

1.3. MUSICAL TERMS

Key concepts

- Nada - Division of Nada
- Classification of Nada based on timbre
- Sruti - Varieties of Sruti
- Svaram Nomenclature
- Sthayi - varieties of sthayi and the signs used to indicate them.
- Arohana & Avarohana
- Raga
- Alankara - Saptatala alankaras
- Dhatu & Matu

1.3.1. Nada

Nada is a musical sound which pleases the ears and mind the moment it is produced and heard. The whole subject of music relates to nada. Nada gives rise to sruti and these give rise to svaras and these again to ragas. Nada admits of the divisions. Ahata & Anahata. The nada that is heard without the conscious effort of man or other beings is Anahata. It is the music of nature and universe. It also includes the nada emanating from the mooladhara part of the body. This is audible only to yogis.

Nada produced by the conscious effort of man is 'Ahata'. The science and art of music relates to Ahata nada. 'Ahata' means 'struck' and Anahata 'unstruck'. Ahata nada admits of the threefold division - Geeta, Vadya and Nrithya.

From the point of view of the timbre of notes produced, Ahata nada is classified into Sariraja, Nakhaja, Dhanuja, Vayuja, Charmaja and Lohaja.

Nada is produced by the conjunction of prana and anala and this is referred to by Tyagaraja in the charana of his kriti 'Mokshamugalada' (Saramati raga). In the word 'nada' 'na' denotes prana and 'da' denotes fire. In practice the nada emanating from the chest is called 'Mandra' that from the throat is called 'Madhya' and that emanating from the region of head as 'Tara'.

1.3.2. Sruti

There is an aphorism 'sruti mata laya pita' which means sruti is like mother and laya is like the father of music. Sruti is an important factor of Indian Music. In music each performer must choose the sruti which is convenient to him and the sruti selected by the performer is retained till the end. Here 'sruti' means the convenient pitch or adhara shadja to which the performer prefers to sing. The word sruti has another different and elaborate meaning in Indian classical music.

'Sruti' means the smallest audible difference of pitch or a quarter tone. The use of these subtle tones or sruti is of great importance in Indian music. There are sruti intervals like Ekasruti, Dvisruti, Trisruti, Chatursruti, Panchasruti and Shatsruti. An eka sruti interval is of 3 sizes or types - pramana sruti, nyuna sruti and purna sruti.

All the systems of world music admits of 12 svara sthanas. In addition to these 12, ten micro tones or srutis are used in classical music which gives a peculiar charm and colour to our music. All together there are 22 srutis in Indian music which have been in use for centuries. Various srutis can be recognised in various ragas.

Eg: Goula rishabham, Varali madhyamam etc.

1.3.3. Svava Nomenclature

Literally 'svava' means that which pleases of its own accord. It is a musical note or interval. The svaras are seven namely Shadja, Rishaba, Gandhara, Madyama, Panchama, Dhaivata and Nishada and while singing they are represented as 'sa - ri - ga - ma - pa - dha - ni'. The 12 svarasthanas are the development of these sapta svaras. Shadja and Panchama have no varieties (achala svaras) and the other five have two varieties each and thus we get $10 + 2 = 12$ svava sthanas

The 12 svava sthanas in a sthayi are :-

- Shadjam

- Suddha Rishabha
- Chatursruti Rishaba
- Sadharana Gandhara
- Antara Gandhara
- Suddha Madhyama
- Prati Madhyama
- Panchama
- Suddha Dhaivata
- Chatursruti Dhaivata
- Kaisiki Nishada
- Kakali Nishada



Check your memory/progress

The two divisions of nada



Let us do

Vocalisation of svaras

1.3.4. Sthayi

Sthayi means 'stana', saptaka, octave, voice register etc. It is a series of 7 notes beginning from shadja and ending with nishada. In Indian music, we have the five sthayis as Anumandra sthayi, Mandra sthayi, Madhya sthayi, Tara sthayi and Ati tara sthayi. A normal singer will be capable of singing 3 sthayis i.e. mandra, madhya and tara.

Sthayi is indicated by placing dots above and below the notes as per the octave to which it belongs. A dot placed above a note indicates that it belongs to the higher octave and a dot placed below a note indicates that it belongs to the lower octave. Thus 'ṣ̣ ṛ̣ ḡ ḡ in are higher octave or tara sthayi notes and 'ṇ̣ ḍ̣ ṩ ṩ ṩ ṩ are lower octave or mandra sthayi notes. Srgmpdn are middle octave or madhya sthayi notes. The notes belonging to the atitara sthayi (the octave above tara sthayi) and anumandra sthayi (the octave below the mandra sthayi) are indicated by two dots above and below the notes respectively as follows

Atitara sthayi - ś ř ġ ñ

Anumandra sthayi - ṣ ṛ ḡ ṅ

Thus we can understand that the compass of the Veena is in 3 ½ octaves ranging from p to s.

1.3.5. Arohana

A series of notes in the ascending progression of pitch specifying a particular raga. Arohana and Avarohana together constitute the briefest description of a raga.

Eg: Mohana Aro: s r g p d s
Ava: s d p g r s

1.3.6. Avarohana

A series of notes in the descending progression of pitch. Arohana- Avarohana gives in a concise form the outline of the raga. The normal sancharas that the raga admits of are directly revealed by its arohana - avarohana.

1.3.7. Raga

Raga is the pivotal concept of Indian music. The whole structure of Indian music is built around the concept of raga. Ragas are aesthetic facts and can be perceived by trained ears. All possible combinations of notes for creating emotional effects have been utilised in raga formation.

Raga consists of a series of notes which bears a definite relationship to adhara shadja. Raga is the basis of all melodies. Ragas give pleasure to the listener.

“Yo asou dhvani viseshastu
Svara varna vibhooshita
Ranjako jana chitanam
Sa cha raga udahruda”

It is important to note that no two ragas have the same structure and the change of a single note can bringout an entirely new raga.

Eg: Mohanam & Hamsadhvani

Raga is called 'pan' in ancient Tamil music. There were pagal pans (day), iravu pans (night) and podu pans (general).

3.8. Alankara

In ancient times, beautiful svara combinations were called alankaras. But today the word "Alankara" is related to Suladi Sapta talas namely Dhruva, Matya, Rupaka, Jhampa, Triputa, Ata and Eka.

In order to learn sapta talas effectively, svara passages have been composed in an orderly manner and they are called 'Sapta tala alankaras'. The names of the 7 principle talas with their constituent angas are given in following table.

No	Tala	Constituent angas
1	Dhruva	1 0 1 1
2.	Matya	1 0 1
3.	Rupaka	0 1
4.	Jhampa	1 0 0
5.	Triputa	1 0 0
6.	Ata	1 1 0 0
7.	Eka	1

3 types of angas are used in these talas

- I = laghu
O = Drutam
U = Anudrutam

The above seven talas expand into 35 talas due to the five varieties (jati) of laghu. The five varieties of laghu are - tisra, chaturasra, khanda, misra and sankeerna. It is interesting to know that the 35 talas again expand into 175 talas owing to the 5 varieties of gati namely tisra, chaturasra, khanda, misra and sankeerna.



Check your memory/progress

The seven principal talas (Sapta talas)



Let us do

Vocalisation of alankaras

3.9. Dhatu

The svara part of the composition

Eg: p , , , d p m g p m g m g r (Marivere- Anandabhairavi raga)

3.10. Matu

Sahitya part of the composition

Eg: Pa - - da Yugamu matilo dalachi (Marivere - Anandabhairavi raga)



Learning out come

The student acquires knowledge of

- Classification of nada
- Varieties of sruti
- Varieties of svara and svarasthanas
- Five ranges of sthayi and the signs used to indicate the sthayi
- Raga
- Sapta talas and alankaras

Evaluation

- Division of Nada.
- Classification of Nada from the point of view of timbre.
- Define sruti.
- What is Svara? Name the svaras and 12 svara stanas.
- Explain sapta tala alankaras.
- Define sthayi and explain the varieties of sthayi.

Reference

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