Veda namely Natyaveda by compiling its elements from the four Vedas. He took "Pathya" or recitation from the Rg Veda, "Abhinaya" or the art of communication from the Yajurveda, "Ganam" or music from Samaveda and "Rasa" or aesthetic experience from the Atharvaveda. The term "Veda" has its root in "Vid" which means to know. Veda is knowledge. Sastra is systematisation of knowledge. Veda implies a holistic approach and sastra denotes its specialisation through the laws of differentiation. Any branch of knowledge in India is introduced to the student only from a holistic view. "Sa Vidya Ya Vimucyate" -learning is that which liberates. Hence the very introduction to any branch of knowledge is only from a philosophical point of view. In other words, the essence of learning is introduced in the very beginning. The study of the relationship between Self and the Universe is inevitable in the Indian methodology of learning any subject. In this sense, the Natya Sastra is Natya Veda. The term Sastra etymologically means that which regulates or governs in a systematic or orderly exposition. A Sastra has to be that which gives precise formulas, which admit only one interpretation. The Natya Sastra gives innumerable technical terms, the etymological derivations of which lead us to ideas of astounding precision. The concepts therein are irrevocable, unambiguous, universally applicable, and are of permanent value in an intellectual, aesthetic and moral sense. No wonder that such

a work was written by a Muni (Seer), whose nativity is not definitely known, nor is relevant, for he and his work belong to the common heritage of humanity. Bharata himself mentions that his Natya Sastra is meant for the Saptadvipa or seven continents of our planet, and more so for Jambudvipa and Bharatavarsha. Bharatavarsha is India, and according to ancient Indian Geography, Jambudvipa meant more or less the whole Asia and Europe together.

## BHARATA OR BHARATAS?

Many scholars have opined that the present text of Natya Sastra is of composite authorship. It is said that Bharata was a pen name utilised by a few authorities belonging to different centuries. Though one can surely see interpolations, I have more recently started believing that the entire text running to thirty six chapters must have originated from a single mind of Adi-Bharata. Bharata, like Sankaracarya could have later become a common name for his followers or actors. But the present text seems to have an alignment which is so well knit, that the contents of the chapters are often inter-dependent for a proper understanding. Cross references are almost a characterlistic of the entire work. For example, for me to master the contents of the fourth chapter, I had to get well acquainted with almost all the chapters, and specialise in atleast ten of them. Though I had earlier blindly believed the other scholars about the concept of multiple authorship. I changed my opinion after a deeper study along with practical application.

## DATE OF BHARATA AND NATYA SASTRA

The discussion on the date of Natya Sastra would almost amount to the very question of rewriting Indian chronology, from the traditional Indian method of calculating time. Many scholars have suggested many dates; these range from 500 B.C. to 500 A.D. But I have reasons to believe that the present text of Natya Sastra itself may belong to pre-epic period.. Here is a summary of the exploration.

Dr. Manmohan Ghosh, in his Introduction to his English translation of the Natya Sastra had already noted that Bharata mentions Artha Sastra thrice with Brhaspati as author. He does not mention Kautilya. Hence we can conclude that the Natya Sastra is surely pre-Mauryan. According to Kota Venkatachalam's "Plot in Indian Chronology", this would mean that Natya Sastra is prior to 1500 B.C.

Why not take clues from internal evidences and try to calculate time from the traditional Indian view ? According to the first chapter itself, (of Natya Sastra) Bharata seems to have received the Natya Veda from Brahma, at the commencement of the Treta Yuga. It was the beginning of the reign of Vaivasvata Manu. According to Indian tradition, both Rama and Krishna are historic personalities like Buddha or Jesus Christ. Rama is said to have been a contemporary of Valmiki, the author of Ramayana in Treta Yuga. The last chapter of the Natya Sastra has connection with the first, for fixing up the date of Bharata. In this chapter, a list of names of Rshis are given, as those who were listening to the entire Natya Sastra as preached by Bharata. This list includes the name of Valmiki. This corroborates with the mention of Treta Yuga in the first chapter. It is well known among music historians, that Valmiki's Ramayana was sung by Lava and Kusa with "Jati" and not "Raga" as its musical base. The Natya Sastra delineates the "Grama-Murcana-Jati" system and not its later evolution of the raga classification. Moreover Valmiki mentions two terms relating to dance, highlighted in the Natya Sastra ie., Nrtta and Angahara. These terms are used by Valmiki in relation to the artistes of Ravana's court. It is thought-provoking to realise that the entire voluminous work of Natya Sastra, containing thirty six chapters in an encyclopaedic style, does not mention Rama and Krishna, the two heroes of all times in the theatre world. Why are they not mentioned?

The reason is too obvious. When Bharata was propounding the Natya Sastra in he presence of Valmiki, Ramavatara had not taken place. Since Adi-Bharata was the father of Indian poetics and since Valmiki is referred to as the Adi Kavi, it is highly probable that they lived at the same time. Therefore, Valmiki taking lessons in dramatics, Music and Poetics under Bharata before starting his immortal Ramayana, is quite natural. The inspiration from the Karuna Rasa emanating from the death of one of the pair of the Kraunca Birds was the starting point of Valmiki writing the

Ramayana. Was it not Bharata who was the father of the Rasa theory? All this makes us believe that "Valmiki" mentioned in the last chapter of Natya Sastra, is none other than the Adi Kavi himself.

About forty names of Rishis are mentioned along with that of Vamiki as those who learnt the Natya Sastra from Bharata, as he was propounding the treatise. This list includes great names, significant to history like Viswamitra, Vasishta, Pulastya, Agastya, Brhaspati, Narada, Kanva and such others. At least the first four are known in the Ramayana as contemporaries of the period. Pulastya was Ravana's grand father. Viswamitra, Vasishta and Agastya were Rishis highly venerated by Rama. This list of names give us greater confidence to place Bharata as contemporary of Valmiki.

The last chapter of Natya Sastra includes a very interesting question posed by the Rishis to Bharata. They respectfully ask, "How, Oh Sir! the drama has descended down to the earth from heaven? Why have your descendants come to be known as "sudras"?" Bharata explains how his sons, intoxicated with the knowledge of Natya Sastra, produced "Prahasana" (humorous satire). This offended the sages, who became angry and cursed them to attain the character of Sudras and be unfit for handling the Vedas. The curse was for their lineage as well. Through the intervention of Indra and other Devas, the Rishis proclaimed that Natya would not perish, but the curse on the actors will take effect in its entirety. The Bharata putras decided to kill themselves and also blamed Bharata for his having devised Natya. Bharata advised them not to destroy Natya, which has been devised with great difficulty with its origin in the Vedas, their Angas and Upangas. He said that the actors may undergo "Prayascitta" - purificatory ceremonies after every performance as advised by the Apsaras.

After this incident, in course of time, a king named Nahusha attained heaven by merit. He was the grandson of Pururavas; when he saw Natya in heaven, he decided to take it to earth to his palace. When the Devas refused permission, he approached Bharata and convinced him to send his sons to earth, in order to establish "Natya" in his palace. He said, "In the house of my grandfather, Urvasi had taught Natya to his harem. But when the harem were distressed on the death of the king who became

insane due to her disappearance, this art was lost. I wish to resume the production of this art form, thus adding to your fame." So Bharata told his sons that they may go to earth and that would end their curse; theywould no longer be despised by Brahmins and kings. Bharata declared Kohala as his successor and said that his "Uttara Tantra", i.e., supplementary treatise will treat the practical application of theories and include the "Karika" (memorial verses) and Nirukta (etymology). Unfortunately Kohala's work has reached us only in fragments.

The abovementioned legend has been taken by some scholars as a later addition to an older text of Natya Sastra, for the first chapter itself speaks of the origin of Natya. It was devised by Brahma, as an audio visual aid for education through entertainment. From the first chapter, we gather that this happenned in the beginning of Tretayuga, when deterioration in morality had already set in on earth, particularly in Jambudwipa and Bharata Varsha. The delegation led by Indra to Brahma requested for a new device in order to re-instill character; that product was Natya. But its place of performance as per the first chapter is the Deva Loka during Indra Dwaja Festival. The location of the second performance, as per the fourth chapter, is Kailas. Even the construction of the theatre for which Viswakarma was the architect, seems to have been only in the Deva Loka. Hence, the story of the descent of Natya to earth is not totally redundant as criticised by some scholars, while dealing with the origin of Natya. Even if the story of the last chapter is considered as a later addition, it has been well connected and hence not out of context. The other possibility is that the event is much older than the time of Bharata. It is perhaps worth looking into the historicity of this event.

Nahusha's name is mentioned in the Vamsavali of Puranic history. He is the grandson of Pururavas. While it is difficult to fix the date of this king, or blindly accept the date suggested by Dr.Trivedi in his "Indian Chronology" (as Satya Yuga- 6581 BC), it is relevant to note that Nahusha belonged to an age not far removed from that of Manu, the law giver. In fact, Pururavas and Urvasi are mentioned even in the Rg Veda. Here is a hypothesis of mine, which may be considered by scholars for discussion.

The contents of Natya Sastra is perhaps anterior to Nahusha. The fact that both Panini and Bharata do not mention each other, may mean that they were contemporaries. Panini mentions the two Nata Sutrakaras - Silalin and Krsaswa. The present text of Natya Sastra must have completely incorporated their works. Bharata himself, on some occassions, quotes traditional views on certain topics, proving that there were authorities prior to him. It is possible that during the time of Pururavas, a great dancer by name Urvasi could have caused infatuation in the king, leading to insanity when she left him. This incident was the seed for the great literature of Kalidasa, "Vikra-morvasiyam". Manu Smrti condemns dramatic art and classifies actors among the seven "Antyajas". It forbade men from witnessing performances. This musthave been a reaction to the unfortunate incident in the life of Pururavas. It is likely that the art that was condemned was revived by Nahusha, the grandson of Pururavas. This proves that the social acceptability of the art depends on the moral and ethical standards of the artists of every age.

It is likely that this historic event was narrated by Bharata himself during a much later time, i.e., during that of Valmiki. while the contents of Natya Sastra is much older, the work must have been given the present shape by a single author - Bharata, during the time of Valmiki.

The International Society for the Investigation of Ancient Civilisations has done yeomen service to the field of Indian history, by fixing the dates of Rama, Buddha and Sankara through seminars and publications. According to N.Narasinga Rao, in his book "date of Rama",his accurate astronomical calculations have led him to conclude the actual day and date of Rama's birtrh as Sunday,February 11,4433 B.C. Krishna's demise has been an accepted date, as 3102 B.C. with which the Kaliyuga is said to be calculated,according to the Hindu Calendar. Taking Bharata to have written the Natya Sastra before Rama's birth,we can surmise that it was before 4433 B.C. perhaps just within a difference of a few decades, in the same century.

R.Siddhanta Shastree in his "History of Pre-Kaliyuga India" gives an ancient view of calculating time. According to the above calculation it would amount to a mind-boggling chronology - namely more than two million years since the Natya Sastra was conceived. The following table gives the details:-

| | |
|---|---|
| Beginning of Kali Yuga | 3102 BC |
| (+) Present christian era | 1995 AD |
| Present year of Kali Era | 5097 |
| (+) Years of Dvaparayuga | 864000 |
| (+) Years of Tretayuga | 1296000 |
| Years that have elapsed since Natya Sastra was conceived (ie., beginning of Tretayuga)= | 2165097 |

Perhaps the understanding of the Yuga theory needs an inter-disciplinary approach with astronomers, geologists, samskrita pundits and astro scientists - all working together. The Polar shifts, changing of the magnetic field, differences in geographic factors with geological upsurges, and the slowing down of the rotation of our planet need correlated study with a puranic view of Time and Space. Whatever may be the distance of time from that of ours, we can safely conclude that Bharata lived when Valmiki lived. I leave it for scholars and scientists to calculate and solve the Yuga puzzle. The above account is only to create thought ripples among the elite, about the profundity of our human history and the role of India in its civilisation.

Another possibility is that Bharata and his Natya Sastra are as old as the time of Nahusha. The legend of the last chapter might be the work of Kohala, in order to link his Uttara Tantra with the much older Natya Veda. Perhaps Kohala was a contemporary of Valmiki. The dates of Pururavas, Nahusha and Valmiki thus become relevant to fix up the date of Natya Sastra. The Yuga puzzle needs to be solved in order to reconstruct even our cultural history. Barring the mention of Nahusha, Bharata's Natya Sastra does not refer to any other mortal king. If Pururavas and Nahusha are to be placed in Satya Yuga as Dr. Triveda did, the internal evidence from Natya Sastra as its having been compiled in the beginning of Treta Yuga will not make sense. We will have to wonder if these lines are interpolations.

## VEDIC AFFINITY

The affinity that Natya Sastra has with vedic metres certainly proves the validity of calling it the Natya Veda, which is a part of the Gandharva Veda, which in turn is an Upaveda of Sama Veda. The question and answer format of the Natya Sastra is surely Upanishadic in its character. Dr. Ghosh himself agrees that in point of the mythological elements, the Natya Sastra is very close to the epics. From the view of the linguistic history, the mentioning of the seven older Prakritas would take Natya Sastra to a more dim past.

Above all this, he says "that the metres used in Natya Sastra lack in many cases Sandhi and even allow hiatus in places of internal yati, seems to show that it carried the vedic tradition in its metres" (IXi) Inspite of these extraordinary observations, Dr. Ghosh placed the text only as late as 500 B.C., obviously due to the influence of western view of the diminished antiquity of Indian civilisation.

In the ancient literature of Sanatana Dharma, the vedas are four; they are also called Sruti because they are to be learnt by hearing, as recitation. They are not to be written down. The limbs of the Vedas ie., the Vedangas, are six, they are the six auxiliary sciences, which were developed to understand the vedas. In other words they are needed to interpret the vedas. they are:-

1) Siksha - The Science of phonetics, pronunciation and articulation

2) Vyakarana - Grammar

3) Chandas - Rhythm of language and hence it denotes metre

4) Nirukta - Etymology

5) Jyotisha - Science of time through astronomical calculations

6) Kalpa - Vast literature meant for life

All the above six elements are found in the Natya Sastra.

Kalpa is classified as Srauta Sutra and Grihyasutra. They are guide books for the practical application of the Vedic prescriptions and hence give the details of daily and special rituals. It is also called Dharma (Law). The entire vedic literature is in the form of Sutra. Sutra literally means thread. It is to put in a nutshell all knowledge. It is an aphoristic statement in the briefest way possible. The Natya Sastra is in Sutra form. This is one more major factor to indentify the work as Natya Veda. Sutra is generally prose. If Sutra is in a poetic form, it is called Karika. The Natya Sastra has this style followed for all definitions. In the following example for the Sutra form, we see how Bharata gives the entire principle of aesthetics in just six words.

"Vibhava anubhava vyabhicari samyogat rasa nishpattih"

Sutra and Karika forms are so short that they need supplementation. This is called Vartika. Harsha (probably Harshavardhana) is said to have written a Vartika for Natya Sastra. But it is totally lost. Vartikas also need further elaboration and commentary. This is called Bhashya. Many Bhashyas were written for Natya Sastra which

include those of Lollata, Sankuka, Bhatta Tota and Abhinavagupta. Only Abhinavagupta's work has come to us in entirety. The Natya Sastra is universal in appeal and timeless in relevance like the vedas themselves.

The story of Brahma creating the Natya Veda by compiling elements from the four vedas, and the handing over of the text to a human being Bharata, is generally ignored as fiction. The vedas are not a product of the human intellect. The mantras are present permanently in the cosmic vibrations. The Rshis were not the composers of vedic mantras, but they were the receivers - like the radio. Hence they are called Mantra- Drashta and not Mantra-Karta - ie., those who perceived and not composed. Rshi means a seer, i.e., one who sees beyond the physical eyes. This is precisely the reason for hailing Bharata as a Rshi or Muni. He has only recorded like a scribe what he perceived through his divine power of concentration. However the vedic age is beyond our comprehension.

The reader who is used to western imperial chronology with christian calendar, is bound to be shocked at the above suggested dates. One must realise that the antiquity of Indian history was limited not only to suit Greek history, but also to safeguard the biblical concept of creation of the world by God in 4000 B.C. Even the western world is now negating this view. Let Indians awake to recognise their heritage.

I have tried to present to the world of scholors the various available data with regard to the possibility of finding a solution to the problem of fixing up a date for the One Common Scripture on performing arts and poetics of our Bharata Varsha. It is possible to arrive at a conclusion only through an inter- disciplinary study. But the basic need is to relieve ourselves from the shackles of western way of limiting our antiquity and look into our own sources for reconstructing our past. This in turn will surely revitalise our much dwindled common Indian psyche and the common Indian self-esteem.

* * *

# THE IMPORT OF TYAGARAJA'S SONGS

T.S. PARTHASARATHY

Tyagaraja will, perhaps, be remembered by posterity primarily as a singer and music composer but on a closer analysis, his greatness passes beyond the horizon of a mere singer and enters the domain of the seer and the mystic. He was, no doubt, the most illustrious among the musical composers of South India and one of the greatest musical geniuses of all time. But his approach to music was not in its role as an art or a science but as 'nadopasana', the easiest and the sweetest method of attaining salvation. He was a confirmed votary of 'absolute music and composed nearly a score of songs exalting the noble art of music with sacred authority from the Upanishads and other scriptures. These songs read like a commentary on what has already been stated by Yajnavalkya in the verse.

"Vina vadana tatvajnah
Sruti jati visaradah
Talajnaschaprayasena
Moksha margam sa gacchati."

(He who knows the mysteries of playing the vina, he who has mastered the knowledge of sruti and jati and he who is an adept in tala, attains moksha without effort.)

But in presenting this old theme in a new garb, Tyagaraja has furnished us with a wealth of musical details from scriptural sources in an attractive and assimilable form. He begins by saying (in his song "Nadopasana") that even the Trinity, Sankara, Narayana and Brahma, flourished on nada upasana. In another song ("Nada Loludai") he adds Indra, Kartikeya and Ganesa to the list of votaries of nada and defines nada as consisting of a "collection of svara and raga, which produces the sweetest of results". No referrence to Nada Yoga can be complete without a mention of Narada, the divine singer, and in his songs of this sage, Tyagaraja describes him as 'one

who is a master of the mysteries of the Vina' and as 'the bee that constantly hovers round the lotus called nada'. He pays Narada the highest homage in the song "Narada Guruswami" by praising him as a 'past master of the yoga sastra known as music'. Finally, he describes Rama, his Ishta Devata, as an incarnation of nada, the seven notes as the bells of His bow, Kodanda, and ghana, naya and desya as the arrows.

His other songs on music clearly indicate that he treated music purely as a sadhana. According to him, pranava nada breaks into the seven notes (svaras) by the union of prana or air and anala or energy. He stresses (in "Nada Tanum") that music is the essence of Sama Veda and refers to the birth of the seven notes from the five faces of Siva viz. Sadyojatam, Aghoram, Tatpurusham, Isanam and Vamadevam.

The song "Svara raga sudharasa yuta bhakti" epitomizes Tyagaraja's views on music as a sadhana. He states that bhakti can lead one to svarga (heaven) and apavarga (final beautitude) only when it is combined with music. The mere realisation of the nada emanating from themuladhara and a knowledge of the seven notes can lead one to moksha. One who has inborn bhakti with raga jnana becomes a mukta.

A knowledge of the art and science of music can lead one to the bliss of sarupya. It is a sine qua non for righteous conduct and one must be blessed with it by the Creator Himself. In the song "Vidulaku" he enumerates a galaxy of Purvacharyas in music like Bharata, Kasyapa, Anjaneya, Guha, Markandeya, Agastya, Tumburu, Somesvara, Sarngadeva and Nandi.

Tyagaraja is the only Indian music composer who has so exhaustively dealt with the subject of music as a path to salvation. His songs constitute an authoritative exposition of the theme and occupy a place of honour in the sphere of Indian musical literature. They also place Tyagaraja in a special niche among the nada yogis of our land.

## MUSIC WITH BHAKTI

It is difficult to say what Tyagaraja's creed was. He was not a scholar but a rasika and was not concerned with metaphysics but with devotion and faith. All literature connected with bhakti was grist to his mill. His purpose in life was not to propound a new faith or a doctrine but to reiterate the time-honoured beliefs from a new approach.

Tyagaraja belonged to a family of Advaitins. His father, Rama Brahmam, was an expounder of the Ramayana and other scriptures and was a worshipper of Lord Rama. He is stated to have been initiated in the Rama Taraka Mantra by the head of the Marudanallur Math. The idols of Rama, Sita etc. worshipped by him were later inherited by Tyagaraja. Tyagaraja was himself in his boyhood initiated in the Rama Shadakshari Mantra by a saint called Ramakrishnananda. He is stated to have recited Srimad Bhagavatam as a daily routine. Tyagaraja can perhaps be best described as a 'Bhagavata' and was an outstanding example to show that Advaita and bhakti are not incompatible. The philosophy of love mediates between the metaphysics of Advaita and the ethics of Dvaita. It transforms Madhusudana Sarasvati, the monistic thinker, into a mystic drawn by the alluring beauty of Krishna; and Chaitanya, the suble logician, into a God-intoxicated devotee. South India can boast of host of saintly Advaitins like Sadasiva Brahmendra, Narayana Tirtha and Sridhara Venkatesa who had made significant contributions to the bhakti cult.

In several songs Tyagaraja makes references to Advaita by using expressions like Soham, Nirguna Brahmanubhava etc. but places the accent not on 'Soham' but 'Dasoham'. In the song "Dvaitamu Sukhama" he poses the question whether Dvaita is preferable or Advaita but leaves it unanswered. He led the life of a true Bhagavata as enjoined in the scriptures and no gospel is more inspiring than his songs to show that without the grace of God all human endeavour will be futile.

## TYAGARAJA'S DEVOTION

Bhakti or devotion is the keynote of the compositions of Sri Tyagaraja. Although he was a confirmed votary or upasaka of nada, Tyagaraja firmly believed that nadopasana can lead one to salvation only if it was combined with bhakti. He stresses this point particularly in two of his songs. In the song "Sangita Jnanamu" he wonders whether "righteous conduct is possible without a knowledge of music and bhakti". He is more emphatic on this belief in another song, "Swara raga sudha rasa yuta bhakti", in which he avers that "only a combination of music and bhakti can lead one to Heaven, the supreme end of life".

Upasana or bhakti is the unitive way in which the aspirant sheds his egoism, attunes himself to the will of God and yearns for eternal communion with Him. It is the consummation of moral and spiritual culture. Bhakti is thus the direct pathway to perfection as it leads to the very heart of religious consciousness.

The practice of bhakti presupposes certain elaborate disciplines, which include not only the sublimation of feeling but also the training of the intellect and the will. These are known as the sadhanas. In his song "Bhaktuni charitramu" Tyagaraja enumerates the qualifications of a devotee thus: "He should eschew attachment and be a Jivan Mukta. He should make no difference between the Gods (Siva and Vishnu). Rajasa and Tamasa qualities have no place in his life. He should ceaselessly strive in the Raja Yoga method to deserve the Lord's benign grace."

Equipped with these disciplines, the bhakta enters on the life of meditation and cultivates the love of God. Of the three upanishadic injunctions of sravana or hearing, manana or reflection and nididhyasana or meditation, the first two naturally lead to the third and dhyana is the divine command; sravana and manana as the apperception of scriptural terms and the assimilation thereof by reflection have no value unless they deepen into dhyana. Dhyana is a continuous process of mental concentration and a ceaseless remembrance of the Lord which is likened (by Ramanuja in his Sri Bhashya) to the uninterrupted flow of oil(taila dharavat avichchinna smriti santana rupa). Tyagaraja dwells upon the glories of meditation in more than one song. In the song "Dhyaname", he

affirms that "meditation is as purifying as a bath in the celestial Ganges" and in another piece "Smarane sukhamu", he states that "the mere meditation on Rama Nama results in that Divine form entering and filling our heart and giving rise to bhakti". In the song "Paripalaya", he offers his meditation on the Lord's holy feet as a substitute for Ganges water.

Tyagaraja's conception of God is essentially from the saguna (with attributes) angle. God is saguna, with the metaphysical and moral perfections of satyam, jnanam, anantam, amalatvam and ananda as His differentia; and with the other kalyana or auspicious gunas derived from the essential qualities. Bhakti is meditation on Him touched with love or priti. The true bhakta is the true jnani as he knows that Bhagavan alone is the source and satisfaction of life. The supreme value of bhakti is the accessibility to his devotional needs. Many songs of Tyagaraja are rapturous outpourings extolling the various auspicious attributes of Hari and pining for a spiritual union with Him.

## DOCTRINE OF SELF-SURRENDER

The love of God becomes, in course of time, a thirst for communion with Him and the progression in bhakti corresponds to the awakening of divine grace. The path of bhakti is strewn with infinite pitfalls and set-backs. Our scriptures have, therefore, provided an alternative path in the shape of surrender, known as saranagati, prapatti etc. This method preserves the essentials of bhakti but dispenses with non-essentials like the need for ceaseless practice.

As a true bhagavata, Tyagaraja was a firm believer in the doctrine of surrender and has mentioned it in several of his songs. In these songs, he cites the examples of Vibhishana, Draupadi, Prahlada, Kakasura, and a host of other devotees who obtained succour from Providence after absolute surrender to Him. In his song "Saranu sarananuchu" he wonders whether his repeated entreaties to the Lord for help are treated by Him as a huge joke and in "Nichittamu" he proclaims that he has abandoned himself to His care on the conviction that all arguments to the contrary would be futile "Sarva loka saranya", the saviour and refuge of the whole universe.

In other songs Tyagaraja stresses the point that the Lord is the Universal Saviour that is the inner self of all jivas frees the soul from the fears of samsara and gives him eternal life and joy. The Ramayana is extolled as the scripture of self-surrender and it inspires every one with the hope of divine assurance of succour. Tyagaraja was not only a Rama Bhakta par excellence but a keen student of the Valmiki Ramayana and other versions of the classic and has constructed many of his songs around themes from the Ramayana. He quotes profusely the examples of Ahalya, Sabari, Svayamprabha, Sita, Lakshmana, Bharata, Hanuman, Vibhishana and others who were the recipients of the grace of the Lord.

Strangely enough, Tyagaraja's mind appears to have been exercised by the puzzling question whether divine grace would come spontaneously or only after spiritual effort on the part of the jiva or soul. It is well-known that this is a highly controversial subject in the Visishtadvaitic school of Vaishnavism and two opposite views are held by the Vadakalai and Tenkalai sects of South Indian Vaishnavites. These are called Sahetuka Kataksha or grace arising from a cause and Nirhetuka Kataksha or grace not arising from any cause. The above two sects often quote the analogies of a monkey cub clinging to its mother (Markata-nyaya) and a cat carrying its kitten in its mouth (Marjara-nyaya) to explain the two kinds of operation of Divine Grace. Tyagaraja refers to this in his song "Tanayuni" in which he asks Rama "should a mother go to protect her son or should the son approach the mother? Should the cow go to the calf? Or should the crops go in search of the clouds?" He, however, does not give answers and merely entreats the Lord to give him darshan.

## GOD AS VISION OF BEAUTY

As a passionate student of the Srimad Bhagavatam, Tyagaraja visualizes God in a form of self-resplendent and unsurpasable beauty. It is well-known that this classic intuits the nature of brahman as bhuvana sundara or the 'beauty of the world'. The philosophy of beauty makes the realm of beauty as autonomous as those of truth and goodness and an essential feature of reality. The mundane beauty of Manmatha (Eros) that

soils the jiva is conquered by the divine beauty of the Lord who is called 'Manmatha-Manmatha'. Tyagaraja is never tired of referring to the Lord in his kritis as 'Mara-Mara' and similar names and conjures up before our mental vision his beauteous form.

Although Tyagaraja was not a Visishtadvaitin in the strict sense of the word, he appears to be a follower of the many of the tenets of that sect and introduces them freely in his songs. His description of Vaikuntha or Heaven in his Sanskrit Gadya (prose) is as gorgeous as that of Ramanuja's in the latter's 'Vaikuntha Gadya'. Tyagaraja also appears to have accepted the theory of the pancha rupas (five forms) of Lord Vishnu viz., Para, Vyuha, Vibhava, Archa and Antaryami, figuring in South Indian Vaishnavism. In his song "Dorakuna" he gives an ornate description of the Para, Vibhava and Archa forms of the Lord. A number of songs like "Sarvantaryami" mention the fact that Brahman is the inner self of all beings. It is well known that he was himself a passisonate idol worshipper and has sung more than 40 songs on the deities enshrined in the various temples in the South.

## TYAGARAJA, THE MYSTIC

Each philosophy or school of thought, eastern or western, has its own mystics in whose lives and utterances the system finds support and verification. William James has proved conclusively that mystic experience is not the aberration of a diseased minde but is a genuine experience of God, which illumines the intellect, purifies the will and exalts the feeling.

Tyagaraja, the mystic, is so deeply engrossed in divine love that he has no other thought or feeling than that of God. Rama alone satisfies his organic cravings of hunger, thirst and pleasure. In many songs he graphically describes the thrill he enjoys in every fibre of his body when he experiences the presence of his Lord. But the very reciprocity of love between him and Rama leads to the mystic process of samslesha or union and vislesha or separation. the former is the joy of contracting the

entrancing beauty of his Rama and the latter the pangs of separation from him. In vislesha each moment stretches into eternity and in samslesha eternity is crowded into a moment. Tyagaraja passess through this process till he becomes one with his Lord and enjoys the eternal bliss of such communion.

Some of the most soul-stirring songs of Tyagaraja are those that describe his woes of separation, sometimes expressed through the medium of nayaka-nayaki love. The sudden absence of God leads to the feeling of utter emptiness and helplessness. He entreats his Rama to appear before him for a moment and give him the love He gave to Sita. He wonders whether all the stories he had heard about other devotees having been saved by the grace of God are false. While thus pining away, Tyagaraja gets a sudden glimpse of God and feels a strange joy sweeping over him. It is but a glimpse and mental vision or trance which is physically imperceptible and lacks sensory vividness. Yet he cries in a song (Enta bhagyamu) "How fortunate I am". You came near me and spoke to me kind words. You saved me just as you saved the sages of yore!".

As a follower of the Upanishads, Tyagaraja firmly believes that God is the source of all ananda or bliss. The Tyagaraja Upanishad says :

"Anandadyeva khalvimani
Bhutani jayante
Anandena Jatani jivanti
Anandam prayantyabhisam visanti".

(The self emerges from ananda, is sustained by ananda and merges into ananda).

He mentions this anubhava in many songs and the famous song "Jagadanandakaraka", his longest piece in Sanskrit, starts with the words, "Thou, giver of bliss to the entire universe!".

## TYAGARAJA'S TWO OPERAS

In addition to nearly 600 songs of the nature, described above, Tyagaraja composed two musical plays in Telugu, the "Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam" and the "Nowka Charitram", crystallizing his views on bhakti and saranagati. The former, which deals with the 'triumph of Prahlada's devotion', centres round bhakti while the latter deals with an imaginary story in which the faith of the Gopis is put to the test by Lord Krishna who ultimately makes them surrender to Him.

In the 'Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam', Tyagaraja does not narrate the traditional story of Hiranyakasipu's unrelenting enmity towards Lord Vishnu and his ultimate death at the hands of the Narasimha Avatara but a completely imaginary version of the theme in which Prahlada's devotion is put to the acid test by Lord Hari who is finally won over by the boy-devotee's unfaltering bhakti. Prahlada occupies the foremost place in the hierarchy of devotees of Vishnu and it is obvious that Tyagaraja, whose mission in life was the propagation of the bhakti cult, deliberately chose the story of Prahlada for his magnum opus. It is a full-length drama in five acts with 45 songs and 132 verses. Tyagaraja has also given us appropriate quotations from the Valmiki Ramayana, Srimad Bhagavatam and the Mukunda Mala. At the end of the play, Lord Hari reveals himself to Prahlada and makes the significant statement:

"To dwell in the hearts of devotees gives me far greater pleasure than reclining on the milky sea or residing in Vaikuntha or in the sun and moon or living in the company of Raja Yogis".

The "Nowka Charitram" is a shorter play and is based on an imaginary excursion of Lord Krishna with the Gopis of Brindaban in a boat on the river Yamuna. The Gopis, in a delightful whim, got into the boat full of youthful exuberance and refused, in a haughty manner, the proffered aid of Krishna becuase of his youth and inexperience in acquatic sports. Krishna ingratiated himself into their company by his clever persuasions and started with them on the journey. The unmixed enjoyment of the Gopis was not to last long. A terrific storm overtook them in midstream and their boat was tossed about furiously, at one time threating to engulf the whole pleasure party into the bottom of the river. It was only then that

the Gopis turned to young Krishna for help. But all prayers clothed in the most beautifully embellished songs were of no avail. The waters were rising and making their way into the boat through the holes at the bottom. With a view to humbling their pride, Krishna gently advised them to remove their clothing to be utilized for plugging the holes. The Gopis, in that condition of absolute despair and helplessness, carried out his suggestion. The Lord was immediately moved by their contrition and the whole scene at once changed. The storm ceased and the Gopis found themselves safe on the bank of the Yamuna. The esoteric significance of the story lies in the unqualified surrender or abandon of the devotee to the Lord in his hour of trial. It is a delight to see how a puritan like Tyagaraja dexterously steers clear of the pitfalls of sringara while dealing with the erotic motif of this play.

Vairagya or self-renouncement is a preparation for vedantic life and virakti is the first requisite of the mumukshu who seeks the infinite bliss of Brahman. The sensualist regards the world as a carnal feast and revels in the joys of earthly paradise, without looking before or after. Every pleasure, however, is fraught with pain and vairagya is the only method by which the seeker of God can get rid of the cycle of pleasures and pains.

Tyagaraja stresses the importance of self-renouncement and the transient nature of worldly pleasures in many of his songs which read like a commentary on Bhartrihari's "Vairagya Sataka". It is well-known that he disdained riches and scorned royal patronage with a contemptuous remark in a song (Kasichchede) "Kings only know how to distribute money. They have no regard for Haridasas because they know that the latter will not sell their poetry for a consideration in the courts of haughty princes". He led an austere life drawing sustenance from his faith and devotion.

## THE MESSAGE OF TYAGARAJA

It will be seen from the foregoing that the songs of Tyagaraja (about 700 in number) constitute his spiritual and literary heritage and a treatise on bhakti sastra. The composer, great innovator as he was in music proper, was not anxious to be original in his exposition of bhakti. He was a cultured man whose mind was sensitive to all the winds that blew. Out of the common heritage of his people he took as much as he needed to body forth his immortal longings and deep intuitions. Above all, he had the sanity of a genius and the universality of a great humanist. The words of his songs are supremely worth conning from the spritual and aesthetic points of view. They are not only a guide to the spiritual aspirant but also the record of the experience of one to whom Sri Rama was the giver of bliss par excellence as well as the Gracious Lord with an infinity of auspicious attributes.

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# BOOK REVIEWS

## UNIQUE DIRECTORY OF RAGAS

RAGA DHANA (Wealth of Ragas) An alpha-numerical directory of ragas. By Ludwig Pesch. Published by Natana Kairali (Research and Performing Centre for Performing Arts), Ammanur Chakyar Madham, Irinjalakuda (Trichur District), Kerala - 680 121. Copies also from Karnatic Music Book Centre, 14, Sripuram First Street, Royapettah, Madras 600 014. Rs.200

Venkatamakhi's magnum opus, the 'Chaturdandi Prakasika', is considered to be the bedrock of karnatic music even today. The 72 melakarta ragas described in it represent all the possible combinations of notes which a refined ear can easily distinguish and appreciate. The Madras Music Academy published this work more than six decades ago in two parts, the first containing the Sanskrit text and the second a Tamil translation. Later research, however, showed that the 'anubandham' (appendix) containing the Kanakambari nomenclature of the 72 melakarta ragas was not Venkatamakhi's.

Venkatamakhi's scheme did not see the light of day for nearly a decade and half after 1650 and it became an established fact only during the time of the Trinity, particularly Tyagaraja and Muthuswami Dikshitar. While Dikshitar followed the raganga raga lakshanas of Venkatamakhi, Tyagaraja chose to follow the sampurna mela paddh_ti found in the 'Sangraha Chudamani' of Govinda (Govindacharya). Later, Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer (1844-1893) composed his celebrated 'Mela Raga Malika' covering all the 72 melakarta ragas adopting Govinda's Kanakangi-Ratnangi nomenclature.

Various ingenious nemonic devices were being adopted to enable musicians and students to find out the melakarta numbers of the janaka ragas. The most popular device is the Katapayadi samkhya used in astrology and other disciplines. The formula is Kadi-nava, Tadi-nava, Padi-pancha and Yadyashta. The first two numbers thus obtained must be reversed in order to obtain the melakarta number. This device, however,

applies only to melakarta ragas and does not cover hundreds of janya ragas which came into existence in the wake of Venkatamakhi's scheme.

The mounumental Raganidhi by B. Subba Rao, published by the Music Academy, covers 800 ragas both Karnatic and Hindustani and the equally voluminous works on the ragas of the two systems by Walter Kaufmann are in the alphabetical order and do not lend themselves for easy reference.

These thoughts must have exercised the mind of Ludwig Pesch (b.1955), a German musician who, after a deep study of Western music at the Freiburg College, made Madras his second home. For 15 years he studied with the late Ramachandra Sastri (1906-1992), disciple of Palladam Sanjiva Rao. Pesch not only became a performing artiste on Karnatic flute but had access to his mentor's research material. He received many scholarships and put them to good use for enlarging the horizon of Karnatic music by research, documentation and publications.

Years ago, he published the first edition of 'Raga Dhana', which explained his ingenious and logically consistent scheme for identifying ragas by an alpha-numerical method. He went on revising and enlarging the book till it became almost encyclopedic in its scope. The Natana Kairali Research Centre at Irinjalakuda in Kerala has taken the credit for publishing Pesch's work in a form which compares favourably with international standards of printing.

In the chapter 'How to use Raga Dhana' the author has explained the method for finding ragas by his scheme. The 'Alpha alphabetical Raga Index' contains 500 north and south Indian ragas in alphabetical order and the code numbers lead the user to the 'Numerical Systematic List of Ragas' with copious footnotes.

In the chapter 'Melakarta and Janya Ragas', the 72 scales have been numbered as 01.000 for the first Mela Kanakangi and 72.000 for Rasikapriya, the last Mela. For each Mela, the mnemonic, the Hilndustani svaras and their Western equivalents have been given and the scales shown in staff notation. Below them are shown the janya ragas with their Aroha and Avaroha.

There are separate sections for Kathakali music, the pann system of the early Tamils, scales and modes in Western music. The glossary, with all terms and names cross-referred, is an illuminating compilation. All credit to Ludwig Pesch for his labour of love which every lover of music should welcome with gratitude.

T.S.Parthasarathy

## WIZARD OF THE VIOLIN

SANGEETHARATNA T. CHOWDIAH: Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao. Translated from the Kannada original by Uma Anil Kumar; Sree Ramaseva Mandali Trust, Chamarajapet, Bangalore-560 018. Calico Rs.40. Ordinary Rs.35

The violin was the first Western musical instrument to be introduced to Karnatic music about 200 years ago, but within a century South Indian violinists achieved incredible mastery over it. The 20th century produced a galaxy of violinists and the centenary of Mysore Chowdiah (1894-1967) was celebrated last year on a scale unheard of in the annals of South Indian music.

Chowdiah was exceedingly popular with audiences in Madras and other centres in Tamil Nadu. His very presence on the platform was attractive and he played with great rest. Many leading vocalists preferred his accompaniment as he gave them solid but unobtrusive support. He introduced the seven strings violin and despite criticism, continued to play it till the end.

The life of this colourful maestro was a saga of Guru bhakti, sincerity and perseverance. He had a gruelling time with his Guru Bidaram Krishnappa who openly insulted him on no less than three occasions. But Chowdiah soon reached the pinnacle on his own merit. His generosity was proverbial and made him a noble human being as well.

Prof.S.K.Ramachandra Rao, the author of the Kannada original, is a highly respected and versatile scholar of Bangalore who is also a noted musicologist. The book covers all aspects of Chowdiah and the author's intimate knowledge of the violin wizard.

The English translation is a faithful rendering of the original with no pretence to literary merit. It makes smooth reading. The book contains many rare photographs of archival value. A few errors here and there could have been avoided.

T.S.Parthasarathy

## DANCE TERMS IN INSCRIPTIONS

DANCE TERMINOLOGIES - Their epigraphical interpretations: By Hema Govindarajan; Harman Publishing House, A-23, Naraina Industrial Area, Phase II, New Delhi-110028. Rs. 560.

A study of the evolution of dance terminologies down the centuries is a fascinating subject not only for scholars but for teachers and performers as well. While Bharata used only the two words Nritta and Natya, Samgadeva in his Sangita Ratnakara refers a threefold classification of dance viz. Natya, Nritya and Nritta. Later, in literature and actual practice a large number of terms like Nartana, Natana etc. have been used in a somewhat loose manner. The Sanskrit lexicon, Amarakosa (5th century) has listed Nartana as one of the synonyms for dance (Tandavam, natanam, natyam, lasyam, nrityam cha nartana) but this term is not extensively used today. Although Bharata defines Natya as 'drama', the solo dance form of South India is, strangely enough, called Bharata Natyam. In this context, every source of information that throws light on any aspect of this art is welcome and epigraphical records are a reliable source of information. The study and interpretation of such records would certainly add another dimension to the history of the art and it was left to Hema Govindarajan to undertake this arduous but rewarding task.

The author is a noted scholar in Ancient History and Archaelogy as well as the holder of a doctorate in dance besides being a performer and teacher. Her earlier work 'The Natya Sastra and Bharata Natyam', published by the same firm, was noticed in these columns two years ago.

As the terminologies figuring in inscriptions are too numerous, the author has selected only eight of them for her analysis and these are Bharata, Sangita, Nritta, Nritya, Nartana, Bhangi and sutradhara. Hundreds of inscriptions mainly from Karnataka and Tamil Nadu dating from the 10th century,have been listed with details of the dynasty, rulers' names, language, place and the year of the inscription. These throw a flood of light on the terms selected by the author and they have been explained by her with great clarity and precision.

Many inscriptions refer to the term 'Bharata' in the context of dance e.g. Bharata Kala, Bharata-Agama, Bharata Sastra and Bharata Vidya. But epigraphically Bharata may be taken to mean the art of dance, skilled dancers and the dancing community. Another interpretation is that it stands for Bhava, Raga and Tala and this is supported even by Vedanta Desika. The term 'Sangita' is also used in inscriptions to connote the art of dance. As regards Nritta, a Tamil inscription refers to it as a ceremony in temples. The term Nritya is interpreted today as a full-fledged dance type. The author discusses all these in great detail. The term bhangi is used to a limited extent and means a 'posture', 'pose' or 'stance.' Sutradhara invariably figures in dance dramas. The author concludes that many terminologies which have been used in inscriptions have, with the passage of time, assumed a definite meaning today.

The second chapter deals with indirect references to dance but which are extremely relevant in the context of this art. Women dancing in temples were known as sule (Kannada), devaradiyal (Tamil) and sani (Telugu). Inscriptions refer to their appointment, sale of land and taxes levied on them.

Chapter three deals with Rangamantapam (dance halls) known by several names and Rangabhoga, enjoyment connected with the stage. A selective examination of inscriptions referring to these terms has been made in this chapter. The next chapter scrutinises interpretations in dance like

Kuttu, Attam, Arya Kuttu, Santikuttu and Tamil Kuttu. A 12th century epigraphical record from Karnataka mentions the proficiency of the Hoysala queen Santaladevi in the art of dance.

In the concluding chapter the author stresses the importance of epigraphical evidenee as a reliable source of information on dance and how this art formed an integral part of the aesthetic life of civilisation.

The appendices, bibliography and glossary in this well printed book enhance its value as a book of reference.

T.S.Parthasarathy

## NEW MELAKARTA RAGAS

NAVAMELA CHAKRAM: By Dathathreya. (The Theory & Practice of 120 Melakartha Ragas):Universal Brotherhood Foundation, 69, T.T.K.Road, Alwarpet, Madras-600018. Rs.60.

The origin of the concept of the mela may be traced to the seven jatis in which the Ramayana is said to have been sung by Lava and Kusa.

So far as Karnatic music is concerned, Vidyaranya (14th century) was the originator of the concept of mela and janya ragas. He spelt it out in his "Sangita Sara", the first work on South Indian music, Although its original is lost, its mela portion is quoted by Govinda Dikshita, father of Venkatamakhin, in his "Sangita Sudha" attributed to ruler Raghunatha Nayak. According to this work, Vidyaranya propounded 15 mela ragas and 50 janya ragas.

The next author, Ramamatya (16th century) listed 20 melas but said that five of them got merged into the fifteen. The musicologist who created a revolution in Karnatic music was Venkatamakhin who evolved a system of 72 melakartas which represented the maximum number possible by the method of permutation and combination.

But all the 72 were not practical ragas in his time and he referred to most of them as future possibilities. His scheme, however, came into force in the 18th and 19th centuries when Tyagaraja and Dikshitar recognised it and composed kritis in many of the new melas.

Several musicians tried to increase the number by adding more swarasthanas in an octave and the experiment seems to be continuing. Krishna Pisharoti of Kerala propounded a scheme of 84 melas and these were known as Krishna Chandra melas. Attempts were made to create another 36 melas by replacing the panchamam with the prati madhyama and the late Thanjavur Kalyanaraman introduced them as panchama varja melas.

The latest scheme by Dathathreya propounds 120 melas and was first mentioned in a pamphlet published in 1982. The book under review is the second enlarged version. This scheme provides for new swarasthanas called nava rishabha, nava gandhara, nava madhyama and atita madhyama and by the method of permutation and combination, a total of 120 melakarta ragas have been arrived at.

The additional 48 melas are in continuation of the traditional 72 and have been given names like lasitamritam, bhasadivyangi etc. The 120th mela is called Katina madhyamam.

The author pleads that "the advent of 48 navamelakarta ragas should not glibly discussed or set aside as a mere permutation and combination exercise; the ragas definitely have musical and aesthetic validity for all time".

It was Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer (1844-1893) who gave a permanent musical image to all the 72 sampurna melas of Govinda in his monumental "Melaraga-malika". If the Navamela chakram of Dathathreya is to be popularised among musicians, some competent composer must come forward to give the new ragas attractive melodic forms.

Till then, the scheme may remain only on paper like Venkatamakhi's scheme which saw the light of day only 150 years after his time.

T.S.Parthasarathy

## SRI VIDYA CULT

SRI VIDYAMRITAM: By Paramahamsa Bhuvanesvari Swamigal, Yogamaya Bhuvanesvari Peetham, Ganga Nagar, Red Hills Road, Ambattur, Madras-600053, Rs.20.

The concept of God as the Divine Mother of the universe is the contribution of Hinduism to the religious literature and practice of mankind. Hymns in praise of the Devi are found in the Vedas, in the Sakha, Aranyaka and Upanishad portions. The Rigveda contains the famous Devi Sukta.

The Sri Vidya upasana is the centre which is equidistant from all the points in the circle of spiritual Vidyas in India. Sri Bhaskaraya Raya, whose diksha name was Bhasurananda Natha, was the patriarch of the Sri Vidya cult in South India. Born in the Maharashtra, he was an erudite scholar in several disciplines and was a disciple of Gangadhara Vajapeyi who lived at Tiruvalangadu in the Thanjavur District. Bhaskara Raya was patronised by the then Maratha ruler of Thanjavur who presented him an entire village which came to be known as Bhaskarajapuram. Many miracles are attributed to him but he is remembered today as the author of the 'Prasthana Traya' of Sri Vidya viz. 'Saubhagya Bhaskara.' the first ever commentary on Lalita Sahasranamam, the 'Varivasya Rahasyam' and the 'Setubandha.' A brief and absorbing biography of Bhaskara Raya has been thoughtfully included in the book.

Paramahamsa Srimad Bhuvanesvari Swamigal, the author of this book, has been propagating Sri Vidya and giving initiation to deserving aspirants for many years. Initiation into the procedures of Sri Vidya is secret and is known as 'Rahastarpana.' But with a view to making literature available to the public, the Swamigal has come forward to publish this book which is bound to be a boon to those who wish to worship Devi in the Sri Vidya tradition.

The steps of the aradhana are the Karanyasam. Hridayanyasam, Dhyanam, Panchapuja and Japa Samarpanam. There is also a mula mantra for each deity comprising mystic syllables like Hreem, Kleem, Sreem etc. Starting with the Sri Maha Ganapati mantram, the book proceeds to deal with the aradhana of Bala Tripurasundari, Bhuvanesvari, Chandi, Rajarajesvari, Raja Syamala, Rajamatangi, Mahavarahi, Asvarudha, Sampatkari and Pratyangira. The book has been written in lucid Tamil. The artist who drew the pen drawings of the deities deserves all praise for the highly inspiring sketches.

T.S.Parthasarathy