





INTRODUCTION TO ABHYASA GANA

(Sarali varisai to Swarajati)

earning Indian music is very essential for understanding and appreciating its fine elements. It is therefore very important to devise a proper teaching methodology which will enable the student of music to gain proficiency in both rhythmic and melodic aspects of music. Carnatic classical music is classified into **Abhyasa gana** - the music for practice and Sabha Gana - the music rendered in concerts.

Abhyasa gana are the fundamental lessons in music, which introduce the basic knowledge of the Art music to the student. The lessons comprising Abhyasa gana are Sarali varisas, Janta varisas, Hecchu Sthayi Varisa, Taggu Sthayi Varisa, Datu varisa, Alankaras, Gitas, Jatiswara, Swarajatis and Varnas. These technical forms when practiced both in vocal and instrument, helps the student to acquire good Sruti jnana, Swara jnana and Laya jnana. But Varnas which belongs to the group of Abhyasa gana are also sung as a beginning piece in concerts, to warm up their voice or hands if they are playing any instrument. The compositions comprising Melodic forms are Kritis, Ragamalikas, Padas, Javalis, Kirtanas, Tillanas, Raga, Tana, Pallavi etc.

Sri.Purandaradasa who was called Sangita Pitamaha organised the basic lessons of Karnatak music. He formulated the basic lessons in the raga Mayamalavagowla. The word Maya was prefixed to Malavagowla only in the later period, for nomenaclature of raga in katapayadi sutra, but until then it was called Malavagowla.

Raga **Mayamalavagowla** is a Sampurna raga. It is a 15th mela. A Janaka raga taking the notes: Shadja (s), Shuddha rishabha (r1), Antara gandhara (g3), Shuddha madhyama (m1), panchama (p), Shuddha dhaivata (d1), Kakali nishada (n3)



The notes ascending in a progressive manner is called Arohana and notes in descending order is called Avarohana.

Arohana : $s r g m p d n \dot{s}$

Avarohana : \dot{s} n d p m g r s

Since the interval between each pair of notes i. e. s r - g m - p d - n s are equal, it will be easy for a beginner to render the scale with ease. Hence this raga became the starting raga in Carnatic music.

In Hindustani music raga Bilaval (equivalent to raga Shankarabharana in Carnatic music) is used for Abhyasa gana.



OBJECTIVES

After learning this lesson, the learner will be able to:-

- 1. describe the variety of Swaras in perfect swarasthanas;
- 2. state the thristhayis and different speeds;
- 3. explain various patterns of the swaras;
- 4. write the composition in perfect tempo and melody.

4.1 SARALI, VARISAS

Simple varisas are the basic exercises in vocal and instrumental music. The varisas are sung in the raga Mayamalavagowla, which is suited for a beginner to learn both in vocal and instrumental. This raga takes two consonant notes i.e. shuddha rishabha (n) and \$huddha dhaivata (dl). Antara gandhara (g3) and kakali nishada (n3).

Arohana : $s r1 g3 m1 p d1 n3 \dot{s}$

Avarohana : Š n3 d1 p m1 g3 r1 s

This raga is easy for the beginners to learn, because the swaras stand in balanced distances from one another. Here the purvanga or first half is symmetrical to the uttaranga or second half. This helps a student to render the raga easily. Sarali varisas are set in one octave beginning from Madhya shadja to Tara shadja.

The first lesson has all the seven swaras in the progressive manner in the arohana followed by the same seven swaras in the descending order.

The important feature of sarali varisais is the sequence in which they have been composed. The varisais progress step by step, so that the student learns about the interval between the swaras. The first varisais is regular in progression as said earlier.

Notes

The 2nd varisais goes upto rishabha and returns to shadja. The descending part is a gradual decrease of swaras.

3rd goes upto gandhara and returns to shadja.

All Sarali varisais have a beautiful set of swaras with different permutations and combinations. In some varisais there will be deergha aksharas like p,; or m,; which helps the student in stabilising the voice at one place.

Coming to the tala aspect, Sarali varisais are set to Adi tala consisting of 8 aksharakalas. The Purvanga (1st part) has 1 laghu with 4 aksharas and the uttaranga (2nd part) has 2 dhrutas with 4 aksharas.

In the 1st exercise

The 1st part s r g m has 1 laghu i.e. counting of fingers with 4 aksharas. The 2nd part p d with 1 dhruta and n s with another dhruta.

(1 dhruta means a beat and a wave which equals to 2 aksharas)

Hence the arohana of the 1st sarali varisa has 8 aksharas and avarohana again has 8 aksharas.

There are 3 speeds of rendering Sarali varisas.

The 1st speed or kala has 1 swara for 1 beat

(The symbol x denotes beat, and 1, 2, 3, denotes turning the palm for dhruta)

The 2nd speed has 2 swaras for 1 beat



Notes

$$x$$
 1 2 3 $x \sqrt{\sqrt{x}}$ $x \sqrt{x}$ $x \sqrt{x}$

The 3rd speed has 4 swaras for 1 beat

$$x$$
 1 2 3 x \sqrt{x} \sqrt{x} srgm pdns sindp mgrs | srgm pdns sindp mgrs |

Here in the 3rd speed, the 1st exercise has to be rendered 2 times for the tala structure to be completed.

After becoming familiar with the Sarali varisais in the raga Mayamalavagowla, the student can practice the same varisas in different ragas like Shankarabharana or Kharaharapriya.

4.2 JHANTA VARISA

The 2^{nd} lesson after Sarali varisais in Abhyasagana comprises of Jhanta varisais. Jhanta means double. This exercise has double swaras and helps the student to get trained in rendering double swaras.

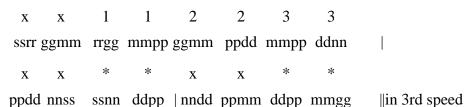
In Jhanta swaras, a swara will be repeated twice wherein the second swara will be stressed. This enables the student to sing or play on instrument, the same swara twice on the same place, with perfect swarasthana. These excercises are also tuned to the raga Mayamalavagowla and set to Aditala. Janta varisais are little more advanced than Sarali varisais. Though the 1st exercise is a gradual progression as in

The remaining exercises have different combinations. Here the student will learn all the intervals that occur between the swaras present in one octave as in:

x123x
$$\sqrt{}$$
x $\sqrt{}$ ssirrggmmrrggmmpp||ggmmppddlmmppddnn||ppddnnssi|ssinnddpp||nnddppmmggrrss||ppmmggrrrrss||

Here the student will learn to intervals between m and r; p and g; d and m; n and p.; p and s. The student has to jump from madhyama to the perfect sthana rishabha.

The tala count in Janta varisa will be one kriya for each swara in 1 st kala.



Hence in this 2nd exercise the student has to render once the entire exercise to complete one avartha of tala in 1st speed; the entire exercise twice in 2nd speed and four times the exercise in 3rd speed. Rigorous practice of janta varisas enables a student to sing gamakas like sphurita, tiripa, ahata etc. in later stages.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.1

- 1. What is abhyasa gana?
- 2. What is sarali varisa?
- 3. Define the word "Janta".
- 4. Which Raga is used for abhyasgana?
- 5. Who structured the basic exercises of Carnatic music?

4.3 TARA STHAYI VARISAI OR HECCHU STHAYI VARISAI

After learning Sarali and Janta varisai, which are only in the middle octave or madhya sthayi, students move on to learn rendering swaras in different octaves or Sthayis.

Tara sthayi or Hecchu sthayi means higher octave i.e. swaras above Tara shadja. The gradual progression of swaras systamatically reaches the higher octave swaras and ends up in the avarohana krama in these varisas.

In the first varisa the swara goes upto Tara rishabha, in the second to Tara gandhara and subsequently to madhyama and panchama. Tara sthayi swaras are denoted by a dot above the respective swara. These exercises enable a student to render swaras in higher ranges. Generally 3 - 4 Tara sthayi varisa in 3 speeds are taught to get trained in rendering higher octave notes. These are sung into raga Mayamalavagowla and set to Adi tala.

Notes



Example

```
d
                                 m
                         n
                                     \mathbf{S}
                                                                              ṁ
                                             Ġ
                                                n
                                                         d
                                                                              Ġ
                                                         d
d
                         d
                                     Š
                                             d
                                         n
                                                        m
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4.4 MANDRA STHAYI OR TAGGU STHIYI VARISAI

Mandra sthayi or Taggu sthayi means lower octave. Swaras rendered below madhya shadja are called Mandra sthayi swaras. Here the swaras are in a systematic descending order. The fIrst varisa descends up to Mandra nishada, the second to Mandra dhaivata and later to panchama. These varisas end up at Tara shadja in arohana krama. Mandra sthayi varisas are denoted by a dot below the respective swara and these exercises enable a student to get trained in rendering lower octave notes. Generally 3-4 Mandra sthayi excercises in 3 speeds are taught to train a student to render in lower octaves.

Example

4.5 DATTU VARISAS (VAKRA VARISA)

Datu means jumping or skipping. In datu varisas the swaras are structured in such a way that along with krama sancharas one, two or three swaras jumps in a systematic manner. The varisas help in training the students to have a good control over individual swarasthanas. Dattu varisas are in the raga Mayamalavagowla and are set to Adi tala. Dattu varisas are rendered in three speeds.

Example

```
S
  g
                  g
                    r
                        g
 m
             r
                  m g
                       m
                             r
g
       r
          g
         m
                g
                  p
                    m
             d
                        d
  d
       m p
               m
                    p
                             m p
```

| p | S | n | S | d | n | p | d | p | n | d | n | p | d | n | S | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| S | p | d | p | n | d | S | n | S | d | n | d | S | n | d | p | |
| n | m | p | m | d | p | n | d | n | p | d | p | n | d | p | m | |
| d | g | m | g | p | m | d | p | d | m | p | m | d | p | m | g | |
| p | r | g | r | m | g | p | m | p | g | m | g | p | m | g | r | |
| m | S | r | S | g | r | m | g | m | r | g | r | m | g | r | S | |



Notes



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.2

- 1. Write briefly about raga Magamalava gawla.
- 2. Which tala is used to set the Datu varisas and name the number of aksharas present.
- 3. Name the three sthayis is music.
- 4. Define Dhatu varisas.

4.6 ALANKARAS

The term Alankara literally means ornamenting or embelishing. Here in the sphere of Abhyasa gana, Alankaras are a group of rythmic swara patterns set to a particular tala. The seven alankaras in the raga Mayamalavagowla are set to Suladi Sapta talas namely Dhruva tala, Matya tala, Rupaka tala, Jhampa tala, Triputa tala, Ata tala and Eka tala.

Learning alankaras in 3 speeds helps the student to acquire knowledge in different rythmic swara patterns, different talas with different angas and the mode of applying them. i.e the kriya. The swara patterns are composed in such a way that the student apart from being trained in rendering regular progressive swaras, they will also be exposed to forward and backward movements.

The angas present in the sapta tala alankaras are laghu denoted by the symbol |, dhruta denoted by the symbol 0, and anudhruta denoted by the symbol U.

- 1. Dhruva tala has 1 laghu (|), 1 dhruta (0), 2 laghus (|) (|)
- 2. Matya tala has 1 laghu (1) 1 dhruta (0) 1 laghu (1)
- 3. Rupaka tala has 1 dhruta (0), 1 laghu (1)
- 4. Jhampa tala has 1 laghu (|), 1 anudhruta (U), Idhruta (O)
- 5. Triputa tala has 1 laghu (|), 2 dhruta (0), (0)



- 6. Ata tala has 2 laghu (1) (1) 2 dhruta (0), (0)
- 7. Eka tala has, One laghu only (1)

Example

4.6.1 Chatushra jati Matya tala

Angas: |0| = 4+2+4 = 10 Akshras

| X | 1 | 2 | 3 | X | | X | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| S | r | g | r | S | r | S | r | g | m | |
| r | g | m | g | r | g | r | g | m | p | |
| g | m | p | m | g | m | g | m | p | d | |
| m | p | d | p | m | p | m | p | d | n | |
| p | d | n | d | p | d | p | d | n | S | |
| S | n | d | n | S | n | S | n | d | p | |
| n | d | p | d | n | d | n | d | p | m | |
| d | P | m | p | d | p | d | p | m | g | |
| p | m | g | m | p | m | p | m | g | r | |
| m | g | r | g | m | g | m | g | r | S | |



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.3

- 1. What is alankaras?
- 2. How many talas are used for alankaras?
- 3. Name the Suladi sapta talas?
- 4. Write the angas of the Suladi sapta talas?

4.7 GITA

Gita is the simplest composition, a learner come across in his study of Carnatic music. Broadly speaking it has two varieties called lakshya Gita and Lakshana Gita. Lakshya Gita as its words signifies gives an idea about the raga to the beginner, which they can keep as specimen of the raga. The Lakshana gitas are seen in several categories like pillari gita and Sanchari gita.

As its word signifies Pillari gita describes about the Lord Ganesh, where as

sanchari gita praise about the Gods & goddesses of the Hindu mythology. Purandaradasa is first to compose these conpositions particularly in the name of Lord Ganesh in the raga. Malahari, Sanchari gitas are in different ragas like Kalyani, Mohana, Kamboji etc. for example:



Notes

Example

Raga: Malahari Tala: Chatusra Jati Rupaka

Janya of 15th th mela Mayamalavagowla

Arohana : s r m p d s Avarohana : s d p m g r s

In the raga Malahari besides shadja and panchama the svaras taken are suddha rishabha, antara gandhara, suddha madhyama, and suddha dhaivata. In this raga gandhara is varjya (deleted) in arohana and nishada is varjya in both arohana and avarohana.

| X | $\sqrt{}$ | X | 1 | 2 | 3 | X | $\sqrt{}$ | | X | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| | _ | | | | | | s dhu | | _ | | _ | |
| | | | | | | | p ri | | | | | |
| | | | | _ | | | r ku | _ | | | | |
| | | | | | | | p ma | | | | | |

Lambodara laku mikara ||

Siddha charana ganasevita

Siddhi vinayaka te namo namo || Lambodara ||

Sakala vidhya adi pujita

SarVothama te namo namo || Lambodara ||



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.4

- 1. What is Gita?
- 2. Name the types of Gita.



- 3. Who composed Pillari Gita.
- 4. Write the ragalaksharna of Malahari raga.

Raga Jaganmohini

Triputa tala 3 + 2 + 2 = 7

Arohana: S G3 M1 P N3 S | Ararohana: S N3 P M1 G3 R1 S S , \parallel S G M \parallel P M \parallel G , \parallel M G R \parallel S R \parallel S N \parallel garuda re mu ra re gamana | P M || G R , | S N | P N || $P N S \mid G M$ ja na yana ja ga nnaa $S G R \mid S$, | S , \parallel S G , \mid M , \mid re An . . \parallel N P M \mid G M \mid $M G R \mid S G \mid$ M P dha .. kaa.ka li. swara gan .. ra $G \hspace{0.1cm} G \hspace{0.1cm} R \hspace{0.1cm} | \hspace{0.1cm} S \hspace{0.1cm} N \hspace{0.1cm} | \hspace{0.1cm} S \hspace{0.1cm} S \hspace{0.1cm} | \hspace{0.1cm} S \hspace{0.1cm} G \hspace{0.1cm} M \hspace{0.1cm} | \hspace{0.1cm} P \hspace{0.1cm}$ | N P || shu . ddha Aa \mid G M \parallel G M P \mid N P \mid M G \parallel $S N P \mid M P$ rida va rJita Ava.ro ha $S G , \mid M , \mid P P \parallel M G R \mid S R \mid$ r Jija || sa .. gra ha nya . $S \quad G \quad M \quad | \quad P \quad , \quad | \quad N \quad P \quad \| \quad S \quad N \quad P \quad | \quad M$ P tripusa msha saa .. . yu G M P | N $P \mid M G \parallel M N M \mid P M M$ G maa lava Gowla $M G R \mid S R$ $S N \parallel P N S \mid G , \mid R S \parallel$ Janita Jag .. hi . ni. an mo $S G M \mid P N \mid S S \mid N P M \mid G R \mid$ S N | mavadha .. raya sri .. raa .. ma

4.7.1 Laksbana Gitas

namo

S G , \mid R , \mid S , \parallel

mo

na

Lakshana gitas are another form of Gitas. If sanchari gitas are in praise of gods,

lakshana gitas describe the charactaristics of a raga. The sahitya part describes the name of the raga, its janaka raga (if it is a janya raga), swaras taken by the raga, whether vakra or varjya, its graha, amsha and nyasa swaras, even the tala in which the gita is composed will be mentioned. In olden days when the notations were not available, lakshana gitas helped the students to remember the raga lakshanas. Sri.Govindacharya and Paidala Gurumurthy Shastry have composed many lakshana gitas. For ex: Raga: Jaganmohiai Lakshama: Triputa tala.



Notes

4.8 JATISWARA

Jatiswara is a musical form belonging to Abhyasa gana being taught after gitas. Jatiswaras consists of only swara phrases which are in the model of jati passages. Hence they are called jatiswaras. The combinations of swaras comprises janta, daatu etc., in both madhyama and vilamba kalas. These compositions are comprised of only swara passages, and are also called swara pallavis. Jathiswaras are comprised of both hrisva and dirgha swaras and there is no sahitya for this compositions, but these syllables are composed in several patterns like mridanga Jatis.

Jathiswara consists of pallavi and many charanas. The charanas have different datus. It is ,also rendered in the dance concerts. Ganakrama of jatiswara has a pallavi followed by charanas repeating the pallavi at the end of each charana.

Jathiswaras are usually set to adi, rupaka talas but occassionally in other suladi sapta talas and chapu talas. Normally they are composed in common and rakti ragas, but very few are in rare ragas. In some Jathiswaras, different gathis are used in the charanas.

4.9 SWARAJATI

Swarajati is a musical form belonging to Abhyasa gana being taught after jatiswaras having both swara and sahitya. In swarajati, there are the sections called pallavi, anupallavi and charana. Some swarajatis will not have anupallavi. The charanas have different dhatus. All the charanas may be of the same length or they may increase gradually. Entire composition has sahitya and there will be usually one sahitya syllable for swara syllable. Swarajati originated as a dance form with jatis.

Normally the sahitya of the pallavi is rendered, followed by both swara and sahitya of the charanas and repeating the pallavi after each charana. Ragas and talas used here are same as in jatiswaras. Swarajatis are comprised with both hrasva and deergha swaras. The sahitya may be one syllable for one deergha swara or there may be an akara or ukara for the deerghaksharas. This helps student to render varnas - the next exercise with ease. Some of the swarajatis especially composed



by Sri.Syama Shastry are of a very high standard, and they are rendered in concerts too. Normally the sahitya will be either devotional or heroic.

Example: Jatiswara

Raga: Hamsadhwani

Tala: Rupaka

Janya raga of 29th Mela Dhira Shankarabharana

Arohana : srgpns Avarohana: snpgrs

Besides shadja and panchama, Hamsadhwani takes chatusruti rishabha, antara gandhara, and kakali nishada. This is a varjya raga. Madhyama and dhaivata are varjya swaras. Audava raga i.e with five swaras in arohana and avarohana.

Pallavi

 $s\ \, ,\ \, \|\ \, s\ \, n\ \, p\ \, g\ \, \|\ \, r\ \, s\ \, \|\ \, g\ \, ,\ \, |\ \, s\ \, ,r\ \, s\ \, \|\ \, g\ \, ,\ \, |\ \, r\ \, g\ \, p\ \, n\ \, \|$

Charana

1. s , | r n , s || p , | n s , r || s , | np , g || r , | g p , n || s , || 2. p n | s r g p || n s | r g p n || g r || s n p g || r s || r g p n || s , || 3. g p | r g s r || s n | p , p , || n s | r g p n || s r | s , s , || gr | s n s r | s n | p , p , | r s | np s n | p g | r g p n | s , | || , , | s r s n || p , | , , p , || , , | s n p g || $r \ , \ | \ , \ , \ r \ , \ \| \ , \ , \ \| \ g \ r \ s \ n \ \| \ s \ , \ \| \ , \ , \ s \ , \ \| \ , \ , \ | \ r \ g \ p \ n \ \|$ s , | , r g r || s n | p n s r || n , | , s r s || n p | g p n s || rs|, npg || np |, grs || ns |, rgp || gp |, nsr || s, ||



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.5

- Briefly Explain Jatiswaran.
- 2. In which speed Jatiswaran in sung?
- 3. What is swarajati? Explain briefly.
- 4. From which Mela Hamsadwani is derived?

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

Abhyasa gana is an essential part of Carnatic Music education where in a learner will practice the exercises like sarali varisa, Jhanta Varisa, Dhattu Varisa, Mandra. Thara Sthayi Varisas and Alankaras. These exercises will give the learner ability to sing the higher level lessons. The other forms like Gitams, Swarajati's Jatiswarams give an idea about the raga in which it is composed and a rhythmical knowledge about different talas. These forms are essentially practiced by even professional musicians to achieve clarity in performance.



Notes



TERMINAL EXERCISES

- 1. Abhyasa gana are the fundamental lesson in music Explain it.
- 2. Write about the term Sarali Varisa with two exercise.
- 3. Write a para on Jhanta Varisa.
- 4. What are the difference between Heechu Sthayi Varisai and Taggu Varisai.
- 5. Explain Alankaras along with exercises.



ANSWER TO THE INTEXT QUESTION

4.1

- 1. Abhyasa gana in the fundamental lesson in music
- 2. Sarali varisai are the basic exercises in vocals Instrumental music
- 3. Janta Means double. These exercises have double swaran.
- 4. Mayamalavagaula
- 5. Saint Purandara Dasa

4.2

- Mayamalavagaula is a sampoorna raga. It is 15th Mela raga. It has shadja, Sudha Ri Shabha, Anthara Gandhara, Sudha Madhyama, Panchama, Sudha Dhaivata, Kakali Nishada.
- 2. Adi Tala 8 Akshara Kalas
- 3. Mandra-Madhya-Thara Sthayis
- 4. Dhattu means jumping of skipping one or two swaras in a systematic manner.



4.3

- 1. Alankaras are a group of rhythmic swara patterns set to a particular tala.
- 2. Suladi Sapta talas are used for Alankaras.
- 3. Dhniva, Matya, Rupaka, Jhampa, Triputa, Ata and Eka
- 4. Dhruva 1 Laghu, 1 Druta, 2 Laghus

Matya – 1 Laghu, 1 Druta, 1 Laghu

Rupaka – 1 Druta, 1 Laghu

Jhampa – 1 Laghu, 1 Anudruta, 1 Druta

Triputa – 1 Laghu, 2 Drutas

Ata – 2 Laghus, 2 Drutas

Eka – 1 Laghu

4.4

- 1. Gita is a simple composition. It is taught after the Alankaras.
- 2. Pillari Gita, Sanchari Gitas Lakshana Gita
- 3. Saint Purandara Dara
- 4. It is a Janya of Mayamalava gaula. Swarastanas are—Shadia, Sudha rshabha, Anthara Gandhara, Shudha Madhyama, Panchama, Sudha Dhaivata. It is an Audava—Shadava raga. In Arohanas, Gandhara and Nishada are omitted and in Avarohana Nishada is omitted.

4.5

- 1. Jatiswara is a musical form belonging to Abhyasa gana being taught after Gitas. Jatiswara consists of only swara phrases which are in the model of Jati passages.
- 2. Madhyama kala and vilamba kala.
- 3. Swara jati is a musical form belonging to Abhyasa gana being taught after Jatiswara comprising of both swara phrases and sahitya.
- 4. Dheera Sankarabharanam.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- 1. All the Sarali version given in the practical section has to be practical in IIIrd degrees of speed.
- 2. Students are advised to practice all the Jhanta varisa in III degrees of speed.
- 3. There Sthayi-Mandra Sthayi-Dathu varisa are to be practiced in IIIrd degrees of speed.